

Prophet Muhammad
تعلموا الرمي والقرآن
"Learn archery and the Qur'an"

Mamluk Archery

Beginners Course



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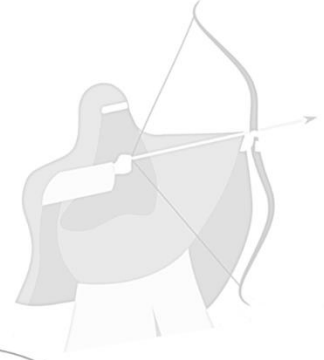
Bows of Prophet Muhammad

صلى الله عليه وآله وصحبه وسلم



الزَّوْرَاءُ

az-Zawraa'



الرَّوْحَاءُ

ar-Rawhaa'

Al-Safraa' (the yellow bow), taken from Nab' tree whose branches are used in making bows

الصَّفْرَاءُ

as-Safraa'

أخذ - صلى الله عليه وسلم - من سلاح بني قيتقاع ثلاث قسيّة: قوسًا اسمها الروحاء، وقوسًا من شوحط تسمى البيضاء، وقوسًا من نع تسمى الصفراء

Prophet Muhammad (S) took these three bows (al-Rawha', al-Safra' & al-Bayda') from the weapons of Banu Qaynuqa'



الْبَيْضَاءُ

al-Baydaa'

Al-Katum – broke on the day (the Battle) of Uhud and Qatadah ibn al-Nu'man took it.

الْكُتُومُ

al-Katoom

الْكُتُومُ، كُسِرَتْ يَوْمَ أُحُدٍ فَأَخَذَهَا قَتَادَةُ بْنُ النُّعْمَانِ

Al-Katoom (the silent) due to its silent sound when shot



السَّدَادُ

as-Sadaad

Al-Sadaad (Straightness) It shot arrows very straight.



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الشَّدَادُ

al-shadaad



فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ

“until he was two bow-lengths away or even closer” (Qur’an 53:8)

تعلموا الرمي والقرآن

“Learn Archery and the Quran” (Hadith)

تعلموا الرمي فإن ما بين الهدفين مروضه من رياض الجنة

“Learn archery for indeed between the two targets is a garden from the gardens of paradise” (Hadith)

ان الله تعالى يدخل بالسهم الواحد ثلاثة نفر الجنة: صانعه يحتسب في صنعه الخيّر، والرامي به، ومنبله، وارموا واركبوا، وأن ترموا أحب إلي من أن تتركبوا، ليس من اللهو محمود إلا ثلاث: تأديب الرجل فرسه، وملاعبته أهله، ورميه بقوسه ونبله. ومن ترك الرمي بعد ما علمه مرغبة عنه فإنها نعمة تركها.

“Allah, Most High, will enable three persons to enter Paradise for one arrow: the **maker** when he has a good motive in making it, the **one who shoots it**, and the **one who hands it**; so shoot and ride, but your shooting is dearer to me than your riding. Everything with which a man amuses himself is vain except three (things): a man's training of his horse, his playing with his wife, and his shooting with his bow and arrow. If anyone abandons archery after becoming an adept through distaste for it, it is a blessing he has abandoned; or he said: for which he has been ungrateful.” (Hadith)

من اتخذ قوساً في بيته نفى الله عنه الفقر أربعين سنة

“Whoever keeps a bow in his home, Allah will diminish poverty from him for 40 years.” (Hadith)

“Whoever passes through our mosques or markets with arrows should hold them by their heads lest he should injure a Muslim.”

Rasulullah (S) passed by some people from the tribe of Aslam practicing archery. He said, "O children of Ishmael! Throw (arrows), for your father was an archer. I am on the side of Bani so-and-so," meaning one of the two teams. The other team stopped throwing, whereupon the Prophet said, "What has happened to them?" They replied, "How shall we throw while you are with Bani so-and-so?" He said, "Throw for I am with all of you." (Hadith)

“Beware, strength consists in archery. Beware, strength consists in archery. Beware, strength consists in archery.” (Hadith)

“Who learnt archery and then gave it up is not from us. or he has been guilty of disobedience” (Hadith)

“Teach your children swimming, archery and horse riding”. (Hadith)

“Practice archery and practice horse riding, and that you practice archery is more beloved to me than that you practice riding.”

“Any action without the remembrance of Allah is either a diversion or heedlessness except four acts: walking from target to target (during archery practice), training a horse and learning to swim.” (Hadith)

Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas: The Prophet took out a quiver (of arrows) for me on the day of Uhud and said, "Throw (arrows); let my father and mother be sacrificed for you." (Hadith)

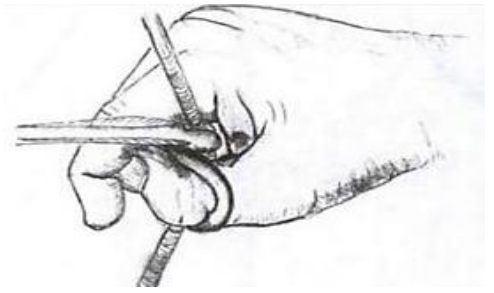
Anas b. Malik said: We used to offer the Maghrib prayer with the Prophet (saws) and then shoot arrows, one of us could see the place where arrow would fall.

