

## **SPORT, LEISURE: ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVES IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TEMPLES (Part I)**

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**Abstract:** The ancient Egyptians expected that life after death would follow the general pattern of life on the earth so they kept in their tombs food to eat, clothing to wear, boats to sail, weapons for war and sports and games equipment's for their amusement. All the people in Ancient Egypt did many fun things together. All of them enjoyed the Nile River, such as adults and children that they used to swim and fished. People went to their temples together, where they worshipped their gods and watched performances of plays. Sport in ancient Egypt like all other aspects of ancient Egyptian culture was closely linked up with religion. During feasts, the public entered the great temples to see and petition their deities and watch athletes compete in combative sports. This is especially true of certain periods and specific kinds of sport, so the games are an activity of recreation and enjoyment. Boys wrestled, played tug of war and used pretend weapons to imitate warriors. There are depicted in Egypt with girls holding hands in a circle and dancing. Both of them played ball games also. The balls they used were made from papyrus, wood, or leather. There were other toys too. Horses on wheels and baby rattles have been found. The children had many things to keep them entertained. Adults played many indoor games. A board game (Senet) is the most well-known. Ancient Egyptians played other games too. A game that used a board with twenty squares has been found in some tombs. Also Dice have been found with another type of this game. It's too bad we don't know how to play these games. Maybe someday we will! Sports based in combat are strongly represented in many forms like wrestling, fencing with sticks, boxing, swimming, rowing, horse riding, and hunting in tombs and temples. The aim of this paper is to highlight the sport and hunting scenes and its position in ancient Egypt.

**Key words:** Ancient Egypt, Game, Hunting, Leisure, Senet, Sport, Temple.

### **Esporte, lazer: perspectivas artísticas nos antigos templos egípcios (Parte I)**

**Resumo:** Os antigos egípcios acreditavam que a vida após a morte iria seguir o padrão geral de vida na terra, motivo pelo qual elas mantinham em seus túmulos seus alimentos para comer, roupas para vestir, barcos à vela, armas de guerra, e equipamentos de esportes e jogos para sua diversão. Todas as pessoas no Antigo Egito fizeram muitas coisas divertidas juntos. Todos eles gostavam do rio Nilo, tais como adultos e crianças, que costumavam nadar e pescar. As pessoas iam para seus templos juntos, onde eles adoravam seus deuses e assistiam apresentações de jogos. Esportes no antigo Egito, como todos os outros aspectos da cultura egípcia, estavam intimamente ligados com a religião. Durante as festas, o público entrava nos grandes templos para ver suas divindades e assistir os atletas competirem em esportes combativos. Isto é especialmente verdadeiro sobre determinados períodos e tipos específicos de esporte, de modo que os jogos são uma atividade de lazer e diversão. Meninos lutavam jogos de cabo de guerra e usavam armas fingindo imitar guerreiros. Não são retratados no Egito com as meninas, que prendiam as mãos em um círculo e dança. Ambos jogavam jogos de bola também. As bolas que usavam eram feitas a partir de papiro, madeira ou couro. Havia outros brinquedos também. Cavalos em rodas e chocalhos de bebê foram encontrados. As crianças tinham muitas coisas para mantê-los entretidos. Adultos jogavam muitos jogos. Um jogo de tabuleiro (Senet) é o mais conhecido. Os antigos egípcios jogavam outros jogos também. Um jogo que utilizada uma placa com vinte quadrados foi encontrado em algumas sepulturas. Também Dice foram encontrados com um outro tipo de jogo. É muito ruim que não saibamos como jogavam estes jogos. Talvez um dia! Esportes baseados em combate estão fortemente representados de muitas formas em túmulos e templos, como luta, esgrima com paus, boxe, natação, remo, equitação e caça. O objetivo deste artigo é destacar o esporte e cenas de caça e sua posição no antigo Egito.

**Palavras-chave:** Egito Antigo, Jogo, Caça, Lazer, Senet, Esporte, Tempo.

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## Introduction

What do you do for fun? Do you play games? Maybe you go to the movies. How about listening to music? These are all things we do for fun and games. What about the Ancient Egyptians? How did they have fun? From what we have found out, they had lots of fun. They had toys, games, and played pretend. They listened to musicians. And, they enjoyed sports. Let's see what we can discover.<sup>2</sup> The history of sport probably extends as far back as the existence of people as purposive sportive and active beings. Sport has been a useful way for people to increase their mastery of nature and the environment.<sup>3</sup> Of course, as we go further back in history the dwindling evidence makes the theories of the origins and purposes of sport difficult to support. Nonetheless, its importance in human history is undeniable.

