

# The stages of the development of BC sports and their impact on society (Study and analysis)

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**Abstract:**

*Historians have focused on economic and political history. They recounted the lives of kings and queens, that of prime ministers and presidents. They have often neglected social history. We believe that history should not be limited to economic and political aspects; it should also be interested in artistic and educational events; she should describe how social activities evolve. Social history should teach us how people lived, how they loved and how they played. The history of sport is an essential aspect of social history. It deals with the particular aspects of human activities, namely sports and games. If we stop thinking, we realize that people spend a lot of their time in sports; by reading sports pages; either by acting as a spectator or participant. Sport occupies an important place in the life of the nation. It reflects the socio-cultural system that allows it to exist. In recent years, the history of sport has become an academically respectable area. Specialists have been trained in various departments of physical education, human movement studies and human kinetics. These specialists have learned to master the historical method. They gained an understanding of the importance of the history of sport in the field of social history. There are now international associations in sports history, a North American association, a Canadian association. In addition, researchers can publish the results of their research in journals entirely devoted to this field. These specialists gradually reveal the role played by sports and games in various societies and civilizations. The following countries have contributed most to the advancement of the history of sport: Germany, the United States, Australia and Canada. If we make an exception for the German language, most of the work in sport history has been published in English. Few French Canadians have been interested in this area, although Francophones have made a significant contribution to the world of sport. They have been noticed in tennis, hunting, dancing, sailing, gymnastics, cycling and fencing. It is also a Frenchman who has contributed the most to the development of the Olympic Games of the twentieth century, Baron Pierre de Coubertin. Many Canadian sports originate in Quebec. These include: snowshoeing, sliding, ice hockey, fencing, weightlifting, curling, lacrosse, billiards, cycling, tennis, gymnastics, boating, swimming, etc. Research on these activities and the traditional games of French Canadians have been sporadic. Some researchers like Yvan Leduc, Donald Guay, Claude Lessard and Jean-Paul Massicotte have drawn from the sources. However, we are entering a new era that will recognize the contribution of*

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*Francophone researchers to the world of sport. It is a recognition that is due. The book by Jean-Paul Massicotte and Claude Lessard published in French, draws on the discoveries of many researchers from various countries. New knowledge is made available to French-speaking students and researchers. This book will undoubtedly inspire new authors who will enrich the best contributions made by their predecessors.*

**Keywords:** *history of sport, Social history, socio-cultural system*

## **I. Introduction:**

In the history of sport, there are certain trends over the years and centuries. We are fortunate to have access to a text of great value which sets out these major orientations which the researcher needs to guide himself through the many documents he consults. Maxwell L. Howell has managed to find these "generalizations" after many years of work. We find in this first text essential data for the understanding of those who follow. It was inspired by Howell's statements that the choice of the other texts on antiquity ended with works concerning the Cretans, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Etruscans and the Romans. The importance of seals in the study of antiquity in particular is more to do. We have a striking proof of this in Howell's article on the seals of the Oxford Ashmolean Museum. As Paul Faure says in his book on the daily life of the Cretans, this people "gave their heirs the love of sports, rhythm and dance ...; they were the first classics of Europe ". They are the ones who inspired the Mycenaean culture that Homer reveals. The Greeks will use these sometimes magical and funerary facts to season their soldiers. With Clarence Forbes, we stop at various aspects of the physical education system of the most famous Greek cities, Athens. As we can see in his work, it is in the fifth century that this city has had its best years in sport. It is then the century recognized as the golden age for this civilization. The influence of Athens did not manifest itself only in Greece. Indeed, this city has shone in Egypt since the most distant Antiquity. Kamal Saleth Abdou gives a very scholarly demonstration in a text entitled sports and games of ancient Egypt. The Egyptians were known as remarkable builders. One may wonder after reading this work if these brilliant qualities did not come from a superior physical condition .

A final proof of the Greek influence is given again by Maxwell Howell with a work on the Etruscans. These people, who have been poorly known for a long time, are astonishing in their place for sports. The drawings on the tombs give a striking proof. All aspects of sports known then and practiced are found among the Etruscans, although the place made for physical education was lower than what we find among the Greeks. Our texts on Antiquity end with a last of Howell concerning the Romans. These people who dominated the world seem to have practiced little sport but Howell's archaeological evidence seems to prove the opposite.

