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# History of Recurve Bows

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- Skills and guides -



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**Description :**

An historical view on recurve bows.

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## History of Recurve Bows

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This started as long post on KF, replying on the question, and finally developed into this article, for reference. It explains how old static recurve bows work, and development of them and doesn't have pretension to be all around article on bow history. It can help you in search for perfect traditional bow.

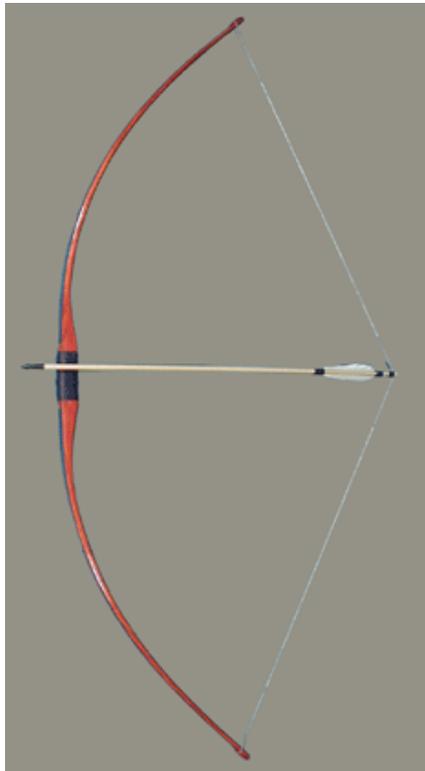
In beginning all bows were longbows.

This is standard longbow, and it is clear that string is completely free from touching the bow from the nock to nock.. As you pull it draw curve is pretty straight from the start without surprises.



### Longbow

When it is pulled string have same length from points where it touch the bow as in relaxed bow.



### Longbow drawn

Lets move further..

Static recurves are next step up from the longbows. They have levers on the end of the limbs, and string is attached on the end of the levers. So working parts of the limbs are shorter storing greater power, and nocks are pulled in front, like in very deflexed bow. Because of that pull weight is greater from the start.

Here is very old model of static recurve, Scythian one..



### Scythian recurve



### Scythian recurve drawn

Advantage is also that nock ends are pulled forward, so in short bow string wont fall from the nocks when fully drawn.

But that isn't only advantage of static recurve if it is constructed properly. Further development concentrate on that.

On further asiatic development string is laying on the bow at the start of the shyahs.. actually at the beginning you are pulling short stroud bow, lets say with shyah length of 4" each and strung bow length of 55" at the beginning you are pulling 45" bow.. Well short bow of same dimensions as longer bow is much harder to pull, and that short bow at the start of pulling thinks he is going to lets say 100# @ 29 draw length. So draw curve is very steep.. But at one point, string is straight and lift from the shyahs.. At that point 45" bow with 100# @ 29 suddenly becomes much longer bow and starts to draw 50# @ 29.. What is the trick.. It lowers progress of drawing curve suddenly, and it can go much flatter from that point, and more important surface of diagram which represent stored energy is much bigger than on longbow.. So that means automatically that arrow speed will be greater.

Here is example of perfect static recurve with that clever invention added.. It can be much more powerful than previous one, storing about 30% more energy per same draw weight.

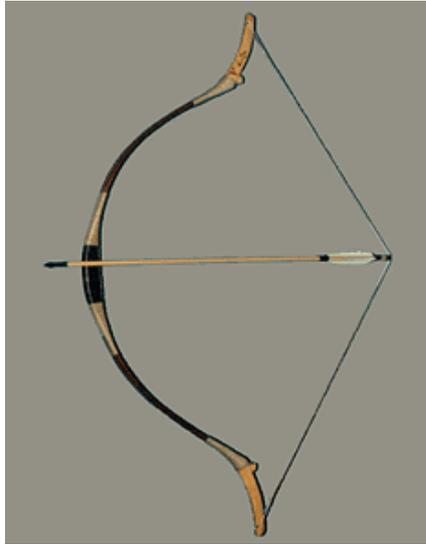
This one is also old, assyrian bow, from which all others emerge.



And in drawn state

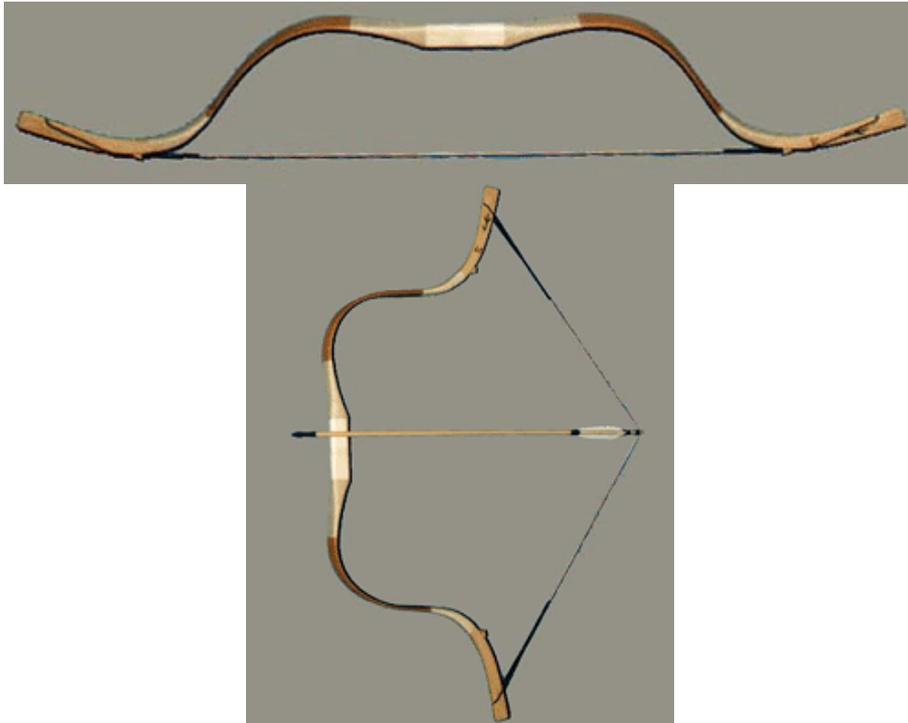
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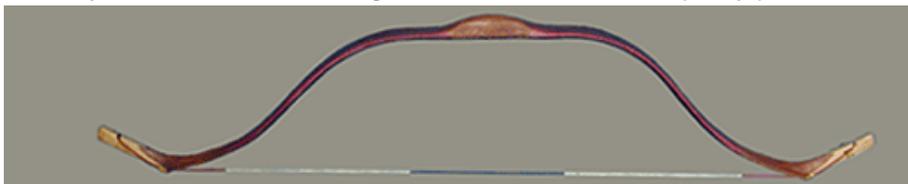


