

ATHENS, OLYMPIC CITY
1896-1906

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INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMY

**ATHENS, OLYMPIC CITY
1896-1906**

Foreword

LAMBIS NIKOLAOU NIKOS FILARETOS

President of the Hellenic Olympic Committee President of the International Olympic Academy

Edited by

CHRISTINA KOULOURI

Professor of History, University of the Peloponnese

Contributors

ELENI FOURNARAKI LINA LOUVI

ALEXANDER KITROEFF VASSILIKI TZACHRISTA

GIORGOS KOKKINOS ELEANA YALOURI

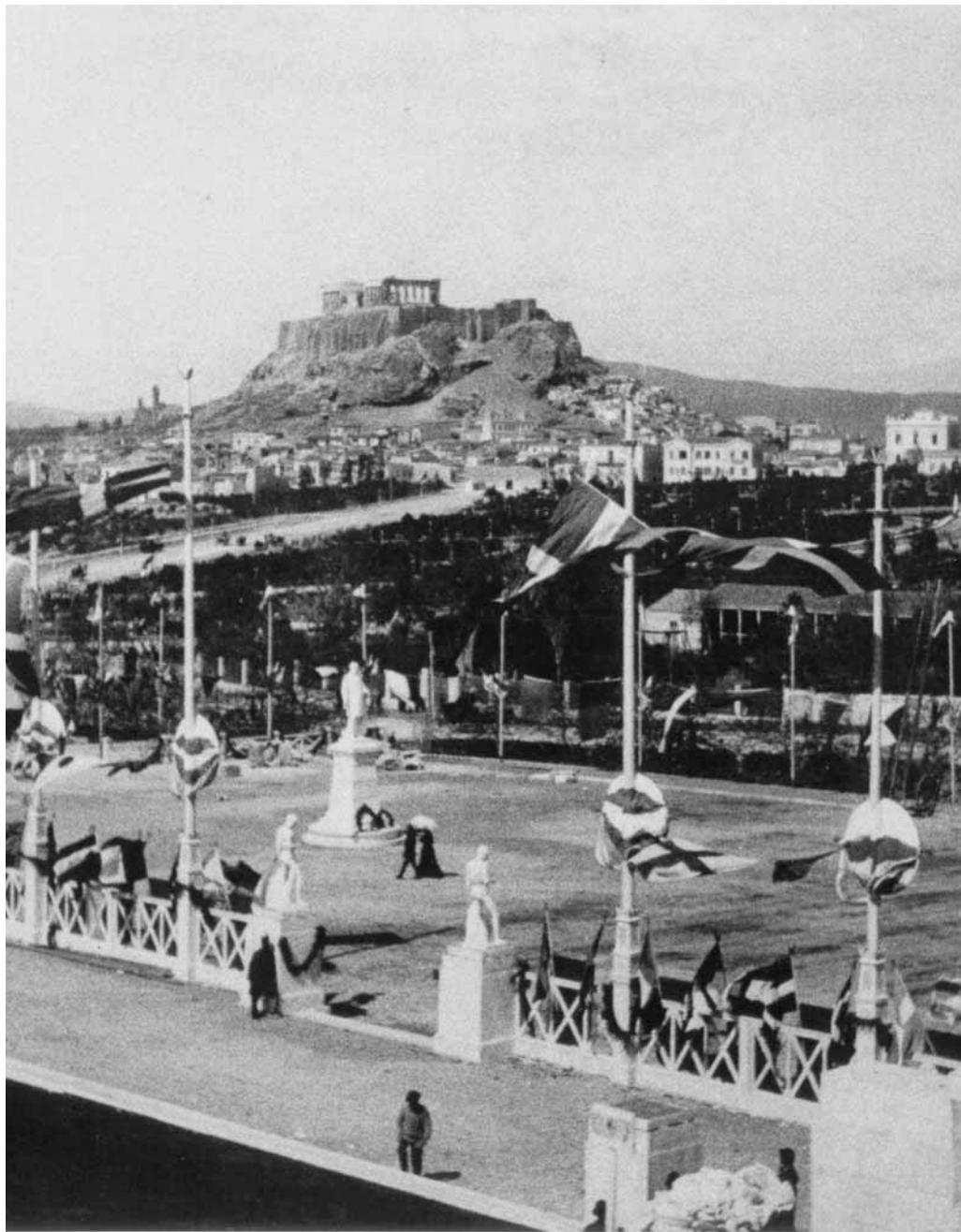
CHRISTOS LOUKOS YANNIS YANNITSIOTIS

Translation

GEOFFREY COX

ATHENS 2004

The entrance to the Panathenaic Stadium with the statue of Georgios Averoff.
[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.33]



The history of the Olympic Games from their initial phase in antiquity, their revival in the nineteenth century, in conditions of social and political changes, as well as their subsequent occurrences throughout the twentieth century, in the period between the two World Wars and then in the period of unmitigated ideological and political bipolarism embracing the whole planet, constitutes a plexus of intricate events (and equally intricate assessments of those events), which renders the approach to this multifaceted subject extremely difficult for every specialist researcher.

