

draft #1

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
PREPARED REMARKS FOR THE LIGHTING OF THE OLYMPIC FLAME
OLYMPIA, GREECE
MARCH 30, 1996**

I am honored to represent the American people at this celebration of the 100th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. It is a special privilege to be here in Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics, and of so many ideals and institutions that define our civilization our today.

The flame we have just kindled will serve as the guiding light of the centennial games this summer in Atlanta. But while this new flame came to life just minutes ago, it is endowed with the spirit of thousands of athletes and Olympic contests that have taken place here and around the world.

That spirit stretches back nearly three thousand years, to the first foot race held here at Olympia and the presentation of a crown of olives to the victor [Koroibos of Elis]. The same spirit grew only greater as the peasant Spiridon Loues crossed the finish line in the first Olympic marathon one hundred years ago here in Athens, inspiring the princes of Greece to carry him to a place of honor in the royal box.

These Olympic games, which have moved princes to lift peasants onto their shoulders, emphasize an inescapable dimension of the human experience -- that we are all members of one global family. Our victories and defeats are not purely our own; they are shared with the world.

Every four years, the family of nations gathers to pursue excellence and to find peace and camaraderie through sport. That is the heart of the Olympic ideal. It is a testament to the power and vision of Greek civilization.

In Ancient Greece, warring city states called a truce during the Olympics so that all of Greece's finest athletes, warriors, poets, and artists could attend the games and honor the gods. In the modern Olympics, distinctions of class, nationality, and race are forgotten in contests judged by individual strength, speed, and endurance.

Through these games, we have forged bonds of international goodwill and understanding. This summer will mark the largest gathering of nations at an Olympics. Young people from 197 countries, who have long been striving to fulfill their God-given

potentials, are serving as role models for children around the world. They will go to Atlanta not just to test their abilities against their counterparts, but also to build bridges of respect, tolerance and friendship.

The flame that leaves Olympia today on a four-month journey through Athens, across the Atlantic and through the United States, carries much more than light and heat. It carries the spirit of our family of nations, of the earliest runners,, of Spiridon Loues, and of the young women and men who will convene in Atlanta this summer. Through them, the Olympic spirit will only grow faster, higher and stronger.

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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
PREPARED STATEMENT UPON ARRIVAL IN GREECE**

I am pleased to have this opportunity to visit Greece for the first time and to represent my country at the ceremonial lighting of the torch at Olympia on March 30. During my stay, I *hope to meet* ^{try} with the leaders of your country as well as private ~~Greek~~ ^{hope to meet} citizens from many walks of life. I hope to celebrate the special bonds between our two countries and peoples. Many Americans trace their roots to Greece and their heritage has greatly enriched the American experience. As the birthplace of democracy, Greece is the source from which many of our own values springs. I hope that in some small way my visit will build upon the important friendship that Greece and the United States have enjoyed for many years.

Greece: Arrival and Departure Statements

Arrival

ceremonial I am very pleased to have this opportunity to visit Greece. *my country* It will be ~~my~~ great honor to represent ~~the United States~~ at the lighting of the ~~Olympic~~ torch at Olympia on March 30. During my stay I ~~also~~ hope to meet with the leaders of your country as well as private Greek citizens from many walks of life. I hope to celebrate the great and special ties that exist between our two countries and peoples. Many Americans trace their roots to the shores of Greece and our Greek ethnic heritage has greatly enriched the American experience. As the birthplace of democracy, Greece is the source from which the freedom we so greatly cherish springs. I hope that my visit can contribute in some small way to enhancing the warm friendship that exists between us. *for the first time*

Departure

As I depart from this wonderful country, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the warm hospitality extended to me by the Greek people. It was my great honor to represent President Clinton at the lighting of the torch at Olympia as it begins its long journey to Atlanta. I was also grateful for the opportunity to meet Greek citizens from many walks of life. Many of their relatives did themselves undertake long journeys to the United States, helping to create the special bonds between our two nations. I was thrilled by the great beauty of Greece and the warm friendliness of the Greek people. I will take back to America many fond memories as well as the hope that I have contributed in some small way to the friendship between our two peoples. *The American people are excited about hosting the Olympic games this summer in Atlanta and it is a*

Billy Payne Olympia Speech
By George Hirthler

CEO of Olympics

In honor of the Centennial Olympic Games, we have journeyed to the sacred grounds of Olympia today, making a pilgrimage that so many before us have made, to witness the glorious lighting of the torch, to behold with our own eyes the purity of the Olympic flame, to stand where so many have stood in awe of a global tradition that links generation to generation, country to country, city to city, runner to runner in the endless and magnificent cycles of the Greek Olympiad.

But we have also come — as a delegation of Atlantans entrusted with the prestigious honor of hosting the Centennial Olympic Games — to pay tribute to the greatness of Greece and the dream that you have given to the world...a dream that all humanity has embraced.

It is fitting that we pay homage to Ancient Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic idea. In the annals of history, men and women have long held in the highest esteem the birthplaces of great ideas. And no idea is grander — or holds greater potential for the benefit of mankind — than the idea born here. An idea that elevates higher than any other, the ideals of human excellence, the spirit of friendship, the justice of fair play, the mandate of international understanding and the need for world peace.

The Olympic idea is an idea of transforming power. It possesses the power to change lives, to exalt heroes, to rebuild cities, to shape history, to unite the world.

Those of us who are here from Atlanta today have experienced this power personally. Nine years ago, it inspired a dream that transformed my life and ultimately revealed the destiny of our city.

It would be impossible for me -- for us -- to express the depth of our gratitude for that transformation, for the inspiration we drew from the dream that was born here.

The flame you will light today is the essence of that dream and the enduring expression of that power. Above all else, it is the bright and pure symbol of the Olympic ideal.

In a few short weeks, you will entrust the flame to us -- to fly to America to begin the final leg of a journey that embodies the noblest aspirations of humanity.

As we receive the torch from you, we will remember that it is your dream that we hold so gratefully in our hands. It is your gift that we shall share with the world. It is the flame of Olympia that burns within our souls. It is the idea of Olympia that lives within our hearts ...

It is the legend of your land -- the greatness of the Greek legacy -- that we shall celebrate when the world gathers in Atlanta this summer.

Out of our deep and abiding respect for the traditions that you have entrusted to us, we consider our mission as sacred as the hallowed grounds we stand on today.

It is our mission to spread the message of Greece and Olympia to the world through the celebration of the Centennial ... to honor you and your land by carrying the flame farther than it has ever been carried, to hold it higher than it has ever been held, to pass the torch to more runners than ever before - to work with all our strength to ensure that the pure and eternal symbolism of the flame burns brighter than ever before in the eyes of the world.

It is our mission to ensure that when the cauldron is lit in Atlanta and the flame ignites the celebration of the century - there is immediate and universal recognition that the Olympic Ideal - the Greek Ideal - is the source of humanity's greatest hope for the future.

We shall guard the sacred Olympic flame on every step of its journey. We shall never turn our eyes away from it. With you and all of your countrymen, we will proclaim "This flame, our eyes."

3/22/96

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STATEMENT FOR THE LIGHTING OF THE OLYMPIC FLAME
MARCH 30, 1996

I am honored to represent the American people at this celebration of the 100th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. It is a special privilege to be here in Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics, and of the many traditions and institutions that sustain and enrich the human family to this day.

The flame we have just kindled will serve as the guiding light of the centennial games this summer in Atlanta. But while this new flame came to life just minutes ago, it is endowed with the spirit of thousands of athletes and Olympic contests that have taken place here and around the world.

That spirit stretches back nearly three thousand years, to the first foot race held here at Olympia and the presentation of a crown of olives to the victor [Koroibos of Elis]. The same spirit grew only greater as the peasant Spiridon Loues crossed the finish line in the first Olympic marathon one hundred years ago, inspiring the princes of Greece to carry him to a place of honor in the royal box.

These Olympic games, which have moved princes to lift peasants onto their shoulders, emphasize an inescapable dimension of the human experience -- that we are all members of one human family. Our victories and defeats are not purely our own; they are shared with the world.

Every four years, the family of nations gathers to pursue excellence and to find peace and camaraderie through sport. That is the heart of the Olympic ideal. It is a testament to the power and vision of Greek civilization.

In Ancient Greece, warring city states would call a truce during the Olympics so that all of Greece's finest athletes, warriors, poets, and artists could attend the games and honor the gods. In the modern Olympics, distinctions of class, nationality, and race are forgotten in contests judged by individual strength, speed, and endurance.

Through these games, we have forged bonds of international goodwill and understanding. This summer will mark the largest gathering of nations at an Olympics. Young people from 197 countries who have long been striving to fulfill their God-given potentials and serving as role models for children around the world will go to Atlanta not just to test their abilities against their counterparts, but also to build bridges of tolerance and friendship.

So this flame which leaves Olympia today on a four-month

journey through Athens, across the Atlantic to the United States, carries much more than light and heat. It carries the spirit of our family of nations, of Koroibos of Elis, of Spiridon Loues, and of the young women and men who will convene in Atlanta this summer. Through them, the Olympic spirit will only grow faster, higher and stronger.

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3/21/96

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT FOR THE ~~KINDLING~~ OF THE OLYMPIC FLAME
MARCH 30, 1996

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I am honored to represent the American people at this celebration of the 100th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. It is a special privilege to be here in Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics, and of the many traditions and institutions that sustain and enrich the human family to this day.

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These Olympic games, which have moved princes to lift peasants onto their shoulders, emphasize an inescapable dimension of the human experience -- that we are all members of one human family. Our victories and defeats are not purely our own; they are shared with the world.

Through these games, we have respected a common language of perfect tens and world record times, established common rituals in the lighting of the Olympic torch and the parade of nations, and shared a common memory peopled by the triumphs and defeats of our world's greatest athletes.

Most importantly, we have forged bonds of international goodwill and understanding. This summer will mark the largest gathering of nations at an Olympics. Young people from 197 countries who have long been striving to fulfill their God-given

Serving as
~~coordinator~~

potentials and ~~to become~~ role models for their countrymen, will go to Atlanta not just to test their abilities against their counterparts, but also to build bridges of tolerance and friendship.

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT FOR THE KINDLING OF THE OLYMPIC FLAME
MARCH 30, 1996

^{100%} I am honored to represent my husband and the American people at this celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. I am so happy to be here in Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics and of so many other traditions and institutions that continue to sustain and enrich the human family. ^{to represent the American people} ^{It is a special privilege}

^{This summer} The flame we have just kindled will serve as the guiding light of the centennial games in Atlanta. But while this new Olympic flame is just minutes old, the sun which gave it life ^{came to life} has also endowed it with the spirit of thousands of legendary athletes, fiercely-fought contests, and heroic efforts in Olympic contests that have taken place around the world.

^{Date} Long ago, ^{the flame} this sun witnessed the foot race which marked the first games and ^{that} presided over the presentation of a laurel wreath to the victor. Centuries later, the same sun shone on the peasant Spiridon Loues when he retraced the steps of the Greek hero Pheidippides from Marathon to Athens. ^{celebrating} The newspapers say that as Loues claimed victory in the first Olympic marathon for Greece, the princes of Greece lifted the peasant on their shoulders and carried him to a place of honor in the royal box.

^{The Olympic} Through the ages, the games which have inspired princes to lift peasants onto their shoulders have emphasized an inescapable dimension of the human experience -- that we are all members of one human family. In Ancient Greece, warring city states would call a truce every four years so that all of Greece's finest athletes, warriors, poets, and artists could attend the games and honor the gods. In the modern Olympics, distinctions of class, nationality, and race are forgotten in contests judged by individual strength, speed, and endurance. They enabled the great African American runner Jesse Owens to demonstrate the superiority of his talent in the heart of Nazi Germany.

The Olympics is about the individual. The Olympic motto "faster, higher, stronger" reminds us that we can each seek to improve ourselves. There are no limits for our self-improvement. We can each fulfill our god-given potentials.

The Olympics is about nations. Every four years, our countries' finest athletes gather to test themselves against their counterparts in the world, and to find camaraderie in the common language of sport.

The Olympics is about the world. The modern games are the brainchild of a Frenchman who, inspired by the ancient Greek tradition, committed himself to reviving the Olympics for citizens of the world. Through these games, we have forged bonds of international goodwill and understanding. We have respected a common language of perfect tens and world record times; established common rituals in the lighting of the Olympic torch and the parade of nations; and shared a common memory peopled by the triumphs and defeats of our world's greatest athletes.

traditions of Greece in whatever city
testament to power & vision of Greek civilization

So this flame which leaves Olympia today on a four-month journey through Athens, across the Atlantic to the United States, carries much more than light and heat. It carries the legacy of our human family, of Spiridon Loues, of Jesse Owens, and of the young women and men who will convene in Atlanta this summer.

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gravitas
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The hour finally struck when the crowds were admitted to the glistening whiteness of the restored stadium, and King George signaled the re-establishment of the Olympic games with the formal pronouncement: "I declare the opening of the first Olympic games of the modern era."... The group of International Olympic Committee members surrounding the Prince Royal typified the continuing international nature of the enterprise—a character that I was determined to maintain without faltering. Across the way [represented by the Greek audience] stood rampant nationalism reeling at the hope of seeing Athens become the permanent site of the games and of welcoming every four years a flood of flattering and profitable visitors.

BARON PIERRE DE COUBERTIN*

The fulfillment of his young life's dream of the revival of the Olympic games within reach, Baron de Coubertin plunged wholeheartedly into the planning of the games of the 1st Olympiad at Athens. Less than two years remained in which to bring into actual being the celebration that now existed only in the form of a paper declaration by the athletic congress of Paris.

His first act was the nomination of M. Bikelas, who had presided over the discussion of the Olympic games at Paris, as president of the International Olympic Committee. This was in line with the proposal made by Coubertin at the Paris congress that a representative of the country in which the games were to be held should be president of the International Olympic Committee in the period preceding and during the games themselves.

The two Olympic enthusiasts quickly found themselves buried in work and difficulties. While the Greek nation as a whole promptly embraced the idea of the games with wholehearted enthusiasm, Greek officialdom was frankly not so helpful. Greece then, as now, was in a seething political turmoil, and while public approval was evident, official support was lacking.

As a matter of fact, Greece was at the time serving as a political battlefield between Charilaos Trikoupes and Theodore Delyannes, who for more than a dozen years had alternated at the head of the Greek government. At the moment of the award of the Olympic games to Athens, Trikoupes held the upper hand, and while he did not actively oppose the games, his "neutrality" on the question was of such a nature as to discourage much activity in their behalf.

Seeking a nucleus for an organization to handle the details of the games, Bikelas and Coubertin discovered that a sum of money had been left by an Athenian family named Zappas for the purpose of erecting and administering a large building to be known as the Zappeon, in which athletic demonstrations

*Coubertin, *Mémoires olympiques*, Imprimerie d'éditions Paul Rowbaud, Aix-en-Provence, 1931, pp. 36-7.

and contests should be held. As the directors of the Zappas estate were citizens of considerable prominence in Athens, this group was an admirable nucleus around which to build the organization for holding the games.

Under the spell of his consuming interest in the project of reviving the games, Coubertin thought that the people of Athens would leap at the prospect of being first to revive an event that reflected so much credit on their ancestors. He turned the project over to the directors of the Zappeon and settled back to watch his dream come true.

Things began to happen right away. They weren't exactly what Coubertin had anticipated, and his soul, which had craved action on Olympic matters for such a long time, certainly got its fill without delay. Just imagine his embarrassment which he learned that instead of being wildly enthusiastic at the prospects of reviving the games, the directors of the Zappeon were inclined to be just a little chilly to the proposition.

At their head was one Etienne Dragoumis. The organization seemed favorably inclined toward the games, but was undoubtedly under the domination of the Greek premier. When M. Bikelas was suddenly called back to Paris by an unfortunate private matter, the directors of the Zappeon met and in his absence dispatched the following missive to Coubertin:

Athens, Nov. 1, 1894

My dear Baron:

I wish to thank you for the communication you have sent regarding the international Olympic games.

The choice of Athens for the first celebration of the games could not fail to produce a feeling of satisfaction and fond recollections in Greece. It is no less true, however, that the choice of our people because of their illustrious past constitutes for these descendants of the ancient founders of the games a heavy responsibility concerning which I doubt their ability to acquit themselves with the degree of success warranted by this great world celebration voted by the Paris athletic congress. Since his recent stay in Athens M. Bikelas has taken note of the hesitation we have felt since the idea of holding the first games here was known and the official announcement made.

I do not wish to insist on a matter in which our government is particularly interested. How can it think of placing itself at the head of this movement, send out invitations, take the initiative necessary to guarantee success to such a great international festival at a moment when it finds itself facing a great economic crisis at home and facing foreign complications of the most grave nature? The duty that is incumbent upon the government to watch over the dignity of its country and the solicitude it feels toward the great cause we are all so anxious to see revived will probably call for an attitude of extreme reserve.

One could be accused of false pride if he did not admit that, in a new country where there still remains much to be accomplished before it attains suitable conditions for the actual existence of a civilized people, the exact thing that you call "athletic sports" does not exist. It is exactly to such a country that, because of its past history, you wish to award the responsibility of presiding over the first celebration of these games which

are founded upon a new and extremely complicated basis and set of regulations.

The great international fair announced as planned for 1900 in France undoubtedly offers much greater possibilities, should you consider holding the first Olympic games at that time and place. At Paris, with her tremendous resources, the nearness of centers of population and of world tradition, aided by the strongly organized sports societies, the games would be certain of success. Would it not be prudent to set back the opening date of these peaceful modern struggles? The new Olympics would undoubtedly have the *éclat* gained by a more significant date of launching, the opening of a new century.

I have given you, my dear Baron, a summary of the opinions expressed at the meeting of our committee. We trust you will understand how great is our regret at being forced to decline an honor so graciously offered our country and at the same time to deprive ourselves of the opportunity to be associated with the high type of men who will preside over the revival of such a beautiful and historic institution as the Olympic games. Knowing the feebleness of the means at the actual disposal of the Greek people and convinced that the task exceeds our strength, we are left without choice in the matter.

With assurance of highest consideration and my best personal regards, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

ETIENNE DRAGOUMIS

Having been warned by his confrere M. Bikelas that official Athens might take some such actions, the doughty Baron laid plans accordingly. With typical foresight and courage he resolved, first of all, to ensure that the games would be held somewhere in 1896 by communication with Franz Kemeny, the enthusiastic Hungarian member of the International Olympic Committee, in the hope that arrangements could be made to switch the games at a later date, if necessary, to the great Hungarian festival to be held in Budapest in 1896 celebrating the thousandth anniversary of Hungary's existence as a state. Secondly, he resolved to make a personal visit to Athens to head off, if possible, the attempt to reject the games that the letter from M. Dragoumis contained and any others which might arise.

Arriving in Athens while the Dragoumis letter was en route to Paris, Coubertin found two messages awaiting him. One was a letter from Kemeny giving assurances that if worse came to worst in Athens, the Hungarians would come to the rescue and take over the games. The other was a copy of the letter from M. Dragoumis declining the honor of holding the games.

Coubertin promptly answered Dragoumis with a note "doubting the correctness of the resolution passed by his colleagues and expressing the sentiment that only a misunderstanding of the intentions of the International Olympic Committee"* was responsible, closing with the request that the directors of the Zappeon should meet once more to reconsider their action.

The reply to this request was not a meeting of the Zappeon directors but a personal visit from M. Trikoupes, the prime minister, who proved very

*Coubertin, *Une campagne de vingt-et-un ans*, p. 112.

cordial but in substance told Coubertin that he could look around, study the conditions, and "you will be convinced that it is impossible."

A man who had carried the standard of the Olympic games to the point they had reached by this time was not to be headed off either by resolutions of boards of directors or by personal visits from prime ministers. Circulating about Athens, Coubertin quickly became convinced that regardless of the financial depression and the political turmoil, the private citizens of Athens were wildly enthusiastic about the games.

Not only did a few trips about the city assure him that the sites were available properly to stage the many sports contemplated for the games, but everywhere he went he heard the wish expressed that the games should be held. The strongest adherents of the games were among the common people, the small shopkeepers, the hack drivers, the everyday Athenians.

But Coubertin was not content with their support. He wanted it to be unanimous. He took the opportunity to address a meeting of the Parnassus Literary Society and strongly to advocate the games, and was loudly applauded. Convinced that he had the support of the public and the neutrality, at least, of Trikoupes, and feeling that, under such conditions, the directors of the Zappeon would be at his command, Coubertin boldly addressed a letter to the press announcing that the games would be held in Athens and that an organizing committee would promptly be formed to take over their management.

With his rare ability to hit public psychology by means of well-phrased sentiments, Coubertin's statement wound up: "We French have a proverb that says that the word 'impossible' is not in the French language. I have been told this morning that the word is Greek. I do not believe it."

Coubertin's courageous enthusiasm and his absolute refusal to let anything stand in the way of the success of his project swept everything before it. When he found that the directors of the Zappeon were still afraid to call a meeting for the organization of the games, Coubertin boldly called the meeting himself, and, thanks to the support of the Greek Crown Prince, who accepted the presidency of the Organizing Committee, it proved successful. A skeleton organization was completed; a tentative program including not only track and field athletics but gymnastics, cycling, yachting, and fencing was drawn up; and Coubertin departed for home convinced once more that his troubles were over.

Scarcely had he left Greek shores than the organization that he had built up by his own efforts commenced to crumble. One of the four vice presidents of the Organizing Committee, Commandant Soutzo Etienne Scouloudis, who was a great friend of Minister Trikoupes, called meetings of the heads of the organization, to which the younger and more enthusiastic supporters of the games were not invited. He convinced them that Coubertin's estimates of expense were far too small, intimated that the government would refuse to authorize the lottery by which it was proposed to raise the money for the games, and finally proposed to submit the whole sad situation to the Crown Prince for his decision. Trikoupes meanwhile brought the question before the government, and it appeared that, after all, Coubertin's visit to Athens had been in vain.

To the Crown Prince must go the credit for saving the games for Athens.

When the committee, headed by M. Scouloudis, waited upon him with its lengthy and obviously unfavorable report, the Prince met the members with a smile, accepted the report, and, without looking at it, thanked and dismissed them with the statement that he would read the report at his leisure. This refusal to take any action was not only courageous in face of the known opposition of the government, but excellently timed to permit the public and the press to make their sentiments known.

Backed by an overwhelming popular approval, the Crown Prince took matters in his own hands, reorganized and enlarged the committee, and moved its headquarters into his own palace with M. Philemon, a former mayor of Athens, as its general secretary, and by his personal example united the Greek people in an enthusiastic movement to ensure the success of the games.

