

Historical Journey of Wrestling from Ancient Egypt to Today

 **Abdullah Yavuz Akinci**

Asst. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Demirel University, Faculty of Sports Science, Sports Management Department, Isparta, Turkey.

Abstract

The journey of wrestling which began approximately 5,000 years ago in a Sumerian temple, continued with a wrestling handbook in an Egyptian wall painting dating from 1850 BC. Later became one of the Ancient Olympic sports event, then completed the ancient journey as Greek type games in Rome. The abundance of resources from the Greek and Roman periods is perhaps due to the fact that Greek sports are pioneers around the Mediterranean. The literary and physical cultural elements are full of evidence that shows the prevalence and application of wrestling from Sumer to the present. The aim of this study is to examine the wrestling that took place in Egypt hundreds of years before Ancient Greece. In ancient Egypt, sports have been closely linked to religion, like all other aspects of culture.

Ancient iconographic and literary evidence has been used to explain the popularity of wrestling in Egyptian Civilization in light of ethnographic studies. While creating the theoretical framework, various epigraphic records and source works in the field have been used, information about the past practices of wrestling has been obtained, and the related resources have been scanned and images have been reached. Based on the data obtained, inferences have been made for the purposes of the research. It was concluded that the technical and tactical practices applied in ancient Egyptian wrestling are partially applied in today's wrestling, the referee management continues, but the subject of clothing is different due to the globalization of regional cultural values.

Key words: Beni Hassan, Egypt, Medinet Habu, pharaoh, wrestling

1. Introduction

1.1 Sports

Sports are activities that involve physical strength and skill, where the individual or team competes against someone else or others to increase their health, well-being and enjoyment throughout their lifetime. The term contemporary "sport" (Latin original: excite(d), enthus(e)iastic, ravish), has a lot of different connotations in terms of competition. In ancient Greece, which offers special opportunities for athletic activities, it has been rewarded as being fascinated, excited, and influenced [1]. Decker, on the other hand, stated that the concept of sports, which is a modern word that does not correspond exactly in the Egyptian language, is a cultural element that includes physical games and activities ranging from children and board games to wrestling, stick fighting, acrobatics, hunting and many more [2].

The most basic feature of sports is that it is shaped according to the needs of the era. Sports, which was performed due to various reasons such as physical education, being healthy, providing peace, and religious rituals in the ancient period, has gone beyond that and gained different functions and has finally become a profession.

1.2 Wrestling

Wrestling is the name given to the sport or activity that is struggling with a competitor within the rules and trying to hold it and usually throw it on the ground. Throughout history, wrestling has been a rite of passage for gods, heroes and kings. It is possible to present a wrestling history by discussing different examples, evidence and cultures. Perhaps the best-known wrestler in western civilization is Jacob, who was described only as a man in the Epic of Creation, while he could become a patriarch in Israel [3]. Radical differences are observed in the example of the power show between the Sumerian hero Gilgamesh and Enkidu, also mentioned in the Epic of Creation, pre-pharaoh duels in Egypt, the competition of *Heracles* and *Antaeus*, and the competition at the end of the pentathlon in Ancient Greek festivals. Although the same techniques and grips are used in each, their cultural functions are completely different [1].

Wrestling, which is one of the old sports as much as human history, has reached today by the written and visual works from ancient cultures. Homeros' *Ilias* and *Odysseia*, Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*,



Pushkin's Ruslan and Lyudmila, and Dede Korkut Tales in Turkish history gave wide coverage to wrestling. In summary, wrestling has been intertwined with people from the Roman Vergilius to the British Shakespeare.

Like the Sumerians, Egyptians were extraordinary warriors and valued their ability to fight. Unlike the war in Egypt, which exhibited its war and survival capabilities from 3000 to 30 B.C., the records of hunting activities were not kept, the performance was measured only by the person's ability to collect food. Like the Sumerians, evaluation of performance in Egypt has been quite simple; those who survive are the most successful [4].

Wrestling as the official competition is part of the world of sports, from the eighteenth Ancient Greek Olympiad in 704 B.C. to the present day. While Greeks were the first nation to structure competitions as an official qualifying tournament, the *Gilgamesh* Epic, one of the oldest works in history, narrates of wrestling just like *Homer's Illias*, one of the most important works of Greek Literature.