“The Messenger of Allah (saws) prohibited taking a living thing as a shooting target.” (Hadith)

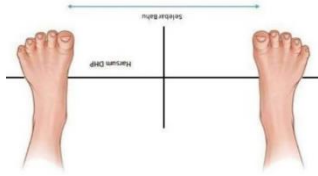


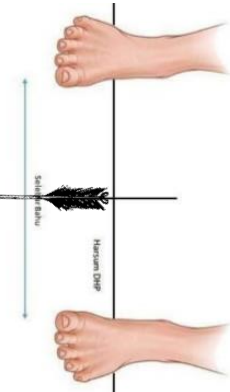

“There is no harm for any of you to take up your bow when you are feeling overtaken by burden, and thereby do away with your worries.” (Hadith)

Mamluk Archery

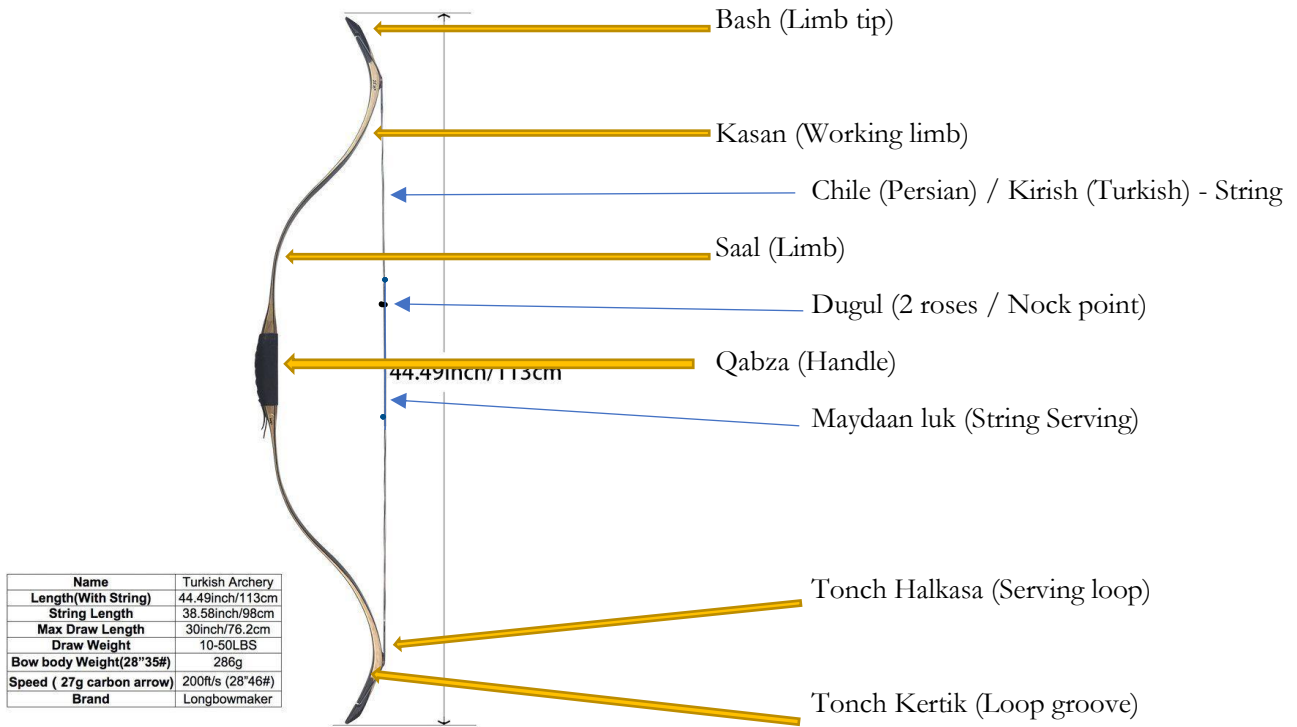
Sahabi **Sa'd ibn abi Waqqas** (ra) is the founder of Islamic Archery and the first to shoot an arrow in the way of Islam. He is the figurehead and Ustadh al-Ramy. **Taybugha Al-Yunani** is the Grand Master because he achieved all 114 levels of competency in archery and horseback archery.



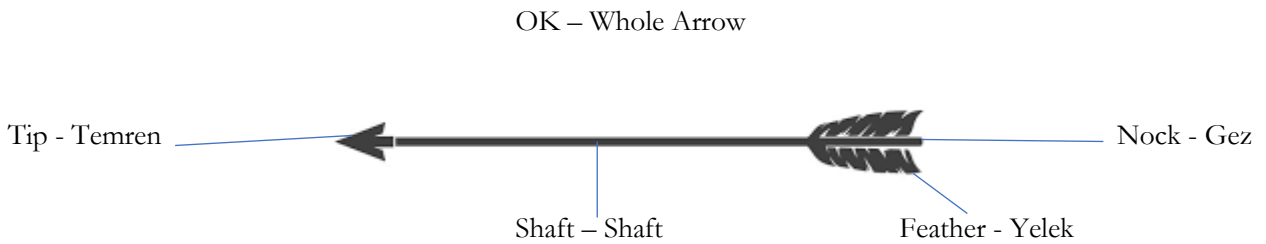
Basics of the three schools of Mamluk Archery

NAME	GRIP	FEET POSITION	
<p>ABU HASHIM AL-MAWARDI</p> <p>School 1</p> <p>CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER – 1 (TALL)</p>	<p>Learned from daughter of S. Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas. Did not get to meet the Sahabi.</p>  <p>Square (a). Long fingers. Imam Abu Hashim (RA)</p>	<p>Feet straight, sideways on to target 90°. Anchor point is the chin.</p> 	<p>Push and Pull method</p> 
<p>ISHAQ AL-RAQQI</p> <p>School 2</p> <p>CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER – 3 (INTERMEDIATE)</p>	<p>From Raqqa (modern day Northern Syria)</p>  <p>Intermediate FIG. 19. GRIPS ON THE BOW (b). Medium fingers. Imam Ishaq Ar-Raqi (RA)</p>	<p>Feet are 45° to target. Anchor point is side of mouth.</p> 	<p>Push and Pull method</p> 
<p>TAHIR AL-BALKHI</p> <p>School 3</p> <p>CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER – 2 (SHORT)</p>	<p>From Balkh (modern day Afghanistan)</p>  <p>Oblique (c). Short fingers. Imam Taahir Al Balkhi (RA)</p>	<p>Feet facing the target. Anchor point is eye line.</p> 	<p>Push and Pull method</p> 

