

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE AMONG THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS

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Abstract:

The primitive system that humanity experienced is considered the first social and economic formation for the emergence of human society, as man in that era was unaware of natural forces, so he relied on hunting wild animals and picking fruits, as well as the urgent desire for self-defense to ensure life and preserve the species and race, which earned him a kind of... The experience of climbing and running is all that motor activity includes. Later, these skills developed to become a type of sport that people of that period knew and developed.

Keywords: ancient Egyptians, the importance of exercising

Introduction:

Human society has known sports since ancient times. The first man was preoccupied with the search for food, housing, and the need for security. This necessarily required him to practice different types of physical activity to meet his basic needs. He had to search for food and drink, which prompted him to practice archery, hunting, and running. He also needed to develop his muscular strength and fighting skills in the face of the dangers of ferocious beasts that were competing with him for his sources of livelihood. Thus, he learned the techniques of fighting, including attack and defence, which required him to confront the invasion and repel the invaders. He found himself in need of training and building his body, so sports and games appeared, and their purposes varied between entertainment and amusement, and the necessity of preparing for self-defense, to impose security and safety, and to achieve self-realization and live in peace. This is how ancient societies knew sports and martial arts.

Sports in ancient Egypt (3500 BC):

The ancient Egyptians were considered one of the first peoples to practice sports, as they knew much mathematics that formed the basis of many sports games. The ruling king used to perform an athletic demonstration in front of his people in the days of his coronation to prove his ability to rule and continue in it (Mahmoud Sami, 1971, p. 18), where the life of the groups that began with a system began to appear. Families, clans and tribes, and human conflict began to appear after it aimed to preserve the species and sex. It went beyond that to be the goal of control. Wars and invasions that required the preparation and training of combat soldiers to

acquire physical fitness and motor skill became corrupted, and sports began to appear in the form of exercises characterized by a military nature for the purpose of strengthening the body, such as Bow and arrow, chariots, running, throwing and jumping

Because the ancient Egyptian man was aware of the importance of physical exercise and achieving mental and physical fitness so that he could successfully perform his role in his society, and when the Egyptian wanted to express the sport of hunting birds and fish, which were his captivity for worldly and religious reasons. (Abdel Halim, 1988, p. 03)⁽

Some historians described the goddess as “Sekhmet, Lady of the Woods,” which some translated as “Mistress of Sports or Game.” Here is Prince Djehotep, the owner of the famous tomb in Barsha, describing himself as “the man of sports” or the athletic man, and if ancient Egypt had preceded others in many areas of life Among them were also physical sports, and if the Greeks were proud that sports games had begun from Mount Olympus, with which the Olympics were linked, then the scenes recorded on the walls of Egyptian antiquities testify to the leadership of the Egyptians in this field and to their precedence over many peoples of the earth, and before we refer to the types of sports practiced by the ancient Egyptian. In addition to the means, tools, and places for practicing it, we would like to shed light on the goals of sports and portray them in its facilities, including several goals:

- 1- Gaining physical competence by practicing his daily life, which was characterized by strength and speed in order to survive. 2
- 2- Recreation by chasing animals and dancing on occasions such as victory and closeness
- 3- Providing food, shelter and clothing
- 4- self-defense.
- 5- Enjoy and entertain yourself

The historical dimension of sports in ancient Egypt:

Exercising in the ancient Egyptian era is a fact. Historical, as evidence and monuments still preserve what the ancient Egyptians recorded on the walls of their tombs and in their temples, and the educational intent of sports in their era cannot be denied, as mentioned by (Theodore of Sicily) that the Egyptian king Syzoes proved that students were different in practicing sports from the military and professionals. This indicates that sports were a means of education for them. Some historians mentioned that the school in ancient Egypt was called (the House of Education) and the curriculum included grammar, behavioral arts, reading, writing, arithmetic, swimming, and physical sports, in primary schools.