The enthusiastic Greeks not only in the home country but in all the colonies poured voluntary contributions into a fund to finance the games, thousands of small gifts being topped off by a donation of one million drachmas by George Averoff, a Greek citizen of Alexandria, who stipulated that his money should be used to refinish the ancient stadium at Athens in native marble.

While the financial success of the games was now assured and popular enthusiasm in Greece was running high, there was no opportunity for Coubertin to rest on his oars. The success of the games depended on more than popular enthusiasm and adequate finances. Two other factors upon which ultimate success rested had yet to be taken into consideration.

First were the problems of organization, hundreds of them. The modern Greeks were none too familiar with the ancient Olympic games, much less with their adaptation to the sports of the modern world, essential to the success of any modern revival of the ancient games.

Second, there was the question of foreign participation. The Greeks had few athletes, and without the athletes of other nations the games would be worse than a failure. Inasmuch as the games had existed only in the mind of Baron de Coubertin up to this time, it was quite natural that the thousand and one problems that arose in connection with their organization should promptly be referred to the worthy father of the idea.

Coubertin found himself swamped under a mass of problems. Who should invite the nations to the games? Who should write the invitations? What events should be held? How is a bicycle track constructed? Under what rules should the athletes compete? What should they be given for prizes? These questions alone were enough to stagger the doughty Baron. Interwoven among these questions there promptly arose problems of national jealousy; questions of authority developed among the various sports bodies; and no sooner was one question answered than another arose. He was like a man fighting bees.

Coubertin himself drew up the official invitations to the games. When the organizing committee couldn't figure out how to design and build a bicycle track, he personally secured the plans of the velodrome of Arcachon and sent them to Athens, being repaid for his pains by having the committee toss his plans aside and instead copy the plans of the bicycle track at Copenhagen, which they had secured from another source. Scarcely had the invitations been drawn up than the organizing committee demanded of Coubertin exact

information as to the number of participants to expect—and this with the games still nearly a year and a half away. Few countries had even heard that they were to be held.

At the request of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Greece, Coubertin set about the task of securing a design for a medal and a diploma to be awarded to the participants in the games. Chaplain, the great French artist, designed a medal; but Puvis de Chavannes, who had been requested to design the diploma, after much study refused the task on the grounds that he "could not sufficiently Hellenize himself to do justice to the ancient Greek spirit." As a result a Greek designed the diploma and, ironically enough, was afraid of being too classical and turned out a bizarre modernistic design.

Meanwhile throughout the world the various colleagues of Coubertin on the International Olympic Committee were doing their best to stir up interest. Sweden and Hungary, led by committee members Balck and Kemeny, were displaying the keen interest and enthusiasm that these countries have maintained ever since; and Professor Sloane in the United States, in the face of the warfare then existing between the colleges and the Amateur Athletic Union, organized a team of four college boys from Princeton and five Boston athletes to represent the United States.

In Coubertin's home country a French team was organized under the leadership of Raoul Fabens, only the French Shooting Federation refusing to participate. The riflemen expressed surprise that "the Olympic games should imagine that the French Shooting Federation would consent to become an 'annex of their committee.'"

In Great Britain the games were still eyed rather coldly, the newspapers printing Coubertin's appeal for participation without enthusiasm and several of them suggesting that "Pan-Britannic" games be organized instead.

Although Germany had failed to participate officially in the 1894 congress, there was strong German interest in the games, and this was augmented by the relationship between the ruling houses of Germany and Greece. For some time it looked as though the Germans would organize a strong team to participate at Athens, but suddenly, at the close of 1895, an official announcement was made that Germany would not participate, the refusal being based upon a supposed interview in which Baron de Coubertin had been quoted as expressing pleasure that the Germans had not been at the Sorbonne congress and that they would not be at Athens.

Despite Coubertin's denials of such a statement, the denials being supported by Baron von Reiffenstein, who had attended the congress unofficially, a strong feeling against Coubertin and the games swept across Germany, and because of the close relationship between Germany and Greece, it found a foothold among the Greeks. The German Olympic Committee under Dr. W. Gebhardt absolutely absolved Coubertin of any blame in the matter, and Germany finally did compete; but a few politicians and editors in Athens, now assured of the success of the games and more and more convinced that the games were theirs by right of inheritance, seized upon this pretext to ignore Coubertin despite the efforts of the Crown Prince to pay him the credit due him for his effort in reviving the historic contests.

And so it happened that as the days for the first celebration of the games approached during the warm spring days of 1896, Baron de Coubertin, by

whose sole effort the forgotten games had been revived and upon whose shoulders the entire initiative of the organization of the first games had fallen, found himself ignored by the very people to whom he had restored their inheritance.

The Greek politicians could ignore him, but they could not kill either his enthusiasm for the games or his lively interest in their success. Coubertin was no Achilles sulking in his tent. He went to Athens early in the spring and kept in constant communication with his confreres of the International Olympic Committee. He was ready to help.

Perhaps no better picture can be had of the scene than is shown in a letter written by Coubertin from Athens on the eve of the games, a translation of which is herewith reproduced:

Athens
March 26, 1896

The Athenian spring is double this year. It warms not only the clear atmosphere but the soul of the populace. It pushes up sweet-smelling flowers between the stones of the Parthenon, and paints a happy smile on the fiery lips of the Palikares. The sun shines, and the Olympic games are here. The fears and ironies of the year just past have disappeared. The skeptics have been eliminated; the Olympic games have not a single enemy.

They have spread to the breezes the flags of France, Russia, America, Germany, Sweden, England. The soft breezes of Attica joyously lift their folds, and the citizens in the street of Hermes rejoice at the spectacle. They know that the world is coming here, and they approve the preparations that have been made to receive her. Preparations are comprehensive. Everywhere people are shining up the marble, applying new plaster and fresh paint; they are paving, cleaning, decorating.

The road to the stadium is in full dress with its Arc de Triomphe and its Venetian matting. But this is not the favorite promenade. Interest is elsewhere, on the shores of the Ilissus, until now disdained. Every evening about five o'clock the citizens come here to cast an appraising eye upon the work being done at the stadium. As usual, the Ilissus is without water, but this passes unnoticed. A monumental bridge spans the celebrated stream and gives access to the great plain upon which they are restoring the ancient stadium.

The surroundings of the stadium produce an impression heightened by reflection. Here we have a tableau that the ancestral Greeks so often witnessed. It has sprung up before our eyes. We are not accustomed in these days to such constructions, and its lines are so unfamiliar as to surprise and disconcert us. The silhouette of the Grecian temple has never been lost, its porticoes and colonnades have known twenty renaissances. But the stadiums disappeared with the athletes. People knew their architectural peculiarities but never restored them. A living stadium has not been seen for centuries. A few days now and this stadium will be alive with the animation given such structures by the crowds that fill them. We will see them again climbing the stairs, spreading out across the aisles, swarming in the passageways—a different crowd, doubtless, from that

which last filled such a stadium, but animated nevertheless by similar sentiment, by the same interest in youth, by the same dreams of national greatness.

There is room for about fifty thousand spectators. Portions of the seats are in wood, time having been lacking to cut and place all the marble. After the games this work will be completed, thanks to the generous gift of M. Averoff; bronze work, trophies, and columns will break up the severe monotony of its lines. The track is no longer dusty as of yore; a cinder track has replaced it, built by an expert brought from England for the purpose. Everyone believes the events will be strenuously disputed by the Greeks. For—here is an interesting fact—in this country where physical exercises have produced few experts, where fencing and gymnastic clubs recently organized have experienced considerable difficulty in recruiting members, it has been necessary only to mention the Olympic games to create athletes. The young men have overnight become conscious of the native strength and suppleness of their race; their ardor has been so great and their training so serious that the visiting athletes will find in them improvised rivals of veteran caliber.

Already the Hungarians have arrived and they have been given an enthusiastic reception; speeches have been exchanged and music has been played. Today the Germans have come, and the Swedes and the Americans. The news that the Municipal Council of Paris has voted a fund for the French representatives came at the moment when the Organizing Committee was holding a meeting at the Prince's palace, and the Prince is delighted to know that the participation of France is finally assured.

Such, then, was the scene of the games of the 1st Olympiad. Small wonder that there surged in the bosom of the founder of the games a paternal pride that could not be downed even by the ingratitude of certain of the Greek officials.

On the day of the official opening of the games, the first week in April 1896, a terrific crowd jammed the stadium as the King and Queen of Greece, the former in full military uniform and the latter in pure white, officially opened the celebration. Athletes, officials, and a choir added color to the scene, the rendering of the Olympic Hymn by the chorus of hundreds of voices being a great feature of the ceremony.

With the athletic contests once under way, the superlative prowess of the handful of young American athletes instantly made itself felt. Although they were not champions in their own country and despite the construction of the track, which was far from favorable to good performances by athletes accustomed to modern conditions, the Americans captured one race after another until some of the Greek public, sensing their superiority and realizing that it must result from more scientific training than had been available to the natives, raised the cry of "Professionals!"

The Americans, however, had their adherents. An American warship, the *San Francisco*, had dropped anchor in the harbor for the period of the festival, and sailors, always intensely enthusiastic, joined forces with a handful of students attending the American University in Athens to raise wild whoops and yells at each successive American victory, this first demonstration

of American college yells quickly drowning out the boos of the handful of Greeks whose ignorance of athletic technique and disappointment at the failure of their own athletes led them to regard the American successes with disfavor. The majority of the Greeks did their best to join the American college yells, and they even generously applauded the Princeton college boy who won the discus throw, thus taking away the prize that the Greeks regarded as their hereditary possession.

Outside the great stadium other competitions attracted good crowds, and the victories were divided among many nations that did not figure in the track and field contests. Boland of Great Britain was the outstanding tennis star, winning the singles and teaming with Traun of Germany to win the doubles, a mixture of nationalities that of course would not be permitted in present-day Olympic competition.

Although Germany had a fine team and won the gymnastic competitions, Greek athletes were not without reward. Greek natives were victorious in two branches of the competition, the rings and the rope-climbing event. Other Greek victories were scored in rifle and pistol events, fencing, and cycling, while a vast number of second and third places also went to Greece.

France carried off the majority of the cycling honors, making a clean sweep, in fact, of the events on the track, but out on the roads Greece won one race, and in another, a herculean test of 315 kilometers, or nearly two hundred miles, an Austrian named Schmal was the winner. France also won the foils event in the fencing competition.

Hungary and Austria won swimming honors, Denmark and Great Britain shared honors in weight lifting, and revolver honors went to representatives of the United States. It is unfortunate that more complete records are not available with all the details of these first contests in modern Olympic history.

The performances in the various track and field events were hampered by the condition of the track, which had too many cinders and not sufficient clay to pack it and make it fast, and the general plan, which, of course, had been laid out centuries before. The track had two long straightaways with excessively sharp "hairpin" turns at both ends, and to add to the confusion of the Americans at least, races were run in the opposite direction from that to which they were accustomed, the turns being to the right rather than to the left. It is not surprising that records made at Athens were quickly broken at succeeding celebrations of the games.

The two short races on the program, the 100 and 400 meter runs, were both captured by T. E. Burke of the United States, while E. H. Flack of Australia retaliated by capturing the 800 and 1,500 meter runs, also in time that was far from phenomenal. The United States managed to take an edge in the track victories through the high-hurdle win of Curtis.

It was in the field events, however, that the young Americans made their best showing, setting an example that their successors have followed ever since. Ellery H. Clark won both the high jump and the broad jump, and W. W. Hoyt captured the pole vault. J. B. Connolly won the hop, step and jump, while R. S. Garrett was a double winner, triumphing in the shot-put and discus throw.

Greek disappointment at American victories on the track was all forgotten, however, on the day of the marathon. Here indeed was an event with a vital

appeal to the natives. The beautiful trophy that had been donated for the winner of this classic event by M. Michel Bréal stood for more than an athletic victory; it signified Greek history. The running of this classic race over the actual course covered by the Greek hero Pheidippides from the battlefield of Marathon, forty-two kilometers away, added to the intense feeling of the Greek populace, and when the day of the race dawned it seemed that the entire population of the country was there.

The stadium itself was jammed with more than sixty thousand excited spectators, while many times that number had swarmed to points of vantage along the route of more than twenty-five miles to see the contestants as they ran.

Within the stadium itself were the King of Greece, the King of Serbia, Grand Duke George, the Archduchess Theresa, the Royal Princess of Greece, the members of Greek officialdom, and the diplomatic corps. As the runners approached the stadium, hidden from the spectators by its marble walls, a mighty roar rolled over the hills from the thousands of Greeks who lined the course.

Unintelligible to the waiting thousands in the stadium, the sound nevertheless had an electric quality that swept the anxious crowd to its feet like a single individual. The muffled roar broke into a veritable scream as, preceded by an excitedly gesticulating Greek official, a sweating runner burst into view between the marble colonnades at the end of the stadium and was instantly recognized as Spiridon Loues, a Greek peasant, who had insisted on fasting and spending the preceding night in prayer.

As he trotted smilingly around the track to the finish, the scene baffled description. When he crossed the finish, he found himself snatched from the ground and borne to the royal box on the shoulders of the Crown Prince and his brother. There, receiving the congratulations of his ruler, he was literally swamped with gifts from his wildly excited countrymen. Women showered him with jewels, and the presents ranged from those of fabulous value to the offer of a street gamin to shine his shoes free of charge for life.

It was a fitting and magnificent climax to this first revival of the games of the ancient Greeks. The victory of Loues in an instant swept aside all jealousy of foreign victories in other events. Charles Maurras, a hardened enemy of the games, turned to Baron de Coubertin under the thrill of the moment and said, "I see that your internationalism of athletics does not kill national spirit—it strengthens it."

At the instant, by this single Greek victory, opposition to the Olympic games disappeared; ill feeling was forgotten; and Baron de Coubertin's dream, which had so often in the past months faded away to the point where even his own eyes, gifted with farsightedness by his zeal for the great cause, could scarcely make out its dim outline, now took on the sturdy appearance of reality.

AN APPROVED HISTORY OF
THE OLYMPIC GAMES



The important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, the important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well. To spread these precepts is to build up a stronger and more valiant and, above all, more scrupulous and more generous humanity

DE COUBERTIN



CHAPTER 1

THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES



History fades into fable; fact becomes clouded with doubt and controversy; the inscription moulders from the tablet; the statue falls from the pedestal.

WASHINGTON IRVING

The Olympic games have appeal for many reasons. Their story sparkles with big names—kings, queens, presidents, dictators, diplomats, artists, poets, sports figures, war heroes, educators, socialites appear constantly in the chronicles of the games.

Their appeal is universal, for they involve as many countries as the United Nations.

They have background, for they began beyond the Golden Age of Greece and ran, uninterrupted, for more than a thousand years.

They are in their modern revival no passing fancy, for in almost a century of renewed existence they have survived the life and death of nations, spanned devastating depressions, and lived through two world wars.

They are in the last analysis just what the historian seeks, for belligerent controversy has accompanied them from their very birth and has spun a web of tangled fact and fable that cries for clarification.

Writers by the thousand have skimmed around the edges, listing the names of the champions in some Olympic contests, but seldom all. They have painted portraits of the victories in stirring prose. They have spewed invective over the controversies. They have spectacularly described the recurring celebrations. But always they have skirted the heart of the whole business and have avoided probing the source of the astonishing vitality of the games.

The facts about the Olympic games? Most of the facts are to be found in the tabulated listings of the champions.

The fables about the Olympic games? Most of the fables are to be found either in the writings of the defenders who seek to prove that the games are pure and above reproach, or of the muckrakers who would abolish them for their iniquities.

It is high time to separate fact from fable: to probe this fantastically successful movement and find the secret of its strength.

That the modern Olympic games are the honest heirs of the ancient games is beyond question. Both were founded on a high religious and moral plane, rose to dizzy heights while clinging to these fundamental ideals, and showed signs of decay under the influence of politics and professionalism.

The tyrants of today are no better able to understand the Olympic games than those of yesterday. Hitler might well have echoed the puzzled comment of the invaders of ancient Greece who, halted at Thermopylae by a handful of courageous defenders who were hopelessly outnumbered, remarked that these were strange people indeed, for "they contend in their Olympic games not for money, but for the sheer glory of achievement."

Hitler, had his Olympic knowledge equaled his ambition, would have

recognized something familiar in the dramatic, spectacular drive of General George Patton across France, the Rhine, and deep into Germany. This drive had the same dynamic characteristics that Patton, as a slim young lieutenant and his country's first participant in the modern pentathlon at the 1912 Olympic games, in Stockholm, showed when, by sheer dash and drive, he outscored the ultimate winner in three of the five events on the program.

General Douglas MacArthur found time during the darkest days of the war to remember the occasion when, as president of the American Olympic Committee, he led his country's team to the 1928 games at Amsterdam. And it was quite in line with what might have been expected when American soldiers under MacArthur's command took up a collection to make possible participation in the 1948 Olympic games by the athletes of liberated Korea—successors to the Koreans who, under duress, won Olympic championships for Japan in less happy days.

Soldier and athlete, poet and historian, General MacArthur stated his case for the Olympic Games thus: "The [Olympic] athletic code has come down to us from even before the age of chivalry and knighthood. It embraces the highest moral laws and will stand the test of any ethics or philosophies ever promulgated for the uplift of man. Its requirements are for the things that are right, and its restraints are from the things that are wrong."

Truly history repeats itself as it honors the athlete-knight of both ancient and modern Olympic eras, and just as the story of the ancient games is half fact, half fable, so the modern games, too, are surrounded by half-truths.

Among these, there is the belief that some nations "win the Olympic games" each time they are held. This is not true.

Some "experts" persist, after each celebration of the games, in tabulating a point score. No points are scored in the Olympic games.

The average individual thinks of the Olympic games as solely an athletic carnival. The truth is that trophies exactly the same as those awarded the champion athletes go to the winners in Olympic contests in art, music, literature, sculpture, and architecture.

Perhaps, since the games of the XIth Olympiad at Berlin were so productive of controversy, it is worth while to cite some popular errors of fact regarding their celebration, just by way of example. For instance, the Nazis did not hold the 1936 Olympic games. They were not even awarded to Germany. Actually, since they are always awarded to a city rather than to a nation, Berlin held the games. Furthermore, they were awarded to Berlin before the Nazis had come to power. Adolf Hitler, as chief of state, was the patron of the games, but he was completely without authority. On one occasion when he overstepped the bounds of propriety he was ordered to stop—and did so—by President Baillet Latour of the International Olympic Committee. He did not refuse, as is still widely believed, to shake hands with the great American black athlete Jesse Owens. The fact is that he had no opportunity to do so. Perhaps, had the opportunity presented itself, he would have refused. One is equally entitled to speculate that, under the circumstances, Owens might have refused to shake the hand of Hitler.

Such a recital of a few of the fables, myths, half-truths about the Berlin games is worth while only as an example of the sort of stories circulated during and after every celebration. And it would be unprofitable to recite a

list of the unpleasant incidents connected with the games except to point out they achieve publicity out of all proportion to their real importance.

One has only to remember that when a certain member of the United States Olympic team was barred from competition in the 1936 Olympic games because of conduct unbecoming an Olympic representative on the steamer en route to the games, it became a *cause célèbre*. But when four other members of the same United States Olympic team were likewise barred from representing their country and were shipped home, there was scarcely a mention of the decision. But in the first case the culprit was a good-looking young woman while the others were unphotogenic males, which may account for the difference.

But enough of fables and half-truths. Of far greater importance to the proper understanding of the Olympic games is a study of the facts regarding their rebirth. With a sound knowledge of the hard facts of history it is more easily possible to comprehend their almost fabulous vitality.

A recital of the facts just at this time is all the more significant in that here too is a historic parallel. The period in which young Pierre de Coubertin was inspired to revive the Olympic games was, as now, a postwar period. His country, France, had been overrun by Germany in 1870. Like many a young man of today, Coubertin stood poised at the threshold of life disillusioned, disturbed, and dissatisfied with the pathways that lay before him.

Analyzing the situation, Coubertin, at the risk of oversimplification, felt that since his country was in fact composed of individual people, the way to a better France lay in the development of better Frenchmen. Looking beyond the confines of his country, he was struck by the fact that near-by Great Britain, similar in size and in many physical characteristics less favored than his own country, was ruling a far-flung empire and in many ways wielding an influence out of all proportion to its size. Using the same straight line of reasoning, he concluded that the Britons must be turning out a better product, and he set out to see how this, if true, was being accomplished.

Coubertin was doubly fortunate. He had the keen analytical mind of a historian. He also had money—not wealth, but means. He already had his first clue to the mystery of Great Britain from his boyhood perusal of that old standby *Tom Brown's School Days*, which presented a picture of life in England's schools quite in contrast to his own experience in France. So he went to England, following the trail of the legendary Tom Brown, and found himself investigating Rugby, a school that, he felt, might be the factory turning out the type of young Englishmen who at the moment were wielding such an unparalleled influence in world affairs.

The architect of this superior type of individual, he became convinced, was the old Rugby headmaster Thomas Arnold.

Arnold [he said] arranged that the adolescent should build his own strength from the materials at his disposal, and that under no circumstances should any outsider do it for him. He felt that the adolescent goes to school not to be disciplined there but rather to be gradually emancipated; to exercise free and thoughtful individuality; to learn to use his own independence while, at the same time, observing the laws which hold the

individual responsible to his own conscience and to the society in which he lives.

He arranged [reasoned Coubertin] to make life in school a sort of preface—a first chapter of social existence . . . the boy must step boldly into manhood. To accomplish this, Arnold had to organize college along the lines of society—not an ideal society where perfect justice prevails, but society as it actually exists, with all its peculiarities and excesses. In other words, the school had to reflect everyday life.

Arnold thus had the courage to permit the organization and existence within his school of regrettable, but necessary, human groups, rather than attempt to suppress them, for their destruction would have created dangerous differences between life in college and life in the world outside, and would give the students dangerous illusions.

All the important facets of modern life—the intermingling, the associations, the vote, the press, the opinion, the elective hierarchy which functions in a methodic and orderly manner—all these things find their parallel in the world of sport.*

The evidence, of course, is all on his side. Only such a school, one dearly cherishing the freedom of the individual, could have immortalized the heretical but highly human infraction of the established rules by one of its sons who, in so doing, fathered a new type of game. At Rugby there is a tablet with the following inscription:

This stone
commemorates the exploit of
William Webb Ellis
who with a fine disregard for the rules of
football as played in his time
first took the ball in his arms and ran with it
thus originating the distinctive feature of
the Rugby game.
AD 1823

This was indeed free enterprise in action. This was the spirit of which empires were built. This was what was making England great. This was the spirit found lacking in Coubertin's own countrymen. As he analyzed it, this was the answer.