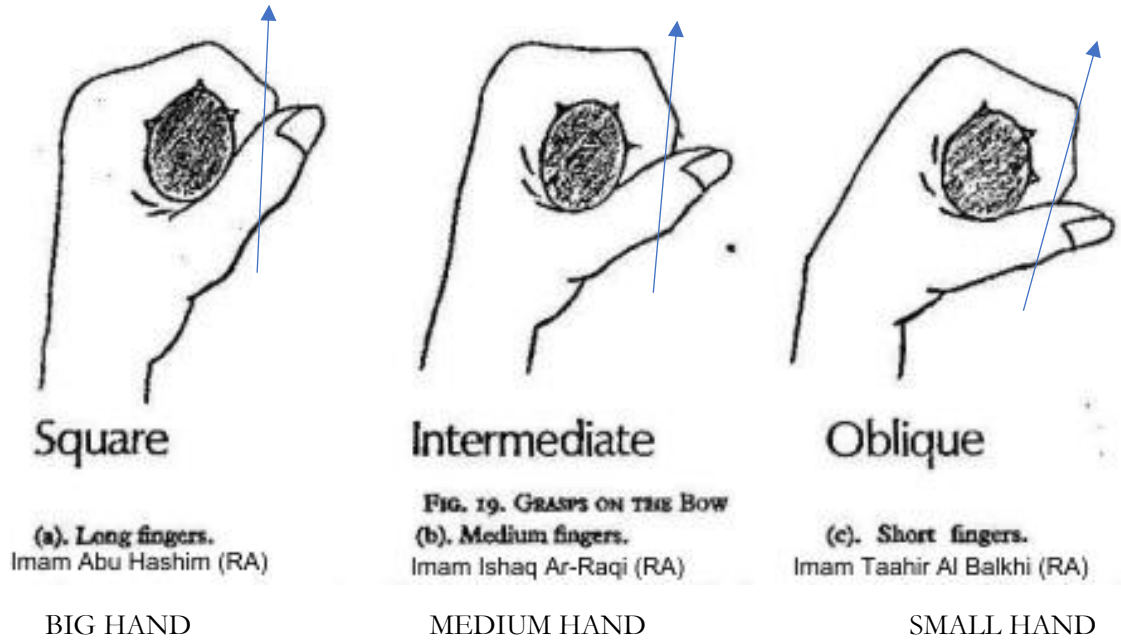
BOW PARTS



ARROW PARTS



QABZE (HANDLE/GRIP) POSITION

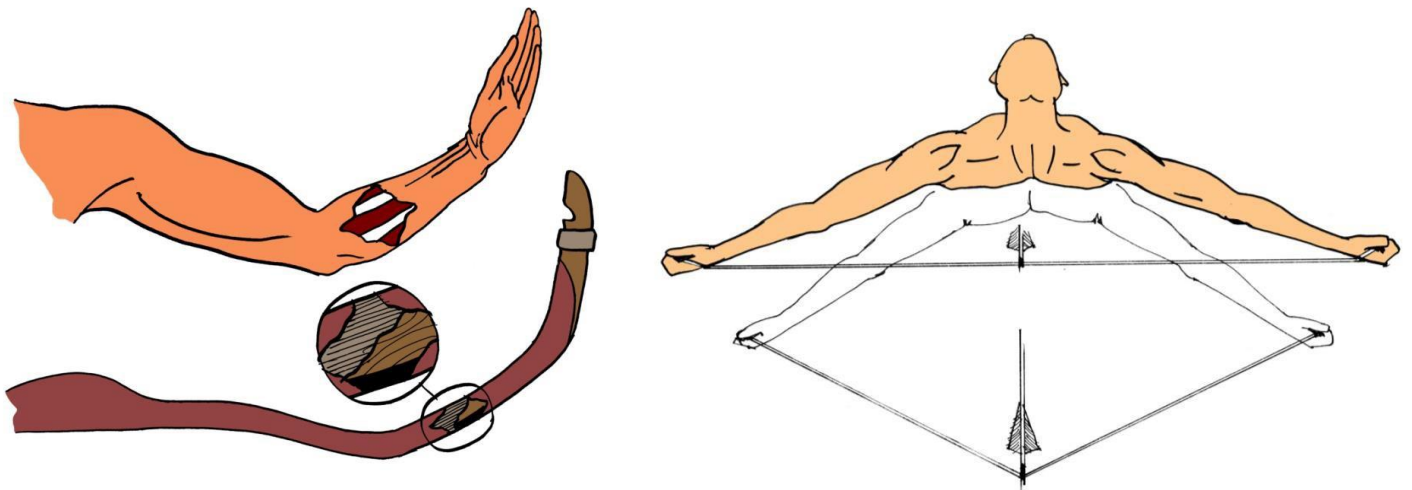


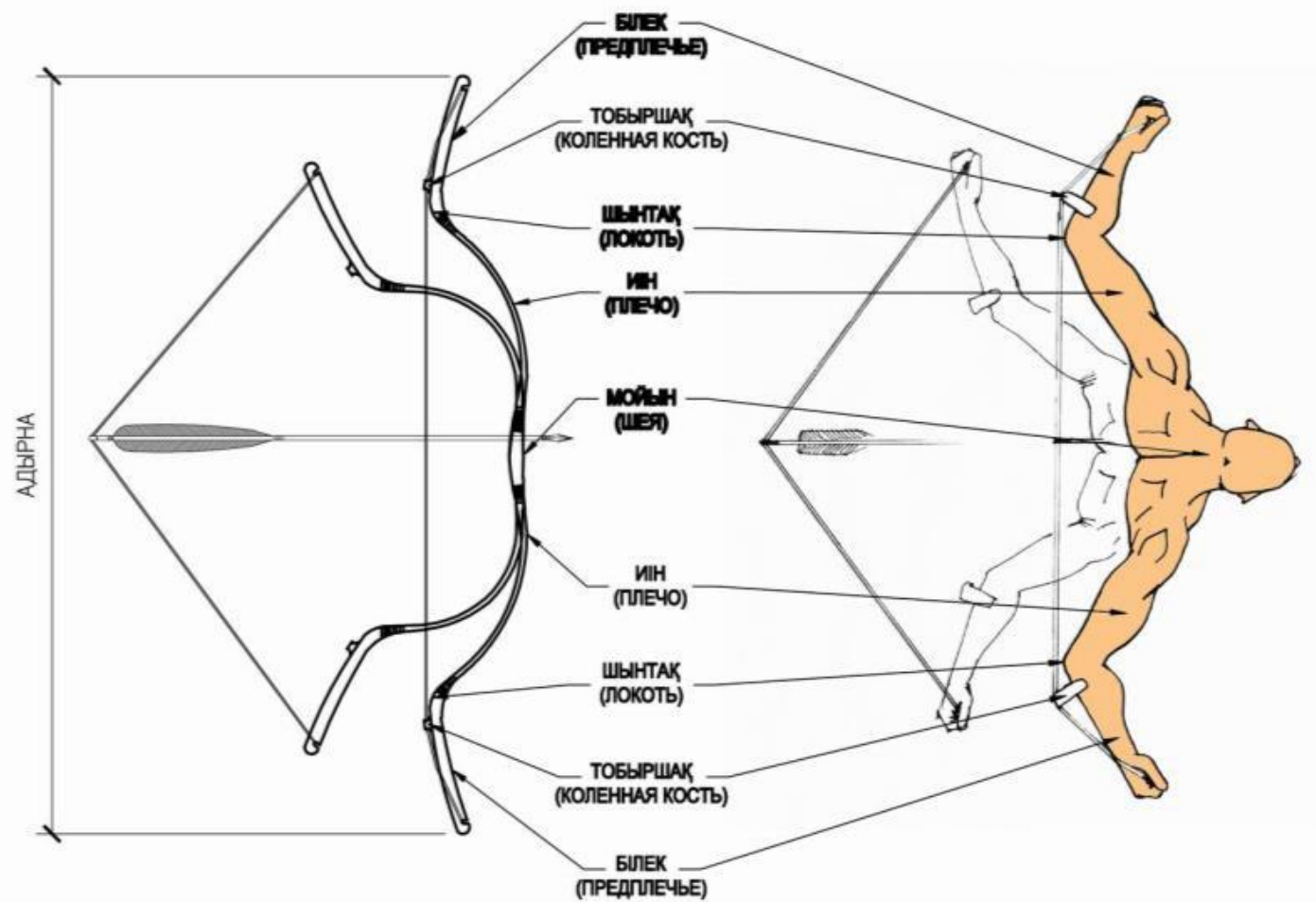
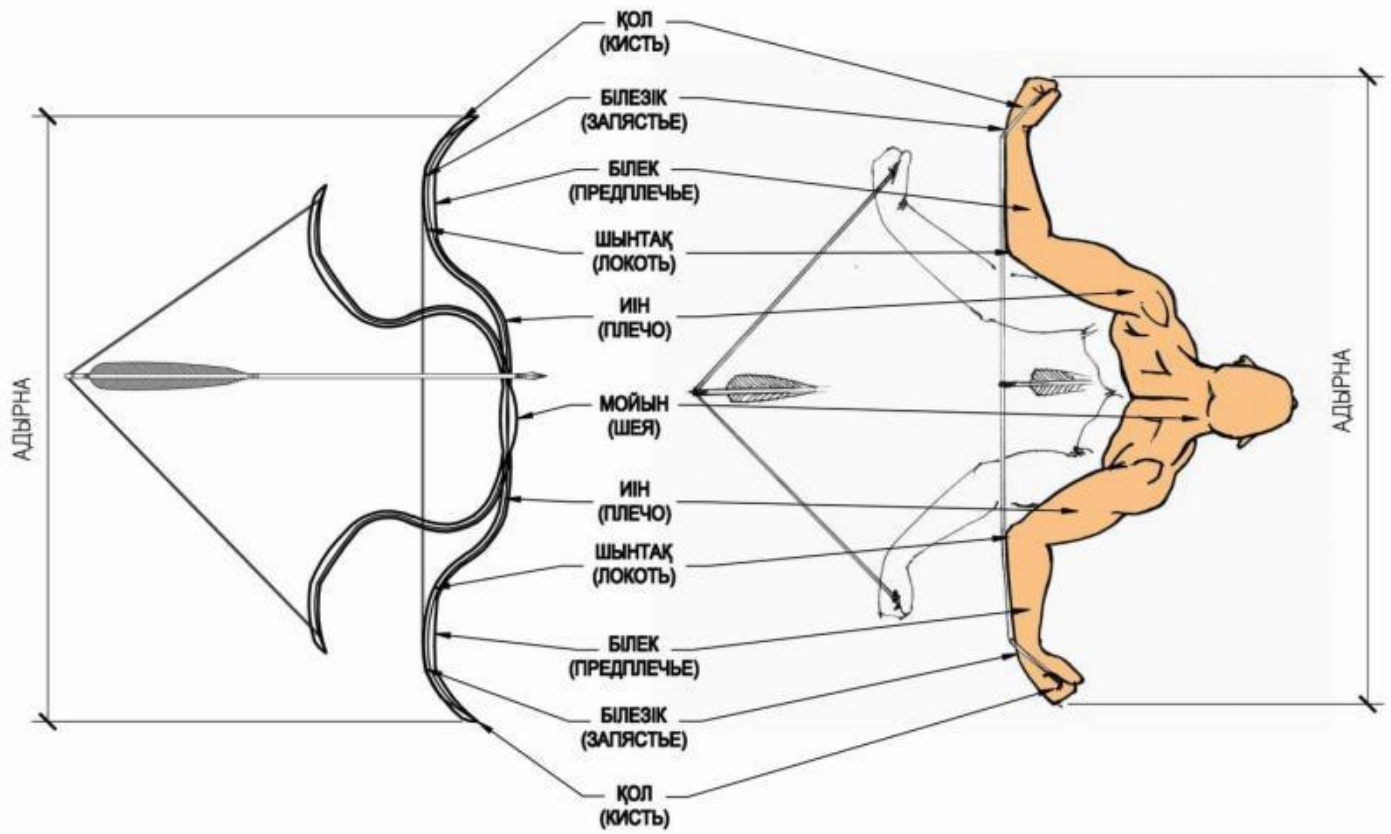
BOW MATERIALS

Back – Sinew (Ligament) / Middle – Wood / Belly – Horn / Glue – Fish Bladder

Traditionally a bow takes upto 1.5yrs to make and is kept with limb tips touching while drying. Then over 2 months the bow is slowly opened up and strung before shooting.