First generalization<sup>1</sup> The studies that have been done never give us complete proof; we have only partial knowledge of sports, games and physical activities in a civilization. It is precisely for this reason that the majority of researchers are reluctant to present a generalization. It may happen that a new discovery can completely reverse what has been advanced. Their hesitation may be explained by the fact that the available evidence is obviously

incomplete. Second generalization On the one hand, we insisted on the importance of the games played by certain classes while the importance of games played by other classes was reduced.

Thanks to literature and archeology, it is the games of the nobles and high classes that we know among the peoples of antiquity. The descriptions that have come down to us are usually those that describe the games of kings, nobles and mythical figures who are gods. It may be natural that emphasis should be placed on the highest classes. The games of the poor and children are more difficult for the archaeologist because they are less frequent; nothing prevents children from playing. There is less chance that their games will be held while those of a king will be, as well as the prowess of a lord in the hunt. The literary proofs concern especially the high classes while the archaeological evidence describes the games of the poor and the children, the dolls, the game of house, the ossicles and the others. However, as the number of evidence increases, as is the case with the Greeks and Romans, the more we are likely to find evidence pertaining to the entire population. Here is what Bishop describes in his study of the Romans: There is no doubt that the many literary and archaeological records that have been preserved have demonstrated the taste of the Romans for gladiatorial battles and public spectacles. But all this evidence has tended to obscure the less obvious evidence that individuals enjoyed informal activities. This study reveals the interest of the Romans for all kinds of activities such as hunting, swimming, fishing, bullfights or simply the practice of *latruneuli* after exercising in the baths. Indeed, once the imperial baths were built, games and physical exercises were part of daily activities. We therefore have the proof supporting the hypothesis that physical activities occupied an important place in the life of Roman citizens, whether rich or poor.

Third Generalization We are continually having trouble proving that it is a game and defining terms. Several researchers have questioned the value of the terms sports or games. There are some who have preferred the term physical activity. It is possible that game is a better term because it has more extension. In reality, we can not agree on the terminological point of view; which limits the comparative analyzes. The theoreticians of the game seem to agree not to get along; each invents a new method of analysis. There are as many approaches as there are studies. There are researchers who exclude dance from their analysis; others want to include it; others want to include hunting, fishing, boating; which complicates the situation in addition to the military goals.

Seventh generalization It seems useful to make a geographical regrouping of ancient civilizations. This approach is also traditional. However, this grouping becomes limiting when one wishes to have a global understanding of sports and games. Games do not have geographical barriers. After Van Niekerk's studies of the Vikings, Glassford of the Indians, Salter of the Australian Aborigines, Danielson of the Inuit, Jones of the Polynesians and Lansley of the Melanesians, the puzzle explaining the emergence of games and phenomena that are attached will appear more clearly. In doing this work, we realized the limits of our knowledge. What is most lacking is the influence of the ancient cultures that are currently located in India, China, Russia and Ukraine and of which the internal and external displacement of tribes and games and the influence caravan routes, their direction, what was the maritime traffic and its influence. The recent analysis of the Ganges stone seals, for example, shows bull games similar to those of the Minoans. Were these seals a product of this place? Were they really representative of the activities that took place there or were they transported by traders? Perhaps they came from the island of Crete.



**Eighth Generalization** In some cultures, most games have a military character. The assumption that most of the physical activities of the Sumerian and Hittite civilizations were of a military character seems to be confirmed by the primitive art that most of these activities were directly or indirectly related to the improvement of the effectiveness of the forces fight on the ground. There was little environmental control in the old societies; people had to defend themselves and preserve their ecological niche. It is not surprising that physical activities were very practical and that life was turned towards war and related activities in areas where the political situation could be changed and the balance of power changed to none. any moment. Physical exercise and workout were related; As a farmer, craftsman, hunter, and warrior, the exercises were valuable only in so far as they served practical purposes. This is the practical nature of following activities that mattered and not the pleasure of practicing them: trolley racing, horseback riding, archery and swimming. Members of the phalanxes, infantry, and wagon teams sought prowess for battle and for hunting; they practiced fervently to continue their feats as needed. However, the goals were fundamentally utilitarian. The warrior element seemed to dominate among the Sumerian, Hittite and Assyrian civilizations, but it is possible that this was due to the paucity of evidence. Each of the other civilizations pursued warlike aspects, but we have no proof that this was a dominant trait. In any case, the following activities were popular: gladiator fights, archery, boxing, wrestling, chariot racing, equestrian races and javelin throwing.

