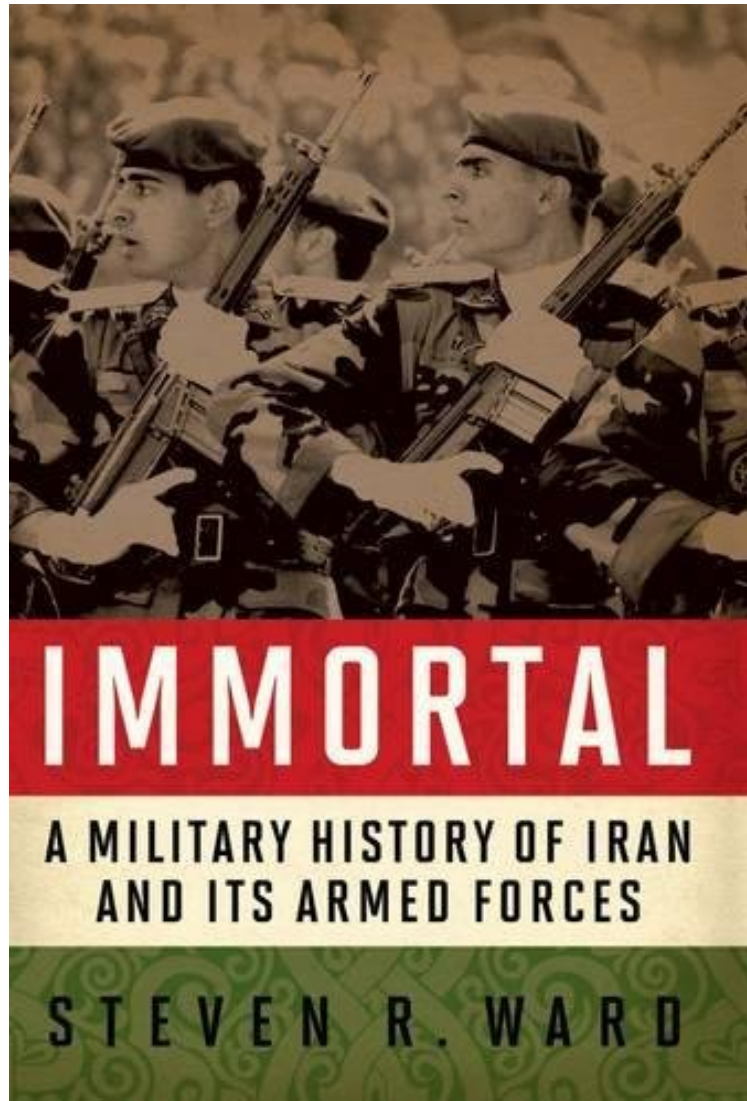


Immortal: A Military History of Iran and Its Armed Forces

Steven R. Ward

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Steven R. Ward : Immortal: A Military History of Iran and Its Armed Forces before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Immortal: A Military History of Iran and Its Armed Forces*:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Ward, and excellent book on Iran.By Danny L. Thoms Jr.A grad course motivated the purchase beside required reading and understanding the ideas were very well presented and explained. The author did his homework and the subject matter was great to read. I recommend this book if you would like or have interests in a more detailed state of being, Iran2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A history

lesson for those who care or want to knowBy JasonIt says it on the cover very plainly, this is a history book. It starts very early on with...historical stuff. But quickly it does get to recent history some of us can remember, such as the Iran-Iraq war. I haven't finished it yet but I'll assume there's a chunk after that explaining the current Revolutionary Guard (labelled as a terrorist org. by our government), and probably stuff about their other, lesser known forces of 'evil' (Basij/Qods). I did enjoy the extensive coverage of their history, which helps one realize how they got so messed up in the first place. And in case you're wondering, I don't have the time or patience to give this book a proper, more professional review, its really not that important to me. I'm just doing this because I have 5 minutes to burn. Anyways, the author seems well informed (former CIA or something), but he's not Iranian himself so really all he's doing is regurgitating what he's researched or knows already into an readable form that is publishable (not classified, he makes that clear in the intro). This is good enough for me because all I really wanted was to learn was what everyone else who pays attention to Iran already knows. Jolly good book sir.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Hamid SaebNone