Egyptians enjoyed the good life and playing was a part of it, all kings, princes and statesmen were keen on attending sports competitions, which they encouraged and provided with the necessary equipment. Children and adults are often depicted involved in games. Typically boys' games were rougher than those of the girls, but the latter weren't above fighting and hair pulling, like the pair in the picture on the right fighting during the corn harvest.

The ancient Egyptians expected that life after death would follow the general pattern of life on the earth, so they kept in their tombs food to eat, clothing to wear, boats to sail, weapons for war and sports and games equipment's for their amusement (SALEH, 1989, p. 113). We don't know equivalent word to "sport" existed in the ancient Egyptian language; there was clearly a cultural element that is best expressed by this modern word (DECKER, 2001, p. 310). Interwoven with the Egyptian civilization that began to emerge around 3100 B.C. was new sporting traditions. They evolved and developed together over thousands of years; traditions always developed with civilization. Egyptian sporting traditions were part of the cultural totality (EL-HABASH, 1992, p. 3).

We pointed out briefly in our introduction that sport in ancient Egypt, like all other aspects of ancient Egyptian culture, was closely linked up with religion (EL-HABASHI, 1992, p. 7- 68). During the feasts the public entered the great temples to see and petition their deities and watch athletes compete in combative sports (PICCIONE, SAOC, 58, p. 347). This is especially true of certain periods and specific kinds of sport. The games are an activity of recreation and enjoyment, which represented on the walls of the temples and tombs in the connection with the *heb-sed* festival (DECKER, 1994, p. 564-574, pls. 315- 322).

Many of today's sports were practiced by the ancient Egyptians, who set the rules and regulations for them. Inscriptions on monuments indicate that they practiced wrestling, weightlifting, long jump, swimming, rowing, shooting, fishing and athletics, as well as various kinds of ball games. Ancient Egyptian kings, princes and statesmen were keen on attending sports

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<sup>2</sup> Naegeli, P. Fun and Games in Ancient Egypt, [http://edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension\\_42\\_24.html](http://edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_42_24.html), accessed on 26 aug. 2012.

<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_sport](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_sport)

competitions, which they encouraged and provided with the necessary equipment. Both winner and loser were met with ovation, the first for his superiority and the latter for his sporting spirit.<sup>4</sup> Ancient Egyptians played a game that is similar to our present-day.

### Wrestling in ancient Egypt

The ancient Egyptian word for wrestling is unknown. Wrestling was one of the most popular kinds of duel in ancient Egypt and was practiced by youths and adults.<sup>5</sup> The Egyptians developed wrestling into a sport in many holds were used but for which there were also nanny counter-holds. Long and intensive training was needed to gain real Lancaster in this sport, which skill and technique were important. Very probably, the young men received a military training, just as the royal princes did, not only in those sports practicality practised by officers such as archery and chariot driving but in all kinds of physical exercises. Conspicuous among the military games were wrestling and stick fighting “fig. 1” (ROSALIND and JANSSEN, 2007, p. 139, fig. 48 a.).

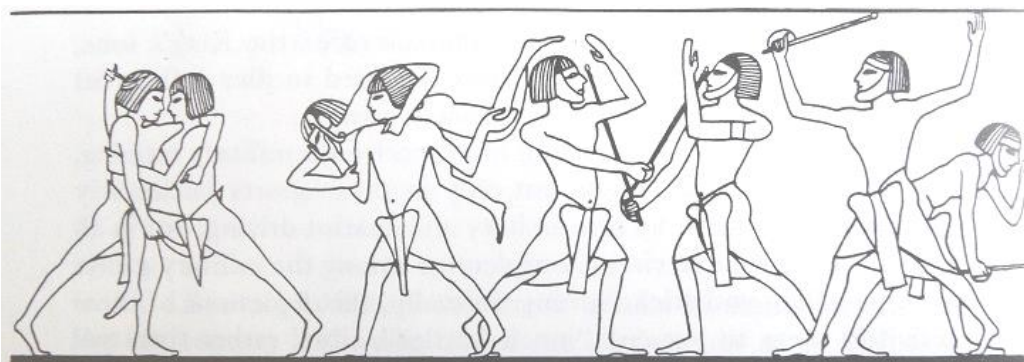


Fig (1): Wrestling and single-stick fighting, 1<sup>st</sup> court, Medinet Habu temple. Rosalind, M., and Janssen, J., *Growing up in Ancient Egypt*, The Rubicon Press, 1990, p. 139, fig. 48 a.



Fig (48): Hunting scenes, Habu temple.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.touregypt.net/historicalessays/ancsportsindex.htm>

<sup>5</sup> The oldest picture of this sport comes from the tomb of the Vizier "Ptahhotep" of the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty, a frieze showing six pairs of wrestlers identifiable as children by the lock of hair hanging down from the right temple. See, Ruiz (2001, p. 66-67).

