The Iron Helmet and Body Armor in Eastern Asia before 6th Cent.: the Relationship between Ancient China and Ancient Chosen and Ancient Japan

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After ancient Chinese iron armor appeared at the end of the Warring States Period, it underwent considerable development from this time through the Qin, Han, Wei and Jin dynasties through to the period of Southern and Northern Dynasties that ended before the 6th century. It had a considerable influence on ancient peoples and states in the East Asian during that period, mainly on the ancient states in the Korean Peninsula and in Japan. However, once this ancient Chinese iron armor had made an initial impact, regional differences and differences in the cultural traditions of the various ethnic groups gave rise to further developments as armor assumed ethnic features peculiar to each ethnic group and state and each ethnic group selected types of armor that were best suited to their needs. This paper is a brief study of examples of ancient iron armor before the 6th century that have been obtained from archaeological excavations in various parts of East Asia, and related visual materials.