

PANKRATION : IN ANCIENT GREECE Read Free

Pankration: A Deadly Martial Art Form from Ancient Greece. Pankration – Combat Martial Arts from Ancient Greece. Pankration.



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The word Pankration comes from the Greek pan all and kratos power. Our early ancient sources contain a mix of fact and fiction, so it is difficult to ascertain exactly when Pankration developed as a historical phenomenon. However, we do know that Pankration was regarded as the premier Olympic combat event, and was introduced at the games of BC. The date of the first Olympics is generally agreed by historians to have been BC. Many athletic contests which made it to the Olympics had been around for several centuries prior, and this is most likely the case with Pankration. Thus it seems reasonable to assume that it was invented at least a few hundred years before the first Olympics, since boxing and wrestling had been known in the Greek world dating back thousands of years. Those who practiced Pankration were known as Pankratiasts. Hoplites would use their wrestling skills to stay balanced and get back to their feet quicker than the enemy if they fell down.

Getting back to your feet quicker was often the difference between life and death. Over time, the accomplishments of the strongest and most successful Pankratiasts formed the basis of legendary stories and mythical embellishments. One famous tale focuses on the Olympic victor Polydamas, who was rumored to have killed three fully armed Immortals elite Persian warriors with only a stick, after the king Darius invited Polydamas to his court and had him ambushed to test his skills.

The available evidence suggests that grappling was more integral than striking and that most fights ended on the ground, so those better trained in wrestling and submissions had an advantage in Pankration fights. There were two kinds of Pankration: ano pankration when the fight had to stay standing, similar to kickboxing and kato pankration in which the fight could go to the ground. Only two rules prevailed: no biting and no eye gouging similar to the early UFC events.

In Sparta, even these techniques were allowed during their bouts. Pankratiasts would compete naked in a wrestling-pit, and covered themselves in oil. The referee would use a rod to enforce the rules. There were no rounds or time limits, and the fight only ended once somebody gave up or was rendered unconscious or dead. Fighters would signal defeat by raising their arm or tapping out. Fatalities were common, especially by strangulation, as many fighters refused to give up after being caught in a choke. Many believe that the techniques were developed out of necessity and then perfected by the hoplite soldiers, who were trained to enter tough battlefield conditions and were then instructed to be victorious.

They were armed with a shield and sword and had a unique way of standing with their shields locked in order to increase their chances of being victorious. If the hoplites had to break formation for any reason, they fought with a combination of their swords, shields, and using combat tactics from pankration. Another thing that is unknown is exactly how much this fighting style influenced other styles of the world. There are some distinct similarities between pankration and other fighting styles, such as Asian styles of martial arts. However, whether the styles had evolved separately or were influenced by each other is up for debate.

It is widely understood that pankration was a mixed martial art that involved fighting tactics, maneuvers from boxing, and also wrestling and grappling tactics. The goal of any pankration fighter was to use whichever methods they needed in order to be

victorious. Pankration techniques included kicks, punches, grappling, arm locks, takedown maneuvers, and more. As it evolved into a competitive sport, a series of rules were developed. One of them was Coragus, a highly skilled and decorated warrior who challenged Dioxippus to armed combat in front of Alexander and the rest of the troops. Coragus fought with weapons and full armor, while Dioxippus showed up armed only with a club. The Romans eventually adopted pankration, which they called pancratium in Latin. But in AD, this ancient martial art, along with gladiatorial combat and all pagan festivals, was abolished by the Christian Byzantine emperor Theodosius I. With this act, pankration would gradually disappear over the centuries, until a Greek-American martial artist named Jim Arvanitis rediscovered it

Pankration scene: The pankratiast on the right tries to gouge his opponent's eye; the umpire is about to strike him for this foul.

British Museum, London. Public Domain. However, despite all the effort Arvanitis has put into the revival of pankration, every historian agrees that the modern version of pankration has nothing in common with the brutal and bloody martial art that Spartan, Athenian, and Macedonian warriors used as a natural weapon. Featured image: Pankratiasts fighting. Theodoros Karasavvas, J. When called upon to do Read More. Ancient Origins has been quoted by: At Ancient Origins, we believe that one of the most important fields of knowledge we can pursue as human beings is our beginnings. And while some people may seem content with the story as it stands, our view is that there exist countless mysteries, scientific anomalies and surprising artifacts that have yet to be discovered and explained. The goal of Ancient Origins is to highlight recent archaeological discoveries, peer-reviewed academic research and evidence, as well as offering alternative viewpoints and explanations of science, archaeology, mythology, religion and history around the globe.