As you see on this one string starts to lift from the shyahs late, and it is pretty hard to pull, having almost compound effect.. But it is efficient and fast.

Here is Avar example, perfect one,



Turkish with little shorter shyahs, but even more angled, so effect of them is pretty pronounced.



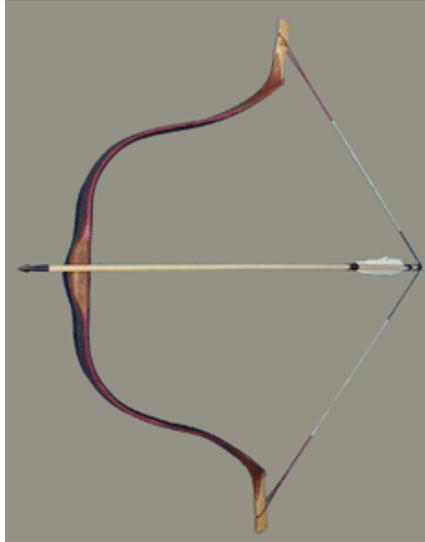
Detail of the shyah shows even better how string is laying on it.

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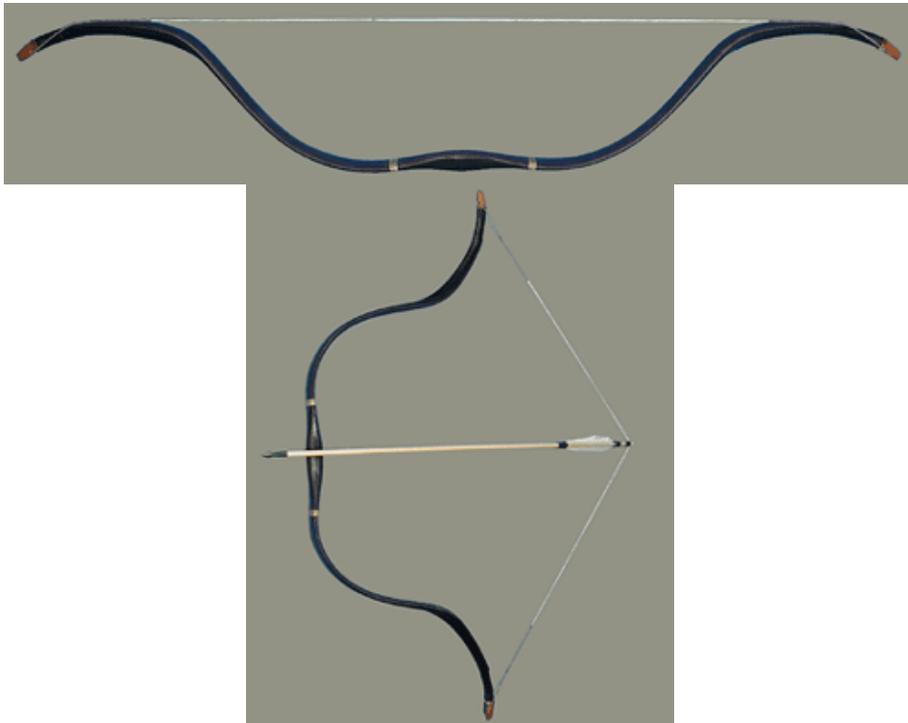
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And same bow drawn.



Ok, but that wasn't the end of development, after static recurves men developed working end recurves. One on the border was Indopersian one, and working ends recurves developed in India..



On this one, shyahs still don't bend, but back part of them is curved, so string is lifting continually as you pull the bow, and draw curve isn't straight any more, but curved, and looks even more like compound one..

So I won't to bother anyone with this any more, but at the end here is modern recurve, with working recurves. On this

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one, ends are fully working, making even more important thing, opening and getting straighter as bow is drawn. So curve is even more curved and bow stack lesss.



But my favorite is still modern hunting bow with static limbs, although it isn't as efficient as working recurve one..



There wouldn't be this article without these perfect photos, courtesy of Csaba Grozer, owner of Grozer Archery from Hungary. Watch his traditional bows at his website [www.grozerarchery.com](http://www.grozerarchery.com).

I hope that I will have chance to meet Mr Csaba this summer, and to make more articles on his magnificent bows. Lets hope more will come.



Enjoy.

Bogdan Ristivojevic