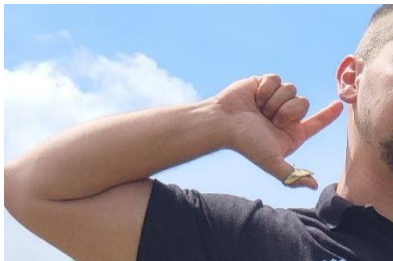


Similarities of the bow and the human body in shape and constitution. Human body is made of Bone, Sinew, Muscle and Blood.










A bow is a sacred item so must be handled with respect. We 'give' a bow while holding the handle/qabza with hand on top, we 'receive' the bow from the qabza/handle with hand beneath.



NAME	MEANING	REASON	OTHER
IFLAAT	Follow through of String hand 3 fingers remain clenched, index and thumb like 'Hilal' Crescent moon Elbow behind head and level with shoulders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Release of Kinetic energy 2. To avoid bad forward release 3. More arrow speed when releasing back 	
KHATRA	Follow through of Bow hand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrow does not touch bow or hand 2. More speed 3. Release of Kinetic energy 	<p>Abu Haashim has 'Fatha bi shimaal', open with left hand. Bow swings round to release hand shock due to having larger bow.</p> 
FERKE (Arabic name)	Twisting of the string at full draw	More power by pulling limbs closer together	<p>Only used by Taahir al-Balkhi because he was not tall and had short draw.</p> 

SHOT TYPE	BODY POSITION	OTHER
FRONT SHOT	Lean on left leg standing in stirrup Right foot open pointing away from horse. Right leg is light but pressing onto horse Upper body in line with target	
SIDE SHOT	Feet balanced in weight Standing in stirrups Upper body in line with target	NEED IMAGE
BACK SHOT	Turn around to target Lean on right leg while standing in stirrup Left foot pointing away from horse. Left leg is light but pressing onto horse Upper body in line with target	
SEATED SHOT		
FRONT KNEE SHOT		

BACK KNEE SHOT		
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NOCKING SYSTEM	METHOD	OTHER
Meshaa'ir Turkiye (Turkish style) Pencil	Hold arrow like a pencil Push forward between fingers of bow hand Push nock past the string and pull back Arrow shaft keeps contact with the string	Taybugha style
Bird style	Hold arrow with tips of fingers, like a birds beak Hold nock and shaft inside palm of hand Run string along palm as you pull back and nock	Taybugha style
Scooping	Grab arrow as normal with thumb and index finger, remaining 3 fingers hook the string and scoop the arrow onto the string to nock	Not historical

3 TYPES OF DRAW – (TAYBUGHA)

- SLOW
- FAST (continuous smooth movement, ensure full draw is reached and release)
- SLOW THEN FAST (Secret Style)

Ensure each style you maintain full-draw, iflaat and khatra.

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There are three primary source books we recommend, ‘Saracen Archery’ of master archer Taybugha and also alongside it ‘Arab Archery’, with the author unknown and lastly, to infuse both Eastern and Western traditions, we recommend delving into Roger Ascham’s, ‘Toxophilus - The School of Shooting’, all three texts are available in full on our website.

The book, **Saracen Archery** (An English Version and Exposition of a Mamluk Work on Archery (Ca. A.D. 1368)), is attributed to **Taybugha** Al-Ashrafi Al-Baklamishi Al-Yunani. The Arabic manuscript is entitled *Kitab ghunyat al-tullab fi ma’rifat ramyi an-nushab* (Essential archery for beginners). Not much is known about Taybugha, however, Latham and Paterson claim, ‘he was a Turkish slave imported from Greece and manumitted (freed) on conversion to Islam we know nothing for certain about Taybugha. The biographer Ibn Hajar, however, in his dictionary of notabilities deceased in the fourteenth century (eighth century A.H.) makes a laconic entry under the year A.H. 797 (1394-5): *Taybugha ibn Abd Allah, a certain celebrated warrior, died in prison in Aleppo*... The patronymic ‘ibn ‘Abd Allah was regularly adopted by converts to Islam after recruitment into Mamluk service.’

Below is a snippet into the English version and exposition of ‘*Kitab ghunyat al-tullab fi ma’rifat ramyi an-nushab*’, you will find below an excerpt from Taybugha’s introduction and an introduction into the three schools of Archery including al-Tabari’s technique. You are welcome to download the pdfs for Saracen Archery and other books above from our website (Scan QR code):



CHAPTER 1

THE AUTHOR’S INTRODUCTION

Most of the introduction is devoted to an exposition of the religious basis on which the practice of archery is held to rest.¹ Since the subject matter, containing a good deal of pious fiction, is of limited interest it is best summarized as follows:

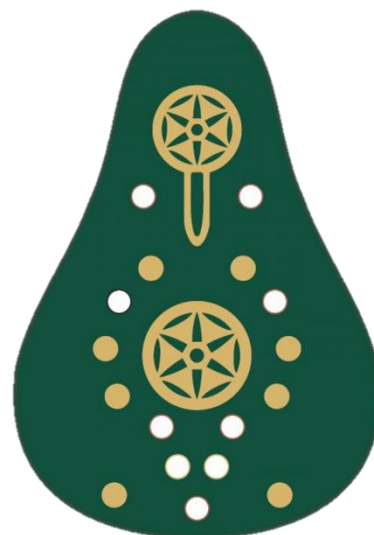
Archery is a religious obligation established in the Koran on the basis of Muḥammad’s own explanation of sura viii. 62, where the word *quwwah* (‘force’) is taken to refer to archery. The Prophet himself, furthermore, was an archer and possessed three bows. The terms in which he urged his community to practise riding and archery—preferably the latter—amount to a standing order, and archery is a *farḍ kifāyah* (i.e. a religious obligation incumbent, not upon each individual, but upon the community by representation). When his Companions engaged in archery contests, the Prophet used to attend and would support one or other of the contending parties (3a-4b).