2. Wrestling in Ancient Egypt

In ancient Egypt, sports such as boxing, running, stick fighting, wooden sword fighting are included in the records, but the most important of them is wrestling. Besides the wrestling, weightlifting, long jump, swimming, rowing, shooting, athletics and fishing activities in the inscriptions of the period; The artworks of stick fighting and various ball games can be found in images on graves, temples and pyramid walls [5, 6, 7].

As with all civilizations, the Ancient Egyptians have applied various ways to relax and have fun, from lower classes to elite classes. While equipment-requiring games and recreational activities are predominantly seen in the upper class (eg boating, fishing, board games), poorer classes have adopted inexpensive and simpler games and entertainment (e.g. dance, ball games). In other non-economic situations, all classes seem to share similar entertainments (eg storytelling, feast) or variants of the same type of entertainment (e.g. wrestling) [8].

Egyptian sports tradition started to emerge around 3100 B.C. and it has been intertwined with civilization from the same date. Indeed, historically, traditions are processes that developed and matured with civilization [9].

All the tactics, including mainly the most complex movements found in modern free wrestling, can be seen among the 406 wrestling images depicted in the walls of the Middle King tombs of Beni Hasan in the Nile valley, and in sculptures and writings in Mesopotamia [3].

Wrestling has been an important sport in ancient Egypt. Pictures of the grave dating back to 2050 B.C. in Beni Hasan, on the edge of the Nile River, 200 miles south of Alexandria, reveal the various wrestling positions of 122 couples and young men. While we can see almost all modern wrestling moves, we can also understand that there are no limited moves [10]. In today's wrestling, there are restrictions on weight categories, scoring, passivity practice, duration, ground and standing movements for free and greco-Roman wrestling types and are set in the regulations.

The Egyptian sport, which is depicted from the Sed Festival to the love of hunting and fishing among the wrestlers in the tombs of Beni Hasan, continued until the chariots of the *Hyksos* [11]. However, some changes were observed in the Second Middle Period (c. 1786-1560 B.C.). After the Hyksos tribe invaded Egypt and introduced the chariots and composite bows, the New Kingdom pharaohs (c. 1570-1085 B.C.; 17-20 Dynasties) became militarist and imperialist, they were shown strong as warrior-hunters for military reliability. The trend that reached its peak with *Amenophis* declined from the nineteenth dynasty to the twentieth dynasty. Because they were trained to gain physical fitness and military skills, some New Kingdom pharaohs were interested in sports and demonstrated car racing, horse riding and archery [12].

Archaeologists have found pictures of wrestlers in Egypt's eighteenth dynasty (1570-1320 B.C.) tombs [10]. From the wrestling scenes in the seals and reliefs of the eighteenth dynasty and wrestler images wearing belts from different periods, it is understood that the wrestlers applied around 60 different techniques [13].

The conquest of Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. made Egypt a part of the Greek world. While the penetration of Hellenic culture naturally progresses slowly, one aspect that Egyptian culture is influenced by Hellenic culture is sports activities. Although sports activities are not a new practice in Egypt, many known sports such as running, wrestling and boxing from Greek origin have revealed their independent traditions



in Egypt [2].

The conquest of Alexander is the beginning of the Greek migration to Egypt. The fact that the Macedonian army was largely Greek men made it possible for the Greeks to keep in touch with Egypt. In addition, Egypt attracted other Greeks due to economic expectations [14].

Fig. 1-2: Wrestler figurines from the second century B.C. [15]



2.1 Concrete Evidences

The first depictions of wrestling are found in the Near East in 3000s B.C. [3].

Wrestling became extremely popular among Egyptians as well as in the classical world during the emergence of sports in Egyptian art. A series of wrestling scenes that first appeared in *Ptahhotep's* Old Kingdom tomb (2300 B.C.) are also seen in the New Kingdom period (2000-1085 B.C.). Some of the most interesting scenes in this period are wrestling matches between foreigners and Egyptians [16].

2.1.1 Beni Hasan Tombs

Ancient Egyptian civilization left many examples of sports art to Sumer, Greek and Roman civilizations. Ancient paintings on the Sumerian and Egyptian tomb walls show in detail the various types of sports and games of their culture, including more than 400 wrestling scenes in Beni Hasan tombs.