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The all-time greats of the Ancient Olympic Games

Such a history I hope will enable us to examine the foundations of our sport so we can better understand its current shape and structure, both as an athletic competition and as a legitimate enterprise rapidly gaining popularity among mainstream audiences. This first article in a proposed four-part series will chronicle the appearance of ancient Greek Pankration as the original incarnation of MMA. The second article will discuss the gladiatorial games of the Romans and their influence on the perception and organization of current MMA events. The third article in my series examines the resurgence of modern Pankration and cross-training through pivotal though perhaps lesser known figures such as Jim Arvanitis and Aris Makris, and the legendary Bruce Lee. The word Pankration comes from the Greek pan all and kratos power. Our early ancient sources contain a mix of fact and fiction, so it is difficult to ascertain exactly when Pankration developed as a historical phenomenon. However, we do know that Pankration was regarded as the premier Olympic combat event, and was introduced at the games of BC.

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One famous tale focuses on the Olympic victor Polydamas, who was rumored to have killed three fully armed Immortals elite Persian warriors with only a stick, after the king Darius invited Polydamas to his court and had him ambushed to test his skills. The available evidence suggests that grappling was more integral than striking and that most fights ended on the ground, so those better trained in wrestling and submissions had an advantage in Pankration fights. There were two kinds of Pankration: ano pankration when the fight had to stay standing, similar to kickboxing and kato pankration in which the fight could go to the ground. Only two rules prevailed: no biting and no eye gouging similar to the early UFC events. In Sparta, even these techniques were allowed during their bouts. Pankratiasts would compete naked in a wrestling-pit, and covered themselves in oil.

It is interesting to note that the exact origins of pankration are not entirely known. However, it is assumed that it was developed somewhere in the 7th Century B. Many believe that the techniques were developed out of necessity and then perfected by the hoplite soldiers, who were trained to enter tough battlefield conditions and were then instructed to be victorious. They were armed with a shield and sword and had a unique way of standing with their shields locked in order to increase their chances of being victorious.

If the hoplites had to break formation for any reason, they fought with a combination of their swords, shields, and using combat tactics from pankration. Another thing that is unknown is exactly how much this fighting style influenced other styles of the world. There are some distinct similarities between pankration and other fighting styles, such as Asian styles of martial arts. However, whether the styles had evolved separately or were influenced by each other is up for debate. It is widely understood that pankration was a mixed martial art that involved fighting tactics, maneuvers from boxing, and also wrestling and grappling tactics. The goal of any pankration fighter was to use whichever methods they needed in order to be victorious.

Tydeus is described to have followed this takedown with a choke while applying the "grapevine" body lock on the prone opponent. As the pankration competitions were held outside and in the afternoon, appropriately positioning one's face vis-a-vis the low sun was a major tactical objective. The pankratiast, as well as the boxer, did not want to have to face the sun, as this would partly blind him to the blows of the opponent and make accurate delivery of strikes to specific targets difficult. While this positioning was of paramount importance in boxing, which involved only upright striking with the eyes facing straight, it was also important in pankration, especially in the beginning of the competition and as long as the athletes remained standing. However, there are indications that staying on one's feet was generally considered a positive thing, while touching the knees to the ground or being put to the ground was overall considered disadvantageous.

It has been suggested that in antiquity, as today, falling to one's knees was a metaphor for coming to a disadvantage and putting oneself at risk of losing the fight. Regarding the choice of attacking into the attack of the opponent versus defending and retreating, there are indications, e. Dio Chrysostom notes that retreat under fear tends to result in even greater injuries, while attacking before the opponent strikes is less injurious and could very well end in victory. As indicated by Plato in his Laws, an important element of strategy was to understand if the opponent had a weak or untrained side and to force him to operate on that side and generally take advantage of that weakness. For example, if the athlete recognizes that the opponent is strictly right-handed, he could circle away from the right hand of the opponent and towards the left side of the opponent. Moreover, if the opponent is weak in his left-side throws, the athlete could aim to position himself accordingly.

Training in ambidexterity was instrumental in both applying this strategy and not falling victim to it. There are indications that the methods and techniques used by different athletes varied, i. While specific styles taught by different teachers, in the mode of Asian martial arts, cannot be excluded, it is very clear including

in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* that the objective of a teacher of combat sports was to help each of his athletes to develop his personal style that would fit his strengths and weaknesses. The preparation of pankratiasts included a very wide variety of methods, [5] most of which would be immediately recognizable by the trainers of modern high level athletes, including competitors in modern mixed martial arts competitions.