The first depiction of wrestling at the temples is on the so-called “cities palette”, from the time of the unification of the kingdoms. From the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty, there is a pair of Nubians wrestlers appears on a stone block from the reign of king Amenhotep IV. The wrestlers here wear skirts from the cords of which hang small, globular, that were wear until now in Sudan (DECKER, 1992, p. 71, 77, fig. 45).



Fig (45): Hunting scene: Dogs attacking antelopes a lion attacking a bull, west wall, tomb of Mereruka

Duell, P., The Mastaba of Mereruka, I- II, **OIP, 31**, 1938, pl. 24.

Sports based in combat are strongly represented in the form of wrestling, fencing with sticks and boxing. Of the three, the first one is the most frequently attested and is found throughout Egyptian history (DECKER, 2001, p. 312). The wrestling and single-stick fencing duels and there is no indisputable evidence of boxing matches. These duels, especially in the case of wrestling, were undoubtedly thought of as a means of increasing physical fitness in ancient Egypt and were probably included in military training.<sup>6</sup>

### Single-stick Fencing in ancient Egypt



Fig (2): Wrestling scenes.

Decker, W., Herb, M., Bildatlas zum Sport im Alten Ägypten, 1994, pl. CCCXV (M 2).

<sup>6</sup> The ancient Egyptian wrestling match was a tough manly sport which, because of its free style, can be compared with the modern American catch-as-catch-can. Its exact rules remain unknown to us, since these are not given with the pictures (TOUNY, WENIG, 1969, pp. 15- 16).

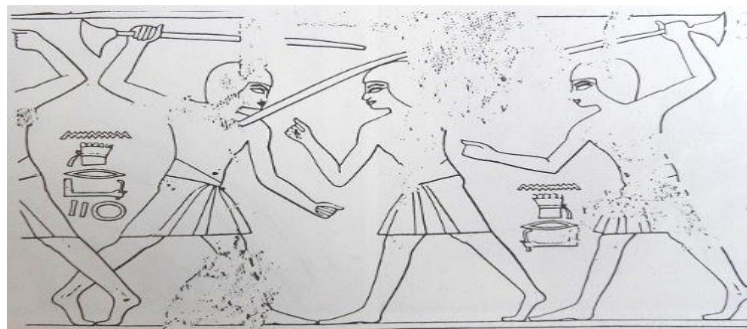


Fig (3): Wrestling scenes.

Decker, W., Herb, M., *Bildatlas zum Sport im Alten Ägypten*, 1994, pl. CCCXVI (M 2).

Religion and sport combine in the fencing contexts and they do not contravene each other since they function on separate plans. The earliest reference to fencing like activity in the pyramid texts and rituals of the middle kingdom refer not to the sword, but to activities with fighting sticks, clubs and even plant stalks. During the New kingdom, stick fighting became quite popular (DECKER, 1992, p. 82). We have found several examples of the fighting sticks in the tomb of King Tutankhamen (REEVES, 1990, p. 91). The stick was carried by the archers in the Kadesh battle as a secondary weapon (DECKER and HERB, 1994, pp. 568- 569).

In ancient Egypt fencing was a sport that ultimately came to be associated with the ideology of kingship. We know that the Kings were not depicted fencing with others in the Egyptian art. It was a special kind of duel of which there is pictorial evidence only from the New kingdom period and not, as was thought, it may have been unknown in Egypt before this and have arrived only later with other foreign habits and customs. We found this game in the mortuary temple of king Ramesses II “Ramesseum” (WRESZINSKI, II, 1923, pls. 92- 92a, 94) and in the mortuary temple of king Ramesses III at Medinet Habu<sup>7</sup>; in one scene the ceremony before the duel are shown: the fencers bow to the spectators, in this case high officials (TOUNY, 1969, pp. 24- 25). Another was a band, maybe of leather to cover the forehead and the chin (DECKER, 1992, pp. 83- 84) and finally some figures on ostraca (figs. 4, 5).



Fig (4): Wrestling scenes on Ostraca.

<sup>7</sup> The earliest picture of single-stick fencing comes from a tomb at Tell el- Amarna.

Decker, W., Herb, M., *Bildatlas zum Sport im Alten Ägypten*, 1994, pl. CCCXXI (M 10).



Fig (5): Wrestling scenes on Ostraca.

Decker, W., Herb, M., *Bildatlas zum Sport im Alten Ägypten*, 1994, pl. CCCXXII (M 11).