**Ninth generalization** In general games tend to mirror the societies where they are practiced. The games and physical activities of the Sumerians, Hittites, Assyrians and Egyptians, Minoans and even Etruscans seem to concern the upper classes. They were indeed a reflection of these societies; they reveal class differences and the magnitude of this difference. It is at least necessary to assert that knowledge of the sports, games, and physical activities of a civilization provides a valuable insight into this civilization; it is an overview often underrated by classical authors, historians, anthropologists, etc. As far as Greek and Roman civilizations are concerned, the increase in both literary and archaeological evidence would make it possible to generalize that sports and physical activities tend to be a microcosm of these societies.

**Tenth generalization** When analyzing games, diffusion and acculturation are important factors. Their diffusion means that physical activity spreads from an original point. The diffusion rate is a variable related to a large number of factors. At present, we have the examples of freeze-bee, hulahopp, skate board that are influenced by advertising and industrial production. It is relatively easy to study diffusion in modern times when we have knowledge of the production, sales and locations where these sales take place.

In old times, we must rely on isolated references and discoveries; this is why diffusion depends on academic assumptions. If we only use the archaeological evidence, we would say that the table game appeared in Sumeria then came to the Egyptians and finally to the Hittites. However, it is not so simple since the first table games probably originate from Chinese and Hindu. They have spread by following the caravans through the villages or vessels trading. They were copied and modified thanks to the imagination of the people in the middle. In addition, the first copies of table games may not have survived; they may have been constructed of clay or other perishable material. As far as acculturation is concerned, which means the influence of one culture over another, it is an interesting point to consider through games. Let's see the Etruscan and Roman games. Paintings on Etruscan tombs, for example, demonstrate an obvious Greek influence: wrestling scenes, discus throwing, running, jumping and javelin throwing. It is clear that these activities were practiced by the Etruscans and that the Greeks influenced them and favored their adoption. The influence of the Greeks on the Romans is not as well known but Bishop wrote a brilliant chapter on this topic: Greek Athletic Games. It offers proof of acculturation. We are well aware of the negative references, those of Cicero telling Pompey that he had wasted oil and efforts after endorsing games. Cicero also wrote to Atticus that if there were few spectators he was not surprised. On his side Lucien said: "You will meet an army of individuals recruited in the Greek gymnasium. These carefree individuals following the courses at the palestra are barely able to carry weapons. " Martial also said, "Why lose the strength of the arms using stupid weights; it would be better to exercise by digging a vine. Tacitus gives us an account of this growing influence: "We should run the games as we used to do when the praetors presided over them without any obligation on the part of those who were to participate". Bishop supports this view with archaeological evidence and inscriptions. There is a fair amount of evidence about boxing, running, competition and nudity. Auguste frequently organized athletic competitions; he made them permanent. The games took place every four years, on the model of Pan-Hellenic festivals; they included running, wrestling, boxing, pancrace and pentathlon, as well as competitions for heralds, musicians and poets. The winners were given a crown. Games

The holdings at Nicropolis near Actium were founded in Rome in 25 BC. There was another famous festival, the Sebista. The program of these games included the stadium, the diaulos, the wrestling, the pancrace, the pentathlon, the arms race, the equestrian events, including the chariot race with four horses. The musical and dramatic events took place afterwards. The games of the Greeks then influenced the Etruscans and Romans. The games we have seen prove this acculturation. This acculturation can be seen from studies done in Canada; cricket was the national game in Canada in 1867. The influence of American football and baseball in recent years can be seen, and the influence of hockey in U.S.A.

Eleventh Generalization Some games seem to be unique to a single civilization. Various versions of table games can be found. How can one explain that an activity of major importance is accepted by a society when the same activity is unknown to another people? This fact deserves to be studied. We can give as an example the simulated maritime battles of the Romans, the battles of the Egyptians, the Phersu game of the Etruscans, the bulls of the Minoans. All of these activities can serve as an example. One may wonder why these nations who traded between them do not seem to have accepted the game played by the other. These activities have some characteristics in common; there is the danger of practicing them and the difficulty of organizing them.