As Coubertin saw it, Arnold had arranged that the young Englishmen emerging into the maelstrom of adult life found himself in a world with which he had already become familiar in school. He had not suddenly been pushed, unprepared, from the unrealistic classroom association with the shadowy figures of history into the hurly-burly of modern existence, as was the case with the average French boy. He had been subjected, instead, to the give-and-take of life—not life as the scholars would like to have it, but life as human strength and weaknesses really make it. He had been forced to toady

*Baron Pierre de Coubertin, *Une campagne de vingt-et-un ans*, Librairie de l'éducation physique, Paris, 1908, pp. 4-7.

to the stronger boys, accept the regulations—whether good or bad—set by his elders, fight his way to office in schoolboy organizations, battle for a place on the school athletic teams. In short, nothing that was likely to happen to him in afterlife would be completely without parallel in what he had gone through in school.

All this had started at Rugby but had spread, and Coubertin summed it up this way:

When Thomas Arnold died prematurely, the triumph [of his ideas] was already certain. The influence of his genius had grown step by step, spreading from one school to another; everyone had been influenced. In appearance things had not changed . . . [but] from the schools emerged men in the real sense of the word—energetic, honest, upright. These were the men who had, without commotion, provided the moral revolution from which came the real Anglo-Saxon strength. Anyone who compares the Great Britain of 1860 with that of 1830 must recognize that a veritable revolution had taken place during that period. From the day when there came to the direction of public affairs, to the leadership of outstanding institutions, the first generation developed by this pedagogic reformation, ideals and methods changed; preoccupation with the public welfare dominated the country; the forces of the nation co-ordinated and disciplined themselves; there developed a revitalizing of all the machinery [of living] and this great movement spread vast distances, particularly into the government of the colonies.*

This was a far cry from the situation in French schools, where a brief walk once a week was considered almost too great a diversion of energy from the major task of disciplined study.

This was a truly liberal education.

This was freedom!

Convinced that he had his answer, Coubertin determined to abandon everything else and devote his entire time and energy to securing, if possible, a pedagogical reform in his own country—one that would provide his fellow Frenchmen with the advantages of the liberal education that, in his opinion, was accomplishing so much for Great Britain.

It took little time to convince him that educational reform was more likely to start at the bottom than at the top of the educational system of his country. "The foundation of real human morality," he said, "lies in mutual respect—and to respect one another, it is necessary to know one another."

He chose athletics as his field.

This, he felt, was a means of getting the younger generation of his own country in contact with the younger generation of Great Britain. France, generally speaking, was still dominated by the old-school gymnasts, to whom the self-torture of mass exercises under the supervision of an instructor constituted the ultimate in athletic activity. There were, however, some Frenchmen participating in what he called "free sport"—activities whose common characteristic was competition. He thought he saw in the give-and-

**Ibid.*

take, victory-and-defeat of competitive athletics the quickest available parallel to the pedagogical reform he had discovered in Great Britain. But here he encountered a new barricade on the road to his goal.

The first major sport with which he associated himself was rowing, a rapidly growing activity along the Seine. When he inquired, however, into the possibility of bringing British oarsmen to France, or sending French oarsmen to compete at Henley, he found that British and French conceptions of amateurism were not the same.

This was the major turning point. It was here that Coubertin came to the realization that to attain his end he must raise his sights.

There must be One World in Sport!

So it was that Coubertin conceived, for the first time, the idea of drawing together educators, diplomats, sports leaders, to see if some way could not be found to further the interchange of ideas and make it possible for the youth of many nations to benefit by a meeting of the minds and of the muscles.

This was the birth of the modern Olympic games.

As, later on, we unroll the record of this first meeting in 1894 and the gradual growth of the Olympic movement, we shall see the extent to which this was the work of one man—Coubertin. And we shall see that while Coubertin envisioned the growth of his idea to world-wide proportions, he never lost sight of his primary objective, the individual. Only when we remember this can we understand.

So firmly were his eyes fixed on the welfare of the individual that, to his dying day, he fought to preserve the individual's rights. He fought against the introduction into the games of team sports. He wanted no "crews," no "fives," no "elevens." He couldn't prevent their participation, but he never ceased to protest.

In 1934, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Olympic games, he restated his firm conviction that "the Olympiads have been re-established for the rare and solemn glorification of the individual athlete, and team sports should have no place either in the stadium itself or in connection [with the games]."

It was this feeling for the individual that led Coubertin to insist on one thing that he could control, that there should be no point score in the games. The introduction of mathematics, he felt, would tend to obscure the performance of the individual. Larger countries with larger teams might use the point scores to add up an impressive total and thus, by sheer weight of statistics, bury the individual athlete and lose sight of his identity and the quality of his performance. No total point score compiled by a large number of competitors from a major nation should, he felt, be considered of greater importance than a single victory by, perhaps, the only representative of a smaller nation.

This adding up of points, too, he felt, would make for greater nationalism, and he was against that. He foresaw the rise of rampant nationalism, and he recognized that it would be, if carried to excess, bad for everything he cherished and could wreck the Olympic games.

The means by which he forestalled this possibility has been the subject of bitter criticism, but its efficacy is the envy of other world organizations, such

as the United Nations, that have found themselves denied freedom of action for the international good by the selfishness of individual countries.

Coubertin determined that his International Olympic Committee should live up to its name and be truly international in its thinking. He was convinced that if its members owed their membership to their election by their individual countries, their loyalty and devotion to the international welfare would be affected. So he personally selected the first members of the International Olympic Committee, the central governing body, the trustees of the Olympic ideal, and ruled that they should continue to choose their own members from persons who, like themselves, would think first of the good of all the nations rather than primarily of the benefit of one. The members should, he felt, be the ambassadors of the international Olympic ideal to their various countries, rather than the delegates of their nations to the International Olympic Committee.

This self-perpetuating feature, as Coubertin anticipated, has brought criticism from the very beginning, but, probably more than any other basic feature of the modern games, has held the organization together and maintained the Olympic ideal.

"As the best means of safeguarding liberty and serving democracy," he said on one occasion, "it is not always best to abandon ourselves to the popular will. Rather we must maintain, in the midst of the vast electoral ocean, strong islands that will ensure independence and stability."

One final basic fact, almost universally misunderstood, must be made clear before we plunge into the chronological story of the Olympic games, ancient and modern. Peace is not the major aim of the Olympic games.

Peace, Coubertin hoped and believed, would be furthered by the Olympic games. He said so on many occasions. But peace could be the product only of a better world; a better world could be brought about only by better individuals; and better individuals, Coubertin was convinced, could be developed only by the give-and-take, the buffeting and battering, the stress and strain of fierce competition. So peace—well, that was to be hoped for and prayed for and worked for, but in the meantime, the tougher the battle, the better.

"Heaven preserve us," cried Coubertin in London many years ago after a particularly violent series of incidents in the 1908 Olympic games, "from a society in which there are no excesses and where any expression of impassioned feeling must be kept imprisoned within the narrow confines of convention. . . . When I think of the attacks without number to which [the International Olympic Committee] has been subjected—the ambushes, the unbelievable conspiracies, the mad jealousies . . . I thrill to the realization that this sort of wrestling is great sport, even when our adversaries disregard the niceties of the classic techniques and go in for catch-as-catch-can methods. The important thing in life," he continued, "is not the victory, but the struggle; the essential thing is not to have conquered, but to have fought well. To spread these precepts is to develop a more valiant, more strong, more scrupulous and more generous humanity."



Gentlemen, can you possibly believe that similar [unsporting] incidents are not spread across the chronicles of the Olympic, Pythian, Nemean games—all the great sporting events of ancient history? One would have to be naïve indeed to pretend that this is the case.

BARON PIERRE DE COUBERTIN*

The ancient Olympic games could never deny their modern offspring. They, too, were beset by sectionalism, professionalism, jealousies, and wars.

In spite of all, they survived.

For nearly twelve hundred years, despite never-ending threats of invasion and the interminable internal squabbles that culminated in the Peloponnesian War, and finally surviving even the loss of Greek independence, the Olympic games were held every four years without interruption.

The spirit of the Golden Age of Greece, handed down to us in the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides, the philosophies of Pythagoras and Socrates, the fragmentary marbles of Phidias and Praxiteles, was as truly typified in the ancient Olympic games. The high ideals of true sportsmanship that were the real basis of their success furnished the inspirational power as the Olympic games reached their zenith in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.; and the momentum gained during the Golden Age carried them on for hundreds of years, even though the decadence that eventually cost Greece her independence likewise undermined the true spirit of the games and destroyed the basic ideals that had been responsible for their popularity.

At their height, the games were the embodiment of all that made Greece the mistress of the Mediterranean. The simple religious festival in which they had their beginning developed into a seven-day carnival of culture and athletic prowess with all the color and pageantry of those classic days. Kings raced side by side with common soldiers at Olympia, the prize a simple wreath of olive. The victor found his name inscribed with the immortals. Writers, sculptors, and artists came to be inspired. "Solemn embassies coming to the shores of the Alpheus and to the foot of Parnassus in their splendid chariots or to the Delos in their gilded vessels with sails of Tyrian purple" made of Olympia a spectacle that was more than a mere athletic carnival.

It was the Golden Age of Greece in flesh and blood.

The origin of the games is shrouded in the mystery of the period when myth and legend were inextricably tangled with the beginnings of Hellenic history. One story told by Pindar traces the origin of the games back to that legendary time when Heracles, doing penance for his misdeeds, was given the unpleasant task of cleansing, in a single day, the stables in which Augeas, king of Elis, maintained his magnificent herds. Heracles, as canny as he was re-

*Address by the founder and life honorary president of the Olympic games at a dinner given by His Majesty's Government during the celebration of the games of the Fourth Olympiad at London in 1908.

sourceful, wheedled from the King the promise of one tenth of his coveted herds should he be successful in his task, and promptly turned the rivers Alpheus and Peneus from their courses to flow through the stables and win his wager from him. Augeas then made his second mistake: He refused to pay Heracles his reward, whereupon that worthy, with the rough and ready justice of his day, slew Augeas and his family, made himself a present of the entire herds of his erstwhile employer, and instituted the Olympic games in celebration of what he no doubt regarded as a fine piece of work.

This account is only one of many versions of the origin of the games, none of them very well substantiated. One thing, however, seems certain, and that is that the games in their early days had religious significance; and there is some reason to believe that they were a gradual development of the custom of common sacrifice by neighboring communities, which prevailed as Greece emerged from the pugnaciousness of the heroic age.

According to a more believable version, Lycurgus, the great Spartan law-giver, about 820 B.C. joined with Iphetus, king of Elis, on the bidding of the oracle, to restore the festival. Their act was immortalized by the inscription of their names jointly upon a discus of which we have record as hanging in the Temple of Hera in the second century A.D. at the time of Pausanias.

It is certain that at some time, many centuries before Christ, the people of the fertile northwestern coast of the Peloponnesian peninsula, stretching southward from the Gulf of Corinth, were celebrating a great festival at Olympia. This town was located in Pisatis, the near-by neighbors of which were Elis, boasting an acropolis on a hill five hundred feet high, and Triphylia, in which was located Pylos, the city of Nestor.

In all probability the games originally were under the control of the Pisatans, but the Eleans and Spartans took joint charge, and under their management the games quickly assumed vast importance. The great historian Herodotus tells how the Eleans, visiting Egypt, boasted of their handling of the games and declared that not even the Egyptians could better their administration. The Egyptians contented themselves with pointing out that there was room for improvement in a situation wherein Elean athletes were permitted to compete in contests judged solely by their fellow citizens, a condition that has had its counterpart in the modern games.

However, it is pretty generally admitted that the Elean control of the Olympic games was businesslike and fair. Each fourth year marked the commencement of a new Olympiad and was celebrated by the games, preceding which Elean heralds proclaimed throughout Greece the "Truce of God" and sounded the "Call to the Games."

The Eleans enforced their opinions, regardless of where the lash might fall. It is recorded that on one occasion when the Spartans, who had practically given control of the games to the Eleans, failed to observe the truce, they were fined the equivalent of \$40,000, the sum being spent for bronze images of Zeus. Those who robbed pilgrims en route to or from the games were likewise sternly punished by the Eleans, whose strict and impartial enforcement of the statutes gave the games a fine reputation through the then known world.

The first definite record of Olympic victors commences in the year 776 B.C. with the name of Coroebus of Elis, a cook, and continues in unbroken

succession until 394 A.D., when Theodosius, emperor of Rome, abolished the games by imperial edict, leaving as the last victor of the ancient games one Varastad, an Armenian.

Following hot on the heels of Coroebus, the first listed winner, came the names of eleven other citizens of Elis; but by this time the games, which still consisted of a single race the length of the stadium (about two hundred yards), had attracted athletes from other parts, and the list of Elean victors was broken for the first time at the thirteenth Olympiad.

At the games of the fourteenth Olympiad a second race, two lengths of the stadium, was added to the program; and four years later, at the games of the fifteenth Olympiad, a still longer race gave a chance to those whose endurance was greater than their fleetness of foot.

The influence of the warlike Spartans began to make itself felt more strongly about this time, and with the dawn of the eighteenth Olympiad the pentathlon, an all-around contest consisting of five events, was initiated and was designed obviously for the warrior-athlete.

It was an elimination contest, according to some accounts, in which all entrants first took part in a broad-jumping contest. Those who cleared a certain distance qualified for the second event, a spear-throwing contest. Only the four best in this predecessor of our modern javelin-throwing event survived to participate in the sprint of one length of the stadium. One more athlete was eliminated here, and the best three sprinters whirled the discus, the two having the best throws engaging in the grand finale of this grueling competition, a wrestling match to a finish.

Truly, that was a Spartan test of skill, courage, and endurance.

Boxing was added with the games of the twenty-third Olympiad, four-horse chariot racing at the near-by hippodrome at the twenty-fifth games, and the pankration, a fierce combination of wrestling and boxing, in the thirty-third games. By this time interest in the games had become so widespread and the demand for a wider variety of contests so great that the program was continuously expanded, until at the time of the seventy-seventh Olympiad the period of the games was stretched from a single day to five, with two additional days devoted to religious ceremonies.

The extension of the program to more than one day was doubtless occasioned by the great stimulation of Panhellenic feeling caused by the expulsion of the Persians early in the fifth century B.C. People came from communities bordering the Mediterranean from Marseilles to Trebizond. Africa, Sicily, Italy, and Asia Minor sent their representatives to compete and erected sanctuaries and treasure houses at Olympia.

During the eighty-eighth and eighty-ninth Olympiads, Athens was at war with Sparta; but at the ninetieth Alcibiades, the great Athenian statesman, himself appeared with seven chariots, the political significance of the event being the demonstration that the long war had not impoverished Athens. Alcibiades did not content himself with merely making a show, however, as his great teams took first, second, and fourth places in the chariot race.

Dionysius the Elder, tyrant of Syracuse and a social climber of his day, determined to impress the Greeks with his learning and talents and sent a large chorus to the ninety-eighth games to recite his poems and sing songs of his composition. The feeling of the Greeks toward Dionysius was not such as

to guarantee an unbiased hearing to his works. The audience hissed his performers, their opinion being confirmed by Diodorus, who adds, as further evidence, that the boat transporting the poems, songs, and performers back to Syracuse sank en route, this disaster being attributed in no small measure to the poor quality of the compositions.

Peace was declared a year later; and Dionysius, who appears to have been what modern sports writers would call a glutton for punishment, sent a larger and more impressive delegation, fully equipped with tents of purple and gold, but minus any songs or poems. The appearance of the magnificent representatives of the hated Dionysius was enough to rouse the ire of the Greeks, but this feeling was fanned to fever heat when Dicon, the great runner from Caulonia in Sicily who had captured the Olympic dash in the previous games, now appeared and repeated his victory of four years before but this time representing Syracuse, thus becoming the first "tramp athlete" in history.

This was the last straw, and amid scenes of wild confusion Lysias, the great Athenian orator, harangued the crowds, denouncing Dionysius for displaying wealth torn from Greek sufferers and accusing Sparta of treachery. It speaks volumes for the Elean control of the games that open hostilities did not result. However, the chariots that had been expected to bring the tyrant further honors all fell apart—a fact that may or may not have had significance in the light of the popular feeling against him.

It is quite clear that by this time the Olympic games had achieved an importance that far transcended other activities of the period. It was no small honor to have such poets as Pindar, Simonides, and Euripides sing the praises of the winners or to have a Phidias or a Praxiteles carve their statues.

More than the olive wreath rewarded the triumphant athlete. As early as the games of the sixty-first Olympiad, the victors were permitted to erect statues in their own honor in Olympia, although it was not until they had won three times that the statues could bear their likeness. Frequently the winner was greeted on his return to his home city with all the honor accorded a victorious warrior, sometimes being permitted to enter through a breach in the walls. In warlike Sparta he was rewarded with the post of honor in battle.

Royalty, as we have seen, had begun to seek honors, particularly in the chariot events, where the wealth of the owner could make itself felt through the excellence of his team. Pausanias and Demaratus, Spartan kings, are listed among the winners, as are Kings Gelon and Hiero of Syracuse, Theron of Agrigento, and Archelaus of Macedon. The best that Alexander the Great could do was to tie for victory in a foot race, but this was a personal accomplishment and meant more than a victory due solely to the ownership of a great team of horses.

Respect for Olympic victors was acknowledged throughout the world. Dorieus, the son of Diagoras, fought for Sparta against Athens and, when captured, was released without ransom in recognition of his Olympic victories, for he had won three times in succession. Philipus of Croton, another Olympic victor, was killed in an attack on Sicily, but so great was his reputation that his own enemies erected a shrine over his grave.

Cimon, father of the great Miltiades, was the owner of a splendid team of mares that he drove to victory in the chariot race. Banished from Athens by the tyrant Peisistratus, whose political accomplishments were greater than his

Olympic reputation, Cimon was restored to citizenship when he repeated his victory in the chariot race and permitted the name of Peisistratus to appear in the list of victors in place of his own. When Cimon died some years later after winning his third Olympic chariot race with the same team, his magnificent horses were buried with him.

It was pretty difficult for those who had no understanding of the basic character of the Olympic games to comprehend the motives that prompted the Greeks to take such pride in their Olympic accomplishments, as, for instance, when Alcibiades, setting forth his services to the state, placed first his victory at Olympia and the prestige he had won for Athens by his magnificent display.

Cicero, with Roman contempt for Greek frivolity, cynically reported that an Olympic victor received more honors than a triumphant general at Rome, and told of the Rhodian Diagoras, who, having won the Olympic prize himself and then seen his two sons crowned victors on the same day, was addressed by a Laconian in these words: "Die, Diagoras, for thou hast nothing short of divinity to desire."

Herodotus chronicles a similar feeling expressed by the officers of Xerxes, who, after the battle of Thermopylae, questioned surviving Greeks regarding the prizes offered at Olympia. When told that the winner received only a wreath of wild olive, Tigranes expressed the surprise of all concerned with the remark: "What manner of men are these we are fighting? It is not for money they contend but for the glory of achievement."

Olympia was situated at the spot where the rivers Alpheus and Cladeus converge in western Peloponnesus, The Altis, or sacred grove of Zeus, occupied a space approximately in the shape of a rectangle. Low hills bounded it on the north, the Alpheus and Cladeus were to the south and the west, while at the eastern boundary was the hippodrome, site of the equestrian events.

The stadium itself, in which the running races and other athletic contests were held, was about 210 yards long and 35 yards wide. Entrance to the field of the stadium was reserved for the judges, the competitors, and the heralds. The audience, to the number of probably forty thousand, took points of vantage on the sloping hillsides.

Not much is really known about the hippodrome now, as the rivers have run wild over the site and destroyed the marks by which its exact limits could be measured, but it is generally agreed that it was probably about eight hundred yards in length.

Numerous buildings, most of them treasure houses or structures with a religious significance, were located in and about the Altis. The most important of these undoubtedly was the Olympium, which contained the gigantic statue of Zeus by Phidias. The statue, the figure of Zeus being of ivory and his robes of gold, was more than forty feet high and was regarded as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

The two buildings chiefly devoted to athletics were the gymnasium, with a long covered colonnade equal in length to the stadium track, which was used by the athletes in their training, and the palestra, roughly two hundred feet square, in which the wrestlers, boxers, and gymnasts practiced under the eyes of the judges for the month immediately preceding the contests.

The Greek devotion to a cause at all costs was evident in the training methods of the athletes, if historians of those early days are to be taken at their word. According to Galen, the athletes rose and partook of a breakfast of bread, half baked and slightly fermented. They took plenty of time to eat and digest their food and then embarked on a program of ceaseless and punishing exercise that carried through the afternoon with no stop for lunch and sometimes went on into the night.

But dinner—ah, there was a meal. The Greek idea of a good dinner, if we are to believe the chroniclers of the day, was meat and plenty of it. Milo of Crotona, according to the ringside account of one of these ancient sports writers, ate an entire ox at one sitting, and Theagenes of Thasos, not to be outdone, duplicated the feat. Galen tells us that six and one-half pounds of meat was a very ordinary portion for the he-man athletes of those days, and he describes an athlete named Aegon who tossed off eighty pastry cakes at a single sitting.

While these meals are sufficient to cause the hair of a modern trainer to turn white as he reads of them, at least in the matter of topics of conversation the Grecian trainers agreed with those of today, for none but the lightest topics was permitted to be bandied among the athletes at mealtime, mental strain being regarded as a certain source of dyspepsia and headaches.

Liquor was taken in small quantities by some, but the majority of the Olympic athletes were total abstainers, at least during training; and fried and boiled foods and cold drinks were absolutely forbidden. Various types of baths and rubbing and massage were regular parts of the training routine.

All contestants had to swear that they were freemen, of pure Hellenic blood, that neither they nor their immediate relatives had been guilty of any outlawry or sacrilegious act, and that they did not propose to win by any unfair means. All were required to have undergone a long period of training, varying according to the event in which they were to contest. They competed absolutely nude.

Not only the athletes but also the judges, called *hellanodikes*, underwent a long period of preparation for the ancient games. The judges, who were chosen from among the Eleans, were instructed for a period of ten months by Elean magistrates. Their authority was great, and the only appeal from their decisions was to the Elean senate. Dressed in their purple robes and occupying the special seats reserved for them on the floor of the stadium, they were a most imposing sight.

Historians disagree about the number of the judges, but apparently not more than one or two judges officiated at the early Olympic games, where but one event was contested. When the athletic program was expanded to take in many events and last for five or more days, the number was increased, although there seems to be no record of more than ten judges at a single celebration of the games.