### Single-stick at Ramesseum temple

There is a small scene depicted two Hittite spies beaten in their camp during the battle of Kadesh in the inner face of the 1<sup>st</sup> pylon (L.D, III, 154-155; KUENTZ, 1928, pp. 162- 165, pl. xxxix; BREASTED, 1903, pl. i). The single-stick combats here show less of strain and abandon than the wrestling scenes (DECKER and HERB, 1994, pl. CCCXIX “M 9”),<sup>8</sup> they look more formal and poised and left man holding the other right one from his hair (DECKER and HERB, **1**, 1994, p. 569; DECKER and HERB, **2**, 1994, pl. CCCXIX “M 8”) (figs. 6, 7).

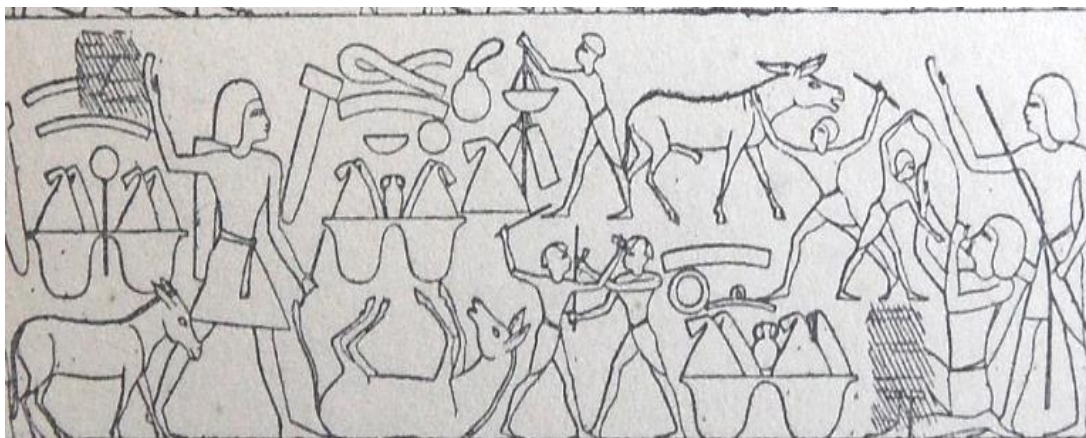


Fig (6): Part of the camp, Kadesh battle scenes, 1<sup>st</sup> pylon, Ramesseum temple.

Kuentz, M. C., *La Bataille de Qadech*, **MIFAO**, **55**, 1928, pp. 162- 165, pl. xxxix.

<sup>8</sup> We have famous scenes for the fencing in the Theban tomb no. 192 of “Kheruef” (fig. 11, 12) (PICCIONE, 1999, p. 341- 344).

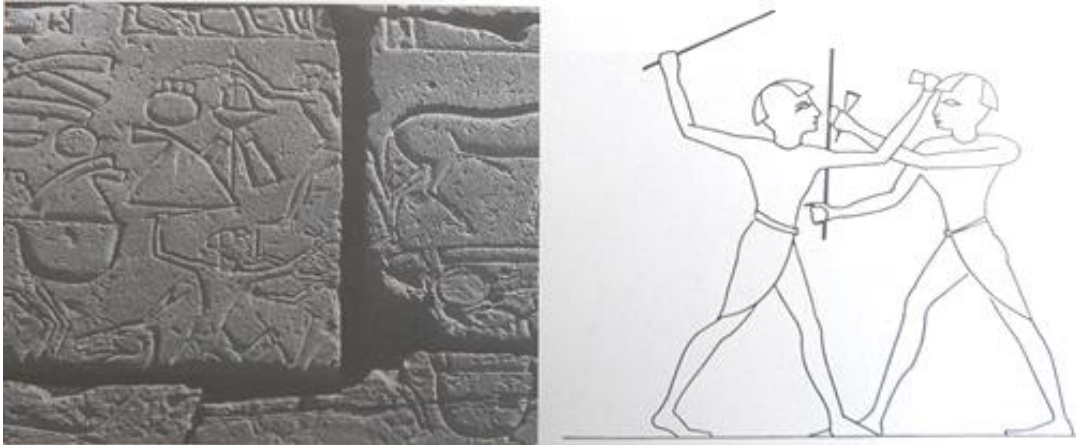


Fig (7): Single-stick on Kadesh battle scene, Decker, W., Herb, M., *Bildatlas zum Sport im Alten Ägypten*, pl. CCCXIX (M 8).

### 3.2 Wrestling and single stick scenes at Medinet Habu temple

There were sport scenes on the south face of the window of the royal appearances at Medinet Habu temple on the interior south wall, in the centre part of the wall between pylons (EDGERTON and WILSON, 1936, p. 141, pl. 114). This window which the king entered from the palace and in which he stood (or sat) while presiding over the ceremonies held in the court (DECKER and HERB, 1, 1994, pp. 559- 561; DECKER, 2006, figs. 81- 92) (figs. 8, 9, 10).



Fig (8): Window of appearance, Habu temple. Decker, W., *Pharao und Sport*, fig. 81.