These methods included among others the periodization of training; a wealth of regimens for the development of strength, speed-strength, speed, stamina, and endurance; specialized training for the different stages of competition i. Nutrition, massage, and other recovery techniques were used very actively by pankratiasts. At the time of the revival of the Olympic Games, pankration was not reinstated as an Olympic event. Neo-pankration modern pankration was first introduced to the martial arts community by Greek-American combat athlete Jim Arvanitis in and later exposed worldwide in when he was featured on the cover of *Black Belt*. Arvanitis continually refined his reconstruction with reference to original sources. His efforts are also considered pioneering in what became mixed martial arts MMA. Lazaros, founder of modern Pankration Athlima, the technical examination programma, the endyma, the shape of the Palaestra and the terminology of Pankration Athlima, in the sport was accepted by FILA, [27] known today as United World Wrestling, which governs the Olympic wrestling codes, as an associated discipline and a "form of modern Mixed Martial Art.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. For the plant genus, see *Pancreas* plant. Two athletes competing in the pankration. Panathenaic amphora, made in Athens in — BC, during the archonship of Niketes. From Capua. Studies in the Terminology of Greek Combat Sport. Frankfurt: Hain. ISBN In John Murray ed. A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities. Retrieved 10 April Ali vs. BenBella Books, Inc. History of Greece, Vol. The Origins of Martial Arts: Pankration. Archived from the original on 16 March Retrieved 6 August Archived from the original on 12 August Ancient Olympic Games. Diaulos Dolichos Hoplitodromos Stadion. Boxing Pankration Wrestling. Herald and Trumpet contest Pentathlon. Olympic Games portal Category. Ancient Olympic sports. Olympic Games portal. Martial arts. List of styles History Timeline Hard and soft. Portal Outline. Authority control. Integrated Authority File Germany. United States. Namespaces Article Talk. Views Read Edit View history.

Help Learn to edit Community portal Recent changes Upload file. Download as PDF Printable version. Wikimedia Commons. Boxing and Wrestling. Introduced in BC in the 33rd Olympiad. Wikimedia Commons has media related to Pankration.

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It was said that some of the heroes of the myths, particularly Heracles Hercules and Theseus, used a form of this martial art when they fought. When Theseus fought the Minotaur, he is said to have used this form of combat to ultimately become victorious against the monster. Heracles was also said to have used a form of pankration when he fought the Nemean Lion. Both of these heroes are depicted in some of the art from Ancient Greece as using some of the combat techniques that are common to pankration. It is interesting to note that the exact origins of pankration are not entirely known. However, it is assumed that it was developed somewhere in the 7th Century B. Many believe that the techniques were developed out of necessity and then perfected by the hoplite soldiers, who were trained to enter tough battlefield conditions and were then instructed to be victorious. They were armed with a shield and sword and had a unique way of standing with their shields locked in order to increase their chances of being victorious.

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The goal of any pankration fighter was to use whichever methods they needed in order to be victorious. Pankration techniques included kicks, punches, grappling, arm locks, takedown maneuvers, and more. Following him, the other athletes do the same. Whip bearers are standing next to the athletes, holding their hands and not allowing them to read the letter they have drawn. When everyone has drawn a lot, the altyarch, or one of the Hellanodikai walks around and looks at the lots of the athletes as they stand in a circle. He then joins the athlete holding the alpha to the other who has drawn the alpha for wrestling or pankration, the one who has the beta to the other with the beta, and the other matching inscribed lots in the same manner.

A copy cast of wrestlers from, displayed at the horticultural center in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia. CC0 1. Nonetheless, contemporary historians who have researched and studied the history of pankration have come to the conclusion that this martial art

is much older in reality than most historians originally thought. The first mention of pankration takes us back to the mythological stories of Heracles and Theseus who, according to the myths, both used techniques of pankration to fight the Nemean Lion and the Minotaur, respectively.

Pankratiasts fighting under the eyes of a trainer. Side A of an Attic black-figure skyphos, c. 480 BC. He takes us back to the 2nd millennium BC, which makes pankration one of the most ancient martial arts. One of the most famous stories involving a pankratiast and a famous historical figure is that of Dioxippus and Alexander the Great. A battle between two soldiers. Alexander was known for his passion for combat sports, so he made Dioxippus an elite member of his close circle, which made many of his soldiers jealous.

One of them was Coragus, a highly skilled and decorated warrior who challenged Dioxippus to armed combat in front of Alexander and the rest of the troops. Coragus fought with weapons and full armor, while Dioxippus showed up armed only with a club. The Romans eventually adopted pankration, which they called *pancratium* in Latin. But in AD, this ancient martial art, along with gladiatorial combat and all pagan festivals, was abolished by the Christian Byzantine emperor Theodosius I. With this act, pankration would gradually disappear over the centuries, until a Greek-American martial artist named Jim Arvanitis rediscovered it. Pankration scene: The pankratiast on the right tries to gouge his opponent's eye; the umpire is about to strike him for this foul.

British Museum, London. Public Domain. However, despite all the effort Arvanitis has put into the revival of pankration, every historian agrees that the modern version of pankration has nothing in common with the brutal and bloody martial art that Spartan, Athenian, and Macedonian warriors used as a natural weapon. Featured image: Pankratiasts fighting. Theodoros Karasavvas, J.

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