In the original race of one stade, or, as the name implies, one length of the stadium, the runners dashed from one wall to another at the opposite end, and in later years when longer races were added, ran back and forth for a certain number of lengths, the first long race apparently being about the equivalent of the modern 1,500-meter run or about seven eighths of a mile, although some authorities say it was more than twice that distance. Foot

aces in heavy armor were held during some of the games and were highly recommended by the warlike Spartans for their military character.

Wrestling was one of the sports that was added to the Olympic program early in the life of the games, and it was extremely popular with the spectators. It was a combination of strength, agility, science, and grace, brute force being of little account because of the nature of the rules. The wrestlers endeavored to remain upright during the contests, the object being to secure a fall by a quick and graceful movement rather than by wallowing on the ground. The instant one of the contestants touched the ground with any part of his body from the knee up, a fall was awarded to his opponent. Milo of Crotona was the most famous wrestler of ancient times, as well as an eater of great reputation.

Boxing, like wrestling, was a popular Olympic sport and was conducted very much along the lines of the nineteenth-century bare-knuckle fights, no ring being used and the contest being continued until one boxer decided that he had had enough—or his opponent decided it for him. The hands of the boxers were wrapped in some kind of covering the exact nature of which changed from time to time during the history of the games.

Apparently in both boxing and wrestling there were no weight divisions, and there is no record of any attempt in any of the other Olympic contests to overcome the handicaps imposed by nature. All contestants in the races had an even start, and with the same principle applied to boxing and wrestling, these two events quickly became practically the exclusive field of the heavy-weights. Despite this fact, there was a premium on cleverness; this was a quality much appreciated by the spectators.

The ancient games had one contest, introduced about the thirty-third Olympiad, that was regarded as a supreme test of courage, resourcefulness, skill, and strength, but which, if the vivid descriptions given by the historians are correct, more closely resembled a gutter brawl than an athletic event. It was a combination of boxing and wrestling, with kicking and other fancy tricks tossed in as a side line, and was called the pankration.

Philostratus, who apparently occupied a ringside seat at these ancient contests, tells us that "the pankrationists practice a hazardous style of wrestling. They must employ backward falls, which are not safe for wrestling, and grips in which victory must be obtained by falling. They must have skill in various methods of strangling. They also wrestle with an opponent's ankle and twist his arm, besides hitting and jumping on him, for all these practices belong to the pankration, only biting and gouging being excepted. The Spartans admit even these practices, but the Eleans and the laws of the games exclude them, though they commend strangling."

Obviously the pankration was no place for weaklings; and it is quite clear from the accounts as well as from murals and sculptures depicting the contest that in the heat of battle the contestants sometimes forgot that there were one or two practices, such as attempting to gouge out their opponents' eyes, that were forbidden. To prevent contestants from thus forgetting how to behave, the judges were provided with an emblem of office in the form of a rod, which not only identified them as people with authority but could be used with great effect on the head of a contestant who stooped to forbidden methods.

In a general way the early field events, such as javelin and discus throwing,

closely resembled the modern practices in athletics, and the same thing is true of the running races, while in the jumping contests it seems to have been the custom to use *halteres*, or weights, which, carried in the hand and tossed backward at the proper moment, added greatly to the distance covered. One Greek athlete by the name of Phayllus was credited with a leap of over fifty feet, which seems incredible to us. However, the professional jumpers of the nineteenth century in England achieved remarkable results with the use of weights, one individual having a well-authenticated record of having cleared six feet in the standing high jump, his feet actually being bound together. The information regarding the performances of the ancient athletes, however, is so contradictory that it is hardly worth while to attempt to make comparisons with the records made by present-day athletes.

Victors in the ancient games automatically became members of the *Athletae*, a pioneer athletic association, whose members maintained a sort of gymnasium where they trained for contests and discussed matters of interest to the athletic world.

The disintegration of the games may be laid at the door of human nature rather than to a basic weakness in the structure of the games themselves. As long as the high moral and religious nature of the games remained intact, they grew in popularity and successfully survived every effort to debauch their noble character. It was only when the influence of the politicians and the wealthy was permitted to make itself felt that corruption crept in, and the athletes began to think not of the wreath of olive but of cash prizes to be had. When the Olympic games were ultimately banned as pagan festivals by Theodosius of Rome, they had long since lost all the characteristics that had carried them to the heights.

The Olympic games after twelve hundred years of unbroken celebration went officially out of existence in 394 A.D. Shortly afterward the looting of the historic city of Olympia commenced, the colossal statue of Zeus being carried off to Constantinople, where it was later destroyed in the great fire. Theodosius II, seeking to continue the work of his namesake, who had been responsible for officially ending the games, issued orders in the fifth century A.D. for the destruction of all pagan temples. Some of the buildings at Olympia were placed in this classification. A hundred years later earthquakes completed the work of destruction, and the muddy waters of the Alpheus and Cladeus soon buried beneath a layer of silt the last vestiges of the site of the games.

There Olympia lay for centuries until the inquisitive pick of Richard Chandler in 1766 first uncovered some of the ruins. He could not finance the work of excavation, but in 1820 the French government picked up where he had left off, only to let the work die after barely getting started.

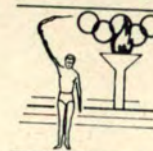
In 1876 the German government started in thorough Teutonic fashion to see what could be found at Olympia, and to their great credit it must be said that six years of hard labor and thousands of dollars were spent on the task without any attempt on the part of the Germans to appropriate what they found.

No less than fifty monumental structures were uncovered sufficiently to determine their nature and their size, and one hundred and thirty statues in varying stages of disrepair were dug up. It was necessary to build a large

museum at Olympia to house the veritable treasure of thousands of coins, bits of pottery, and other objects, each one of which helped to piece together the tragic story of the great games of the Golden Age and the sordid commercialism that brought about their downfall.

Such, then, was the great religious, athletic, and artistic festival that led Pindar to write: "The Gods love the games." Regardless of the hearsay nature of much of the evidence produced by the ancient writers, it must be admitted that the ancient games were one of the outstanding Greek contributions to history and that they played a tremendous part in spreading Greek culture and ideals throughout the ancient world.

Today, fragments of sculpture, bits of history, odes, orations, dramas, and other mute evidences of the glory that was Greece exist in abundance; but the only one you will find outside a museum, a theater, or a book is the Olympic games.



Vainly, perfidious outsiders continue to spread the notion that the modern games had an uncertain beginning and that their development has been a succession of timid steps depending on the hazard of circumstance. The truth is different indeed. Olympism was born full-fledged, like Minerva, its program complete and its scope likewise. The entire planet is its domain. All Games, All Nations.

BARON PIERRE DE COUBERTIN *

Young Pierre de Coubertin had read and traveled extensively. His travels had taken him not only to near-by Britain but across the western seas to the modern land of promise, the United States of America. His studies and reading had taken him still farther—back to the Golden Age of Greece. When, after his visit to Rugby School in England, he became convinced that the way to a better individual humanity lay along the rugged pathway of exposure to competitive modern life, he returned to his own country with a growing conviction that he must get the youth of the world together, preferably in the friendly competition of sport.

As he began the campaign that was to lead toward a meeting, in Paris, of persons whom he felt he could interest in the project of building a better humanity, he wrote, talked, argued, listened, and agitated ceaselessly for his proposal. He found that progress was slow.

"It is hard for anyone to realize," he wrote, "the very slow formation of the International Olympic Committee. It did not enter into real action until after the beginning of the century. Until then, they were friends gathered around me with much indifference and pleasant smiles. As to public opinion, there was none. No help could come from there, either financial or moral. It has been said that Olympism was 'in the air' and likely to be revived somehow or other. It was not. It was born artificially and could not be brought up according to ordinary methods. Its growth was artificial and there still remains a little of that needed today."[†]

As we look back now across half a century of Olympic competition, it is sometimes difficult to realize how things have changed. In the waning years of the nineteenth century each country, as Coubertin had discovered, had its own native sports, its own rules and regulations; and the free competition between athletes of even neighboring countries was prevented by more than the obvious difficulties of lack of transportation and communication. There was a gap of understanding, too.

Coubertin found himself talking in a vacuum, for without an understanding of the possibilities that lay ahead, his friends, who were not overly interested

*Address by the founder and life honorary president of the Olympic games at Lausanne, June 23, 1934, on the occasion of the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the re-establishment of the Olympic games.

†From a letter written to the author by Coubertin, July 27, 1934.

in sport anyhow, could see only the immediate difficulties and no great reason for exerting themselves to change the situation.

A discussion of the need for a pedagogical revolution only mildly interested the educators and interested the others not at all. However, the importance of affecting a change in the understanding of amateurism, so that the athletes of all nations might meet on an equal basis, attracted the attention of those technically informed and finally enabled him to call a meeting of interested persons.

Still something was lacking. Coubertin saw that what he needed was something that would capture the imagination of disinterested persons who had culture enough to understand and time and money enough to provide the necessary pressure.

As he read and as he traveled, he began to see a definite connection between the legendary feats of the Olympic victors of ancient Greece and the sporting prowess of the modern Anglo-Saxons. He became more and more convinced that if the athletes of the modern world could mingle with one another, animated by the high athletic ideals of the ancient Greeks, a great good would be accomplished.

As he studied the story of ancient Greece this idea of restoring the Olympic games to the glorious position that they once had occupied gripped him more firmly day by day. "Delphi and Eleusis were only sanctuaries; Thermopylae immortalized the names of heroes; the Acropolis retells the story of a great city; but Olympia," he said, "symbolizes an entire civilization, superior to cities, military heroes, and the ancient religions."*

After all is said and done, no one can express the deep conviction of Coubertin as well as he himself could, and did, and without an understanding of the deep impression that the ancient games made on him it is difficult to comprehend the burning devotion of the man to his cause.

What of the games themselves? [he asks.] One might feel that with the elite of Greece gathered on the banks of the Alpheus—artists to show their work, poets and historians to read their literary compositions, diplomats to conduct their negotiations—the sport was but a pretext, in reality but a secondary consideration.

But no—these others came only to pay homage to the athletes. The predominance of the athlete is evident everywhere. It is he whose statue is erected in the avenues, he whose name is inscribed upon the marbles, he whose native town greeted him on his return with a triumphal entrance through a breach in the walls.

Folly! Frivolous enthusiasm! But this folly endured for a thousand years. One can explain these things only by two inspirations—civic pride and art. We must admire in the athlete ambition and will, the ambition to do more than his rivals and the will to do his best. The whole story of athletics is contained in the three words spoken by Father Didon in building up the sporting spirit of his pupils in a football game: "*Citius, altius, fortius!* [Faster, higher, stronger!]" † These words form a program of moral beauty and inspiration.

*Coubertin, *Souvenirs d'Amérique et de Grèce*, Hachette et Cie, Paris, 1897, p. 105.

†The official motto of the Olympic games.

The Greeks, who idealized their entire national existence, idealized athletics. So athletics, in their minds, had an origin in a divine legend. Olympia, they said, had been consecrated by the gods. Jupiter there had wrestled Saturn, Apollo there had vanquished Hermes in a race and Ares in a boxing match, Heracles after his triumph over Augeas, King of Elis, had there celebrated the first Olympic games.

The Olympic games were born in Greece because the germ of athletic accomplishment existed there by virtue of some strange law of physiology or some peculiar principle of heredity—and because of the existence of this germ the games could not help being born.

Sport is not natural to man. We must not confuse sport with muscular perfection. They are very different. All animals have a certain kind of vigor, suppleness, and agility, and, if healthy, take a certain sort of pleasure therein, but sport—there's something else again—something more. It presupposes combat and consequently willing, thoughtful training, the ardent desire for victory, and the moral exhilaration resulting therefrom.

In Roman times the gladiator supplanted the athlete. In the Middle Ages there was a revival of the athletic spirit among the knighthood. How little athletics and paganism have in common! The young Greek passed the eve of contest in the solitude of the marble porticos of the gymnasium, far from the noise. He also had to be irreproachable personally and by heredity; without blemish either in his own life or that of his ancestors. He associated his act with the national religion, consecrating himself before an altar and receiving as token of victory a simple wreath, the symbol of genuine disinterestedness.*

Yes. Baron de Coubertin had been bitten by the Olympic germ of which he speaks, and from the bite developed a flaming fever of enthusiasm that he succeeded in spreading until now it animates about a hundred fifty nations all over the world.

French soldiers had exhumed and restored the temple of Zeus at Olympia; and the Germans, following hard on their heels, had exhumed the entire city at the cost of six years of labor and thousands of dollars, apparently without profit to their country, since not a single piece of marble left Greece. They thought the honor of restoring Olympia to the world was honor enough.

Coubertin saw his own nation gradually being transformed under the reviving influence of modern athletics. Red-blooded Europeans were stirring uneasily and craving action. A trip to the United States, where he found a new nation in a new world, had encouraged him to suggest the possibility of the revival of the games, and he had found the Americans, unfettered by the past, more than sympathetic. He began to dare to think of his dream as a possibility.

Coubertin's dreams of a revival of the ancient Olympic games began to crystallize and take form, and at a meeting of the Athletic Sports Union at the Sorbonne in Paris on November 25, 1892, he first gave voice publicly to the great idea that animated his whole being.

Speaking at the conference, of which he was one of the three leaders,

**Ibid.*

Coubertin said: "Let us export oarsmen, runners, fencers; there is the free trade of the future—and on the day when it shall take its place among the customs of Europe, the cause of peace will have received a new and powerful support. This thought is sufficient to encourage your humble servant to dream now of the second part of his program; he hopes that you will assist him as you have aided him to this point and that with your assistance he can work for and eventually realize, on a basis properly in tune with the conditions of modern life, the re-establishment of the Olympic games."*

It is not strange that his auditors failed to grasp the significance of the idea thus first put into words; and, as Coubertin goes on to state, "They thought I was merely speaking in parables and I saw that my hearers classified the Olympic games in their mental museum along with the mysteries of Eleusis or the Delphic Oracle—dead things that could be revived only in the theater."†

But Coubertin was persistent. One Adolphe de Palissaux had proposed an international congress for the "Study of Questions of Amateurism," and he and Coubertin joined forces to bring it actually into being. They secured the backing of the French Sports Union for their idea, and Coubertin personally drew up the preparatory program. Three commissioners were to have charge of the preparations: Mr. C. Herbert, secretary of the Amateur Athletic Association, who represented Great Britain and the colonies; Professor W. M. Sloane of Princeton University, who represented the American continent; and Baron de Coubertin, representing France and Continental Europe.

The program, printed in French and English, contemplated the discussion and study of seven questions closely related to the problems of amateurism, and to these seven Coubertin on his own initiative added an eighth, which read as follows: "Regarding the possibility of the revival of the Olympic games. Under what conditions could they be re-established?"

Thus modestly was launched the idea that was eventually to occupy the dominant position in the discussions of the congress and develop within a few years into the great world-wide Olympic movement.

Baron de Coubertin's ideas on the subject were perhaps put more explicitly in a circular dated January 19, 1894, which was sent to athletic organizations all over the world. Today's athletic groups, struggling with the same problems, will read his document with interest. It said:

Above all things it is important to preserve the noble and chivalrous qualities in athletics that have characterized it in the past, in order that it may continue effectively to play the part in modern education that the ancient Greeks attributed to it. Imperfect humanity tends always to transform the Olympic athlete into the paid gladiator. These two formulae are not compatible, and we must choose between them. As a protection against the lure of money and professionalism that threatens to engulf them, the amateurs all over the world have drawn up complicated rules full of compromise and contradictions; too frequently the letter rather than the spirit of the law is followed out. Reform must come, and before undertaking it we must discuss it. The questions that are found on the

*Coubertin, *Une campagne de vingt-et-un ans*, p. 90.

†Coubertin, *Souvenirs d'Amérique et de Grèce*.

program of the congress treat of the contradictions and compromises of the amateur rules. The project mentioned in the last paragraph might be the happy medium of international understanding that we seek, if not to reach at this moment, at least to prepare for. The revival of the Olympic games on a basis conforming to the conditions of modern life would bring together every four years the representatives of the nations of the world, and we can well believe that these courteous and peaceful contests would constitute the highest of international activities.*

In his preparations for the congress, which was scheduled to be held in the spring of 1894, Coubertin found his main support in the person of Professor Sloane, the Princeton University teacher who was his colleague in preparing for the sessions. Their English colleague, Herbert, took an interest in the technical portion of the program, but evinced little enthusiasm over the revival of the Olympic games, in which regard he reflected the attitude of his country at the moment. As Coubertin so aptly expresses his thoughts: "England, which regarded bodily strength and vigor the exclusive property of her children, was not enthusiastic." However, while Coubertin found little enthusiasm in the two countries upon which he had based his hopes, France and England, he succeeded in interesting personages of great prominence in his project. The Duke of Sparta, the King of Belgium, the Prince of Wales, the Crown Prince of Sweden, and many prominent figures in the European political world accepted honorary memberships in the congress. Mr. Balfour of England accepted and evinced great interest in the program, although openly expressing some skepticism regarding the Olympic portion of the program.

Most enthusiastic of all nations invited to the congress was Sweden, and on May 28 Victor Balck announced the arrival of Lieutenants Bergh and Brakenberg to represent Sweden and to request on her behalf the honor of holding one of the Olympic celebrations at Stockholm on some future date.

The only actual opposition to the congress came from the Belgian Gymnastic Society, which wrote that that organization "had always believed and still believed that gymnastics and other sports were opposed and contrary in principle"; and, not content with sending this letter, it organized violent propaganda among gymnastic organizations all over Europe against the congress.

The shadow of the Franco-Prussian War was felt when, just previous to the opening of the momentous congress, the French Gymnastic Union announced that it would not participate if Germany was admitted to the congress, creating a situation that fortunately was smoothed over through the failure of Germany to send official delegates. Baron von Reiffenstein, the only German present, appeared at the congress on his own initiative as an individual and not as a representative of his country.

Official delegates from France, England, the United States, Greece, Russia, Sweden, Belgium, Italy, and Spain did attend, however; and Hungary, Germany, Bohemia, Holland, and Australia sent proxies or letters. Altogether there were seventy-nine delegates representing a total of forty-nine

*Coubertin, *Une campagne de vingt-et-un ans*, pp. 91-2.

organizations when the six-day congress was opened at the Sorbonne in the great amphitheater where the world of science had just celebrated the Pasteur Jubilee.

The congress was opened by Baron de Courcel, and the discussion of the Olympic games was presided over by M. Bikelas, representative of Greece.

The enthusiasm of Baron de Coubertin proved to be catching, and in short order his project of the revival of the games overshadowed the other matters that were up for discussion. As the delegates pictured the idea of a great international athletic meeting along the lines of those celebrated in ancient history, the possibilities of the project became so clear that they felt the urge to get under way at once.

Baron de Coubertin, an indefatigable writer as well as an inspiring worker, made use of his literary ability to stir up popular interest in his proposition by writing an article proposing Paris, with its international exposition planned for the opening of the twentieth century, as the logical site for the first revival of the games. This article had been published in the *Revue de Paris* on the eve of the congress, and the delegates were well acquainted with it.

But now, with enthusiasm fully aroused, six years seemed too far away, and the delegates demanded action. The iron was hot and it was time to strike. Such ardor might easily cool in the six years intervening before 1900. Someone suggested 1896. Coubertin took his Greek friend Bikelas aside, and in an instant, between the two, a great inspiration flashed—Athens, the capital of Greece! What more fitting site for the celebration of the games of the 1st Olympiad?

The idea swept the congress like wildfire. By unanimous vote the delegates chose Athens and the date of 1896. The games should be held every four years in the leading cities of the world, the program should be exclusively modern, and an International Olympic Committee of fifteen should be named to have supreme authority over the celebration.

And so, amid strange scenes in which the practical men of the athletic world found their petty differences dissipated under the mystic spell of the atmosphere of ancient Greece that was cast over the conference through the inspired stage management of its great protagonist, the Olympic dream of Baron de Coubertin took definite shape for the first time.

And little, perhaps, did Michel Bréal, one of the delegates, realize that the enthusiasm generated in his soul by the 1894 congress that led him to offer a trophy for a marathon race would prove the inspiration for an event that would develop into the real high light of every Olympic revival.

M. Bréal knew his history. His soul was moved by the history of the ancient Hellenes and the efforts of Coubertin and his associates to bring to life once more the high ideals and courage of those classic heroes of another age. At the closing banquet of the Paris congress he rose to his feet and delivered a stirring address eulogizing the Olympic games and their indelible effect on the character of the nation that conducted them.

This Frenchman, like Coubertin, was a man not only of words but of action. A few days after the congress he sent word to Baron de Coubertin recalling the legendary feat of Pheidippides and offering a trophy for a race to be held over the same course of roughly twenty-six miles at Athens in 1896.

Pheidippides, history tells us, was an Olympic champion of about 500 B.C.

When Darius of Persia sent an army to capture and enslave Eretria and Athens in 490 B.C. with Hippias, former tyrant of Athens, as its leader, Eretria was surrendered by treachery after a long siege and Hippias landed at Marathon, a plain some twenty-five miles from Athens, "thinking to do the same to the Athenians."*

Pheidippides, because of his strength and courage, was dispatched to enlist the aid of the Spartans, and for two days and two nights, without rest, this great athlete ran, swimming rivers and climbing mountains en route. He told his story to the warlike Spartans and returned with the news that the Spartan army would start with the full moon.

Meanwhile news came of the landing of the Persians at Marathon, and Pheidippides, bearing spear and shield, marched with his troop to give battle to the invaders while official Athens cringed and prayed. As the Persians sought to surprise the Athenians through an attack by sea, leaving a rear guard of approximately twenty thousand at Marathon, the Greeks, with half that number of warriors but numbering among their leaders the great military genius Miltiades, swarmed suddenly down from the mountains and, in a battle that is still regarded as a tactical classic, slaughtered the Persians and saved Athens.

Flushed with victory, the Athenian generals dispatched their Olympic champion, already fatigued by his long journey to Sparta and return and his personal exploits in the battle, to bring to the beleaguered city the glad tidings of victory, and history tells how Pheidippides, his strength completely spent, reached Athens, gasped, "Rejoice, we conquer," and dropped dead at the feet of those to whom he had delivered the message with his dying breath.

Here, surely, was a classical example of the spirit of the Olympic games, and in proposing the modern marathon race to re-enact and commemorate this historic event, M. Bréal made a contribution to the success of the Olympic games that, as we shall see, was far beyond his wildest dreams.

*Herodotus, VI, 102.



Official Report - Xth Olympiad 1932, L.A.