We can understand the popularity of early games in Egypt from a large amount of visuals from monumental tombs. Especially Beni Hasan walls provide important evidence about games and competitions [17]. The depiction of 220 wrestlers on only one wall reveals that the only exercise that was athletic in Ancient Egypt was wrestling. However, it is difficult to reach the conclusion that a certain system or arrangement is made from the group images. The wrestlers are naked except for the belt in their waist, and many holding and throwing movements known today are noticed [17].

Visuals belonging to 220 wrestler groups found in only one wall of the graves in Beni Hasan, suggests that there is a wrestling school and wrestling is perceived as an exercise with an essentially competitive feeling in Egypt [18]. Wrestling has become an important part of daily life in ancient Greece as in ancient Egypt. In Greece, *palastras*, which are detached wrestling schools, where wrestlers are trained and competitions are held. In places where detached *palaestra* could not be made, some of the *gymnasiums* with sports facilities were used as wrestling fields [19].

In the images of Beni Hasan, besides wrestlers and wrestling techniques, refereeing rules are also explained. The illustrations are of great importance due to their similarities to today's free wrestling techniques, and details of the games such as clothing, wrestling movements, headlock, hand nape, trip, diving, back souple, yoke, tie, bridge and suplex can be seen. Approximately 45 of the 400 positions depicted standing and on the ground, consists of ground techniques. The images in the temple of Ramses III. depict competitions with foreigners, and Egyptians are shown as winners [20].

The visuals on the eastern wall of the tomb of Beni Hasan in Egypt reveal the different moves of wrestling [5, 21]. In the wrestling scenes dating back to 2000 B.C., the moves and stances of the wrestlers were depicted. It is understood from the visuals of different periods that around 60 different techniques were applied [13]. In addition to the wrestling images, there are images of boxing and stick fighting [6].

In the wrestling scenes depicted on the eastern wall of the grave number 15, the wrestlers are thin. Wrestlers, who are often depicted naked in sculptures, are slim and dressed in skirts [13].

Fig. 3: East wall of main chamber of tomb 15 at Beni Hasan.



Visuals found in many tombs (2, 14, 15 17) in Beni Hasan are seen to a limited extent in the 366th grave of Djar Thebes and the B2 of Ukhhotep in Meir [7]. The competition scenes in Beni Hasan show various technical and tactical skills. Athletes who use loin belts in the images are probably soldiers who do part of their military training. Similarly, stick fight scenes in front of Pharaoh draw attention to military preparations rather than athletic competitions.

2.1.2 Temple of Medinet Habu

Egyptian wrestlers in the presence of Pharaoh, depicted in the New Kingdom carvings of Medinet Habu, as in the walls of Beni Hasan, always defeated the foreigners and put forward the message of the superiority of Egypt [12]. However, unlike men, women were not shown while wrestling, and all depictions of soldiers were seen to be men [22].

The Nubian-Egyptian wrestling match in the Medinet Habu relief consists of three separate sections, moving from left to right. In the first part, the Egyptian wrestler applies a headlock movement to his Nubian opponent. A referee with a trumpet in his hand stands next to the wrestlers, warning the Egyptian wrestler about illegal action and uses expressions 'Take care! You are in the presence of the Pharaoh: Life, Prosperity and Health! Your Lord' [16]. The yoke movement known in today's wrestling is applied by wrapping the opponent's head under the arm and wrapping it around the neck of the arm. The headlock movement known in today's wrestling is applied by wrapping the opponent's head armpit and wrapping it around the neck of the arm. However, when the head is over-tightened, it is generally applied to the leg attack movement as it can damage the opponent.

Fig.4: 1st courtyard in Ramesses III's temple at Medinet Habu.



In the image, the Egyptian wrestler tries to drop his opponent to the ground with his attacks. The Egyptian pulls his right leg back while holding his opponent firmly and raises the left arm of the Nubian. The Egyptian wrestler presses his hand down by bending the left arm of his Nubian opponent. The weaker Egyptian holds the strong Nubian so tight that the Nubian's shoulder falls off. The Nubian wrestler tries to counteract the movement by wrapping his left leg on the right leg of the Egyptian wrestler. However, the Nubian has so much difficulty that both feet are cut off from the ground [16].