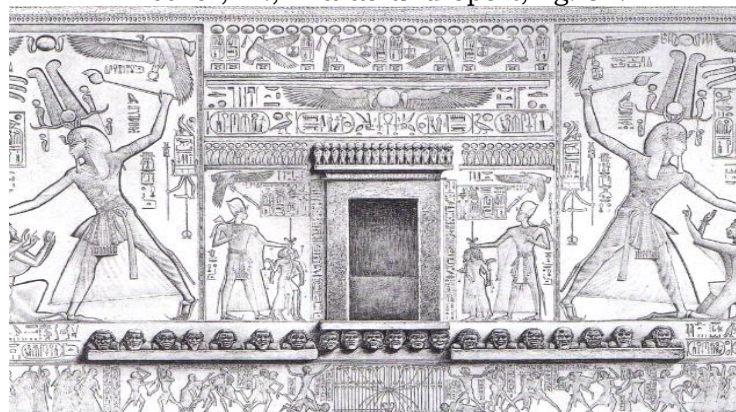


Fig (9): Sport scenes, Habu temple. Decker, W., *Pharao und Sport*, fig. 85.



Fig (10): Sport scenes, Habu temple.

Touny, A. D., Wenig, S., *Der Sport im Alten Ägypten*, Leipzig, 1969, pp. 22- 23, fig. 6.

The window which king Ramesses III made ceremonial appearance from his palace is framed by symmetrically balanced scenes of the king with captives. Many foreigner heads under this window; these are carved in the round. Below there are shown ceremonial games in the presence of the king, wrestling and singlestick (DECKER, 1971, p. 145- 147, Abb. 26; DECKER, 1975, Doc. 32; SALEH, 1961, p. 183, fig. 35).



Fig. (35): A bare-backed horseman rides off: "the arrival of the scout to hasten the army". In other Kadesh scenes, he is said to be hurrying the army of Ptah, as king was in the battle unsupported.

James, *Ramesses II*, 2002, fig. 116 bottom

On the left Ramesses III sacrifices an eastern Libyan and an Asiatic; on the right he sacrifices a Negro and a western Libyan. The wall shows evidences of such repairs as attended the rebuilding of Ramesses III palaces at Medinet Habu. It was put here as to be under the overseer of the king himself. These



ceremonial scenes (WILSON, 1931, pl. xxxvii, figs. 11-14 from the left side, figs. 16-21 from the right)<sup>9</sup> are depicted ten combats that reflect the immediacy of a true sporting activity in which the contestants actually engaged to win and to cheat, if necessary, so this depiction and the admonishments against cheating indicate that the fencing bouts were real and not regularly fixed in the Egyptian's favour. The scenes of the sports are depicted on centre of the south wall of the first court below the window from the interior side, as; three pairs of fencers and seven pairs of wrestlers (EDGERTON and WILSON, 1936, p. 137, pl. 111; SCHWEITERISCHES, 1978, p. 41). These ten pairs of fighter contend in wrestling and fencing matches before the audience of Egyptians (including royal children) and foreigner spectators. The unusual element is that each pair consists of an Egyptian and foreigner (Near eastern, Libyan, or Nubian) and all the foreigners seem to be losing (DECKER, 2001, p. 313).



Fig (11): Famous scenes for the fencing in the Theban tomb no. 192. of "Kheruef". Piccione, P. A., *Sportive Fencing as A Ritual for Destroying the Enemies of Hours*, In, *Gold of Praise, Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*, SAOC, 58, 1999, pp. 341- 344, fig. 32.6



Fig (12): Famous scenes for the fencing in the Theban tomb no. 192. of "Kheruef". Piccione, P. A., *Sportive Fencing as A Ritual for Destroying the Enemies of Hours*, In, *Gold of Praise, Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*, SAOC, 58, 1999, pp. 341- 344, fig. 32.7

<sup>9</sup> we have another ceremonial games scenes from the New kingdom such as these scenes like the Theban Tomb of "Amunmose" no. 19, probably early 19<sup>th</sup> dynasty at Dra<sup>c</sup> Abu El Nagaah (VANDIER, 1940, p. 467- 468); and Cairo ostrakon no. 25132, from the tomb of Ramesses VI. (fig. 13) (DARESSY, p. 26, pl. XXV, no. 25.132); Theban tomb no. 31, of Khonso (figs. 14, 15) (DAVIES and GARDINER, 1948); There are many texts with the games scenes, for more information see Wilson (1931, p. 211- 220).



Fig (13): Cairo ostracon no. **25132**, tomb of Ramesses VI. Cairo museum. Daressy, M. G., *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*, Nos. **25001- 25385**, Ostraca, p. 26, pl. XXV, no. **25.132**.