There is, and will continue to be, argument over the success of the Olympic games as a builder of international good will. It is the fate of the games that the good will goes largely unnoticed while the inevitable incidents to the contrary are given undue prominence. No one can doubt, however, that the chances are improved for reaching Coubertin's goal of a "stronger and better individual" tested by the searing heat of Olympic competition, when the Olympic torch is being kept alight by those who themselves have been exposed to its flame.

Olympic Games

The Olympic Games are an international sports festival that began in ancient Greece. The original Greek games were staged every fourth year for several hundred years, until they were abolished in the early Christian era. The revival of the Olympic Games took place in 1896, and since then they have been staged every fourth year, except during World War I and World War II (1916, 1940, 1944).

Perhaps the basic difference between the ancient and modern Olympics is that the former was the ancient Greeks' way of saluting their gods, whereas the modern Games are a manner of saluting the athletic talents of citizens of all nations. The original Olympics featured competition in music, oratory, and theater performances as well. The modern Games have a more expansive athletic agenda, and for two and one-half weeks they are supposed to replace the rancor of international conflict with friendly competition. In recent times, however, that lofty ideal has not always been attained.

THE ANCIENT OLYMPICS

The earliest reliable date that recorded history gives for the first Olympics is 776 BC, although virtually all historians presume that the Games began well before then.

It is certain that during the midsummer of 776 BC a festival was held at Olympia on the highly civilized eastern coast of the Peloponnesian peninsula. That festival remained a regularly scheduled event, taking place during the pre-Christian golden age of Greece. As a testimony to the religious nature of the Games (which were held in honor of Zeus, the most important god in the ancient Greek pantheon), all wars would cease during the contests. According to the earliest records, only one athletic event was held in the ancient Olympics--a foot race of about 183 m (200 yd), or the length of the stadium. A cook, Coroibus of Elis, was the first recorded winner. The first few Olympics had only local appeal and were limited to one race on one day; only men were allowed to compete or attend. A second race--twice the length of the stadium--was added in the 14th Olympics, and a still longer race was added to the next competition, four years later.

When the powerful, warlike Spartans began to compete, they influenced the agenda. The 18th Olympics included wrestling and a pentathlon consisting of running, jumping, spear throwing (the javelin), discus throwing, and wrestling. Boxing was added at the 23d Olympiad, and the Games continued to expand, with the addition of chariot racing and other sports. In the 37th Olympiad (632 BC) the format was extended to five days of competition.

The growth of the Games fostered "professionalism" among the competitors, and the Olympic ideals waned as royalty began to compete for personal gain, particularly in the chariot events. Human beings were being glorified as well as the gods; many winners erected statues to deify themselves. In AD 394 the Games were officially ended by the Roman emperor Theodosius, who felt that they had pagan connotations.

THE MODERN OLYMPICS

Development

The revival of the Olympic Games in 1896, unlike the original Games, has a clear, concise history. Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937), a young French nobleman, felt that he could institute an educational program in France that approximated the ancient Greek notion of a balanced development of mind and body. The Greeks themselves had tried to revive the Olympics by holding local athletic games in Athens during the 1800s, but without lasting success. It was Baron de Coubertin's determination and organizational genius, however, that gave impetus to the modern Olympic movement. In 1892 he addressed a meeting of the Union des Sports Athletiques in Paris. Despite meager response he persisted, and an international sports congress eventually convened on June 16, 1894. With delegates from Belgium, Britain, France, Greece, Italy, Russia, Spain, Sweden, and the United States in attendance, he advocated the revival of the Olympic Games. He found ready and unanimous support from the nine countries. De Coubertin had initially planned to hold the Olympic Games in France, but the representatives convinced him that Greece was the appropriate country to host the first modern Olympics. The council did agree that the Olympics would move every four years to other great cities of the world.

Thirteen countries competed at the Athens Games in 1896. Nine sports were on the agenda: cycling, fencing, gymnastics, lawn tennis, shooting, swimming, track and field, weight lifting, and wrestling. The 14-man U. S. team dominated the track and field events, taking first place in 9 of the 12 events. The Games were a success, and a second Olympiad, to be held in France, was scheduled. Olympic Games were held in 1900 and 1904, and by 1908 the number of competitors more than quadrupled the number at Athens--from 311 to 2,082.

Beginning in 1924 a Winter Olympics was included--to be held at a separate cold-weather sports site in the same year as the Summer Games--the first held at Chamonix, France. In 1992 about 2,174 athletes from 63 nations competed at Albertville, France, in a program that included Alpine and Nordic skiing, biathlon, ice hockey, figure skating, speed skating, bobsledding, and luge. But the Summer Games, with its wide array of events, are still the focal point of the modern Olympics. The standard events are archery, basketball, boxing, canoeing and kayaking, cycling, equestrian arts, fencing, field hockey, gymnastics, handball, judo, modern pentathlon, rowing, shooting, soccer, swimming and diving and synchronized swimming, track and field, volleyball, water polo, weight

lifting, wrestling (both freestyle and Greco-Roman), and yachting. The Games are governed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), whose headquarters is in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Although the Olympic Games have been increasingly politicized, the ideal of the world's best athletes competing against each other in the arena of so-called pure sport has been at least partially realized, especially from the athletes' point of view. And even though skill and courage are manifested by most Olympic participants, the great gold medalists are the ones who are most often remembered.

In 1912, Jim THORPE, an American Indian, won both the decathlon and pentathlon in Stockholm; Thorpe was eventually honored as the greatest athlete of the first half of the 20th century. Over three Olympiads (1920, Antwerp; 1924, Paris; and 1928, Amsterdam), Paavo NURMI, the Flying Finn, earned 6 individual gold medals in running, for distances from 1,500 m to 10,000 m. In 1924 and 1928, Nurmi's accomplishments were accompanied by those of U.S. swimmer Johnny WEISSMULLER, who took 5 gold medals in the freestyle sprints. In the 1932 Olympics, held in Los Angeles, American athlete Babe Didrikson ZAHARIAS won 3 medals--2 gold, in the javelin and 80-m hurdles, and a silver, in the high jump. When Nazi Germany hosted the 1936 Games in Berlin as a showcase for Aryan supremacy, the black American Jesse OWENS won 4 gold medals in what many experts consider the best track and field performance in Olympic history.

Unheralded 17-year-old Bob MATHIAS arrived in London for the 1948 Games and astonished all with his victory in the decathlon; he repeated his feat in 1952 to become the only two-time decathlon winner. The Helsinki Games of 1952 belonged, however, to Emil "The Terrible" ZATOPEK of Czechoslovakia, who became, and still is, the only man in Olympic history to win the 5,000 m, 10,000 m, and marathon in a single Olympiad. Also in 1952, U.S. diver Patricia MCCORMICK won both golds in women's diving, and she became the only person to repeat this double victory when she won again in 1956. The Melbourne Games of 1956 were the beginning of two other notable winning streaks spread over several Olympics--Al OERTER of the United States garnered the first of 4 consecutive discus titles (1956-68), a feat never equaled in any event, and swimmer Dawn FRASER of Australia won the first of her 3 consecutive gold medals (1956-64) in the 100-m freestyle.

The Olympics in Rome, in 1960, marked a gold-medal performance by the U.S. basketball team that is said to be the finest in Olympic annals; the team included such All-Americans and future professionals as Oscar ROBERTSON, Jerry WEST, Jerry Lucas, Walt Bellamy, Terry Dischinger, Bob Boozer, Darrall Imhoff, and Adrian Smith, and their closest margin of victory was 24 points. Rome also marked the first gold medals for New Zealand's Peter SNELL, in the

800-m run, and Ethiopia's Abebe BIKILA, who won the marathon running barefoot; they repeated their victories in Tokyo in 1964, with Snell also taking the gold in the Olympic "mile" (1,500 m).

The 1968 Olympics in Mexico City were characterized by many great individual performances, but none was so spectacular as the long jump of Bob BEAMON, who broke the world record by 55 cm (21.5 in). In 1972 in Munich, Mark SPITZ earned 7 gold medals in swimming, more than anyone in any Olympiad. Lasse VIREN of Finland took gold medals in both the 5,000-m and 10,000-m runs, and he became the only man ever to repeat this double, in Montreal in 1976. Montreal was also the site of the emergence of Romania's Nadia COMANECI, the marvelous 14-year-old gymnast who won 3 gold medals and accumulated 7 perfect scores during the competition. In both 1972 and 1976 the USSR's Vasily ALEXEYEV won gold medals in the super-heavyweight weight-lifting division. And although the world's strongest man fared poorly at the Moscow Games in 1980 (and retired soon thereafter), his teammate, swimmer Vladimir Salnikov, was proclaimed the greatest distance swimmer of all time after winning gold in the 400-m and 1,500-m freestyle events.

The Winter Olympics have witnessed outstanding performances as well. The Austrian Toni SAILER won all 3 gold medals in men's Alpine skiing in 1956 (at Cortina da'Ampezzo, Italy), an achievement matched only once, by the Frenchman Jean Claude KILLY in 1968 (at Grenoble, France). Sonja HENIE of Norway, still possibly the greatest of all figure skaters, won 3 consecutive gold medals (1928, St. Moritz, Switzerland; 1932, Lake Placid, N.Y.; and 1936, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany), and she was the first skater to parlay her athletic success into a lucrative career in entertainment. That path was also taken by such well-known American figure skaters as Dick BUTTON (1948, St. Moritz; and 1952, Oslo), Carol Heiss (1960, Squaw Valley, Calif.), Peggy FLEMING (1968, Grenoble), Dorothy HAMILL (1976, Innsbruck, Austria), and Scott HAMILTON (1984, Sarajevo, Yugoslavia). In 1980, in Lake Placid, the underdog U.S. hockey team stirred America's spirits by snatching the gold medal from the heavily favored Soviets, and Eric HEIDEN of Wisconsin won all 5 gold medals in men's speed skating, an unparalleled accomplishment. Although the U.S. team did not perform as well as expected overall at the 1984 Games, American Alpine skiers were much better than ever before--the MAHRE brothers, Phil and Steve, won gold and silver medals, respectively, in the slalom, and Bill JOHNSON took the gold in the men's downhill, the first such victory ever for an American; for the women, Debbie ARMSTRONG earned the gold medal in the giant slalom, while teammate Christin Cooper followed with the silver.

Almost all athletes who take part in the Olympic Games stress that, for them, the rites of Olympic passage are apolitical--that while there is, of course, a great sense of pride in competing for one's country, the camaraderie shared by the

athletes is the most rewarding of Olympic experiences.

The ideology of nationalism, which swept the world during the early 20th century, left its mark on the Olympics. Athletic nationalism was brought to a peak by Nazi Germany, which staged the 1936 Games in Berlin and used the Olympics to propagandize its cause. The Germans built a powerful team through nationalized training and scientific advances and dominated the Games in terms of medals won.

The political overtones of the Olympics did not lessen with the fall of Nazi Germany. In 1956, Egypt, Iraq, and Lebanon boycotted the Melbourne Games to protest the Anglo-French seizure of the Suez Canal, and the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland boycotted as well to protest the USSR's invasion of Hungary. In Mexico City in 1968, American blacks Tommie Smith and John Carlos used the victory pedestal to publicize their disdain for racial discrimination in the United States. In Munich in 1972, 11 Israeli athletes were massacred by nonparticipating Palestinian terrorists. And in 1976 in Montreal, 33 African nations, to be represented by about 400 athletes, boycotted the Games to protest South Africa's apartheid policies.

The most serious disruptions to the modern Olympics, however, occurred in 1980 and 1984. In 1980 the U.S. government led a boycott of the Summer Games in Moscow to protest the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Under strong pressure from the Carter administration, the U.S. Olympic Committee voted to boycott the Games, thus depriving the Russians of their chief athletic competition. Although a total of 81 nations were represented in Moscow, about 40 nations followed the U.S. lead (among them West Germany, China, and Japan), depriving the Soviets of their chief athletic competition and raising doubts about the future of the Olympic movement. Such fears were well founded. Although the 1984 Winter Games, held early in the year in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, proceeded without boycotts, the Summer Games, held in Los Angeles, were undercut by an Eastern-bloc boycott led by the USSR. Fear of an openly hostile environment in Los Angeles was cited by the Soviet Olympic Committee as the reason for the USSR's nonparticipation, but most commentators believed the reasons to be political: a reflection of the poor state of recent U.S.-Soviet relations, simple revenge for the U.S. boycott of the Moscow Games, and possible embarrassment to the Soviets on worldwide television caused by planned anti-Soviet demonstrations and possible defections of Eastern-bloc athletes. The popularity and financial success of the 1984 Los Angeles Games were, however greater than anticipated.

In 1988 the Winter Games--in Calgary, Alberta, Canada--went on without international incident. At the Summer Games, in Seoul, South Korea, East met West in Olympic competition for the first time since 1976, with only six nations (including Cuba and North Korea) boycotting, and the focus returned to the

athletes. There was suspicion that the use of performance enhancing drugs was widespread after Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson tested positive and was stripped of his gold medal. The 1992 Winter and Summer Games (in Albertville, France, and Barcelona, Spain, respectively) were notable as the first Olympics without the Eastern-bloc sports machine, the last for the "Unified Teams" from the former USSR, and for the return of South Africa.

1. Back to Main

2.



1896

Athens, Greece

April 6 - 15, 1896
311 Athletes
13 Nations
9 Sports



The first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens Greece after a 1503 year break in the action when the Roman Emperor Theodisus banned the Games in the year 393 A.D. The Games were revived by a Frenchman named Baron Pierre de Coubertin who became obsessed with the idea of Olympic competition that could

inspire athletes from around the world to come together in a rivalry of nations based upon a vision of international understanding and peace through sports.

Though the Games were anxiously awaited by more than 34 countries, only 13 nations were able to assemble enough athletes to participate. The 311 athletes that did take part in the games were an odd mix of both seasoned athletes and interested amateurs who wished for nothing but the chance to make their country proud and put themselves in the forefront of modern Olympic history. Some 100,000 Greek spectators filled the restored Panathenaic Stadium to watch this historical event take place before their very eyes.

Track and Field, cycling, fencing, gymnastics, shooting, swimming, tennis, weightlifting, and wrestling were the sports of the first modern Olympiad. The home country Grecians were the dominant nation winning 47 medals while the Americans could only muster 19 medals, Germany had 15 and France 11. The Americans did, however, take 11 gold medals compared to Greece's 10, which as it turns out made for an interesting rivalry going into the final event, the Marathon.

Attention to all aspiring journalists - Can you write a great Story?

Have you ever dreamed of being a sports writer? Well, here's your chance to have your name on the Internet as a featured writer. You write it and we'll publish it and give you the credit of authorship. Here are some of the historical Olympic figures and/or events of the first Olympiad that you can write about:

- ☐ Spiridon Louis
- ☐ James Connolly
- ☐ Arthur Blake
- ☐ Robert Garrett
- ☐ Georgios Averoff
- ☐ The First Modern Marathon
- ☐ Thomas Burke
- ☐ Theodoros Deligiannis
- ☐ Emperor Theodisus
- ☐ Baron Pierre de Coubertin

These are merely suggestions, so don't limit yourself to these choices - write about anything having to do with the first Olympiad! Send your stories, fun facts, or research papers by e-mail to olympics@sportsnetusa.com

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Welcome to Olympics History!

Herein you may find all sorts of tidbits, little known facts, ramblings, musings, recitations and dissertations about all that has occurred in the history of the Games since they began in Athens one hundred years ago.



The Olympic Games celebrates each "Olympiad" (a period of four successive years) and are held at the beginning of the Olympiad of which they are celebrating. The Olympic Games in Atlanta in 1996 will open the XXVIth Olympiad. When they are not held, the number of the Olympiad remains the same. This was the case in 1916 (VIth Olympiad), 1940 and 1944 (XIIth and XIIIth Olympiads), when no Games were held. Why were there no Games held?



Teachers who want to involve their classes in learning about Olympics History may encourage their students to e-mail articles, news stories, and research papers to us. We will feature one or more schools each month and publish work produced by their students. Stay tuned as we present each Olympiad, starting with the first year of the Games and continuing through the centennial celebration of Olympics in Atlanta in 1996!



Celebrating 100 Years of Olympic Pride



1896 Athens, Greece	1900 Paris, France	1904 St. Louis, USA	1908 London, England
1912 Stockholm, Sweden	1916 Berlin, Germany	1920 Antwerp, Belgium	1924 Paris, France
1928 Amsterdam, Holland	1932 Los Angeles, USA	1936 Berlin, Germany	1940 Tokyo, Japan
1944 London, England	1948 London, England	1952 Helsinki, Finland	1956 Melbourne, Australia
1960 Rome, Italy	1964 Tokyo, Japan	1968 Mexico City, Mexico	1972 Munich, Germany
1976 Montreal, Canada	1980 Moscow, USSR	1984 Los Angeles, USA	1988 Seoul, Korea
1992 Barcelona, Spain	1996 Atlanta, USA	2000 Sydney, Australia	2004 ?

The Centennial Torch Trademark consists of the graphic elements depicting the five-star flame, the column base formed by the centennial "100" and Olympic Rings, and the words "Atlanta 1996." The column alludes to the classical origins of the Games in ancient Greece, while the star-flame represents the aspirations of humanity. Together, they comprise the hope of Atlanta, unifying the world in the centennial celebration of the Games.

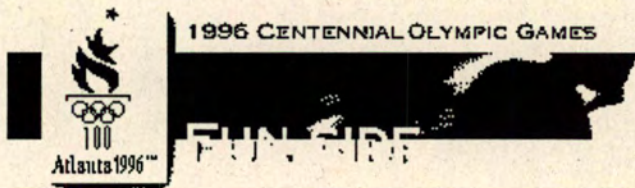
The Quilt of Leaves weaves together graphic images that symbolize Atlanta's grace and natural beauty, the ancient traditions of the Olympic Games and the cultural heritage of the American South. As a symbol for the Games, the quilt mirrors the marriage of colors created in the Parade of Nations, as the cultures of the world blend their flags into a singular expression of human harmony. As the essence of the quilt, the leaves provide a direct link to Atlanta, reflecting the canopy of shade for which the *City of Trees* is known. In Olympic history, the leaves also emerged as a sacred symbol of glory and peace, a jewel in the crown of the olive branch placed on the head of the victor.

Pictograms symbolize the sports of the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. Classical in style, each pictogram portrays the well-toned body of the elite athlete and recalls the traditional Greek figures on amphoras -- the famed Grecian urns of antiquity.



Let the Games Begin...

On April 10, 1896, the first modern Olympic Games began with a race of 25 men from Marathon to Athens, Greece. The record books say it covered 25 miles in just under 3 hours. Actually, it never ended. It was the beginning of an unparalleled, inspiring journey around the world to Atlanta, Georgia, the home of its 100th anniversary.



Citius, Altius, Fortius



CITIUS•ALTIVS•FORTIVS

The Olympic Motto is "Citius, Altius, Fortius," which translated from Latin means "Faster, Higher, Braver." However, the universally accepted meaning is "Swifter, Higher, Stronger" and is meant to express the aspirations of the athletes in the Olympic Movement. The motto is also a fitting one for all human activity since it sets no limits on people's ability to improve the human condition.

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Last Modified: Feb 27, 1996

Along the way, it thrilled us with Jim Thorpe's never-to-be-repeated pentathlon and decathlon victories of 1912 and distance runner Paavo Nurmi's stunning record of seven consecutive gold medals and three silvers from 1920 to 1928.

We marveled at the courage and quiet dignity of Jesse Owens as he achieved greatness in 1936, the grace and skating genius of Sonia Henie in her three consecutive Olympic championships from 1928 to 1936, and the amazing Bob Mathias who set new world records in both the 1948 and 1952 decathlons.

It brought us the unforgettable exploits of Babe Zaharias Didrickson, Rafer Johnson, Muhammed Ali, Bruce Jenner, Olga Korbuto, the inspiring 1980 U.S. Hockey Team, and all of the world's greatest athletes striving for perfection.

But the Olympic spirit is about more than just the victory of athletes. It is a triumph of humanity as well as the most perfect demonstration of brotherhood, camaraderie, and goodwill this planet has ever seen!

Just For Kids	Back to Olympics Main Menu
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25TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The Associated Press

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June 5, 1992, Friday, PM cycle

SECTION: Sports News

LENGTH: 424 words

BYLINE: By NIKOS KONSTANDARAS, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ANCIENT OLYMPIA, Greece

BODY:

The Olympic flame began its journey to Spain for the Olympics in Barcelona after being lit today amid the ruins of the sanctuary where the games were born.

The flame symbolizing the Olympic spirit was lit by the rays of the mid-day sun beaming into a concave mirror on an altar to Hera, one of the principle ancient gods honored at pine-forested Olympia.

"Apollo, god of the sun and of the idea of light, send your rays and light the sacred torch for the hospitable city of Barcelona," called Maria Pombouki, an actress dressed as an ancient Greek high priestess, invoking another patron of Olympia.

She and another 21 young women performed the lighting ceremony.

"The flame with which you entrust us will be the guiding light of a celebration which will be as much yours as ours, and which intends to be for all," said Pasqual Maragall, mayor of Barcelona and president of his city's Olympic Organizing Committee.

He brushed away tears of emotion when the head of the metal torch erupted in a bright flame as the sun's rays hit it.

In the ancient stadium where the games were held for over a thousand years after they were founded in 776 B.C., the flame began a relay that will end in Barcelona on July 24, the eve of the 25th Olympics.

The games will commence when an archer shoots an arrow carrying the flame into a cauldron above the Olympic Stadium.

Savvas Saritzoglou, Greece's discus champion, set out from Ancient Olympia with the torch and a sprig of olive - the kind used to crown ancient victors.

Another 364 runners were each to carry the flame another kilometer, until reaching Athens on Sunday.

The Associated Press, June 5, 1992

From there, a Spanish frigate, the Cataluna, will start out Monday for Empuries, a city in Spain founded by the ancient Greeks.

The flame will cover 3,564 miles en route to Barcelona.

It will travel by plane, ship and hydrofoil as well as be carried by runners and cyclists in reaching all of Spain.

The ancient games were held in honor of the gods every four years, with participants from all Greek city states.

For their duration, the normally quarrelsome Greeks had to declare a truce so that athletes could train, travel and compete in the games without hindrance.

The games were abolished by the Roman Emperor Theodosius I in 394, as they were judged pagan after Christianity took root.

The modern games were revived in Athens in 1896.