The final section in the Medinet Habu relief shows an Egyptian wrestler who victoriously stands over his Nubian opponent. The winner's hands are raised in the traditional winner pose. While the Egyptian wrestler declares his victory in front of Pharaoh, Nubian, who is defeated, has to accept the defeat by kissing the ground in front of Pharaoh [16].

Although a 12th-century B.C. relief shows the referee who warned the Egyptian wrestler, in fact, the competition is organized to honor the pharaoh that both sides must respect. Despite the fact that these scenes are in favor of Egyptians and wrestling is an important sport for Nubians, sports historians point out that old techniques are not understood today. Researchers reveal that wrestling is still an important sport in village festivals, with fertility ceremonies in modern Nubia [23]. Dancers, musicians, singers and other artists took part in religious ceremonies alongside wrestlers from distant cities to attend festivals [24]. In the festivals that attracted the European kingdoms, there were presentations in the fields of arts and sports, as well as important shows from diplomacy, trade, science, education, music, and scene [25]. Besides the afternoon competitions and evening dances, it was admired that military activities were held in the morning [25].

2.1.3 Pose of Victory

Traveler Greek historian *Herodotus* tells about athletic competitions in Egypt, where ox, belts and animal hide awards were given (40, book 2, line, 91). In one of the interesting images in the rock tomb of Meryre II, the Egyptian wrestler raises his arms in a traditional victory pose in front of Pharaoh. The left arm of the Egyptian wrestler, wearing a soldier's suit, is entangled in the neck of his opponent. Grasping one of his opponent's legs, he tilts his head forward and puts it between the legs of the Nubian. He quickly gets up at the same time and drops his opponent on the back [16]. Here, the arm wrapping around the neck of the opponent corresponds to the technique of hand-neck in today's wrestling. Grasping his leg is called a single leg tackle technique, and considering the whole movement, it can be interpreted as a switch technique.

Fig.5: N. de G. Davies, "The Rock Tombs of El Amarnah: Volume II," Archaeological Survey of Egypt 14 (London, 1905), pl. 38.



Another example reflects a Nubia-Egypt wrestling match during the Ramses II era (fig.6). This image is also the same as the depiction in the Medinet Habu relief (fig.7) [16].

Fig.6-7:



The images are intended to be a depiction of Egypt's power over its rivals, while striking shows that the competitions were held with a fair game. In another image in Medinet Habu, the Egyptian wrestler tells the Nubian by teasing his opponent on the ground, saying "Woe to you, O Negro enemy! I will make you

take a helpless fall in the presence of the Pharaoh" [16]. In another statement, the Egyptian wrestler *Ramsesseum* uses "Usermare Setepnere is with me against you" expression [16]. *Ramsesseum* expects support from his goddess with a corresponding statement such as "God is with the believers" due to his belief.

2.1.4 Nubia

When we look at the historical development of wrestling, we said that the first examples appeared at the tomb walls of Beni Hasan in Ancient Egypt. There are examples of wrestling competitions between Egyptians and Nubians in Egyptian art.

If military preparations and ceremonies are interpreted between 2000-1500 B.C. in the images of Beni Hasan, it can be said that wrestling was a national sport. Wrestlers wrestled without rules and tried to drop their opponent to the ground. Some engravings and paintings show Nubian wrestlers wrestling with the Egyptians. Periodic wrestling competitions were held during the harvest season between November and March in the large Nubia villages in the rugged central part of today's Sudan. Heralds announced the upcoming event to neighboring villages with pipes and drums and enabled wrestlers to challenge their rivals. The villages organizing the event made their preparations with hats decorated with colorful beads and drinks (beer) prepared for the event. Before the wrestling competitions, which started in the afternoon, ceremonial dances and cheers were held, the contestants covered with white ash, the symbol of the holy power, tried to bring the back of his opponent with violent struggles. Victory provided the exciting support of the villagers, and when the matches ended before the night came, a festive dance party and food and drinks were served [3].

In Egyptian art, Nubians are represented in different shades of black, with their own clothes and the facial features of the Egyptians [16]. The similarities between Nubian wrestlers' costumes seen in Egyptian statues and the clothes worn today in the same region are remarkable [3].

Researchers believe that due to their common anthropomorphological and cultural characteristics, there may be some cultural links between the ancient and modern worlds, given that today's Nubia (Sudan) wrestlers wear short skirts like their former counterparts [23].