Educational dimension:

Sports play their role in educating the soul, and the historian Diodorus of Sicily narrates that King Senusret III (one of the kings of the 12th Dynasty) was raised with children of his age from among the people, and that they were training so that none of them was allowed to eat their food before they had crossed 180 stades.

- 2- Linking some of the games he plays with certain religious rituals, which is evident in hunting animals, birds, and fish, and in the rituals of Eid “Sad,” which confirm the physical fitness of the ruling king and which we see recorded on antiquities since the time of King Djoser (Marwa Madani, p. 755)

The social dimension of sports in ancient Egypt:

Some foreign authors wrote about physical education in ancient Egypt, pointing out that it was not part of any educational system, but was simply a tool for completing daily work activities. The development of some systems and social institutions has a clear impact on the patterns of physical activities in which people of all classes participate, whether through guidance or By test, The upper classes were provided with educational opportunities that were not available to those below them. When nobility abounded among the common people in abandoning the burdens of daily life, and they had ample leisure time, fishing, and many forms of sports and games... which were depicted on the walls of temples and tombs. The historian of physical education (Macintosh) linked urbanization and introspection around river banks, and the existence of distinct forms of games and physical activities.

Because Egypt was governed by a class system (or semi-class), where the class of pharaohs and nobles was the upper class, and the rest of the people, peasants and craftsmen, were the lower class and they were the majority. The existence of the middle class was doubtful, and hunting was the class's favorite sport. High, whether land or sea fishing.

3-The military dimension of sports in ancient Egypt:

The army is considered a distinct class in society because men acquire the physical skills that prepare them to fight battles. Antiquities have recorded all types of military training associated with this era, with wrestling being the most popular sport. Which would make young people control the following tools: The sword, bow, arrow, spear and shield, and in the circumstances of the many wars that Egypt fought throughout its ancient history, as well as the instability, they reached the point of imposing advanced military lessons given to princes, nobles and their sons in special classes. Provinces: It was necessary to master the arts and skills of combat and to prepare the soldiers with appropriate physical and military preparation, even though the Egyptian texts included violent sports that required effort, practice, and skill to perform. Those who remained satisfied with these tasks included carrying work, wrestling, fencing with sticks, and boxing. .

4- Activities of a military nature**A - Military vehicles:**

The Egyptians used chariots with an open cabin for one person and pulled by one or more horses. The men of the chariot unit were considered among the most competent soldiers on the battlefield and those who enjoyed physical fitness, and princes. It is considered high-ranking, but it has been noted from some sources that riding it was often limited to the class of officers and princes

B- Bow and arrow:

The ancient Egyptians used archery with a bow and arrow, whether in wars or sports. The ancient Egyptians mastered the manufacture of bows in a way that ensured their strength and accuracy in use. Even the Abyssinians and Libyans who excelled and became famous in using this weapon are considered to have taken its idea from their neighbors, the ancient Egyptians.

5- Places to practice sports:**A-Practice in the courtyards of houses and houses:**

Group games were played inside or outside the houses, as the Egyptians' houses were large enough to allow their children to practice their activities and games inside them, and this confirms the practice. Sports inside the houses (houses) because wealthy Egyptian homes are

distinguished by their spacious courtyards and gardens, as well as their roofs, which were prepared to provide their children with many opportunities for fun and playing many types of games.

