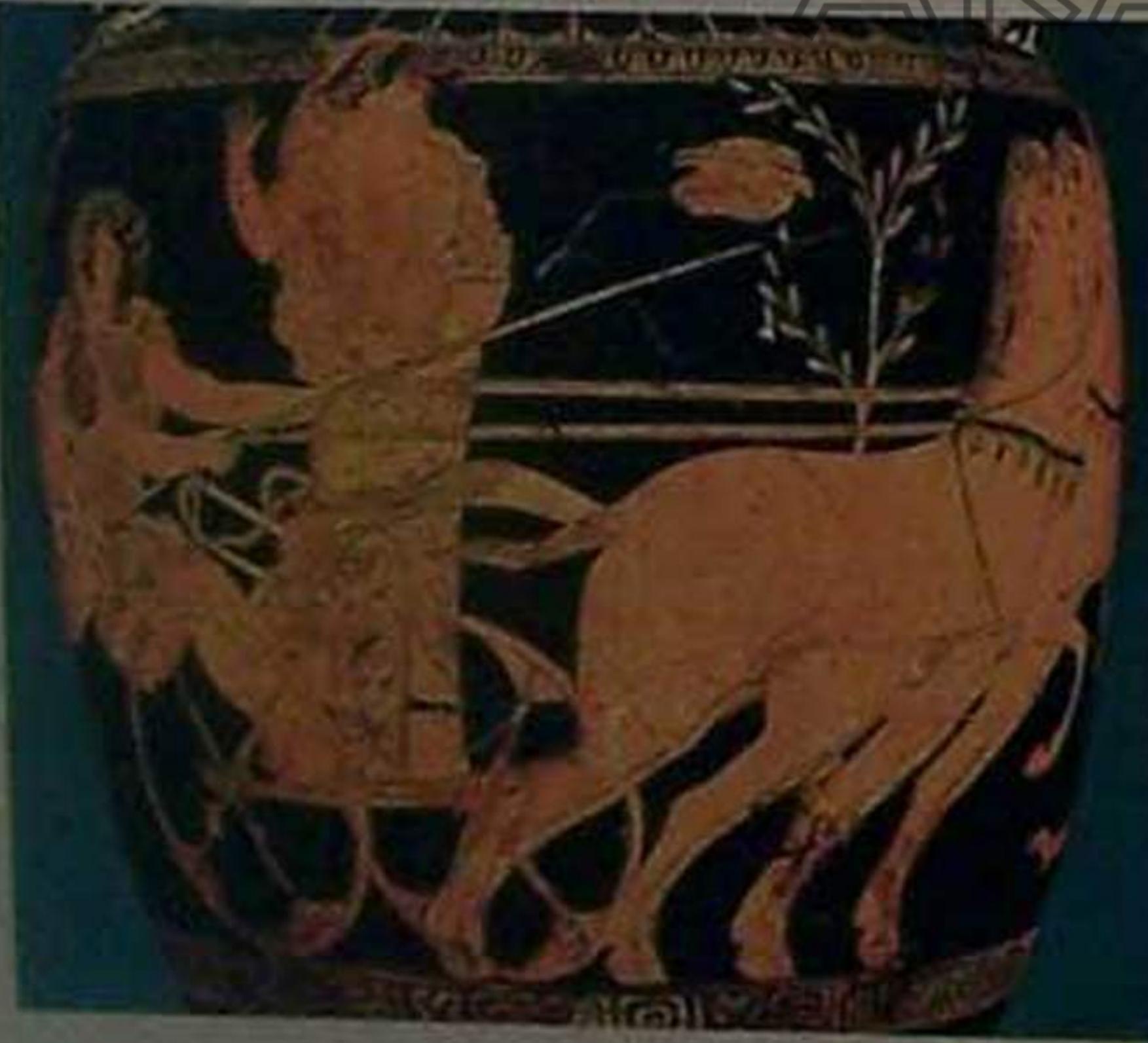


Ελιά και αθλητισμός



The Olive Tree and Athletics

Perseus was the most important mythological figure from the Peloponnesian. He was a race winner and the first name to be associated with the Olympic Games. Oenomaus, king of Elis and Pisae, married Eriope, the daughter of Danans, with whom he had a daughter Hippodamia. Hippodamia was so beautiful, that even her father, Oenomaus, fell in love. Since an oracle had stated that Oenomaus was to die when his daughter married, he attempted to prevent her from marrying. To this end he organized chariot races, for which Hippodamia was to be the prize. Oenomaus, however, made it impossible for anyone else but himself to win the race. He had two sets of gifts given him by his father, immortal horses swifter than the wind and weapons that unfailingly brought death. Perseus had fallen in love with Hippodamia, and so, when the time came for the race, he jostled with Myrtilus, the charioteer of Oenomaus. Oenomaus was dragged by his own horses and killed. Perseus then murdered Myrtilus and claimed Hippodamia for himself.

After the killing of Myrtilus, Perseus was purified by Hephaestus and ruled over in Pisae. He organized funerary games in honour of Oenomaus as part of the process of purification and these funerary games were believed to be the forerunners of the Olympic Games. Pausanias (5.13.1-2) states that there was a shrine at Olympia, called the *Perseion*, where annual sacrifices were performed. Ancient commentators on the Iliad and the Odysseys of Homer also state that the Olympic Games were originated and held to commemorate Perseus. The track events in honour of Hercules and the chariot races became two of the most important contests. The prize, of great symbolic value, was the wreath leaves from the oleanders that grew in the area.

A large, stylized, black and white paper cutout of a peacock's head and neck, featuring intricate feather patterns, is positioned in front of a window. The background shows a blurred interior space with a dark vase and a framed picture on the wall.

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