Immortal is the only single-volume English-language survey of Iran's military history. CIA analyst Steven R. Ward shows that Iran's soldiers, from the famed "Immortals" of ancient Persia to today's Revolutionary Guard, have demonstrated through the centuries that they should not be underestimated. This history also provides background on the nationalist, tribal, and religious heritages of the country to help readers better understand Iran and its security outlook. Immortal begins with the founding of ancient Persia's empire under Cyrus the Great and continues through the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988) and up to the present. Drawing on a wide range of sources including declassified documents, the author gives primary focus to the modern era to relate the build-up of the military under the last Shah, its collapse during the Islamic revolution, its fortunes in the Iran-Iraq War, and its rise from the ashes to help Iran become once again a major regional military power. He shows that, despite command and supply problems, Iranian soldiers demonstrate high levels of bravery and perseverance and have enjoyed surprising tactical successes even when victory has been elusive. These qualities and the Iranians' ability to impose high costs on their enemies by exploiting Iran's imposing geography bear careful consideration today by potential opponents.

"This is not only a timely book, and one that fills a gap of information and analysis on the Iranian military, but it also cogently argues that policy makers involved with the Middle East take a cautious approach to Iran. . . . What sets this historical study apart is the depth of the research, the synthesis of political-military factors relevant to each era, and the quality of the writing, making it possible for non-academics or those without special Middle East backgrounds to profit from reading it."?Colonel Norvell B. De Atkine, Us Army (ret), Proceedings"Immortal provides a welcome introduction to the history and capabilities of Iran's military. It is ambitious in scope, tracing the evolution of Iran's armed forces from the Achaemenid period (6th-4th centuries BC) up to the modern day. . . . As eloquent as it is insightful, Immortal is readily accessible to Iran specialists and nonspecialists alike."?Michael Connell, Middle East Journal"It would serve well anyone closely following the developments in the present diplomatic row between Iran and the West to read Immortal. It is an excellent overview of Iran's military history?a comprehensive examination of their military forces from which both specialists and generalists can benefit . . . [The] wealth of information he was able to provide is an excellent resource for those seeking to understand the country's military in a historical context."?ASMEA Newsletter"Perceptive and intriguing look at Iran's military history. . . Ward assesses Iran's use of military force in both internal and external wars, as well as its legacy of corruption, politicization, and religious interference."?William D. Busnesll, Military Officer"Steven Ward's Immortal is a narrative of Iran's wars from the time of Cyrus the Great to the present. It is an exceptionally well-informed military history that conveys a sense of the sweat and sacrifice, and of the grandeur and the blunders."?Paul R. Pillar, The National Interest"It would behoove today's military planners to absorb these important lessons from the past as they prepare for current contingencies."?Middle East Quarterly"Brings solid credentials and unquestioned regional expertise. In a single-volume survey, Ward might be expected to present only the most cursory examination of such a vast period and to offer little in-depth analysis. In fact, the opposite is true. . . . Ward has produced an excellent book that should be read by anyone interested in the region. It will be especially useful for those wanting insight into Iran's military capabilities and the role heritage plays in their development. It excels at being informative while lacking the dryness of a standard academic tome."?Major Todd M. Manyx, USMC, Joint Forces Quarterly"The title of Immortal refers to soldiers who were known for their military prowess and their loyalty, the famous elite corps of the ancient Persian rulers. . . . The book provides a long historical perspective of Iranian military culture beginning with the fabled Persian Empire founded by Cyrus the Great and continuing with the Achaemenids, Parthians, and Sassanians. . . .The book's most original and revealing aspect is its analysis and evaluation of Iran's military since the Islamic Revolution. It treats the war with Iraq in detail and includes a thorough discussion of the main campaigns, battles, and strategic problems. . . .Ward has provided a valuable addition to the literature on Iran's military. . . . Military officers and national security professionals would do well to read this book - highly recommended."?LTC Prisco R. Hernandez, USAR, Fort Leavenworth, KS, Military "One of the often-quoted excerpts from Sun Tzu asserts that a successful battlefield