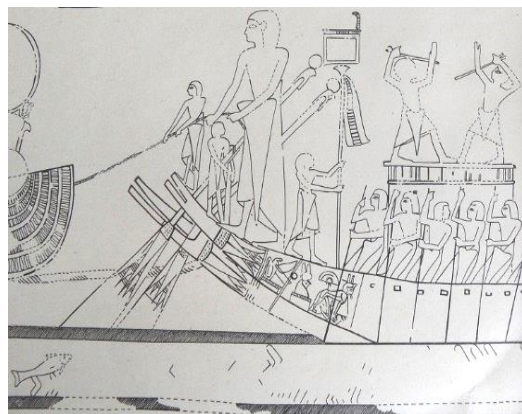


Fig (14): Single-stick, outer hall, east wall, south side, Theban tomb no. 31, of Khonso. Davies, N. de. G., Gardiner, A. H., *Seven Private Tombs at Kurnah*, In, *Mond Excavation at Thebes, II, Egypt Exploration Society*, ed. Gardiner, A. H., London, 1948, pl. XI.



Fig (16): Sport scenes, Habu temple.



Fig (17): Sport scenes, Habu temple.

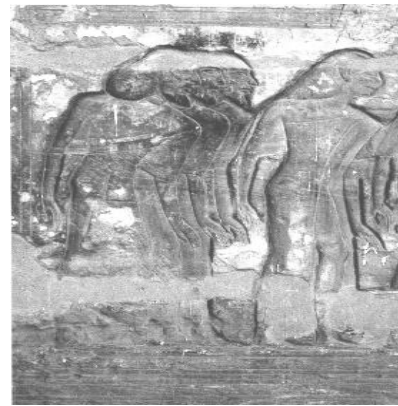


Fig (18): Sport scenes, Habu temple.



Fig (19): Sport scenes, Habu temple.



Fig (20): Sport scenes, Habu temple.



Fig (21): Sport scenes, Habu temple.

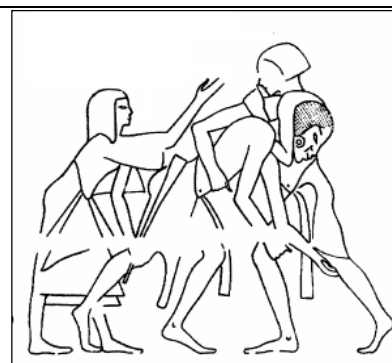
There is an inscription with the sport scenes speak about: “Woe to you, rebellious Asiatic, boasting with his mouth! Pharaoh live, prosper be healthy, my lord is with me against you”. And the king’s first son, princes Ramesses at the right hand side calls out “forward, forward, O good fighter!” to a favoured contestant, and the other royal children, official and privileged foreigners who may represent the diplomatic corps join in a chat (MURNANE, 1980, p. 24-25, fig. 17).

The last scenes are part of the festival programme, which contains the prices, courtiers and the foreigners that The Egyptian soldiers versus Nubians, Libyans and the Syrians. They were copied from the Ramesseum temple of king Ramesses II at Thebes also, but the later were lost now. There is a fragment of the relief from the latter temple was set in the wall of Medinet Habu in recent times (NIMS, 1977, p. 169- 170). The scenes from the Ramesseum reliefs are larger than those in Medinet Habu scenes.

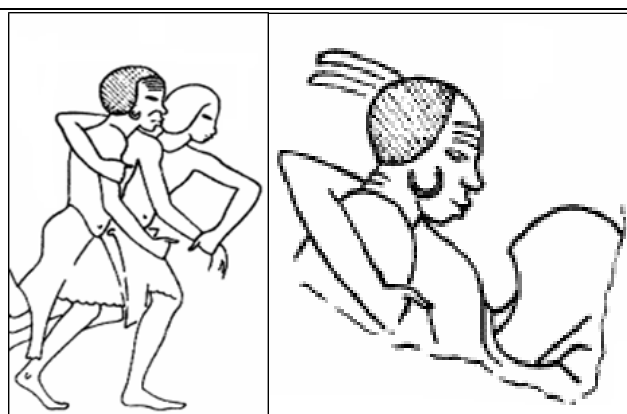
They are directly under and centred toward the Audience window “the window of appearance”, it is clearly in connexion with the ceremonial appearance of the king, as is also evidenced by the recurrent phrase “in the presence of king”, but we can notice that the examines the cartouches in the two central scenes for the names of Ramesses II, not Ramesses III, so that we can say that Ramesses II blocks were taken and reset here in their corresponding places in Medinet Habu. I thought that the artist of king Ramesses III take the idea of the games scenes from the Ramesseum temple of king Ramesses II, so that these blocks from this temple. And as we know that there are many relations between the architecture of the two kings. Here, we have to speak about the details of the sport scenes that are depicted at Medinet Habu temple:

Table (1): Sport scenes that depicted at Medinet Habu temple

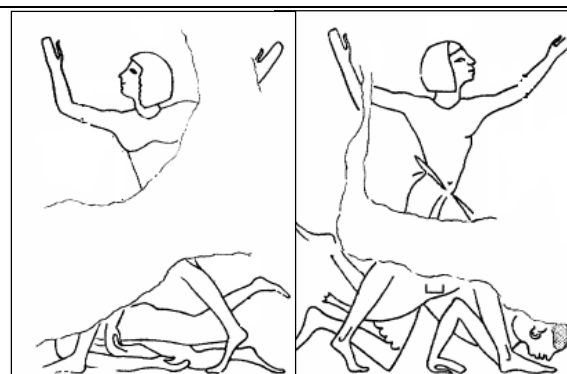
The Egyptian soldier has taken a “chancery hold” in a strong position. It is, however, about the neck rather than the head and is really a “strangle hold”. Therefore, the referee is perhaps warning him against blocking Nubian windpipe. This is an interesting indication that these games had definite rules and restrictions. Maybe the Egyptian an could have improved his case even more by combining a “bar hold” with the “chancery”-running his right arm under the Nubian left shoulder and then his right forearm across his back, in order to prize the Nubian arm and shoulder backwards (figs. 16, 24).



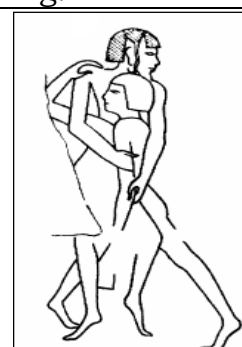
It is clear that the Egyptian has a marked advantage and the Nubian is on the defensive, may be attempting a “hip-lock”: using his right hip as a fulcrum, he hopes to swing the Nubian under him in front (DECKER and HERB, 2, 1994, pl. CCCXII “L 34”). He has threw his right arm around the Nubian shoulders to hold the latter at his hip and controls his left arm in a “wrist-lock”. The Nubian tries to prevent Egyptian soldier from pulling him forward and then down by interlocking his left leg in Light’s right (fig. 18).



The Egyptian soldier turns to the judges’ stand-or rather the king-and throws up his hands in triumph, as a sign of victory, while the Nubian man has been thrown and lies upon the ground (EL- HABASHI, 1992, p. 79.). Maybe the foreigners represented kissing the ground, since he must be drawn on the ground, and as we know that the games were symbolical of Egypt’s victory he should end by kissing the ground before king.



This is poor wrestling and remarks that its only justification is the apparent success the right arm grips the foreign right shoulder, apparently with the intention of pulling it down and forward, thus landing his backwards on his right side (DECKER and HERB, 2, 1994, pl. CCCXIII (L 34) top, left) (fig. 18).



This figure representing the match between two Egyptians, so that we can say that this sports scenes is a symbolic before the king and The Egyptian love of watching good sport. But if the games were symbolic, as we consider, the success of the Egyptian might well have been demanded. Then the foreign contestants would be pledged to “put up a good show” and then succumb. It is very important to say that, the sports in front of the king might be a daily life things made for him as a sign of enjoy (fig. 23).

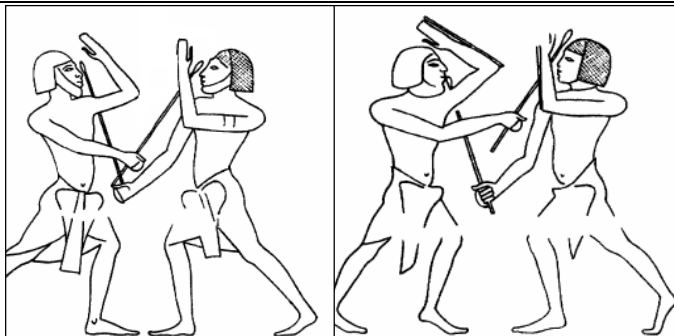


Fig (23): Sport scenes, Habu temple.



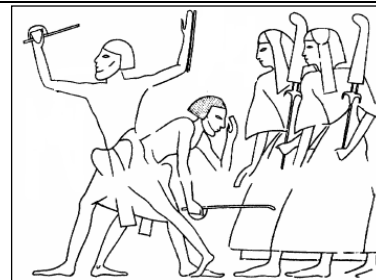
The Egyptian soldier has attempted either a “flying mare” or a “hip-lock”, with his left hand he grips foreigner knee, planning to throw him forward over his shoulder. The foreigner has a “chancery hold” on the head of Egyptian man, but it seems purely defensive.