Today's ceremonies began with a wreath-laying ceremony at a grove dedicated to French Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the driving force behind the modern games' revival.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

OLYMPIA AND THE MUSEUM

CULT AND GAMES: The ancient cult and myths of Olympia

Places, like men, have their destinies. On the remote slopes of Mount Parnassos, Apollo brought together the Hellenes under the Delphic Amphiktyony, and delivered oracles to both Greeks and "barbarians." There was, however, another remote corner of Greece, in the western Peloponnesos, which became the first home of athletics and whose name, as a result, spread throughout the world: Olympia.

The green landscape of Olympia, peaceful and serene, unfolds between two rivers, the Alpheios and the Kladeos (fig. 16). In ancient times, it was full of plane-trees and wild olives; in the dialect of the local inhabitants, the beautiful grove was known as the *Altis*. Whereas the god Apollo had found it necessary to lead men himself to the awe-inspiring rock of Delphi, the rich plain of Olympia was easily accessible and hospitable, as if asking to be chosen for habitation. It was only natural that men should decide to build their houses there at the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., or perhaps a little earlier. The apsidal dwellings discovered in the deeper layers of soil on the site of the sanctuary belong to the Middle Helladic period (1900-1600 B.C.). The first settlers knew nothing of Zeus and the Olympian gods. Tradition has it that the earliest cult was that of Kronos. This ancient god, father of Zeus, was worshipped on the imposing hill that dominates and bounds the northern side of the

sanctuary. The hill was dedicated to him, as its name — Kronion — implies. At the foot of the hill stood other sanctuaries dedicated to female deities: Aphrodite Ourania, Eileithyia (and the dragon-shaped daemon Sosipolis), the Nymphs; finally there was the "Gaion," one of the earliest sanctuaries and oracles, belonging to the very first diviner, the goddess Gaia (Earth), and to her daughter Themis. We have no way of knowing when and how the cult of Pelops — the mysterious hero who gave his name to the Peloponnesos — reached Olympia, or why he became associated with the sacred Altis as the local "daemon," holy and venerable, worshipped next to Zeus. It is quite probable that his cult is older than that of Zeus, and that his *temenos* — the Pelopion — within the sanctuary, is the oldest known monument of the cult, dating back to the same period as the Hippodameion — Hippodameia's sanctuary — whose position is unknown to us. The ancient Greeks knew that this region, named Pisatis, from its capital, Pisa, was ruled by king Oinomaos, who had a daughter called Hippodameia. Before giving away his daughter in marriage, Oinomaos demanded that her suitor should defeat him in a chariot race. If, however, the suitor lost the race, Oinomaos would kill him. The king had killed thirteen such suitors when Pelops came to Pisa. He was the son of Tantalos, from distant Lydia, and his purpose was to take Hippodameia as his wife. During the crucial chariot race, he defeated the cruel king and married Hippodameia. This was how Pelops became associated with Olympia and was henceforth worshipped in the sacred Altis.

There exists another myth, however, which supplies us with clearly historical information. The myth says that when the time came for the Herakleidai to return to their fatherland, the Peloponnesos, they went through a series of mishaps and calamities. Finally, the Delphic god advised them to find a "three-eyed" guide and go through "the narrow pass." On their way they encountered the one-eyed Oxylos, a descendant of Aitolos, who had been king of Elis before going into exile to the land that later took his name: Aitolia. Oxylos was riding a horse, and therefore was "three-eyed." The Herakleidai asked him to guide them across to the Peloponnesos. Oxylos took them to Arkadia, while he turned west with the Aitolians and travelled to Elis, which was then inhabited by the Epeians. A battle ensued between the Aitolians and the Epeians and culminated in a heroic duel between the Aitolian Pyraichmes and the Epeian Degmenos; Pyraichmes emerged the victor. Thus Oxylos became once again king of Elis and the Aitolians lived peacefully side by side with the former inhabitants of the region.

The myth of Oxylos is a good illustration of what recent historical research refers to as the descent of the western Greek tribes into the Peloponnesos at the end of the Mycenaean era. It appears that the cult of Zeus dates from that time, and that he was worshipped as a warrior god, as shown by the early figurines representing him with a helmet. This warlike attribute is still manifest in the archaic cult statue of Zeus (*circa* 600 B.C.) which was housed in the Heraion, next to the seated Hera.

The Olympic Games

It was only natural that the new cult of the "father of men and gods" should acquire a predominant place in the sacred grove and that the shrine should end by belonging mainly to him. But apart from the great altar, where the richest sacrifices were offered, there were several other altars in the Altis. Pausanias

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1. Vase painting from the 5th century B.C. depicting the abduction of Hippodameia by Pelops in his chariot (Arezzo, Museo Archeologico).

mentions 69, and we know he has not included all of them in his account. This means that Olympia was a sacred site where the ancient cults of the indigenous people continued to be practised next to the Olympian religion introduced by the settlers from western Greece. But this was not the factor that consecrated Olympia as the greatest Panhellenic sanctuary and determined its character and significance. Olympia owes its very special place among the other Greek sanctuaries to the games performed there every four years. The ancient Greeks ascribed the beginning of the Olympic Games to mythical times. This implies that the Olympic Games were believed by the Greeks to be of a most ancient

and sacred origin and that they formed an integral part of the ancestral cult.

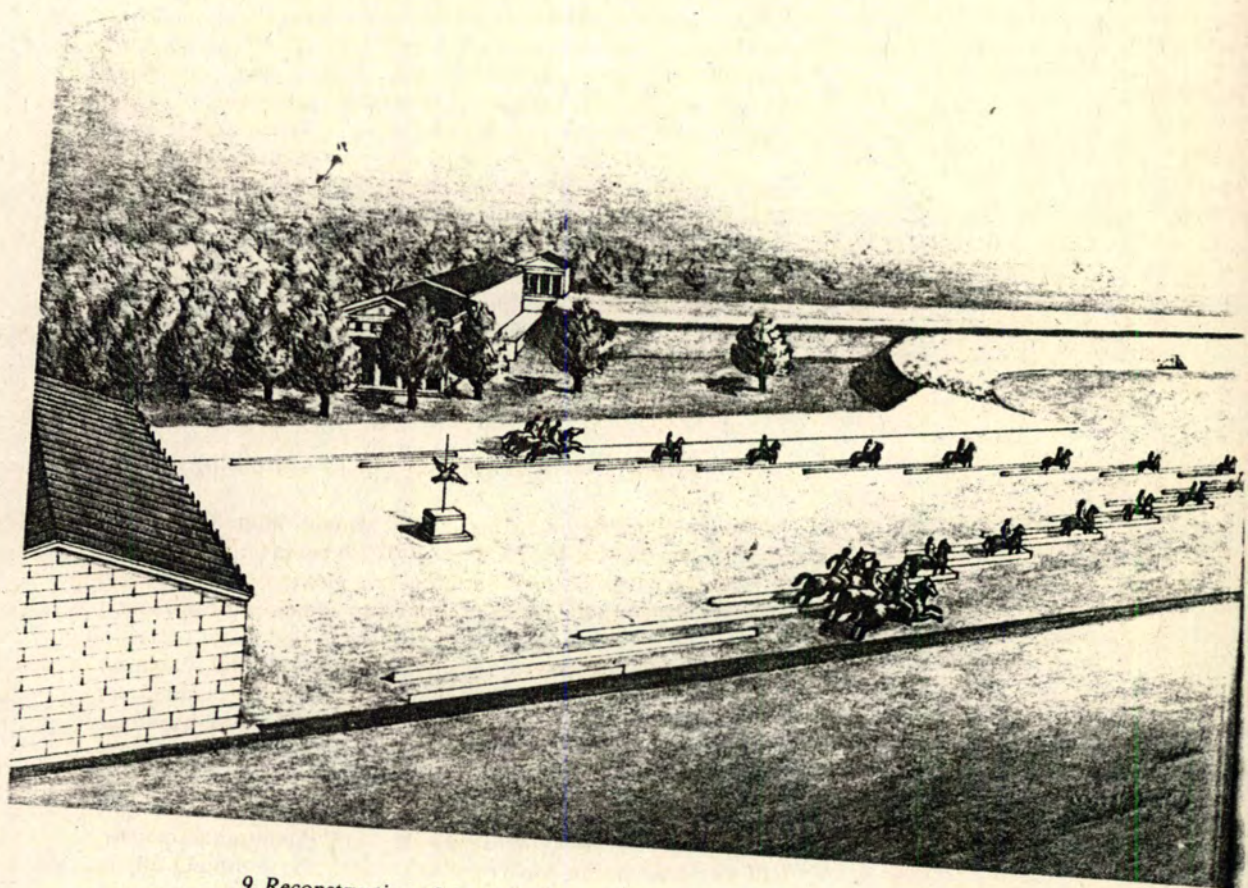
Modern research is far from unanimous in interpreting the institution of the games. Some scholars believe that man's natural disposition to train himself and compete with others was the main motive that led the Greeks to introduce athletic games. But most scholars associate the introduction of the games with burial rites, because we know that in Homeric times games were held in honour of the dead.

However may one interpret the birth of the Olympic Games, their importance exceeds the limitations of both the time and the place where they were originally instituted. It is no exaggeration to say that those games gave birth to yet another Greek idea, a whole attitude to life — the attitude of a free man competing with his peers, naked, unfettered by any element foreign to his own body, conforming only to the rules of the game, with the sole aim of winning for himself an olive crown — in other words a purely moral victory — and the praise of his fellow-men.

The significance of the Games in Greek history

The Olympic Games proved to be historical landmarks for the ancient Greek world. The year 776 B.C., which was the date of the first Olympiad, is also the first certain and accurate chronology in Greek history, because henceforth the names of victors in every Olympiad were officially recorded. The first victor was Koroibos of Elis, who won the one-stade race. But there is a second, far more important historical conclusion to be drawn from the Olympic Games: the Greeks, though divided into numerous tribal groups, though scattered over a vast area from Asia Minor to Italy and from Africa to Macedonia, though organized into hundreds of small states often at war with each other, had a deep awareness of their ethnic unity, which set them apart from the other inhabitants of the world. Only free Greeks were allowed to participate in the Olympic Games; that is why the highest officials and judges of the Games were named *Hellandikai*, an ancient title that shows the supreme significance of the Olympic Games in the life of the Greeks. Their celebration demanded that all Greeks be present in peaceful assembly in the sacred grove. For this purpose the *spondophoroi*, noblemen of Elis followed by an official retinue acted as heralds travelling to all the Greek cities well ahead of the Games, in order to proclaim the "*ekecheiria*", i.e. a truce, a suspension of hostilities that would last up to three months. Thus all the Greeks could proceed without fear to Olympia and attend the most splendid Panhellenic assembly, where they could not only admire youths excelling in athletic games, but also single out famous noblemen and illustrious sages, listen to poets and musicians, and above all mingle among themselves: the Dorians of Sicily with the Ionians of the East, the Greeks of Kyrene with their distant brothers from Macedonia. It is impossible for us to visualize that unique and

8. Stater of Elis with a portrait of Zeus, the most important deity worshipped at Olympia. Middle of the 4th century B.C. Winged victory running to the left holding a crown in her hand, also on a coin from Elis. Silver tetradrachm struck by Philip II of Macedonia to commemorate his victory in the horse race in 356 B.C. It depicts the winning rider and the horse. (Athens, Numismatic Museum).



9. Reconstruction of the hippodrome at Olympia. On the left can be seen the hippaphesis

soul-stirring 76th Olympiad (476 B.C.) when Greeks from all over the world watched Themistokles, the victor of Salamis, entering the Altis. Plutarch tells us that the whole day long, the crowds forgot about the athletes and the contests in order to acclaim the man who had led them to victory.

All this took place under the gaze and protection of the great Zeus, a warrior himself, who always stood by the Hellenes, whether in the struggles of war or in the peaceful contests of athleticism. In return, the Greeks, being a deeply religious people, offered him the arms which had brought them victory and the spoils of war which the god had helped them appropriate. The victors set up their own statues in the shrine of Zeus, not out of arrogance, but with the piety of those who can accept a god's gift in perfect humility. As the years went by, the votive offerings in the sacred grove grew more and more numerous, till they could be numbered by the thousands; they included precious and famed weapons which eventually made Olympia the most complete museum of the war history of Greece.

dances, that of Hippodameia and that of Physkoa. The first is named after the well-known heroine of the East Pediment of the Temple of Zeus, who as mentioned, established the Heraia, and the second is a local nymph with whom the god Dionysus fell in love.

The games and festivals of the Heraia did not take place at the same time as the Olympic Games, but an interval of time always separated them. According to one theory the alternation of the Olympic Games to take place in every Apollonios and Parthenios month was on account of the Heraia. So, if the Heraia consistently took place in the month of Parthenios, the Olympic Games took place on one occasion before them and on the next occasion after them, so that this women's festival would not lose its significance.

THE PANHELLENIC OLYMPIC GAMES

The Panhellenic Olympic Games grew out of a festival of local character. However, it seems that the Truce, which was established by the largest cities of the Peloponnese, was initiated by the panpeloponnesian games which in the course of time became panhellenic and attracted the attention of the whole of the then known world, whither the Greeks had spread.

The Ionian cities of Asia Minor, Cyprus together with other Greek Islands, the colonies of the Pontus, North Africa, Magna Graecia, as well as the cities of continental Greece joyfully received the Olympic proclamation of peace. Thus the Sanctuary of Olympia rapidly became the most enviable panhellenic religious and competitive centre. Moreover, the Olympic Games really idealised Greek Life. They represented a lofty ideal which for many centuries inspired the youth of ancient times, an ideal which, thorough honourable and noble competition, sought to develop the mind and strengthen the body in order to create a superior character.

The radiant spirit of Olympia gradually diffused to all Greek cities. The fact that the Olympics were celebrated in honour of Zeus, the great god of all the Greeks, consolidated their religious importance. Moreover, the principle of the Sanctuary was not to debase the religious concept of the contests at Olympia by awarding a monetary prize to the winner, but by preserving «crowning», to ensure the moral superiority of the Olympics as contests of virtue.

The Olympic Games did not award money or silver but crowns. The winners received only a crown of wild olive, plaited from a branch of the sacred tree, the «Olive of Kallistephanos» (beautiful crown). The Olive of Kallistephanos grew near the opisthodomos

of the Temple of Zeus, next to the altar of the Nymphs of Kallistephanos. After a sacrifice was made on this altar, a child both of whose parents were living, climbed up the sacred tree and with a golden knife cut branches to be made into the crowns of the victors. Some say that the Kallistephanos Olive was brought as a plant by Hercules from the land of the Hyperboreas (Far North), and others say that after a prediction made by the Delphic oracle to Iphitos, King of Elis, the sacred tree was found wrapped in a cobweb, in the opisthodomos of the Temple of Zeus.

In the earlier Olympic Games the prize was an apple or a bronze tripod. However, from the 7th Olympiad (752 B.C.), they started to crown the winners. During this Olympiad the Messenian Daikles, who won the Stade race, was the first Olympic victor to be honoured with the crown of the wild olive.

The crown of the wild olive was the most idolised aspiration of Greek youth. This clearly shows that for the Greeks the contest did not take place either for simple exhibition, or riches, but for spiritual improvement, for the harmonious development of body and mind, for the worship of beauty and nobility. In the Stadium of Olympia displays of strength had to be combined completely with good character and a cultivated mind. That was the ideal aim of the Olympic Games: the harmonious existence, within the same individual, of virtue and strength, for the creation of spiritual and bodily perfection and of a generation endowed with virtue and strength.

Herodotus, the Father of History, expresses the profound meaning of the Olympic Games very well, when describing the conversation of Xerxes, Mardonius and other Persian officers with some Greek deserters who went from the Arcadians to the Persian camp after the Battle of Thermopylae. Once they had explained, it says, that the Greeks at that time held *contests for athletes and horse races* at Olympia, Xerxes, being curious, asked what were the prizes for the winners. They replied: *a crown of wild olive*. Then a staff officer, Tritandaechmes, son of Artabanus, spoke to Mardonius who had induced the Persian king to campaign against Greece and said: *Alas, Mardonius, against whom have you brought us to fight? With men who compete not for money but for virtue.* (Herodotus Book VIII, 26).

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The ideals to which the Olympic Games aspired are verified by the strict rules for the athletes taking part. The athletes had to be Greek freemen — slaves were forbidden to take part — who had not committed any crime or impious act, broken the rules of the Games or the Truce. In addition, they had to have trained in their place of origin for ten months before the Games, and during the last month, in Elis or Olympia.

Elis was a very ancient city built on the left bank of the Peneios river. It was unwallled and had some notable public buildings. It had four gymnasiums for training athletes, a building for the Hellanodikai (Umpires) where they were taught their responsibilities by the Thesmophylakes or Gaurdians of the Law ; there was also a important theatre and Bouleuterion and a special house for the sixteen Eleian women who every four years wove the sacred peplos of Hera and organised the Heraia.

This city-state, which lay about fifty kilometres from Olympia — near modern Amaliada — had overall control of the Sanctuary and, from its great priestly families, the Iamides and Klytiades, it appointed its priests alternately. Also, the Council (Boule) of Eleians organised the Olympic Games, and while they were in progress, met in the Bouleuterion at Olympia. This is why it is called the Olympic Council.

The control which the Eleians exercised over the Sanctuary was the cause of a long and enduring quarrel between them and Pisa, a neighbouring city of Olympia to which the Sanctuary originally belonged. The discord which broke out from time to time developed into bloody conflicts between the two cities in 572 and 472 B.C., the result being the defeat of the Pisians and the destruction of their city. The last vain attempt of the Pisians was in 364 B.C. However, the Olympiads which had been supervised by the Pisians in 748, 644 and 364 B.C. were not recognised by the Eleians who called then non-Olympiads.

However, after the destruction of Pisa, Elis permanently supervised the Sanctuary and the Games. The wise administration of the city always had at its disposal the impartial judges, the Hellanodikai who were entrusted with the smooth running of the Games and the rigid application of the rules. In this task they were assisted by a corps of officials (a kind of police force) the Alytai, the lictors, the flagellators and so on, who were directed by the Alytarch (chief of the Alytai).

The Hellanodikai were Eleian citizens elected by lot for a single Olympiad, and while performing their duties they wore an imposing purple cloak. Among their various responsibilities, was the enforcing of severe penalties for people who violated regulations, and also the prize-giving for the winners. Their decisions were always respected, even in cases where they were clearly unjustified. Those who maintained that they had been wronged could appeal to the Olympic Council which had the power to punish the Hellanodikai severely. But these rules were rarely applied because the Hellanodikai always judged fairly and with impartiality, virtues which were recognised by all the Greeks and which maintained the high prestige of the Olympic Games.

The numbers of Hellanodikai changed at different times corresponding to the number of clans of Eleians. However, in 348 B.C.

it was established that there should be ten, and this number remained constant until the very last Olympiad.

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The events which were included in the Olympic programme can be divided into athletic and equestrian contests. The former were held in the Stadium and the latter in the Hippodrome. The competitors in the athletic events were divided according to age into men and boys, and those in the equestrian contests, into chariot races and horse races.

The most ancient athletic event was the Stade race which was run the length of the Stadium, that is 192.25 m., and was the only contest until 728 B.C. From then on, the number of competitions gradually increased.

724 B.C.: Diaulos or two-stade race (192.25 m. x 2).

720 B.C.: Dolichos, that is the distance of 24 stades (192.25 m. x 24).

708 B.C.: Wrestling and Pentathlon. The Pentathlon comprised the following events: long jump, discus, javelin, running and wrestling.

688 B.C.: Boxing.

648 B.C.: Pankration. This was a very tough and dangerous sport being a combination of wrestling and boxing.

632 B.C.: Stade race and Boys' Wrestling.

616 B.C.: Boys' Boxing.

520 B.C.: Hoplite race. This was an impressive race in which athletes ran in complete bronze armour.

200 B.C.: Finally, the Boys' Pankration.

The equestrian competitions were established in 680 B.C. with the Tethrippon (a chariot race for four horses), according to Pausanias. But according to Pindar, they were established much earlier in 740 B.C., when Samos from Mantinea won the Tethrippon. More races were introduced after that.

648 B.C.: Horse race for stallions.

408 B.C.: The Synoris or two-horse chariot race.

384 B.C.: Four-horse chariot race for one-year-olds.

268 B.C.: Two-horse chariot race for one-year-olds.

256 B.C.: Horse race for one-year-old stallions.

It is worth noting that in these games, the owners and not the charioteers were declared winners. Thus, although the presence of women at the Olympic Games was strictly forbidden, it was also possible for women to be declared winners. The first woman to be declared winner of the Tethrippon in 396 (?) and 392 B.C. was Kyniska, sister of Agesilaus II, King of Sparta, who also set up her statue in the Altis. Later on, in 268 B.C., the winner was Velestiche from Macedon, but most of the others were Spartan women.

Apart from athletics and horse events, after 396 B.C. contests for heralds and trumpeters were included in the programme. This

happened in the Sacred Altis, near the entrance to the Stadium, in the space which is in front of the north side of the Echo Colonnade. According to Pausanias (V.22,1) there was an altar there which was not used for sacrifices for any god but as a Bema (rostrum) on which the heralds and trumpeters would compete. The winners of these competitions would either announce the names of other winners or sound the trumpet for different commands throughout the Games.

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On the eve of the Olympic Games, the Hellanodikai, the athletes and their trainers would set off from Elis walking along the Sacred Way and arrive at Olympia. A little after Elis on the Sacred Way was a holy spring, Pieria, where sacrifices were made. Meantime the Theoroi, that is the delegates of the Greek cities, who followed the Games from seats of honour and finally the crowds of pilgrims would arrive. After a little while, the great festival of Greece would begin.

Originally, the games would only last one day. However, when new events were established later on and word of these had spread, other days were added. Thus from 680 B.C. they lasted two days, from 632 B.C., three, and from 472 B.C. five days.

On the first day of the festival, the athletes were registered in the Bouleuterion. There, in front of the statue of Zeus Orkios, the Guardian of Oaths who held thunderbolts in his hands, oaths would be taken when a boar had been sacrificed. The athletes would swear that they had trained for ten months and that they would compete fairly, abiding by the rules. As well as the athletes, their fathers, brothers and trainers also had to swear and maintain that the athletes had, in fact, trained together according to the rules and that they had all the qualifications which allowed them a place in the Games. Finally, the Hellanodikai would take their oaths to judge the Games with impartiality. After the oaths, the contests of the heralds and trumpeters would take place, followed by those of the boys.

The start of the Games in the Stadium had a particularly festive character, since the Hellanodikai and athletes always entered by the official entrance, the Krypte, marching slowly and with dignity according to Philostratos. There they were met by the priestess of the goddess Demeter Chamyne, the only woman who could lawfully attend the Games, and by the masses of spectators. And when everything was ready, the herald would proclaim the great Olympic message to all the Greeks that the Games were beginning.