B-Practice in the paths:

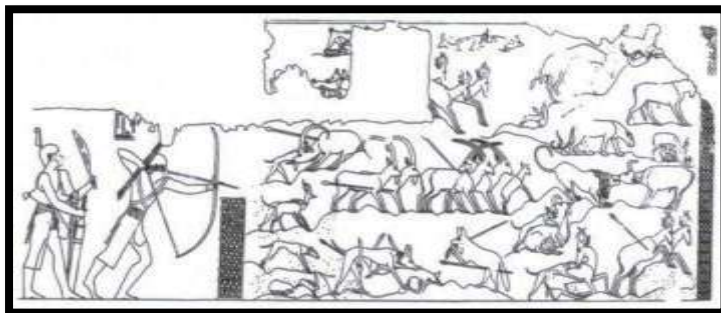
If the wealthy homes had enough space to allow their children to practice sports activities inside them, that is because the poor homes, as depicted in the paintings and antiquities in the Middle Kingdom, were narrow, and therefore there is no way for these children except to turn to playing in the alleys, as people like them do today. It allows the children of these families to practice their activities in group play, as was the case for the children of wealthy homes...and there is no way left for these children except to turn to playing in the alleys, as people like them do today, as well as in the fields, where a funny scene appears depicting four naked boys helping each other. On climbing palm trees as well as in front of the temple ruins.

6-Appearances and colors of sports in ancient Egypt:

The ancient Egyptians became aware of the importance of sports and physical activity more than three thousand years before Christ. They laid the first building blocks for the idea of physical education and sports, and they realized the close relationship between the health of the body and the health of the mind and soul. Among these appearance and colors we find:

Sport hunting:

Nobles, notables, and notables used to hunt and chase lions, tigers, and antelopes, and the Egyptian desert was teeming with various wild animals. It is proven that the ancient Egyptians used many tools for hunting, depending on the prey (nets, bows, arrows, trained animals). Thus, it required setting up tents, setting up camps, riding horses and chariots, walking, running, swimming, boating, and rowing. Hunting was not limited to the land side only, but went beyond it and was practiced on the banks of rivers and seas, as well as hunting birds that live in the forests, swamps and ponds. All of this is proven by historical texts and images



An image illustrating the sport of fishing (Mohammed, 2016, p. 09)

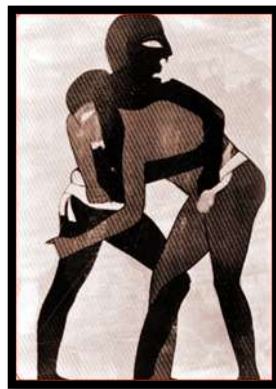
Ball games:

The ancient Egyptians knew the ball as a playing tool for a number of sports games. There are large numbers of playing balls in the Egyptian Museum that were made of palm fibers or barley straw, with two patches of leather balled and sewn around them. It is one of the most important scenes that prove the Egyptians practiced ball games.

Wrestling:

Wrestling was one of the most prominent types of sports among the ancient Egyptians, and it seems that the ancient Egyptians, especially the common people, used to entertain themselves with everything that required highlighting strength and demonstrating ability. Therefore, wrestling was one of their favorite sports. (Ben Jeddou, 2016, p. 07)(.This sport was important

to the ancient Egyptian man because it required a healthy body and a healthy mind. He practiced it from the beginning of his history, and the oldest view of this type of sport can be observed in the tomb of Ptahhotep from the Fifth Dynasty in Saqqara. This sport can be followed throughout ancient Egyptian history, but it is the most important of all. Scenes of the Middle Kingdom recorded on the walls of the tombs of Beni Hassan in Minya (Mohammed, 2016, p. 10), (Khnumhotep II, Amenemhat, Khiti, and Baqet). The game positions in one of the tombs reached 219 positions, and there are scenes of wrestling in the temple of Habu and in Saqqara. (Abdel Halim, 1988, p. 04) Scenes of this game appeared in the tombs of the Middle Kingdom (the cemetery of Bakt-Amenemhat-Khnumhotep), all of which indicate the artist's creativity and his ability to diversify to the point that he reached such diversity that he reached the point of depicting 220 different groups (Zahi, 2006, p. 10)