Certain authors relate that Adam, after being sent down from paradise, was commanded to raise crops. Two birds ate what he sowed, and so he complained to God, who sent Gabriel with a bow, a string, and two arrows. Being asked what these things were, Gabriel explained, as he handed them over, that the bow was the force (*quwwah*) of God, the string was the might (*shiddah*) of God, and the arrows the harm to be inflicted (*nikāyah*) by God. He then taught Adam to shoot, whereupon he killed the birds. Knowledge of archery then passed to Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, and archery is indeed the legacy of these illustrious ancestors (4b-5b).

There is an authentic tradition of the Prophet that it is a sin to give up archery after learning the art. There are, furthermore, numerous traditions of the Prophet which commend archery. He himself used to preach, leaning on a bow, and considered that there was no better weapon. Gabriel had an Arab bow on the day of the battle of Uḥud (fought between Muḥammad and the tribe of Quraysh to the north of Medina, March, A.D. 625). The excellence of the bow is the subject of many traditions of the Prophet, which are too numerous for inclusion in the present work (5b-9b).

The author now continues:

Since archery and riding are enjoined by authentic command of the Prophet himself and as I knew of no treatise by any previous author on the subject of shooting from horseback, I felt I should like to accord the excellent accomplishments of archery and riding joint treatment in a single work. My aim is so doing would be to comply with the command of God and His Messenger (Muḥammad) and to assist those of my Muslim brethren who campaign and fight in the Holy War. ‘This I could do’ by virtue of such knowledge of the subject as Almighty God had imparted to me over a long period of painstaking care and endeavour and after acquiring familiarity with most of the information on record regarding the primary and secondary bases of archery as expounded in time past by men of repute and distinction who ranked among the authorities of their day and who lived in, and hailed from, all countries. I therefore wrote the



Because of his desire to develop a suitable technique, al-Ṭabarī (who was trained in all three systems)⁹ squarred in the same way as Ishāq, adopted Ṭāhir's grasp, braced and sighted after the fashion of Abū Ḥāshim, used a lock that was a compromise between that of Ṭāhir and that of Ishāq and drew on the mouth after the manner of Ishāq . . .¹⁰ Al-Ṭabarī is the author of the *Kitāb al-riqā'ah* (for *K. al-awā'ilīh*, 'The Clear Book').

COMMENT

1. The Schools of Archery

From a comparison of some of the more important treatises relevant to the subject it is apparent—and certain of our observations on preceding chapters will have led the reader to suspect as much—that, in Islamic archery literature generally, there are discrepant versions of the teachings of Abū Ḥāshim, Ṭāhir, and Ishāq. In particular, the account of their systems contained in the foregoing chapter is at variance with that of al-Ṭabarī as transmitted in his *Kitāb al-awā'ilīh* (26a-46b; I, 19b-34b), which, incidentally, as the source of many of the ascriptions appearing in *Arab Archery*, accounts for some points of difference between that work and this.

Familiarity with the technical literature and an awareness of the Islamic predilection for a personal originator of almost any teaching or doctrine combine to make us highly sceptical of the authenticity of ascriptions which the absence of objective criteria makes it difficult or impossible to control. The emergence of personal schools of archery, we suspect, represents the organization of teaching into a coherent system, in which names enjoying the sanction of tradition are used either to legitimize current practice or to promulgate new methods. That Abū Ḥāshim, Ṭāhir, and Ishāq were historical persons, we have no reason to doubt, but whether any of them was the real originator of a technique or system, or merely the leading exponent of a technique or system as taught and practised in a given geographical area at a given time—and this is not unlikely—is just one of the questions for which we have, as yet, no positive answer.

In our treatise these three Great Masters emerge as ideal specimens of two physical extremes and a golden mean and, as such, seem no more than a methodological convenience for an exposition of the author's teaching. In the *Wādīh*, on the other hand, it is deducible from the systems ascribed to them that none of them was a perfect example of such physical types. On this and other grounds it is legitimate to surmise that their somatic differences were not so absolute as portrayed in aftertimes and were indeed of less consequence than one might be led to suppose.

While physical characteristics are of evident importance to some facets of shooting technique—the nature of one's grasp, for instance—they are by no means the whole story. It must be remembered that from ancient times the archer in combat more often than not protected his person with armour which, to a greater or lesser degree according to its nature, added to his bulk or deprived him of the unrestricted use of his body, or both. To illustrate, let us consider the helmet. Many of the earlier surviving specimens of Turkish and Persian helmets are equipped with nasal, or nose-bars, that could be slid up or down in their fittings and locked in the desired position by means of a threaded bolt (Stone, *Glossary of Arms and Armour*, s.v. *Armor*, pp. 36-51, and figs. 50-58, 61-64). A nasal might extend down the face as far as the wearer's chin, and, when shooting a bow in an acutely oblique position like that of Abū Ḥāshim, the archer would not have been able to turn his head in comfort more than about forty-five degrees towards the target. If his drawing hand was in contact with the side of his face as he loosed, it is difficult to see how the string could avoid catching the nasal and ruining the shot, to say nothing of any other inconvenience or injury that might result if his head was turned too much. The might, of

CHAPTER 23

THE SYSTEMS OF THE GREAT MASTERS (A'IMMAH) OF ARCHERY¹

1

The system of Abū Ḥāshim was as follows. When bracing the bow, he would put the *man* of the grip in the middle of the left palm and place the *siyah* of the leg of his bow under the toes of his left foot. His right palm he would apply to the neck of the bow along with the bowstring and give one push so that the loop would fall into the nock. He would incline the bow on account of the slope of the neck (i.e. he held the bow at the slant and not vertically, the degree of inclination depending on the slope of the neck).²

He used the position of acute obliqueness so as to put the mark directly in line with his left shoulder and sighted with both eyes outside (i.e. to the left of) the bow, for he was tall of stature,³ long-necked, long in the forearm, and long-fingered. He used the square grasp and, when gripping, would place the *man* of the bow in the middle creases of the little finger, ring-finger, and middle finger of his left hand and in the distal crease of his index finger, with the *ibraqah* of the bow nucked into a point the width of two fingers away from his wrist-bone.