On the second day, the horse races took place in the Hippodrome, and afterwards, the Pentathlon in the Stadium.

The third day was the most splendid of the Games. In the morning of that day, the priests, the Hellanodikai, the athletes and

trainers, the lords of Elis and even the delegates from the Greek cities formed a procession which set out from the Prytaneion going along the Processional way, entered the Sacred Altis from the South Processional Gate, passed in front of the east side of the Temple of Zeus and arrived at the Great Altar of Zeus. There a hecatomb was sacrificed to the God, that is an offering of one hundred oxen, the largest sacrifice to take place in the Sanctuary during the Games. When these acts of worship were finished, the track events were held (Stade, Diaulos and Dolichos races).

On the fourth day, the tough games took place, namely Wrestling, Boxing, the Pankration and the Hoplite race.

The prizes were awarded on the last day in the entrance of the Temple of Zeus. There, on the table of ivory and gold made by Pheidias' apprentice, Kolotis, were the garlands of wild olive. Previously, a bronze tripod had been used for same purpose. The Hellanodikai crowned the winners with these garlands while the crowd cheered and showered them with flowers and leaves.

After the prize-giving, the Eleians laid on a feast in the Prytaneion in honour of the Olympic champions, to which were invited the officials, the delegates of the Greek cities and all the distinguished people visiting the Sanctuary. Meanwhile, in the vale of Olympia, the friends, relatives and fellow citizens of the winners celebrated the victories until the following day when the return home began.

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The Olympic Games were protected with laws so strictly enforced that the high standards of the competitions were maintained. Athletes who transgressed these rules were punished with fines, disqualification or public flogging, according to the gravity of the offence.

An infringement which the Hellanodikai punished with suitable harshness was bribery since it was in total contrast to the original spirit of the Olympic Games, namely to compete with honour. That is why all those who bribed their opponents so that they could win, and also those who accepted money to lose, were banned from competing and had to pay heavy fines. With these fines, they contributed to the cost of the Zanes, the statues of Zeus which stood by the official entrance to the Stadium as a warning to the athletes. On the statues themselves were written various didactic epigrams. One of these told how *the Olympic victor must win not with money but with fleetness of foot and strength of body*, and another how *these statues teach all Greeks not to offer money to win an Olympic event.* (Pausanias V.21,4).

In 388 B.C., the first penalty for bribery was imposed, and with the fines which the offenders paid the first six Zanes were made and erected in front of the entrance to the Stadium. This severe

penalty acted as a deterrent maintaining the ancient tradition of the Games until 332 B.C. The feeling of Greek world and the cities stopped this means of payment because the punishment of the athletes ruined the reputation of their native city. In 332 B.C., after the second case of bribery, six other Zanes were set up while in the Roman period, more were added making a total of sixteen.

Until the start of the 4th century B.C. the ideal of honourable competition prevailed at Olympia without exception. The athletes entered the arena with the noble dream of victory. However, they fully realized that a victory is not won with money and that only by long hours of practice and persistent effort could they triumph. That is why the Olympic winners became symbols of strength and virtue in every clan and every city, and were respected throughout the whole of Greece. This explains why the winners could dine free at the Prytaneion in Athens and why Solon established a monetary prize for those of his fellow citizens who by victory brought honour to the city. Again, in Sparta, it was usual for the king to fight with a crowned victor by his side. In every Greek city there was the fine tradition of pulling down part of the walls so that an Olympic winner could return home in a four-horse chariot because, according to Plutarch, *walls are of little use to a town when its citizens can fight and win.*

A separate honour for a champion was that an ode be written for him by a famous poet such as Simonides, Bacchylides or Pindar who would celebrate their virtue and courage. However, the greatest of all honours was that a statue of himself could be dedicated in the Sacred Altis. Down the centuries, inscribed on the base of the statue was his name and that of his father and city. The first statues of Olympic winners to be set up in the Sanctuary were those of Praxidamas of Aegina who won the Boxing in 544 B.C. and Opountios Rexivios who won the Pankration in 536 B.C. They were made of wood, the one of cypress and the other of fig. From then on, little by little, the Sacred Altis became crowded with hundreds of statues of Olympic victors.

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The severity of the rules of the Olympic Games were not only restricted to athletes, trainers and the Hellanodikai, but extended to the spectators who were not allowed to be slaves or anyone guilty of impious acts. Barbarians (non-Greeks), however, could watch the Games.

Women were also forbidden to watch the Games. However, Pausanias tells us that this prohibition only extended to married women. It is a difficult problem whether or not maidens were allowed to attend the Games since the Heraia had been established for them. Moreover, in the equestrian events, women could enter teams and charioteers and could even be declared winners, for, as

already mentioned, in those events, the owners and not the charioteers were awarded the prize.

All women who violated the above rules were thrown over the edge of Tropaion, the mountain which lies to the south-east of Olympia beyond the Alpheios. There is no historical source which could verify that this harsh penalty was ever imposed. Nevertheless, it was said that a Rhodian woman, Pherenike or, according to others, Kallipateira, daughter of the Olympic champion Diagoras, brought her son, Peisirodos to Olympia to take part in the boys' events because her husband had died. Being very crafty, the Rhodian woman disguised herself as a male trainer and, together with the others, entered the Stadium unnoticed. Her son was declared winner and his mother, so overwhelmed with joy, ran to Peisirodos. But, as she leapt into the arena, her tunic caught on the fence revealing that she was, in fact, female. Then she was arrested and brought before the Hellanodikai to be tried according to law. However, out of respect for her father, her three brothers and her son, her life was spared, for all were Olympic champions. After this episode, which probably took place in 396 B.C., they made a law which obliged the trainers to enter the Stadium naked like the athletes.

It is said that Fate kept a beautiful death in store for Diagoras, Pherenike's father, the most renowned boxer in Greece. In 448 B.C., then an old man, he came to Olympia as a distinguished champion and had the joy of seeing his sons, Akousilaos and Damagetos, both win on the same day, the one in the Pankration and the other in Boxing. In the hour of triumph, the sons of this Olympic champion, ran to their father and crowned him with their garlands and, raising him on their shoulders, carried him round in the crowd. And while the crowd cheered and applauded with frantic enthusiasm, showering the happy father with flowers, a Spartan roared in a thunderous voice: *Die now Diagoras, you will not ascend to Olympus.* In other words you will not become a god, but this honour is enough for you. A little while later, Diagoras was dead on the shoulders of his children.

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Apart from the representatives of the Greek cities, great politicians, famous generals, previous Olympic winners, philosophers, orators and intellectuals were always present at the Olympic Games and its various rituals. This panhellenic gathering gave them all the opportunity to communicate with the Greeks, but also gave to all the Greeks the opportunity to honour and admire their great works.

Two of the Seven Sages of ancient Greece are said to have died at an advanced age while attending the Games at Olympia: Chilon of Sparta, in 556 B.C., when overcome with great emotion as

he embraced his Olympic victor son, and Thales of Miletus in 548 B.C., while watching the games in the scorching heat (Diogenes Laertios I, 72 and I, 38-39).

Important philosophers like Plato and Aristotle were regular spectators at the Games ; great poets such as Simonides, Bacchylides, Pindar and others celebrated with their verses the Olympionikai (Olympic winners), and famous artists such as Pythagoras, Myron, Pheidias, Paionios, Praxiteles, Lyssipus and others adorned the Sanctuary with their masterpieces and thus became known to the ends of the world.

Great tyrants, politicians and kings themselves took part in the Games with the aim of increasing their political power through an Olympic victory. Thus the Tyrants of Syracuse Gelon and Hieron were distinguished as Olympic winners in the four-horse chariot race in 488 and 464 B.C. respectively. Later in 416 B.C., Alcibiades the Athenian politician took part in the Games with seven chariots and after being declared the winner of the four-horse chariot race, he celebrated the victory by giving a banquet for the participants in the rejoicing. Finally in 356 B.C., Philip II, King of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great, won the horse race.

It is reported that after the Persian wars, in 476 B.C., Themistocles was also present at the most brilliant Olympics which had ever taken place. As he entered the Stadium, although the games had already begun the Greeks stopped watching them in order to cheer. That day in the Stadium the gratitude of all Greeks was concentrated on honouring the heroic victor of Salamis.

Later in 444 B.C., Herodotus read to the rejoicing crowd extracts from his histories about the victories of the Greeks over the Persians, and among others he moved the young Thucydides, afterwards himself to become a great historian.

On other occasions, chosen personalities of the ancient world, with the authority in which they were held throughout the whole of Greece, delivered the panegyrics from the Bema which had been placed for this purpose in the opisthodomos of the Temple of Zeus. In these speeches they emphasised the need for panhellenic brotherhood, especially after the catastrophic outcome of the Peloponnesian War. Thus it is clear that the Sanctuary at Olympia tried to impart to the whole of the Greek world its spirit of peace and brotherhood.

At the end of the 5th century B.C., Gorgias of Leontini was the first to raise the voice of peace on behalf of the Greeks, saying in his Olympic speech that *victories against the barbarians are worthy of anthems, but against the Greeks they are worthy of lamentations*. Later Lysias, in his Olympic oration given in 384 B.C., emphasised the peaceful and brotherly meaning of the celebrations at Olympia, saying that *he who established the games* — he meant Idaeus Hercules — *believed that through them he would initiate panhellenic friendship*. Lysias, the exponent of a broader democra-

tic ideology, even invited the Greeks to unite not only against the Persians, but also against the tyrants and in particular against Dionysios, Tyrant of Syracuse. Finally Isocrates, with the same aim, distributed at the panhellenic celebration at Olympia, in 380 B.C., copies of his panegyric in which he made an appeal to Athens and Sparta to unite and effectively confront the barbarian threat.

This idea of panhellenic unity and peace, which was persistently cultivated at all the Sanctuaries and particularly at the Sanctuary of Olympia, through the panegyrics reached the furthest corners of Greece, and though the idea was never realised, it did however help to mould the national conscience of the Greeks.

THE MACEDONIANS AND THE ROMANS

The panhellenic celebration of the Olympic Games survived and flourished from 776 B.C., which is its historical beginning, until the end of the 4th century B.C.

After the Battle of Chaeronea (338 B.C.), and the domination by the Macedonians of Greek lands, the Macedonian Kings Philip II and Alexander the Great built the Philippeion at Olympia and promoted the Sanctuary and the Games in which Philip II, in 356 B.C., had formerly been distinguished as a winner. The Greek origin of the Macedonian kings, which was an indispensable prerequisite for participation in the Olympic Games, had earlier been scrutinised when King Alexander I (498 - 454 B.C.), was accepted by the Hellenodikai having previously succeeded in proving his descent from the Temenides, an old royal line from Argos in the Peloponnese (Herodotus V, 22).

It is certain that Alexander the Great particularly respected the Sanctuary at Olympia and the Games. This explains why at Issos, during his campaign, he freed a prisoner from Thebes immediately he heard that the man was an Olympic winner. Furthermore, in 324 B.C., he chose to announce to the Greeks at Olympia his decree which gave a general amnesty to all exiles, and sent Nikanor to read it out in the crowded Stadium.

After the death of Alexander the Great the ancient splendour of the Olympic Games gradually gave way, in spite of the fact that his successors raised new monuments and supported the Sanctuary financially.

In 146 B.C. Greece was conquered by the Romans. Then, for the Olympic Games and the Sanctuary the long Roman era began which lasted several centuries. During this period the right of the Romans to participate in the Olympic Games was recognised, since it was first settled that they were of Greek origin. Thus many emperors and officers were distinguished as Olympic winners.

However, in 85 B.C., Sulla pillaged the Greek sanctuaries and in particular the Sanctuary at Olympia, because he needed money

to conduct the war against Mithridates, while, in 80 B.C., in order to celebrate the triumphs of that same war the Olympic Games (175th Olympiad), were held at Rome.

During the reign of the Emperor Octavian Augustus (30 B.C. - 14 A.D.) the Sanctuary grew and revived. But later the Olympic Games experienced the vanity and imperious behaviour of the Emperor Nero. The 211th Olympiad, which should have taken place in 65 A.D., took place in 67 A.D., so that he himself could take part in them. At these Games, Nero included other contests unheard of until then in the programme of the Olympic Games and he was many times declared Olympic winner. Namely, it is reported that he won the artistic contests for tragic actors and musicians, even though *he had a voice worse than a crow's*. It is worth noting that the Eleians did not enter this Olympiad in their official register.

During the 2nd century A.D., and particularly during the reign of the philhellene Emperor Hadrian (117 - 138 A.D.), the Sanctuary revived once again. But from the 3rd century A.D., its influence was yearly more and more restricted and the Greek cities were no longer interested in the Olympic Games. However, from this period the Olympic Games acquired virtually an international character, since athletes from all of the countries of the far-flung Roman Empire (Egyptians, Phoenicians, Armenians and others), arrived at Olympia to lay claim to Olympic victory.

In 267 A.D., many buildings were destroyed (the Echo Colonnade, the Metroön, the Leonidaion and others), so as to construct from the rubble a hastily built wall to the south of the Sanctuary, to protect the Temple of Zeus and the chryselephantine statue of the god from the expected invasion by the Herulians. But the invaders did not get as far as Olympia and the Games continued to take place for many years to come. However, at the 262nd Olympiad (269 A.D.), the registers of the Olympic winners stopped. Thereafter there is no more historical information about the Games, nor are there references to the names of Olympic winners, except for the Games of 373 and 385 A.D.

It is evident that the end is approaching.

THE ABOLITION OF THE GAMES

In the Games of 385 A.D., Varazdates the Armenian, afterwards King of the Armenians, won the Boxing. He is also the last known Olympic victor. Eight years later, in 393 A.D., the Olympic Games took place for the last time. The next year (394 A.D.), they were abolished by Theodosius the Great, and a little later (395 A.D.), Pheidias' chryselephantine statue of Zeus was taken to Constantinople.

Thus Olympia was deserted. Christian fanaticism wrought destruction in the deserted Sanctuary in 426 A.D., when Theodosius

II decreed that the Temple of Zeus should be burned. Terrible earthquakes in 522 and 551 A.D. completed the destruction.

During the 5th century A.D., the area was occupied by Christians who built a Byzantine Church on the site of the workshop of Pheidias. Thereafter the erosion of Kronos Hill and flooding by the rivers Alpheios and Kladeos which spilled onto the ruined monuments, gradually covered them with a layer of earth which made them disappear and at the same time protected them for many centuries. In the course of time, even the historical name of Olympia was forgotten and its location was sometimes called Sevriana and sometimes Antilalo.

THE EXCAVATIONS

From the beginning of the 18th century antiquarians and archaeologists began to search for the forgotten site of the Olympic Games. In 1723, the French monk Bernard de Montfaucon wrote a letter to Cyrenes, the Archbishop of Corfu, in an unsuccessful attempt to convince him to pursue the exploration of Olympia. Later, in 1767, the German archaeologist Winckelmann intended to secure the permission of the Sublime Porte, in order to excavate the Stadium, but in 1768 he died before managing to realise his objective.

In May 1829, hasty excavations in the Temple of Zeus and the Byzantine Church were made by a French team which, after the Sea Battle of Navarino (1827), followed the expedition of General Maison to the Peloponnese (Expédition Scientifique de Morée). The finds from these excavations — metopes from the opisthodomos of the temple and fragments of metopes from the prodomos — were sent to Paris to adorn the collections in the Louvre.

The first systematic excavations were made between 1875 - 1881 by the German Archaeological Institute, funded by the German government. Most of the buildings of the Sanctuary, 130 statues, 6000 coins, 400 inscriptions, many clay objects, 1300 gold and 15,000 bronze objects were found in these excavations at a depth of 5-7 metres. The same Institute later continued excavations, and also reconstructed part of the Krypte and many columns in the Palaestra and the Temple of Hera. Between 1958-61, the German Institute completed the excavations of the Stadium and up to the present time pursues research on various other monuments in the Sanctuary.

THE REVIVAL OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

During the 19th century, the rich Olympic tradition preserved in the writing of ancient authors, roused the highest aspirations of the nations of the world for noble contest, fraternization and for pea-

ce. So the Olympic Games, which is identified with these great aspirations, became a symbol of modern athletics and contributed decisively to their development.

In the 19th century, many countries of the world, particularly England, Germany and Canada organised athletic galas which were given the imposing name «Olympic Games». In Greece, where the Olympic tradition had profound roots, the first attempt at the revival of the Olympic Games was made in 1838 by the municipality of Pyrgos in Elis, near Olympia, but the outcome is not known. Later Games with the name «Olympic» were established by the E. Zappas Foundation and took place in Athens in 1859, 1870, 1875 and 1887.

All these attempts at the revival of the Olympic Games had a limited national or local character. However, at the end of the 19th century, the French Baron Pierre de Coubertin was inspired with the idea of establishing an International Olympic Games and made the appropriate suggestion to the international congress for athletics, which took place in Paris in 1894. It was proposed that the Olympic Games should take place every four years, as in antiquity, but each time in a different country. They would include in the programme new competitions in addition to the old ones, to ensure the right of athletes from all over the globe to take part regardless of race, class, politics or creed. Finally, thanks to their international character, they would promote peace and cooperation between nations.

Coubertin's suggestion combined in the best manner the competitive traditions of the ancients with the requirements of the modern era. For this reason, it was unanimously decided at the Congress, attended by representatives from thirteen countries, to revive the Olympic Games and at the same time Athens was chosen as the centre for the First International Olympiad. Since then, the Olympic Games are supervised by the International Olympic Committee, which on each occasion appoints a town (not a state), to be responsible for their organisation, following an application by the town. At the same time, the International Olympic Committee cooperates with the National Committees of the Olympic Games, founded in various countries and so guides the international effort for the development of athletics.

The first International Olympic Games took place in Athens between 5th -15th April, 1896, at the Panathenaikon Stadium. Athletes from thirteen countries took part. The Olympic Hymn, written by the Greek national poet Kostis Palamas and set to music by the Greek composer Spyros Samaras, was instituted at this Olympiad. The Marathon Race (42,000 metres), was also instituted in memory of the heroic Athenian warrior, who on the day of the Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.), brought news of the victory to Athens and then collapsed and died. The race was won by the Greek runner Spyros Louis.

After the first Olympiad, which was very successful, the Games took place in 1900 at Paris, in 1904 at St. Louis, in 1908 at London and in 1912 at Stockholm.

The Olympic Flag was chosen by the synod of the International Olympic Committee which took place in 1914 at the French town of Lyons. The flag depicts five coloured, linked circles on a white background. The five circles, which are blue, yellow, black, green and red, symbolise the unity of athletes of the five continents and world brotherhood in general.

In 1916, the Games should have taken place at Berlin, but they were cancelled because the First World War intervened. After the war they took place in 1920 at Antwerp and in 1924 at Paris.

Since 1924, the Winter Olympic Games, which only includes winter sports, has been organised every four years. These Games take place in the winter of the same year in which the Olympics also take place.

In 1928 the Games took place at Amsterdam, in 1932 at Los Angeles and in 1936 at Berlin. At the Olympic Games held in Berlin, the ceremony of the lighting of the Olympic Flame was instituted, as we shall see below.

In 1940 and 1944, the Games were cancelled because of the Second World War. After the war they took place normally in 1948 at London, in 1952 at Helsinki, in 1956 at Melbourne, in 1960 at Rome, in 1964 at Tokyo, in 1968 at Mexico, in 1972 at Munich, in 1976 at Montreal, in 1980 at Moscow. In 1984 they are scheduled to take place at Los Angeles.

In 1961, the International Olympic Committee within the framework of their efforts towards the dissemination of Olympic ideology, founded the International Olympic Academy at Olympia. There, in new buildings, which are near the ancient Stadium, athletes, teachers of gymnastics and others involved with athletics are invited from all over the world to stay and to discuss subjects relating to athletics and the Games.

In the village of ancient Olympia, the Museum of the Modern Olympic Games is under the auspices of the Greek Olympic Games Committee. In this museum rare objects, memorabilia of the modern Olympics, are on exhibition: medals of the Olympic winners, torches used to carry the Olympic Flame from 1936 onwards, Olympic coins, a rich photographic archive, as well as a collection of Olympic stamps, unique in the whole world, which belonged to the founder of the Museum and the great friend of Olympia, G. Papastefanou.

From 1896 until today, the Olympic Games have developed great worldwide authority, have materially served their peaceful aims and are beloved by all the nations of the world. Thus the vision of the Baron Pierre de Coubertin became a reality. Greece, wishing to honour him, raised a monument to him at Olympia. Beside this monument, near the ancient Stadium, at a place named

«The Coubertin Grove», a year after his death, in 1938, was placed his heart preserved in a glass jar. This was the last wish of the great reviver of the Olympic Games.

LIGHTING THE OLYMPIC FLAME

In 1936 the Olympic Games were enhanced by a brilliant ceremony. At the XIth Olympiad, which took place in that year, the Olympic Flame was lit on the sacred site of Olympia and then taken to the Olympic Stadium at Berlin. The ceremony instituted in that year now takes place before each Olympiad, symbolically preserving historical continuity and the sacred links of the Games with the place where they originated, Olympia.

Traditionally, the arrival of the Olympic Flame at the Stadium marks the opening of the Games. Throughout their duration, lasting many days, the flame burns continuously on a huge altar and is only extinguished at the close of the Games.

The lighting of the Olympic Flame takes place on the altar of Hera, which is in front of the Heraion. During the ceremony the altar is surrounded by girls dressed as ancient priestesses, while the Vestal priestess, using a concave mirror made of metal, lights a torch from the rays of the sun and immediately transfers the flame to a krater (a small pottery vase), containing inflammable material. Then all the priestesses form the procession of the dance, which passes through the Krypte, the official entrance into the Stadium. There the Vestal priestess lights a torch from the sacred flame in the krater and hands it to the first runner who runs across the Stadium, in the company of other runners, to the Coubertin Grove, which is in the area of the International Olympic Academy.

The marble altar of the Olympic Flame, made in 1936 for the first such ceremony, has been placed in the Coubertin Grove, beside the monument to Pierre de Coubertin. On reaching the Grove, the first runner lights the marble altar in honour of the man who revived the Olympic Games and afterwards sets off, so beginning the traditional race to Athens.

The flame is always taken to Athens by runners who each go one kilometre. From Athens it is taken to the country for which it is destined sometimes by boat, or by plane, or using laser beams, so far a unique innovation at the Olympic Games in Montreal, Canada, in 1976. The Olympic Flame has also been carried in the traditional manner over long distances, by thousands of runners each going one kilometre, for example to Berlin (1936), to Munich (1972), and most recently to Moscow (1980).