Greek writer *Herodotos*, in his second book, which covers the geography, ethnography and history of Egypt in the 4th century B.C., drew a more balanced picture of the Nubian citizens and their administrators than the Egyptians. These sources show that Nubians engaged in activities such as wrestling and stick fighting. There are examples of international wrestling competitions between Egyptians and Nubians in Egyptian art. The defeat of a Nubian wrestler is clearly shown in an image belonging to 14th century B.C. [23].

In *Heliodorus' Aethiopica*, there is a different perspective on Nubian wrestling. Heliodorus, a Syrian citizen, probably lived in the 3rd century A.D. (for critical comments in *Aithiopia*, see 26; 27). Heliodorus describes the wrestling match between a Greek named Theagenes and a black wrestling champion. It makes sense to admit that the definition of African wrestling champion is based on historical facts rather than creative imagination. *Aithiopia* confirms an ancient African wrestling tradition from the New Kingdom days to the late Roman Empire [16].

Egyptians used the concept of Nubian in terms of community and it refers to the southern peoples with brown or black skin. The word in the Egyptian language, translated as curly hair, refers to a pinch of hair, and the adjective is used synonymously with the word "black". This interpretation implies that the distinctive feature about southern Nubians or blacks is their strange hair [16].

Unfortunately, in the iconographic evidence of Egypt, there are no important depictions of Nubia wrestling techniques. Egyptian art is predominantly ethnic and has a humiliating perspective, especially against black wrestlers. Artistic evidence focuses on heroism in Egypt, and these motifs are most common in "tribute games". Nubian competitors, on the other hand, participated in competitions only in the presence of Pharaoh.

2.1.5 Wrestling for Pharaoh

While fundamentally true, it is a stereotype that the pharaoh was synonymous with order, prosperity and power in the ancient Egyptian world. His well-being is synonymous with the state, as in many ancient kingdoms, and his sports defeat is unthinkable. Pharaoh should not have an opponent. In this case, it is not surprising to repeat a run alone in a public environment for three thousand years in various celebrations



reflecting the power of Pharaoh [28]. Perhaps the most important of wrestling problems in ancient Egypt was that Pharaoh continues to legitimize his power by winning pre-determined competitions.

The fact that various inscriptions and reliefs depict the pharaoh as a ritual, not an athlete, is a clear indication of the importance given to physical strength. Visual presentations of the wrestlers are seen from the beginning of the 3rd millennium to the end of the 2nd millennium B.C. and they are made as rough sketches in relief sculptures, statuettes, temple ornaments, tomb paintings and pottery. Unsurprisingly, the popularity of the images at the top coincides with the economic prosperity of the Middle and New Kingdoms. Some relief sculptures depict wrestlers performing a demonstration underlining Pharaoh's patronage and ultimate social authority [28, 29].

Besides men, *Hatshepsut*, the strongest female pharaoh of Egypt, was depicted as an authoritarian and power hungry woman who wrestled with the young and innocent *Thutmosis III* who was the rightful of the Egyptian throne [30].

Fig.8: Eighteenth dynasty, Hatshepsut reign (1473-1458 B.C.), Musei Vaticani, room 1, Epigraphic Artworks.



In an organization organized for Pharaoh, 10 pairs of wrestlers from different regions were invited to the field, and it was noted that the wrestlers, who were champions in the final competitions, were rewarded by the nobility and the pharaoh, by winning the winners of the other groups [31]. One of the important shortcomings here is that there is no information in the evidence about how the competitions will end. The reasons determining the removal of the belt, such as the practices in Sumer, Ancient Greece and Rome, superiority of points, falling to the ground, giving up, and death are not mentioned.

In a relief showing Egyptian wrestlers and stick fighters, the spectators praises Ramses II like the god of war [32, 33]. The reason for the lack of data about the spectators is that ancient people were valued more than athletes, wrestlers and ball players like us, than people who cheer them up [32]. According to the information achieved, there is not enough data about the spectators in Ancient Egypt, and there is not enough data about the stadiums and sports facilities, which are indispensable for the spectators.

In ancient Greece, the spectator was so important that without it the Olympic Games would not be held, the competitions would depend on the gathering of referees (*Hellanodikai*) and spectators [34]. In the 10th book, *Description of Greece*, Pausanias stated that each police had a gymnasium with the agora and theater [32].