The nock (*fiq*) of the arrow he would place in the distal crease of his right index finger and middle finger and support the notch (*faḥ*) with the pad of his thumb. He would push the shaft forward with his right hand and bring back his left so that nocking took place at a point between his left nipple and his liver (i.e. in the area of the navel).⁴ When locking, he would place the bowstring in the distal crease of his thumb and fasten his thumb on the middle finger. His right index finger would be loosely on the thumb with its tip outside (i.e. to the right of) the bowstring.

He would use the lesser draw (*waḡf* *hidāyah*) and draw the shaft on to the tuft of hair between his lips and chin, keeping all (i.e. hands, shoulders, and elbow) in a straight line in the same horizontal plane (*alā khariḡ al-istiwā*). Upon loosing, he would follow through with a forward and downward thrust of his bow hand and complete the movement by striking his shoulder-blade with the *siyah* of his bow (see frontispiece); the archer right centre has just completed the movement). By doing this an archer can determine the length of the bow (in relation to the length of his arm). With his right hand he would give a full twist (*farḡah*; above, p. 66) so that his right index finger would come to rest beneath the lobe of the ear.

ii

Ṭāhir al-Balkhī's system was the reverse of Abū Ḥāshim's because he was short (with a short arm-span),⁵ short fingers, a plump hand, short neck, big beard, and wide chest. He squarred in the frontal position and placed the mark in line with his collar-bone, using the oblique grasp. The *man* of his bow he set in the proximal crease of his little finger, ring-finger, and middle finger of the left hand and in the middle crease of the index finger, with the *ibraqah* of his bow nucked in to a point one finger's width away from his wrist-bone. When nocking, he would dispose the

neck of his arrow in the same manner as that already described above. When locking, he would place the bowstring in the distal crease of the right thumb and, having fastened the tip of the thumb on the middle finger, lay the index finger gently on the thumb with the finger-tip inside the bowstring. He would draw on to his cheek in the *wağāʾ bayāq* position (p. 128) and hold his left hand still. He would bring his right thumb into a position beneath the lobe of his ear with his finger outside it (i.e. the lobe), and, had a drop of moisture dripped from the sky, it would not have gone down between the thumb and right index finger. The loose was accomplished without formation of the crescent with thumb and index finger (*tahīl*; p. 64) or forward and downward thrust as he followed through. The movement would have been incompatible with his position directly facing the mark. Because of the shortness of his neck and the size of his beard, Ṭāhir sighted with both eyes together inside the bow.

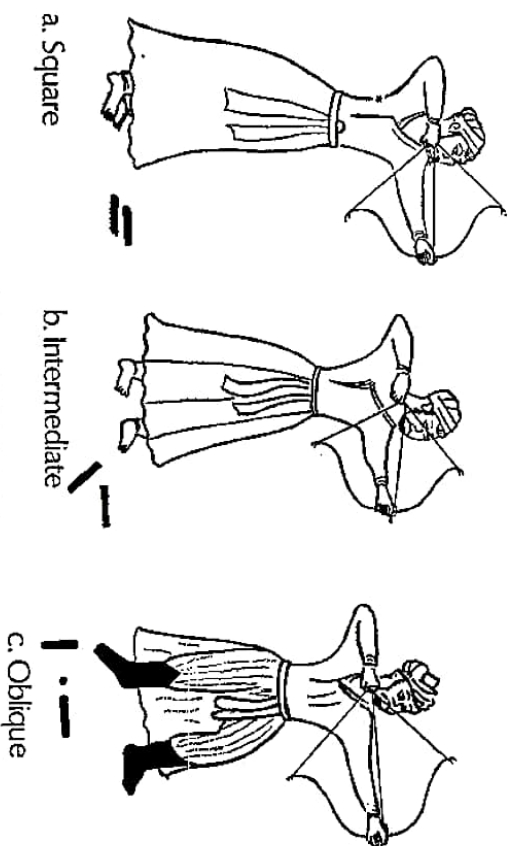


FIG. 45. METHODS OF THE MASTERS
Copied from British Museum MS Or. 9838, fols. 16a-17a.

iii

The system of *Ishāq ar-Raḥāʾī* was a compromise between the two methods already described, for he was of medium build and would squat in a position between that of acute obliqueness and the frontal. What he did was to bring the target in line with part of his collar-bone. When grasping, he would place the *main* of the grip between the proximal and middle creases, right in the centre of the proximal phalanges at the base of the three lower fingers of his left hand, and in the distal crease of his index finger, tucking the *ibrāyid* in to a point one and a half fingers away from the wrist-bone. He used to place the bowstring in the distal phalanx of the thumb and mount the right index finger gently on the thumb with its tip on the string itself, so that the line of the string would bisect the tip of the index finger. He would draw on his mouth and come to full draw in the *masāʾil* *s-sanaʿad* position (? *m. hoyāq*; above, p. 129). He would snarl and with half the full movement follow through with a forward and downward thrust of the bow-hand and half twist with the other to bring the finger-nail of the right index finger into position under the lobe of his ear.

course, remove the nasal or lock it in the raised position, but he could not always count on having the opportunity of doing so. Similar problems could obviously arise from the wearing of armour, be it plate or mail, and both the *Wadhī* and *Arab Archery* leave us in no doubt that the Muslim archers of the Middle East recognized its importance as a factor in the choice of posture (e.g. *Wadhī*, 344-5, 396-403, 450-463; *Arab Archery*, pp. 81 ff.). Ṭāhir's adherents, we are told, rejected Abū Ḥāshim's position of acute obliqueness because of the string's liability to catch protrusive items of armour. To face the target directly, on the other hand, had in their view the advantage of eliminating this hazard and at the same time not restricting the archer to one coat of mail (*zardīyyah*). It did not, however, pertain, as did Abū Ḥāshim's position, the use of the kind of shield with which Khorasanians were wont to protect themselves while actually shooting, nor did it admit of a powerful draw. Both these disadvantages could be overcome by the use of the intermediate position. In view of Ṭaybūghā's emphasis on archery in warfare it is surprising that he says nothing of such considerations, for they must have been of greater importance than physique as witness the fact that today most Western archers, regardless of build, stand sideways to the target.