Twelfth generalization there are a number of activities that we can classify in an empty box. Some games appear everywhere except in a company or two. For example, acrobatics does not appear among Sumerians; ball games among the Sumerians and the Hittites; the chariot race among the Minoans; equestrian races at the Minoans; the race among the Sumerians and the Hittites; swimming among the Etruscans

Thirteenth generalization Some activities have a common character. This common feature of an activity is perhaps the most interesting phenomenon we have to study. It is these games that appear in each civilization even if we take into account that the evidence is not numerous in some civilizations. Are these activities natural? The principal possessing this characteristic are: boxing, wrestling, dancing, knucklebones, hunting and table games.

Fourteenth generalization The theory of spontaneity and emergence seems sufficiently proved. Even if one takes into account the theories of diffusion and acculturation, we can say that the games appear spontaneously; they emerge when a culture has reached a certain level of perfection, when certain geographical conditions predominate, when the man seeks to amuse himself. Then some games appear: games of chance, such as knucklebones and guessing games, table games, boxing, wrestling, dancing. There is enough variety within civilizations to show that although there is a commonality, there is spontaneity and certainly uniqueness.

Fifteenth generalization Several activities have a magic and religious foundation; but this meaning seems to diminish when civilizations become more complex. Other authors have well demonstrated the magic and religious foundations of many activities. Uriel Simri's excellent thesis about ball games is a study that has innovated in this direction ... Kennedy has made the following suggestion: the religious aspect of dance aims to communicate with the invisible forces that provide food, promote fertility, regulate temperature, give good fortune to tribal war and ensure human survival. As Meikle said, As Sumerian society became more complex and territorial expansion took place, their dances were not just about telling the story. It was necessary to express by ideas much more elaborate ideas, and it is possible that the dancers who began to appear on musical scenes, that these dancers have become a special class of performers. If so, the dance had lost its magical and religious character, although this character had existed at the beginning. This character has existed throughout the world: the "day of May", the swing and the game of lacrosse; these are all examples of activities that have lost their primary character. Olympia is perhaps the best example of the loss of religious character over time; the first stage was an altar; the stadium race ended in the temple of Zeus. When games became popular and spectators were needed, competitors were removed from the sacred altar. However, the religious atmosphere was preserved in Olympia. Perhaps we pay too much attention to this fact, which had become necessary. It is certain that the athletes continued to come to the altar and pay their tributes before and after the competition. Religious ceremonies were maintained. It is likely that the game of "Phersu" of the Etruscans is a better example. It is believed that he had a religious connection. As Sawula says: Richardson suggests that the man (Phersu) takes over the scene during which Hercules comes to remove Cereberus from the underworld; being blinded serves to make sure he really experiences Hades' darkness. The masked actor wears a false beard, a hat with pointed ears and a tight suit serving in the other world. The actor is supposed to be Hercules, he should free himself and capture the dog. This rite has its origins in ancient funerals during which sacrifices were offered to comfort the deceased. It is probable that in the beginning the Etruscans began these gladiatorial battles under the influence of the

Romans, although it was in Campania and Lucania that these combats were really developed completely. When a gladiator was killed, he was removed from the arena by a slave dressed in Charon, the demon of Etruscan death. As for the expression lanista, we believe that it is of Etruscan origin; he was the superintendent of gladiators. It must be emphasized that the religious aspect of such fights seems to have collapsed with the Romans.



Sixteenth generalization Occasionally, physical activity has been used as a political tool. This is a relevant topic today as well as in antiquity. For example, the communist bloc provides us with a clear demonstration of the interrelationship of sport and politics. In Canada, as the government gets more and more involved, we see the same trend. If this can be used to console, it is an old story. It is Roman civilization that gives us the best example.

Seventeenth Generalization Each of the internal characters of the game can be illustrated by analyzing the games of Western civilizations. The evidence we possess covers pursuit activities (hunting Sumerians), luck (the game of "mora" and "atep" of the Egyptians), strategy (the chariot race of the Romans), dexterity (the ossicles of the Greeks), of vertigo (the exercises on the soil of the Etruscans), of imitation (the house of the Minoans), of exaltation (the Dionysiac dances of the Etruscans) and of enigma (the wager of the blind of the Greeks). It is desirable that a more detailed analysis of each of these civilizations be made following the method that was used by Jones in his study of Polynesians or Salter in his study of native Australians.