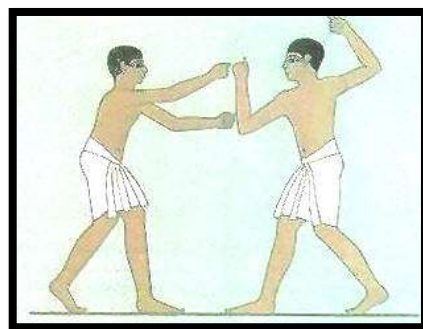
An image showing the sport of wrestling

Running:

It is one of the games that depend on good physical fitness, as it does not need a coach. It only depends on the strength of thinking or good breathing to reach the desired goal. Kings were keen to play it from a young age, as it helps the king to strengthen his muscles. The texts indicated that Pharaoh Ramses II had become accustomed to it from a young age. He should practice this type of exercise and eat delicious food in order to compensate for the energy lost during running (Zahi, 2006, p. 05)

- Boxing:

The ancient Egyptian recorded a rare number of scenes that can express boxing scenes, as well as clearly recorded scenes of a cat and a mouse fighting, (Abdel Halim, 1988, p. 05)



An image representing the sport of boxing. (Mohammed, 2016, p. 09)

3-The long jump:

This sport was practiced by having two legs sit in front of each other and then a third would jump high over their hands

4-Weightlifting:

One of the Middle Kingdom tombs recorded for us a scene depicting three men, one of whom was trying to lift a bag full of sand to the top and keep it in a semi-vertical position.

5-Fencing with sticks:

It has been repeated many times on Egyptian antiquities, where two people duel with a stick in the right hand for each of them, and in the left hand a stick to protect them. There are examples of the duel in the tomb of Marruca and Ptah in Saqqara and Khru-F in Qurna (west of Luxor).

6-Running and rowing:

This type of sport is found in the famous painting of King Amenhotep II in Giza, where the text states, "He could not keep up with him in running, and he was able to row with an oar twenty cubits long alone for a distance of four miles in a falcon boat," while his competitors were unable to keep up with him after half a mile, so they returned.

7-Swimming:

We find that the ancient Egyptian was interested in swimming. There are swimming scenes from the Fifth Dynasty in Saqqara and others from the 12th Dynasty in Beni Hassan. Prince Khiti (one of the rulers of Assiut in the Middle Kingdom) mentions that the king allowed him to receive lessons in swimming in his palace and through scenes of the battles of Kadesh that took place between... King Ramesses II and the Hittite king. It is clear that the Egyptians who fell into the river were proficient in swimming, and there are also scenes of duck hunting with people swimming in the river and collecting birds that fell into the water while hunting.

8-Archery:

The ancient Egyptians used archery with a bow and arrow, whether in war or in sports. The ancient Egyptians mastered the manufacture of bows to ensure their strength and accuracy in use. Many aspects and colors of sports in ancient Egypt: The ancient Egyptians knew the colors of physical and sporting activities, including hunting, dancing, swimming, ball games, wrestling, and throwing. The most famous archery scene is the one that represents King Amenhotep II on his famous painting at Karnak, driving his chariot and throwing his arrows at a metal target. It is clear from counting the arrows that were thrown at the target the extent of the king's skill in this sport. There are scenes in the tomb of Ptahhotep and Merarka in Saqqara . (Mohammed, 2016, p. 09)

Dance:

The inscriptions found in Egyptian tombs and temples indicate that the Egyptians were skilled at performing dance and practiced it on many religious occasions, such as holidays, celebrations, and social occasions, such as receiving the king and welcoming guests. These are machetes for self-recreation. Types of ancient Egyptian dance include: pure movement, athletic, couple, and individual dance. , religious, funerary, military, dramatic, and musical.

- Conclusion:

From this lecture, we tried to review the development of Egyptian sports activity throughout ancient times, explaining the most important pioneering stations, while delving into the educational and social dimensions, explaining the most important sports prevalent at that time, especially in ancient Egyptian civilization. In the next lesson, we will continue to narrate the

development of sports in some ancient civilizations, such as Iraqi, Chinese, Indian and Roman civilization.

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