The Olympic Flame generates feelings of friendship and brotherhood amongst nations and each time rekindles mankind's great aspirations for world peace, the primary object of the International Olympic Games, which is why the flame is always welcomed everywhere with emotional demonstrations and festivities.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

FROM THE village at ancient Olympia, a developing tourist centre, (population c. 1000), an asphalt road lined with laurels, cypresses and olive trees, leads the visitor to the archaeological site.

Approaching the site, one meets the bridge over the Kladeos, a rapid winter torrent, which flows past the Sanctuary and a little farther on joins the Alpheios. On the right bank of the river, rising in the west, is a succession of low hills covered with green vegetation, which end up at Dhrouvas Hill.

The Sanctuary is on the right bank of the Alpheios, the most celebrated Peloponnesian river, which spreads out in a fertile valley. Beyond the Alpheios, to the south-east, Mount Lapithis and Mount Tipaion delineate the horizon.

To the north and east, picturesque villages nestle among a series of small hills, planted with pines, which, descending gradually towards the Sanctuary, reach the conical shaped Kronos Hill.

The monuments of Olympia are situated in this extraordinary landscape, between Kronos Hill and the confluence of the Rivers Alpheios and Kladeos.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENTS

The entrance to the site is next to the bridge over the River Kladeos and near the foot of Kronos Hill, along a steep path which descends to the Sanctuary.

Immediately after entering the Sanctuary, descending 4 to 5 metres below the level of the entrance, one becomes aware of the great depth of deposit removed during excavations which brought these monuments to light. The extent of damage to the monuments is also immediately apparent; the process of decay began when

THE MESSENIANS AND NAUPACTIANS
DEDICATED TO OLYMPIAN ZEUS,
A TITHE FROM THE BOOTY TAKEN IN WAR

PAEONIOS OF MENDE MADE IT
WHO MADE THE ACROTHERIA FOR THE TEMPLE
FOR WHICH HE WON A PRIZE

The above inscription, incised on the base of the statue, gives a full account of the work: Nike, or Victory, personification of the favourable outcome of battle, was dedicated by the Messenians and Naupactians for their victory over the Spartans in the Archidamian War, probably in 421 BC.

THE NIKE OF PAEONIOS

■ It was sculpted by Paeonios of Mende, in Chalkidiki, who also made the acroteria for the temple of Zeus at Olympia.

■ The statue was found in December 1875, during excavations in the Altis, the sacred grove at Olympia, in front of the south-east corner of the temple of Zeus.

■ On the spot where it was found now stands part of the triangular statue-base, which was originally 8.81 m high.

■ The statue of Nike, which was carved from Parian marble, has a height of 2.115 m and, together with the wings, will have been almost 3 m. The entire monument was thus about 10.92 m in height, automatically suggesting to the viewer the idea of Nike, descending in triumph from Mount Olympus and holding sway over the elements of nature.

■ This is still the impression given by the monument, even though much of the statue is now missing: apart from the face and parts of the body, a large part of the wings and the himation blowing in the wind, which conveyed the feeling of flight, are lost.

■ This impression of flight was reinforced by the eagle, symbol of Zeus and the wind, on which the right foot of the goddess stands. Unfortunately, the wings of the eagle are also now lost.

■ The painted decoration of the statue will have helped to enliven the entire composition, but no idea of this can now be formed.

■ This Nike is the earliest known monumental depiction of the goddess, and the question arises as to what experience lay behind the power of the statue, which captures the sensation of flight so perfectly and convincingly. It was, moreover, a very bold device to allow the body of the statue, which is 9 m above the ground, to lean forward so far, giving the viewer below the sensation that Nike is descending from heaven.

■ For the viewer, the body was the vehicle through which the entire movement was expressed: the hands were so freely spread open at the edges of the himation, thereby obscuring the static constraints imposed by the garment, which was skilfully disposed at the back of the statue. By these means, the gifted sculptor succeeded in achieving balance without detracting from the visual effect of flight.

■ The charm of the delicate chiton, which clings to Nike as she descends from the sky, allowing the outlines of her body to be seen, contributes much to the outstanding formal and stylistic value of the statue. The sculptor has successfully rendered the decorative play of the drapery on and around the body, while retaining intact the feeling of strength exuded by the goddess's vigorous youthful body.

■ Today, after twelve years, we have the opportunity to see the Nike of Paeonios once more, standing in the room that was originally intended for it at the Museum of Olympia.

■ It is indeed fortunate that the statue was erected by the distinguished sculptor Stelios Triantes, who, with his vast experience, great admiration and profound knowledge of ancient art, has completely succeeded in capturing the impression desired by his ancient counterpart: that of Nike, triumphant, powerful yet light, passionate and daring, woman and goddess, descending from the sky and conquering all the elements of nature.

Kathimerini, Epitaphios, P. Mousouris, K. Kostas, B. Mihalas, K. Kostas

XENI ARAPOJANNI

Archaeologist

October 1991

ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ □ Ζ' ΕΦΟΡΕΙΑ ΚΛΑΣΙΚΩΝ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΤΗΤΩΝ □ ΙCOM
MINISTRY OF CULTURE □ 7th EPHORATE OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITIES □ ICOM



ΜΕΣΣΕΝΙΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΤΑΚΤΟΙ ΊΝΤΕΡΝΑ
Ο ΊΜΜΙΩ ΔΕΚΑΤΩΝ ΑΠΟ ΤΩΝ ΠΟΛΕΜΩΝ

Η ΠΑΙΩΝΙΑ ΕΠΙΘΗΚΕ ΜΕΣΣΕΝΙΩΣ
ΚΑΙ Τ' ΑΚΡΩΤΗΡΙΑ ΠΟΘΩΝ ΕΠΙ ΤΟΙΣ ΣΧΟΛΕΣΙΚΑ

Αυτή η επιγραφή, η χειρογράφη στη βάση του αγάλματος, δίνει με πληρότητα τα στοιχεία του έργου: η Νίκη, προσκομιδή της κοινικής έκβασης της μάχης, ήταν ανάθημα των Μεσσηνίων και Ναυμαχίων για τη νίκη τους κατά των Λακεδαιμονίων στον Αρχαϊκό πόλεμο, πιθανότατα στα 421 π.Χ.

Η ΝΙΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΙΩΝΙΟΥ

■ Η βάση του ο γλύπτης Πατρόνιος από τη Μένδη της Χαλκιδικής, που δημιούργησε και τα ακροτήρια του ναού του Διός στην Ολυμπία.

■ Το άγαλμα βρέθηκε στην Άλιη, μικρά στη ΝΑ γωνία του ναού του Διός, κατά τη διάρκεια των ανασκαφών, τον Δεκέμβριο του 1875.

■ Σήμερα, στο σημείο αυτό είναι στημένο στη θέση του μέρος της τριγωνικής βάσης του αγάλματος, που το αρχικό της ύψος έφτανε τα 8,81 μ.

■ Η Νίκη, υλισμένη από παριανό μάρμαρο, έχει ύψος 2,115 μ., ενώ μαζί με το άκρο των φτερών θα έφτανε τα 3 μ. Έτσι, ολόκληρο το μνημείο προέγγαζε το συνολικό ύψος των 10,92 μ., υποβάλλοντας αστόματα στο θεατή την ιδέα της Νίκης, που κατέβηκε θριαμβευτικά από τον Όλυμπο, κοριαρχώντας στα στοιχεία της φύσης.

■ Την αίσθηση αυτή έχει κανείς και σήμερα, παρόλο που, εκτός από το πρόσωπο και τμήματα του σώματος του αγάλματος, λείπει και μεγάλο μέρος των φτερών και του ανεμίζοντος ιματίου, που έδιναν κενό την εντύπωση της πτήσης.

■ Την εντύπωση αυτή επιβεβαιώνει και ο αετός, σύμβολο του Δία και του ανέμου, πάνω στον οποίο πατά το δεξιό πόδι της θεάς. Δυστυχώς και τα φτερά του αετού δεν σώζονται πια.



■ Μεγάλο ρόλο στην ποικιλία της αλφειας της κίνησης θα έπαιξαν τα χρώματα και η επιχρωματισμένη του αγάλματος, από τα οποία δεν μπορούμε πλέον σήμερα να έχουμε καμία ιδέα.

■ Η Νίκη αυτή είναι η αρχαιότερη γνωστή μνημιακή διατύπωση, θα πρέπει να αναρωτηθεί κανείς πως εμείς οι βρισκόμαστε πάνω από τη δύναμη του αγάλματος, στο να πείθει απόλυτα για την κίνηση της πτήσης, την οποία με τόσο τελεότητα αποδίδει. Είναι, άλλωστε, αφάνταστα τολμηρό να αφήνεις το σώμα του αγάλματος, το οποίο βρίσκεται 9 μ. από το έδαφος, να έχει μια τέτοια κλίση προς τα εμπρός, ώστε ο θεατής που βρίσκεται από κάτω να έχει την εντύπωση ότι η Νίκη κατεβαίνει από τον ουρανό.

■ Για το θεατή παρέμεινε το σώμα φορέας όλης της κίνησης, ενώ τα χέρια ήταν τόσο ελεύθερα ανασηκωμένα προς τις άκρες του ιματίου, ώστε κανείς δεν μπορούσε να αντιληφθεί τη στατική δόμηση που παρήγαγε αυτό το τμήμα, διότι υπήρχε με σφοδρά στο πίσω μέρος του αγάλματος. Έτσι ο μεγαλοφυής γλύπτης πούχε να υπάρχει ισορροπία, χωρίς να αλλοιώνεται η οπτική εντύπωση της πτήσης.

■ Η γοητεία του λεπτού χιτώνα, που κολλά στο σώμα της καθώς κατεβαίνει η Νίκη από τον ουρανό, αφιόνιζε να διαγραφούν οι ανατομικές λεπτομέρειες, αποτρίβει και την εξαιρετική φορμαλιστική και στυλιστική αξία του αγάλματος. Γιατί έτσι, επιτεγχάνεται ο συνδυασμός του διακοσμητικού παιχνιδιού των πτεγώνων πάνω στο σώμα και γύρω από αυτό, ενώ ταυτόχρονα δίνεται ακέραιη η αίσθηση της δύναμης που αποσπεί το σφαιρικό, νταϊκό κορμί της θεάς.

■ Σήμερα, έπειτα από δώδεκα αιώνες χρόνια, έχουμε την ευκαιρία να ξαναδοούμε στημένο το άγαλμα της Νίκης του Πατρόνιου, στην αιθούσα που εξ αρχής προοριζόταν γι' αυτήν, στο νέο Μουσείο της Ολυμπίας.

■ Και είναι πραγματική τύχη ότι το άγαλμα στήθηκε από τον καταξιωμένο γλύπτη Στέλιο Τριάντη, που με την τεράστια πείρα του, τον απίστευτο θαυμασμό και τη βαθιά γνώση του για την αρχαία τέχνη, κατάφερε να μας δώσει πλήρη την αίσθηση που επιθυμούσε ο αρχαίος γλύπτης. Τη Νίκη θριαμβεύτρια, δυνατή και σενάμα ανάλαφρη, ορμητική και τολμηρή, γυναικα και θεά, να κατεβαίνει από τον γαλάζιο ουρανό, υποτάσσοντας στην πτήση της όλα τα στοιχεία της φύσης.

ΞΕΝΗ ΑΡΑΠΙΟΓΙΑΝΝΗ

Οκτώβριος 1994

Αρχαιολόγος

OLYMPIA AND THE MUSEUM

CULT AND GAMES: The ancient cult and myths of Olympia

Places, like men, have their destinies. On the remote slopes of Mount Parnassos, Apollo brought together the Hellenes under the Delphic Amphiktyony, and delivered oracles to both Greeks and "barbarians." There was, however, another remote corner of Greece, in the western Peloponnesos, which became the first home of athletics and whose name, as a result, spread throughout the world: Olympia.

The green landscape of Olympia, peaceful and serene, unfolds between two rivers, the Alpheios and the Kladeos (fig. 16). In ancient times, it was full of plane-trees and wild olives; in the dialect of the local inhabitants, the beautiful grove was known as the *Altis*. Whereas the god Apollo had found it necessary to lead men himself to the awe-inspiring rock of Delphi, the rich plain of Olympia was easily accessible and hospitable, as if asking to be chosen for habitation. It was only natural that men should decide to build their houses there at the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., or perhaps a little earlier. The apsidal dwellings discovered in the deeper layers of soil on the site of the sanctuary belong to the Middle Helladic period (1900-1600 B.C.). The first settlers knew nothing of Zeus and the Olympian gods. Tradition has it that the earliest cult was that of Kronos. This ancient god, father of Zeus, was worshipped on the imposing hill that dominates and bounds the northern side of the

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1. Vase painting from the 5th century B.C. depicting the abduction of Hippodameia by Pelops in his chariot (Arezzo, Museo Archeologico).

mentions 69, and we know he has not included all of them in his account. This means that Olympia was a sacred site where the ancient cults of the indigenous people continued to be practised next to the Olympian religion introduced by the settlers from western Greece. But this was not the factor that consecrated Olympia as the greatest Panhellenic sanctuary and determined its character and significance. Olympia owes its very special place among the other Greek sanctuaries to the games performed there every four years. The ancient Greeks ascribed the beginning of the Olympic Games to mythical times. This implies that the Olympic Games were believed by the Greeks to be of a most ancient

and sacred origin and that they formed an integral part of the ancestral cult.

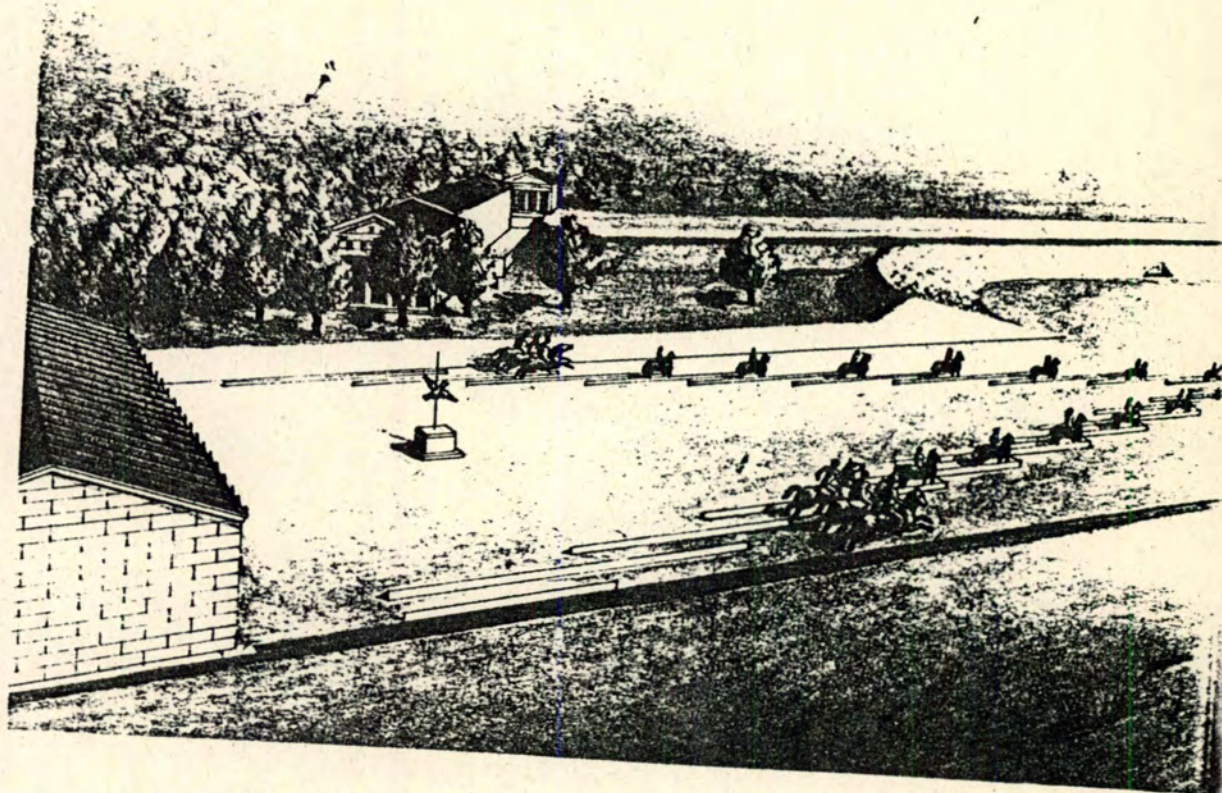
Modern research is far from unanimous in interpreting the institution of the games. Some scholars believe that man's natural disposition to train himself and compete with others was the main motive that led the Greeks to introduce athletic games. But most scholars associate the introduction of the games with burial rites, because we know that in Homeric times games were held in honour of the dead.

However may one interpret the birth of the Olympic Games, their importance exceeds the limitations of both the time and the place where they were originally instituted. It is no exaggeration to say that those games gave birth to yet another Greek idea, a whole attitude to life — the attitude of a free man competing with his peers, naked, unfettered by any element foreign to his own body, conforming only to the rules of the game, with the sole aim of winning for himself an olive crown — in other words a purely moral victory — and the praise of his fellow-men.

The significance of the Games in Greek history

The Olympic Games proved to be historical landmarks for the ancient Greek world. The year 776 B.C., which was the date of the first Olympiad, is also the first certain and accurate chronology in Greek history, because henceforth the names of victors in every Olympiad were officially recorded. The first victor was Koroibos of Elis, who won the one-stade race. But there is a second, far more important historical conclusion to be drawn from the Olympic Games: the Greeks, though divided into numerous tribal groups, though scattered over a vast area from Asia Minor to Italy and from Africa to Macedonia, though organized into hundreds of small states often at war with each other, had a deep awareness of their ethnic unity, which set them apart from the other inhabitants of the world. Only free Greeks were allowed to participate in the Olympic Games; that is why the highest officials and judges of the Games were named *Hellandikai*, an ancient title that shows the supreme significance of the Olympic Games in the life of the Greeks. Their celebration demanded that all Greeks be present in peaceful assembly in the sacred grove. For this purpose the *spondophoroi*, noblemen of Elis followed by an official retinue acted as heralds travelling to all the Greek cities well ahead of the Games, in order to proclaim the "*ekecheiria*", i.e. a truce, a suspension of hostilities that would last up to three months. Thus all the Greeks could proceed without fear to Olympia and attend the most splendid Panhellenic assembly, where they could not only admire youths excelling in athletic games, but also single out famous noblemen and illustrious sages, listen to poets and musicians, and above all mingle among themselves: the Dorians of Sicily with the Ionians of the East, the Greeks of Kyrene with their distant brothers from Macedonia. It is impossible for us to visualize that unique and

8. Stater of Elis with a portrait of Zeus, the most important deity worshipped at Olympia. Middle of the 4th century B.C. Winged victory running to the left holding a crown in her hand, also on a coin from Elis. Silver tetradrachm struck by Philip II of Macedonia to commemorate his victory in the horse race in 356 B.C. It depicts the winning rider and the horse. (Athens, Numismatic Museum).



9. Reconstruction of the hippodrome at Olympia. On the left can be seen the hippaphesis

soul-stirring 76th Olympiad (476 B.C.) when Greeks from all over the world watched Themistokles, the victor of Salamis, entering the Altis. Plutarch tells us that the whole day long, the crowds forgot about the athletes and the contests in order to acclaim the man who had led them to victory.

All this took place under the gaze and protection of the great Zeus, a warrior himself, who always stood by the Hellenes, whether in the struggles of war or in the peaceful contests of athleticism. In return, the Greeks, being a deeply religious people, offered him the arms which had brought them victory and the spoils of war which the god had helped them appropriate. The victors set up their own statues in the shrine of Zeus, not out of arrogance, but with the piety of those who can accept a god's gift in perfect humility. As the years went by, the votive offerings in the sacred grove grew more and more numerous, till they could be numbered by the thousands; they included precious and famed weapons which eventually made Olympia the most complete museum of the war history of Greece.

Olympics / Themes

Host to the world.

We are privileged to give ppl from all over

the world to shine

Largest olympics ever - reflects level of

Coop'n internationally

Olympics — refer mostly to joy ppl.

great role models

197 countries

We look forward to this bc it is a time when our

Country comes together

What is like when First Family ~~entertains~~ watches

Olympics

Track goes w/in 5 miles of 90% of American public

draft/js

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT FOR THE KINDLING OF THE OLYMPIC FLAME
MARCH 30, 1996

I am honored to represent the American people at this celebration of the 100th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games. It is a special privilege to be here in Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics, and of the many traditions and institutions that sustain and enrich the human family to this day.

The flame we have just kindled will serve as the guiding light of the centennial games this summer in Atlanta. But while this new flame came to life just minutes ago, it is endowed with the spirit of thousands of athletes and Olympic contests that have taken place here and around the world.

That spirit stretches back nearly three thousand years, to the first foot race held here at Olympia and the presentation of a crown of olives to the victor [Koroibos of Elis]. It grew only greater as the peasant Spiridon Loues crossed the finish line in the first Olympic marathon one hundred years ago, inspiring the princes of Greece to carry him to a place of honor in the royal box.

Every four years, the family of nations gathers to pursue excellence and to find peace and camaraderie through sport. That is the heart of the Olympic ideal. It is a testament to the power and vision of Greek civilization.

In Ancient Greece, warring city states would call a truce every four years so that all of Greece's finest athletes, warriors, poets, and artists could attend the games and honor the gods. In the modern Olympics, distinctions of class, nationality, and race are forgotten in contests judged by individual strength, speed, and endurance.

These Olympic games, which have moved princes to lift peasants onto their shoulders, emphasize an inescapable dimension of the human experience -- that we are all members of one human family. Our victories and defeats are not purely our own, they are shared with the world.

Through these games, we have respected a common language of perfect tens and world record times; established common rituals in the lighting of the Olympic torch and the parade of nations; and shared a common memory peopled by the triumphs and defeats of our world's greatest athletes.

Most importantly, we have forged bonds of international goodwill and understanding. This summer will mark the largest gathering of nations at an Olympics. Athletes from 197 countries go to Atlanta not just to test their abilities against their

counterparts, but also to make lasting friendships and gain new sights into foreign cultures.

So this flame which leaves Olympia today on a four-month journey through Athens, across the Atlantic to the United States, carries much more than light and heat. It carries the legacy of our human family, of Koroibus of Elis, of Spiridon Loues, and of the young women and men who will convene in Atlanta this summer. Through them, the Olympic spirit will only grow faster, higher and stronger.

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