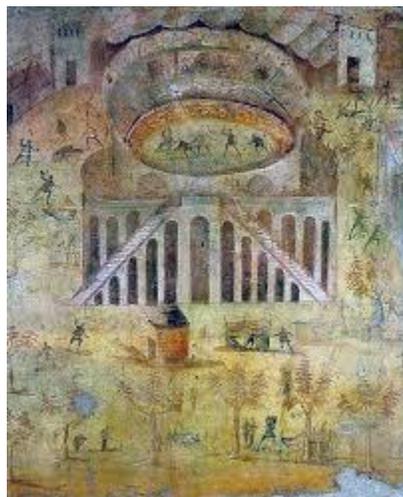
Eighteenth Generalization We have proof of the existence of games related to the major aspects of the culture of the ancient Western civilizations. The evidence we possess covers so-called educational activities (the Minoan house game), political (Gladiatorial battles of the Romans), economic (Minoan fishing), ceremonial (Minoan dances), socialization, ie, social interaction (ball games and Roman baths).

**Nineteenth Generalization** Just as civilizations flourish and then decline, so do sports and games. There is a lasting observation: some activities reach a peak in a civilization and then decline. When one analyzes over many years, the level of acceptance or popularity does not seem to be maintained. Several games reached a peak of popularity, then they declined and disappeared - bull games in Crete, games in Olympia, gladiator fights in Rome. Other activities are regaining popularity and then disappearing, as has been the case in some 150 years of Canadian activity. The popularity of cricket in 1867, its decline, the rise of cycling and baseball, then their decline, the professionalism of baseball and hockey, etc. Who can predict what sports will be in 300 years? Which sports and games will maintain a prominent position? Just as civilizations rise and decline, the same thing happens to games and sports

The Ashmolean Museum Stone Seals, illustrating the physical activities of the Minoan period \* Maxwell L. HOWELL

This study was made possible thanks to the documentation collected by the author during the examination of the stone seals of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. It revealed that we were engaged in physical exercises from the Minoan era in Crete. The examination of the seals of stone shows us the existence of the following physical activities: hunting, table game, ground game, jumping over the bull, catching the bull, fishing, the exercises on the ground, the dance and the race. The period covered by this research ranges from 3,000 to 1,200 BC. It is the bronze age in Crete and the Minoan civilization knows its most beautiful moments.

**Outline of the problems and the procedures** By the archaeological study it is possible to establish the proof of the existence of the games and the sports among the oldest peoples. To achieve this, we question the remains of sculptures, pottery, tablets, frescoes, decoration, monuments and buildings. Each of these elements can provide valuable information. This study uses stone seals, a long neglected source of research. The stone seals of the Minoan era at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford have demonstrated the existence in these people, physical activities, sports and games. The author analyzed and examined the literature relating to that time and this civilization. He thus took note of several catalogs while noting the opinions of specialized archaeologists during this period.



Westernized societies have been doing hobbies and sports referents and models that permeate all spheres of life. In recent years, historians have taken this phenomenon as an object of their research, multiplying the works. But this remains modest compared to the importance (real and symbolic) that sports and leisure occupy in the ordinary life of people: at the heart of discussions, debates, expenses and dating. Frivolous topics, simple entertainment or else a great stultifying mass that is nothing more than a moment of sociability - the approach traditional criticism is now proving to be very inadequate as these practices are at the crossroads of major political, economic, social trends and cultural of each era. This is a foreground story object that allows you to approach the very essence of each great moment of the story. How to understand the advent of gymnastics in the nineteenth century without considering the rise of nation-states? How to evaluate the entertainment at the court of Louis XIV without to speak of the foundations of royal absolutism? That's why medieval tournaments if we do not take them it is difficult to bring them back to the ideal of the combatant knights embody in this society of order?