The single-stick combats here show less of strain and abandon than the wrestling scenes (DECKER and HERB, 2, 1994, pl. CCCXIX “M 9”). They look more formal and poised, like the modern Egyptian games in Upper Egypt with a stick called



“*nabbut*” (DECKER, 2001, p. 312.) and the game itself called in Arabic as “*El taḥteeb*”, “*Lich en-nabbūl*” or “*Lich el Šuba*” as it known at the north part of Luxor (VANDIER, 1940, p. 480- 481, figs. 57- 58). It was still playing by pair of players holding long sticks to attack each other and parry blows (DECKER, 1992, p. 189, no. 58.), that two contestants, often soldiers, stand face to face, holding short batons; each wears various protective gear such as shield-like boards on the lower arm, or shields made out of leather worn on the chin and forehead (DECKER, 2001, p. 312).

The last scene shows one man saluting the spectators, the other with arms thrown high in the air, turned toward the king. The scene agrees with that of the triumphant wrestlers, and one man is accompanied by the refrain of triumph, which should show that he is already victorious (figs. 21, 22).



### Swimming in ancient Egypt

It did not have the same place in ancient Egyptian education like the other sports. In a country largely dependent on the river swimming was not only a popular sport for children and young people, but also a necessity for adults. Egyptian sources contain fleetest no references to this ancient sport, however, extremely informative and permits of far-reaching assumptions. Swimming figures are found in accounts of the Battle of Kadesh (DECKER, 2006, fig. 5).

Here words and pictures describe how at the mere appearance of the king panic broke out amongst the enemy and they fled wildly into the water of the Orontes, in the hope of at least saving their lives (HOSNY, 2001, pp. 115-116, pl. 27) (figs. 26, 27). This confused flight of the enemy is also shown on the victory reliefs of Ramesses II.



Fig (26): Swimming scene, Kadesh battle scene, Ramesseum temple.  
Decker, W., *Pharao und Sport*, Mainz am Rhein, 2006, fig. 5.

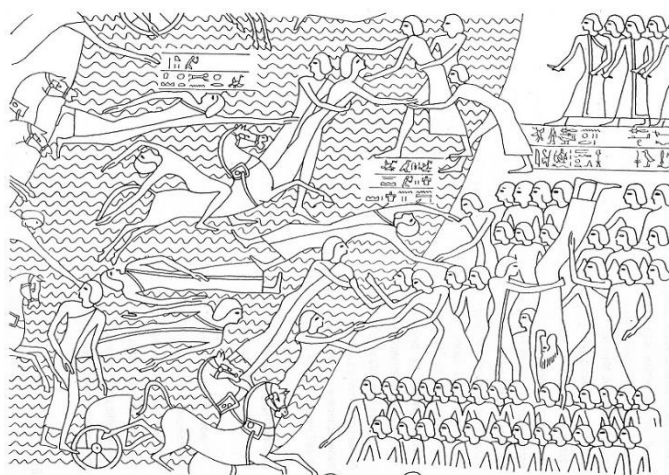


Fig (27): Swimming scene, Kadesh battle scene, Ramesseum temple.  
Hosny, H., *Der Tod durch Ertrinken, Das Ertrinken, im Wasser Untertauchen, als Weg zur Seligkeit*, Magister Artium, Tübingen, 2001, pp. 115- 116, pl. 27.

The river is packed with men trying to swim to the farther bank, where helping hands stretch out towards them. One can clearly see some soldiers trying to bring non-swimmers across the river (TOUNY and WENIG, 1969, pl. 24.). A most unusual scene is that in which attempts are being made to revive a drowned man by holding him up by the feet to let the water run out of his mouth (TOUNY and WENIG, 1969, pl. 23).

### **Rowing in New Kingdom temples**

Rowing appears in ancient Egypt in many tombs and temples of the New Kingdom. In the temple of Queen Hatshepsut, there is shown a style which is different from that used anywhere in the world, and it is a real scenes taken from the life. The rowers were represented in different attitudes and these positions were those of various phases of the stroke. The Egyptian rowing technique was characterized by a cyclical alternation of sitting and standing (DECKER, 1992, p. 97, figs. 68, 71). In this rowing here, we find four distinct



positions for the rowers (JARRETT, 1930, p. 11, 12- 14.): two sitting in which the oarsman are respectively leaning forwards and backwards, and also two standing positions in one of which the rower is leaning back and in the other his position is upright and his left hand is folded across his chest (figs. 28, 29).



Fig (28): Rowers in the middle of their stroke, tomb of Sennefer, TT. 96. Decker, W., Sports and Games of Ancient Egypt, p. 97, fig. 68.



Fig (29): Rowers with leather-reinforced skirts, Deir el Bahri temple. Decker, W., Sports and Games of Ancient Egypt, fig. 71.