With the crystallization of theoretical teaching into three systems at Ṭāhir, it would seem, came face to face with the obvious problem of the individual who fell neatly into none of the three stereotyped classes of physique for which the systems catered. His solution was simple and

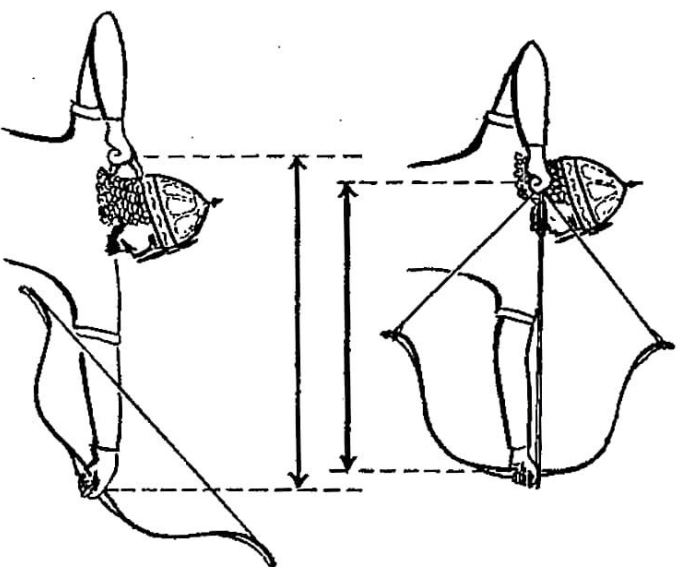


FIG. 46. SHOOTING WHEN WEARING A HELMET
Note *tahīl* and *Rahīrah*.

characteristic of the Islamic way of thinking. Skilfully avoiding innovation which could well discredit him, he reconciled the claims of individuality with those of 'orthodoxy' and tradition by the application of the eclectic principle. In so doing he satisfied an obvious need and set a useful example, thereby earning himself recognition as a Master—in the sense of founder of a school—in his own right.

The four schools, or systems (*madhāhib*), of archery based on allegiance to the teaching of a Master (*imām*) are strikingly reminiscent of the four orthodox schools (*madhāhib*) of Islamic law, each perpetuating the doctrine of a Master (*imām*) and his disciples. Since the systems of our text are, as already indicated, not those described by al-Ṭabarī, we may well suspect that the respectable framework of orthodoxy underpinned by time-honoured names is being used as a cloak for the promulgation of what is either the author's own teaching or teachings reflecting current practice.

2. Al-Ṭabarī's Technique

If we discount the misleading matter of discrepant ascriptions, the practice of al-Ṭabarī as laconically recorded in our text does not, so far as the record goes, fundamentally diverge from that described in the *Wāḍiḥ* (59a-62b; Ist., 45a-48b). The only major difference concerns his grasp on the bow which was, from what he himself says, intermediate and not oblique as stated above. Although the two MSS do not wholly agree, that of Istanbul being more corrupt than that of the British Museum, we nevertheless venture the following account of his methods:

Whether standing or squatting, I prefer to take a slightly oblique position and set the target in line with my left eye. In this I follow the system of Ishāq al-Raffī'. When bracing, the middle phalanges of my left index finger and middle finger are in contact with my right knee. When nocking, I first set the notches (*ḥalaq al-taḥṣīl/al-faṣāḥ*) of my arrows on the middle phalanx of my middle finger and firmly hold the bottom of the notches with the tips of my thumb and index finger. I next push the arrow sharply forward until the string strikes the base of my thumb and index finger without at any time allowing the shaft (*badan*) of my arrow to leave the string. Then, without looking, I bring the nock back, slip it on the string, and lock '63'. Lodging the string in the crease of my thumb, I have my index finger on top of the thumb and the string opposite the mid-point of the very tip of the index finger. In the lock, I have the cusps (*adḡḡatāni*, sing. *adḡḡah*) of the nock between the proximal phalanx and middle crease of my index finger. In this I follow the system of Ṭāhir al-Balkhī.

In grasping the bow, I set the *main* (above, p. 45) of the grip between the crease formed at the base of the four fingers and the middle crease thereof. In this I follow the system of Abū Ḥāshim. The upper end of the grip's belly (*ihramīyah*) I place between the two phalanges [*sic*; it must be joints] of my thumb in conformity with Ṭāhir's teaching, and the lower part one finger's width from the wrist-bone in accordance with that of Ishāq.

When aiming, I displace the lower *siyah* to the right and bring it back to vertical with a twist of my forearm at the very moment I begin to draw, and in this I follow Ṭāhir. Using my bow-hand to focus, I direct the tip of my arrowhead (*ra's an-naḡl*) on to the centre of the mark. I aim with both eyes together outside the bow and, in sighting, I depend essentially on my right eye, though I use it in conjunction with my left. In this I follow Ishāq. I do not lower my left arm for short range, nor do I raise it for long. On the contrary, the proximal phalanx of my left thumb will be in line with the end of my shoulder throughout the draw and remain absolutely level, moving neither upwards for long range nor downwards for short.

In drawing, I execute one uninterrupted movement, as taught by Ṭāhir, and bring back my arrow directly in line with the parting dividing my lips with no deviation either upwards or downwards, as taught by Ishāq. When the arrowhead reaches the *ihramīyah*, I pause for the count of one or two for as long as it takes [reading *bi-qadr* (Ist.) for *ba'd*] for the arrow to settle

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and be trained on the mark. I then take my hand from the string to a point in line with my shoulder, and, at that very moment of loosing, I disengage with a twist of the hand (*farḥah*) and without too sharp a pull on the string let my index finger catch any part of the nock or shaft. I throw out my chest and left arm until the ends of my shoulder-blades meet. In this I follow Ṭāhir . . .