Or, how to analyze the Olympics without linking them to the culture of the body, the medicine and philosophy that are developing in ancient times? Want to detach these practices from companies that found and organize them is - to strictly speaking - impossible. This dynamic also determines the links that combine sports and recreation. Paul Yonnet points out that "the sporting phenomenon is leisure" in that "Rests entirely on a social demand consisting of two elements: a demand for direct sport and a request for a show<sup>1</sup>", an idea that joins that Pierre Bourdieu when he evokes sports speaking of "social demand" and "social conditions of possibility of the appropriation of

different sports products and products, practical golf or skiing, reading The Team or report televised World Cup football<sup>2</sup>". There is well here a couple who does little or better, and this, for a long time. Since we practice the history of sport in the long term, two approaches are opposed. On the one hand, there is the theory of permanence, for which sport belongs to the sphere of the game of which he is the continuity. As such, it has always existed.

In contrast, the proponents of the theory of rupture, more numerous and more influential, argue that the Modern sport is radically different from the physical activities that preceded it. Because it results of the advent of industrial society, sport contemporary proposes a temporality proper, built and specific<sup>3</sup>. To distinguish what is Stone seals were often used in ancient civilizations. In exchanges, for example, they were used to print a brand on the occasion of a purchase or to ensure that work had been done. The seal is essentially a carved or engraved material to leave an imprint on the clay. In addition to having economic significance, the seal served to assert authority. Some had to bring luck; others had a religious or magical meaning. Such seals are found mainly in Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Greece, the Indus Valley, and Crete. They were mostly used in commercial towns and caravan passageways. Two kinds of seals were used during the history of antiquity. These are: the print and the cylinder. It was enough to apply pressure for the first to transmit a fingerprint. As for the second, it required a rotation movement on the clay to print a character. It seems that Syria, Mesopotamia and Egypt used both kinds of seals. Mesopotamia favored the use of the stamp seal; Syria has always hesitated between the two. As for Crete and the Indus Valley, they knew both ways but these people seem to have opted for the stamp seal.<sup>1</sup> The stone seals had

different shapes and they were made of various materials . Most often it was soapstone. The themes engraved on them touched a great variety of subjects; which allowed an excellent understanding of Minoan life. In addition to seals showing military, magical and religious objects, there were others about music, economic and social life and of course sports and games.

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This is an object of history foreground that allows to approach the very essence of each great moment of history. How to understand the advent of gymnastics in the nineteenth century without taking into consideration the rise of nation-states? How? 'Or' What to evaluate the entertainments at the court of Louis XIV without speaking of the foundations of royal absolutism? What to say about medieval tournaments if you do not bother to bring them back to the ideal of the fighter that knights embody in this society of order?

Or, how to analyze the ancient Olympic Games without attaching them to the culture of the body, to medicine and to the philosophy that develop in antiquity? Want to detach these practices from the companies that found them and organize is - strictly speaking - impossible.

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In contrast, more and more influential breakout theory proponents argue that modern sport radically different from the physical activities that preceded it. Because it results from the advent of society contemporary sport proposes a temporality that is specific, constructed and specific. To distinguish what is the sport of what is not, Allen Guttmann points out the seven criteria whose presence qualifies sport – these are secularism, equal opportunities, specialization, rationalization of practices, bureaucratization, quantification of performances and finally the quest for records. On this account, the results are without appeal: only the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries meet these criteria that were developed from even these three centuries, so that of this circle are excluded all previous eras.

For his part, Norbert Elias refers to sport as an element of the dynamics of Western societies much wider and longer: the process of civilization of manners, the pacification of attitudes and emotions. Sport is then an organized group activity that relies on a competition between two or more parties that requires physical effort and who obeys rules, some of which limit the use of physical force. At the time for the sport.

What about Hobbies ? Some define them by a negative approach, which is what they are not: work. For others, they focus on occupations and activities during free time, non-productive and cultural activities, playful, sporty, with an educational dimension. Here again, thousands of pages would not be enough to decide the question of whether recreation already existed before the Industrial Revolution. Joffre Dumazedier makes them rest on principles of recreation, entertainment and development, claiming that only the Industrial Revolution lets talk about leisure: "Some consider that leisure existed at all periods, in all civilizations.