In ancient Rome, the concept of sports was comprehended differently from the Greeks. Roman citizens preferred physical exercises of military origin rather than sports. The Romans were influenced by wrestling, boxing and pancration rather than by Helen-based athletics. Apart from these, they preferred gladiator games and car races with spectator sports. In addition to the arena games, a kind of ball game called *harpastum* and the competitions called *trigona*, in which three people played standing, attracted spectator.

In any case, the rulers of Ancient Greece and Rome understood the importance of the spectator and therefore the support of the public and took responsibility in organizing sports activities. Accordingly, they built sports facilities such as gymnasium, palaestra, amphitheater, and stadium. In the Hellenistic era,

gymnasiums were extraordinarily developed in Egypt, Asia Minor and Greece, and were mostly used for both intellectual and gymnastic purposes. Three Egyptian documents that show some kind of relationship between the gymnasium and the army in Hellenistic Egypt attract attention. One of them is a papyrus of the gymnasium built in Samaria by an army officer named *Apollodorus* who settled here. The second is the inscription that mentions a gymnasium made in honor of *Herodes*, a cavalry commander. The third document is another inscription in which a group of officials honor *Caradyses*, a soldier and athlete, whose location and date are unknown [35].

It is seen that hunting, archery, rowing and chariot races, which became a part and symbol of Pharaohs, reflect the warrior mentality of the period. The fact that young princes of Egypt are learning horse riding, archery and martial arts as well as other activities related to war reveals the reality of these images in Egyptian military society [36]. Images of wrestling competitions are also considered as part of military training [17].

During the 3100-332 B.C. period, Pharaohs searched for beauty and pleasure in life with nobility, and they did not have any obstacles about nudity because they enjoyed the human form. Only foreigners or stupid people are depicted as fat, and physical beauty is appreciated, often featured in visuals and reliefs. We also see the importance given to physical beauty in Ancient Greece. Athletes would even participate naked in the competitions to show their beauty, so married women would not be allowed to participate in the competitions even as spectators [37]. In the Greek society where body beauty is evaluated together with athletic success, Athletic Ideal means that citizens use their body beauty and strength to the upper limit [19].

Ptahhotpe, the Pharaoh's servant and writer, noted that in the middle of the 3rd millennium (2300 B.C.) there is a distinction between work and entertainment, used expressions "Do no more than you are ordered to, nor shorten the time accorded to leisure. It is hateful to the spirit to be robbed of the time for merriment." In an inscription on a 20th century B.C. tombstone, he said, "I am one who used every day to the full, wasting no part of it. Never did I miss a moment of bliss." In this case, it can be said that at least the upper classes and the pharaoh had time for fun and sports. This attitude led to the carving and paintings of daily life in the graves of the elite. These images are our main source of information about Egyptian sports. In addition to adults, visuals documenting children were also found. For example, at the *Saqqara Ptahhotpe* cemetery in Lower Egypt, there are reliefs and stone carvings that show naked boys wrestle and play children's games [38]. In addition, in a Middle Kingdom limestone from Kahun, two children are shown wrestling [22].

In ancient Egypt, the identification of Pharaohs with the state ensured that power and prosperity were gathered on one person, so their definition as a ritual, not as an athlete, attributed the value given to physical power to the person of the pharaohs. Ancient Greece was ruled by democracy. Officially, along with the Emperors and rulers, the police (city-states) were ruled by a council. Although it does not functionally resemble today's assemblies, it had at least a guiding task. The Olympic Games, which were organized for the first time in 776 B.C., expanded in the Hellenistic Period and continued its attraction. Emperors and rulers supported the games as religious and social activities considering their military and political effects. In the Roman Empire, Greek-style games started to be organized by the emperors since 186 B.C. due to political concerns.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

The concept of sports, whose equivalent is not known in the Egyptian language, appeared as a cultural element, and, like all aspects of Ancient Egyptian culture, it was closely related to religion. Sport has been a part of cultural unity by continuing its development in parallel with human history.

It is understood that wrestling was first seen in Sumerians in the historical process and passed to Ancient Greece through Egyptians and Hittites.

It can be said that wrestling is a traditional sport in Egypt, which is one of the civilizations that have ancient records. In today's modern wrestling, we also see clothes that we are familiar with, technical-tactical movements and similar maneuvers in Egyptian wrestling. From the images related to wrestling techniques found in the Medinet Habu temple, it is understood that children wrestle.

