

**SOURCES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN
PRIMITIVE SOCIETY**

Turdimuratov Jengis Auezovich,

Associate Professor, Department of Theory and Methods
of Physical Culture, Karakalpak State University.

Artiqbaeva Dilnoza Dawletmuratovna,

1st graduate Master's student of
Karakalpak State University Named After Berdaq.

Annotation: The history of physical culture has its roots in the very ancient stages of human development - in the period when all mental and physical activities were aimed solely at ensuring survival. The article analyzes the concepts of forms of physical education during the early stages of social organization and the order in which these forms were studied by scholars.

Keywords: simple system, instinctive attack, simple games and exercises, throwing.

Primitive society was the first socio-economic formation in human history, divided into specific stages and characterized by unique features of human development and the emergence of physical culture. The life, economy, and culture of primitive people attracted the attention of scholars from various countries.

There are many theories regarding the origin of physical culture. Some researchers believed that the physical activities of early humans were unconscious, purposeless, and instinctive; that physical education had a religious origin and was not directly related to social needs (German historians Dim, Kerbs, Gillette, and others).

Other scholars - such as Bücher, Gross, Spencer, and Letourneau - argued that play was the primary element in human life, while labor was secondary. According to them, labor was contrasted with physical culture and interpreted as a "free game" that freed a person from life's difficulties.

The question of the origin of physical education is one of the most important in the history of physical culture and has great methodological significance. Many scientists have tried to explain this issue in their studies, contributing significantly to its understanding, although their opinions differed.

While it is generally accepted that physical education began in the early stages of social development, its emergence and evolution remain insufficiently explored. Based on existing sources and logical reasoning about the earliest manifestations of physical activity, certain conclusions can be drawn.

Scholars have analyzed the question through the following theories:

The play theory (Schiller's approach)

The magic theory (first described by Reinach)

The surplus energy theory (Spencer)

In addition, foreign researchers such as Letourneau, Espinas, and Gross suggested that physical education originated from the observation of animal games. Freud and his followers argued that play was not a symbol of human dignity, but rather a means of escaping life's difficulties into the world of imagination.

Theories about the origins of physical culture and religious rituals are interconnected. Researchers such as Bücher, Nering, Maksimov, and Sternberg confirmed that animal training for hunting evolved from simple games and racial instincts.

Huxley and Vogt, on the other hand, claimed that physical training was inherited biologically from humans' animal ancestors, seeing no fundamental difference between the subconscious actions of animals and the conscious activities of humans.

G.V. Plekhanov scientifically proved that ancient games and exercises arose not from biological instincts, but from human labor. Archaeological findings have revealed artifacts of ancient culture, showing that humanity's history of development extends back 150,000 years B.C.

Through labor, human appearance, higher nervous activity, body structure, and functions improved. Hunting large animals was the main source of life. Successful hunts required coordinated efforts from all tribe members using well-prepared and tested weapons. Early humans invented throwing methods, learning to control muscle movements and measure the strength applied based on distance to the target. Running and jumping developed as part of magical rituals related to hunting or escaping enemies. Over time, combined forms of long-distance running, jumping, and throwing appeared.

The invention of the bow brought major changes to people's lifestyles. Stable settlements emerged in fertile valleys and plains, rich in wildlife. Cave paintings depicting hunting and fighting scenes appeared, reflecting both art and communication.

This period marked the appearance of early elements of physical culture.

Many competitive games directly connected to labor began to have educational value and were used among different age and gender groups. The natural division of labor by sex and age was reflected in the developing physical culture. Primitive art also played an important role, enriching people's emotions and intellect.

Repetitive labor-related and defensive movements in games eventually became independent exercises, contributing to the growth of organized physical activity.

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