This is not our point of view. There can therefore be free time felt as such only from the moment when there is a well-defined working time, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Here again, the idea is beautiful, but does not account for the complexity of ancient societies. Many historians suggest today that we should go beyond the imposed framework. Johan Huizinga, with his *Homo ludens* (1938), "the man who plays", insists on the importance of the act of playing. For the historian, the game is consubstantial with the culture and the very foundation of the civilization. For his part, Roger Caillois sets four categories to qualify the game: the role of competition (*agôn*), the chance (*alea*), simulacrum or illusion (*mimicry*) or vertigo (*ilinx*) while specifying two antagonistic poles: the spontaneous entertainment (*paidia*) which opposes arbitrary conventions (*ludus*). In addition, the thing is of importance, that the activity must be free, that is to say, chosen to maintain its playfulness, to be separated, therefore circumscribed within the limits of space and time, uncertain in that the outcome is not known in advance, unproductive;

it produces neither wealth nor wealth, it is regulated, therefore subject to rules that suspend ordinary laws and finally fictional, that is to say accompanied by a fictitious consciousness of the second reality.

Descriptions of Seals In this work, we will find the descriptions of eighteen of the twenty-five seals of the Oxford Museum. Seven seals were thus left aside because they brought nothing new. The study of Minoan seals on sports and games shows us that hunting occupies an important place in the life of that time. A first example, that of the first seal photographed. It consists of a rectangular figure in yellow steatite of the first period. We see a hunter carrying two goats on a stick (photo n° 1). As other seals reveal, different animals were hunted during this period. For example, lions, birds, wild boars, ibex, deer, wolves, sheep and bulls are known. The following seal comes from the Middle Minoan period (photo 2). It has the shape of a rock crystal disc whose surface is convex. We see a hunting dog wearing a collar, attacking a wild goat. Two other seals of the same period, illustrating the dog used for bull hunting, can be added to this study. The first is a lenticular plate of green basalt or porphyry (photo n° 3). It probably represents a hunt: two dogs attacking a bull and a man jumping over it. It is likely that we have here the illustration of a bull hunting accompanied by jumps over the bulls. Although some of the stone has been lost, there is no difficulty in recognizing the jumper stage of a forward somersault over a bull. This dangerous and difficult maneuver for an acrobat is well highlighted on this seal and on other Minoan artistic works. The fourth seal is a

basalt lenticular in Sparta (photo 4). He describes a rural scene. A dog attacks a bull while a slender man performs a jump over the animal. The drawing clearly indicates that the athlete passes over the bull and lands farther than the animal. This scene has been classified as a hunt, but it is quite possible that the artist only intended to describe a peasant way of performing a jump over a bull. During this exercise, dogs were used to distract the bull. The acrobat could thus perform his perilous jump. Moreover, it has happened that Minoan seals represent a hunt for bull without appearing the jump already mentioned. This is the case for example of a hematite lenticular seal (photo n ° 5), which clearly shows us a bull caught in a net. The sixth seal (photo n ° 6), a creamy gray-brown striped agate, shows us a hunter driving bulls into an enclosure where one of these animals seems to have managed to escape. According to Evans, the man was preparing to take the animal with a lasso. To better understand this scene, it was confronted with two other seals and a stamp because the artist remained confused in his drawing. The specialists who studied it are still wondering whether it is a jump, a capture, a fight or a hunt. Powerless to answer this question, they wanted to do better, but without success, wondering if the activities of the first four seals were performed separately or together during a country game. The seventh seal (photo 7) is made of Spartan basalt. The action takes place in the country; we see a bull whose head is dramatically thrown backwards. This scene gives the impression that an individual jumped on the bull from behind and that the animal was grabbed by the horns. It is a scene quite common for the time. In a rodeo today, the attacker would jump off his horse. A similar scene is drawn on another Minoan seal, not represented here, in veined agate and of lenticular form. You can see a bull galloping or jumping in the air. The attacker is above the bull in a very aggressive position since he holds the animal by the horns. The man who stands under the bull, witnessed the tragedy and he saw the danger. He seems hurt or dead.

## **II. Conclusion:**

There are three important conclusions that we wish to mention as a result of our findings. 1. It seems that the Egyptians have managed to keep most of their games and sports through the ages despite the various foreign cultural influences and conquests. 2. The general situation of the country has influenced sports and games. This influence was favorable when the country was prosperous; it was negative when the country became weak. 3. Several games and sports that appear in modern physical education programs and in international competitions were known by the Egyptians 3,000 years before Christ.

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