

Keywords: Pre-Roman|Italy|archery|bow|arrow|archaeology|iconography|Scythians|Iron Age

Abstract

The topic of this bachelor thesis is archery in pre-Roman Italy. Specifically, the possibility of adopting elements of archery traditions from neighboring cultures, especially the possibility of using so-called "Scythian" reflex bows, similar to, for example, the Greeks. Temporally, I will focus mainly on the period from the Orientalizing period to the end of the classical period, and to a lesser extent on the Villanovan period.

Due to the lack of written sources from this period, my work will rely mainly on the remains of archery equipment found, such as arrowheads, guards, or possibly drawing aids. Special attention will also be paid to depictions of bows and archers on objects unrelated to archery and their comparison with contemporary depictions in Greek art, in order to determine to what extent Italian/Etruscan artists depicted local realities and to what extent they were inspired by Greek models or their own artistic convention.

In the introduction to the thesis, I will focus on the basic classification of types of bows and some archery techniques and their artistic representations. Part of the general introduction to archery also includes the presentation of the most common types of arrowheads found in the Mediterranean and adjacent areas to Italy.

The next section deals with the actual findings, the classification of arrowheads into existing types, if their state of preservation allows it and if they fit into any of the categories. In this part of the work, I also address objects that could have been part of archery equipment.

The following section focuses on the representation of archers and bows in art, gradually presenting examples of architectural sculpture, relief decoration of tomb monuments, decorative panels of various bronze objects, and of course, wall and vase painting. Attention is paid to the shapes of bows, depicted equipment, the possible attitude of the archer, and the comparison of scenes with their parallels and models in Greek art.