

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910786626203321
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Titolo	Damascus and pattern-welded steels : forging blades since the iron age // Madeleine Durand-Charre
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Les Ulis, France : , : EDP Sciences, , [2014] ©2014
ISBN	2-7598-1635-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (223 p.)
Collana	Science des matériaux
Disciplina	682
Soggetti	Blacksmithing Forge welding Knives
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	""Table of contents""; ""Introduction""; ""Aknowledgements""; ""First part : The Blacksmitha's steel spanning four millennia""; ""1 Primitive iron""; ""2 Blacksmith steel before the Christian era""; ""3 The swords of the first millennium AD""; ""4 Did you say Damascus steel, Damascene or damask ?""; ""5 From swords to knives""; ""6 The swords of the second millennium""; ""7 Art and Technology in the third millennium""; ""Second part : Formation of the damask pattern""; ""8 Understanding steels""; ""9 Pattern-welding""; ""10 Moire pattern in wootz type, high carbon steels"" ""11 Alignments in medium carbon steels""""12 References""; ""13 Index""
Sommario/riassunto	Steels are a class of materials with multiple and complicated transformations; this is true even for steels of the basic cutlery industry. A damascus steel is a fascinating subject to study, rich in multiple facets, that appears in a first approach as a composite material artistically exploited. Damascus steel was developed in the first millennium AD in India or Sri-Lanka. Its reputation is related to its exceptional properties and to the moire pattern. A similar damask pattern could be obtained by forge-welding giving rise to controversies. Recent findings allow a better understanding of this

pattern formation. This book presents first, observations of ancient blade samples examined with modern technologies such as electron microscopy. The features of many typical swords from different periods are discussed: Celtic, Merovingian, Viking and oriental wootz swords, Persian shamshirs, Japanese katana, rapiers etc. In the second part, microstructural observations at different levels of magnification are displayed and their interpretation is discussed in detail, thus revealing the secret of sophisticated forgings. One chapter is devoted to introducing the main transformations undergone by these steels during the forging processes. The book is intended for all those people interested in the history of science and more specifically to the metallurgists, to the archaeologists and all the researchers confronted with the problems of the expertise of the vestiges, to the blacksmiths, and to the collectors of valuable artistic blades.