commander must know his adversary as well as if not better than he knows his own forces. In the current strategic environment, one of our adversaries, for good or ill, is Iran. Steven Ward's book, *Immortal: A Military History of Iran and Its Armed Forces*, provides a valuable starting point for developing an understanding of that particular adversary. The book is strong on narrative, well written, and engaging. It provides a coherent historical framework for those seeking to begin developing an understanding of twenty-first century Iran."?Gary Hobin, *Army History*"This study is the only comprehensive history of Iran's military and as such it is a must-read for students of Iranian history and those looking to understand the factors that drive Iranian strategic thinking and mistrust of the United States and the West. It is an excellent source book for graduate and undergraduate students studying Iran."?Judith S. Yappe, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*"Beginning with ancient Persia's feared corps, known as the "Immortals," and continuing through today's Revolutionary Guard, Ward offers a panoramic view of Iranian military history?and explains how Iran could still use its geography against its enemies."?Foreign Policy"Ward, a senior intelligence analyst for the CIA, reminds us that although Iran's armed forces have not fared well in the past two centuries, they have demonstrated qualities that bear some consideration. . . . Those studying Iran and its military will want this."?Library Journal Far too often, Americans ignore history and leave military history to a narrow range of experts. The choice of peace or war in dealing with Iran, however, is far too important to make without an understanding of Iran's military history and how its forces have evolved. Steven R. Ward's *Immortal* provides essential background to making that choice=.Before we rush headlong into another Middle Eastern quagmire, it is critical for Americans to develop a greater appreciation for Iran's military history and capability. Steven Ward's *Immortal* comes at a critical moment, when its subject--the military development of Iran--is one of the most important issues confronting our nation. There are few Westerners who possess Ward's experience and understanding of the Iranian armed forces, and he has done us all a great service by placing his wealth of knowledge at our disposal. *Immortal* is a thoughtful, fascinating and extremely informative study of Iran's military from the past to the very present that will finally allow us to fill a large gap in our understanding of one of the most pressing foreign policy problems of the twenty-first century.This is not only a timely book, and one that fills a gap of information and analysis on the Iranian military, but it also cogently argues that policy makers involved with the Middle East take a cautious approach to Iran ... What sets this historical study apart is the depth of the research, the synthesis of political-military factors relevant to each era, and the quality of the writing, making it possible for non-academics or those without special Middle East backgrounds to profit from reading it. "Before we rush headlong into another Middle Eastern quagmire, it is critical for Americans to develop a greater appreciation for Iran's military history and capability. Steven Ward's *Immortal* comes at a critical moment, when its subject?the military development of Iran?is one of the most important issues confronting our nation. There are few Westerners who possess Ward's experience and understanding of the Iranian armed forces, and he has done us all a great service by placing his wealth of knowledge at our disposal. *Immortal* is a thoughtful, fascinating and extremely informative study of Iran's military from the past to the very present that will finally allow us to fill a large gap in our understanding of one of the most pressing foreign policy problems of the twenty-first century."?Kenneth M. Pollack, author of *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict Between Iran and America*"*Immortal* is a superbly written and researched work. Steven Ward has delivered a critically important contribution to understanding the Persian military. This is a must read for those who want to understand Iranian military thinking, heritage, and capability."?General Anthony C. Zinni, United States Marine Corps (Ret.), and former commander, U.S. Central Command"Far too often, Americans ignore history and leave military history to a narrow range of experts. The choice of peace or war in dealing with Iran, however, is far too important to make without an understanding of Iran's military history and how its forces have evolved. Steven R. Ward's *Immortal* provides essential background to making that choice."?Anthony H. Cordesman, Burke Chair in Strategy, Center for Strategic and International Studies