The fact that the sports activities of the period are not as we understand today, but rather to be physically strong and ready for battle at any time, are findings show that sports existed much earlier than



Greek culture.

Wrestling has been the exercise of ordinary people, as well as the propaganda tool of the pharaohs. However, there was no evidence that soldiers from different classes and the upper layer did fun and organized a competition between them. According to *Heredotus*, the participation of Ancient Egyptians in Greek type gymnastics competitions at Perseus Festival reveals that such competitions were not held in Egypt. The absence of such competitions in Egypt directly affected the sports activities, prevented the formation of a sports culture at the points of institutionalization and economic support, and thus, it was insufficient to spread.

The upper layer preferred games that require less movement and watched the performance of professional athletes and acrobats. From this point of view, it is clear that poorer classes do not claim to be athletes. This can have multiple causes. There is no information on a sponsorship-like system in the evidence. For this reason, wrestlers may not have sufficient economic power to meet their needs such as transportation, accommodation, and nutrition for competitions held in another settlement. In addition, it may be another reason not to award any prizes at the end of the competition.

Because the ancient Egyptians formed their armies from the warrior tribes of Nubia, the upper part lived thousands of years of luxury and safely in the Nile valley. Therefore, it would not be expected to develop sports in such an environment. As mentioned above, there was no sponsorship understanding in Ancient Egypt. Administratively, monarchy was prevalent. The fact that the upper layer, which holds the economic power, does not support wrestling and athletics-style sports activities and remains an audience, prevented the progress of athletes and organizations. If we look at the ancient Greek example, it was administratively governed by democracy and money did not belong to one person, it was relatively common, especially aristocratic families. Therefore, sports activities in Ancient Greece were accepted and progressed in terms of social, cultural, economic and administrative aspects than in any other state in that period.

As stated by Goldblatt and Acton, five of the six techniques depicted in Ptahhotep's (c. 2300 BC) tomb paintings are still used by today's Olympic athletes [39]. The techniques of yoke, hand nape, headlock, single leg tackle and switch in ancient Egypt continue to be applied in today's wrestling. In addition to these, double leg tackle, arm pulling, body lock, arm drag, leg sweep, single arm, fireman's carry, back souple, ankle lace and suplex techniques are applied alone or in connection.

References

1. Scanlon, T.F., (2002). *Eros & Greek Athletics*. New York, Oxford University Press Inc.
2. Decker, W., (2006). *Pharao und Sport*. Mainz, Zabern Philipp Von Gmbh.
3. Levinson, D., Christesen, K., (1999). *Encyclopedia of World Sport From Ancient Times to the present*. New York, Oxford University Press, USA.
4. Levinson, D., Christesen, K., (2005). *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World Sport*. Massachusetts, Berkshire Publishing Group, Great Barrington, USA.
5. Koca, F., İmamoğlu, G., İmamoğlu, O., (2018). Antik Mısırda Avcılık, Binicilik, Okçuluk ve Görsellerin Yorumlamaları, *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Cilt: 11 Sayı: 59.
6. İmamoğlu G., Gönülateş S., İmamoğlu O., (2018). Sanatsal Tasvirlerde Bazı Sporların Kökenleri, Antalya, *Uluslararası Herkes için Spor ve Wellness Kongresi Özet Kitabı*.
7. Lloyd, Alan B., (2010). *A Companion To Ancient Egypt*. West Sussex, A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication, United Kingdom.
8. Mumford, G.D., (2016). Ancient Egypt and Nubia, *M. H. Sterne Library: Egyptological & Ancient Near East Essay Resources*: September, 15.
9. Hamed A. E. A. (2015). Sport, Leisure: Artistic Perspectives in Ancient Egyptian Temples (Part I). *Recordes, Rio de Janeiro*, v. 8, n.1, pp.1-17.
10. McComb, D.G., (2004). *Sports in World History*. New York, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 270 Madison Ave.
11. Kyle D.G. (1994). Sports and Games of Ancient Egypt by Wolfgang Decker, Allen Guttmann, *The American Historical Review*, Vol.:99, No:1.
12. Kyle, D.G. (2015). *Sport&Spectacle In The Ancient World Second Addition*. West Sussex, Wiley Blackwell, UK.



13. İmamoğlu, M., İmamoğlu G., (2019). Eski Çağ Ön Asya, Anadolu ve Afrika Uygarlıklarına Ait Güreş Görsellerinde Yer Alan Benzerlikler ve Farklılıklar, *Turkish Studies Social Sciences*, Volume 14 Issue 4, ss. 1515-1523.
14. Christesen, P., Kyle, D.G., (2014). *A Companion to Sport and Spectacle in Greek and Roman Antiquity*. Malden, Wiley Blackwell, USA.
15. Poliakoff, M.B., (2008). Ancient Combat Sports, The Olympic Games How They All Began, *Biblical Archeology Society*, pp.13-23.
16. Carroll, S.T., (1988). Wrestling in Ancient Nubia, *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp.121-137.
17. Gardiner, E.N. (1930a). *Athletics of the Ancient World*. Oxford at the Clarendon Press.
18. Gardiner, E. N. (1930b). *Athletics in the Ancient World*. New York, Dower Publications, Inc., Mineola.
19. Akıncı, A.Y., (2019). *Beden Eğitimi, Sosyalleşme İlişkisi*. Mauritius, Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 17 Meldrum Street, Beau Bassin, 71504.
20. İmamoğlu, G., Koca, F., (2018). Eski Çağ Mısırda Boks, Güreş ve Eskrim ile İlgili Figürler Üzerine Yorumlar, *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Cilt: 11, Sayı: 59, ss.554-559.
21. El-Gammal, M., (2008). *The Ancient Egyptian Sports during the Pharaoh dynasties & its relation to the ancient Greek Sports*. 16th International Seminar on Olympic Studies for Postgraduate Students, Ancient Olympia-Greece.
22. Graves-Brown, C., (2010). *Dancing for Hathor. Women in Ancient Egypt*, Auckland, MPG Books Group Ltd, New Zealand.
23. Crowther, N.B., (2007). *Sport in Ancient times*. Westport, Praeger Publishers, 88 Post Road West, CT 06881.
24. Bunson, Margaret R. (2002). *Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt Revised Edition*. New York, Facts On File, Inc., USA.
25. Russell, M.L. (2004). *Creating the New Egyptian Woman*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, USA.
26. Morgan, J.R., (1978). *A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the Aithiopica of Heliodorus*. Ph.D. Diss., Oxford University.
27. Sandy, G.N., (1982). *Heliodorus*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.
28. Raney, A.A., Bryant, J., (2009). *Handbook of Sports and media*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, Taylor & Francis e-Library.
29. Decker, W., & Herb, M. (1994). *Bildatlas zum sport im Alten Aegypten* (Vol. 1). Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
30. Chadwick, R. (2008). *First Civilizations, Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, Second Edition*. London, Equinox Publishing Ltd.,UK.
31. Sevdâ K., (2013). *Spor Müzelerinin İşlevleri ve Bir Spor Müzesi Taslağının Yönetmelik Açısından Oluşturulması*. İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müze Yönetimi Programı Yüksek Lisans Tezi.
32. Guttman, A. (1986). *Sport Spectators*. New York, Columbia University Press.
33. Decker, W., (1975). *Quellentexte zu Sport und Koerperkultur im alten Aegypten*. Sankt Augustin: Hans Richarz.
34. Hawhee, D., (2002). Agonism and Arete, *Philosophy and Rhetoric, Volume 35, Number 3*, pp. 185-207.
35. Forbes, C.A., (1945). Expanded Uses of the Greek Gymnasium, *Classical Philology, Vol. 40, No. 1*, pp. 32-42.
36. Spalinger, A.J., (2005). *War in Ancient Egypt*, Malden, Blackwell Publishing Ltd. USA.
37. Chandler, T., Cronin, M., Vamplew, W., (2003). *Sport and Physical Education, The Key Concepts*, Taylor & Francis e-Library.
38. McComb, D.G., (1998). *Sports: An Illustrated History*. New York, Oxford University Press.
39. Goldblatt, D., Acton, J., (2011). *How to watch the Olympics*. Newyork, Penguin Group inc., U.S.A.
40. Herodotos, (1973). *Herodotos Tarihi*, Çev.; Ökmen Müntekim, İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi, Ankara Caddesi, 93.