If to the above we add, moreover, individual aspects of what is now a universal institution, such as, for example, the relation between amateurism and professionalism, the antithetical affinity between internationalism and nationalism, or the moral and pedagogic values of Olympism as a demand made in the stifling embrace of gigantism and commercialisation, then, immediately, the undertaking for the researcher becomes virtually impossible.

Against this background, the present volume (which, including some necessary reviews of the past, confines itself to the years 1896-1906) is truly a feat, with the comprehensive introductory essay by professor Christina Koulouri and the selected studies by scholars of great merit. This feat not only fills me with emotion and pride, but also bestows upon me the unshakeable conviction that this work will adorn the library of every specialist in the field of sport, in Greece and throughout the world.

LAMBIS NIKOLAOU
President of the Hellenic Olympic Committee

By the publication of the collection of essays Athens, Olympic City (1896-1906), the International Olympic Academy presents to the academic community and the friends of sport an original study the interest of which is greatly enhanced by the fact that the Olympic Games are being held in Athens in 2004. This work is an integral part not only of the utilisation of the data derived from the classification and recording of the archives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee but also of wider-ranging research carried out in Greece and abroad. With this publication, the International Olympic Academy confirms its academic identity and fulfils its cultural role by supporting academic research in the field of the historiography of sport.

The present volume investigates the parameters relating to the holding of the Olympic Games in 1896 and 1906 in Athens. The special contribution of this research lies in the comparative treatment of the subject of the city welcoming the Games as a public event. In 1896 Athens was the first modern Olympic city. In 1906 Athens was the city that hosted the Intermediate Olympic Games, an 'exceptional' event, which gave the 'kiss of life' to a newly-established institution that had lost its identity in the vortex of the International Exhibitions of Paris (1900) and St Louis (1904).

In 2004 Athens is a modernised European city called upon for a second time in history to manage the most important sports event in the world. The character of the modern city and the return of the Games to their birthplace, combined with the changes and interventions that ensued in 1896 and 1906 and those that will ensue in 2004, will lead us to useful conclusions as to how the people of each period perceive the changes, the symbolisms and the communication dimension of the Olympic Games. It is my belief that this publication will serve as a point of reference for future researchers who will investigate the effects that the holding of the Olympic Games has on modern cities.

In conclusion, I would like to thank personally the Olympic Solidarity Committee of the International Olympic Committee for its valuable contribution to making this publication a reality and I would like to remind readers that every noble endeavour in the field of culture and knowledge gives ground for a warm smile of optimism about life.

NIKOS FILARETOS
President of the International Olympic Academy

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Introduction

Rewriting the history of the Olympic Games

CHRISTINA KOULOURI

*The one duty we owe to history
is to re-write it.*
Oscar Wilde¹

The history of the Olympic Games is rewritten at each Olympiad and on the occasion of each Olympiad. Every four years, it becomes once again fashionable for social scientists and journalists to concern themselves with the Olympic Games. This fashion, moreover, migrates to the country that is holding the Games on that particular occasion, and usually deserts it immediately after they end. Thus interest in the history of the Olympic Games is generated and cultivated on occasion, is short-lived, and is concentrated on the country holding them. This is demonstrated by the host of scholarly and popularising publications on the subject, which inundate booksellers' windows and the columns of the newspapers as the period of the Games approaches. In spite of the unbalanced nature of this production, the increased interest of the public and of the academic community provides a unique opportunity for fresh research to be carried out and original studies to be produced. In this sense, the occasion of the Olympiad in Athens creates the appropriate conditions for the planning of research and publishing projects, and for the holding of conferences and meetings of scholars.

The present publication has its place precisely within the context of this favourable occasion, but its origins are not fortuitous. It derives from a coincidence of the research interests of a group, historians in their majority, some of whom have worked on the laborious task of classifying and recording the Historical Archives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC).² The abundant material in the Archives has opened up new horizons for the history of the modern Olympic Games and, more

1. Oscar Wilde, 'The critic as artist', *Intentions* (1891), part 1, p. 34. Quoted by James Riordan, 'Political exploitation of the Olympic Games within the context of international rivalry', paper presented at the 8th International Congress of the European Committee for Sport History on 'Ancient and Modern Olympic Games. Their Political and Cultural Dimensions', 25-28 September 2003, Ancient Olympia.

2. See Christina Koulouri (ed.), *Αρχεία και ιστορία της Επιτροπής Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων* [Archives and history of the Hellenic Olympic Committee], Athens 2002.

particularly, as to the role played by Greece in them. In the meantime, the photographic archive of the HOC has been classified and recorded.³ By means of the documentation, a little before the Athens Olympiad of 2004, it has become possible for the history of the Olympic Games to be indeed rewritten – and, in the case of some aspects of it, to be written for the first time.

On the pathways of historiography

History holds a stronger position in the case of Athens, because of the associations stirred in Greeks and foreigners. Greece, the cradle of the Olympic Games in antiquity and the place of their revival in the nineteenth century, takes up again the thread of continuity in 2004. In the popularising publications and in the collective imagination, the coincidence of place suggests the idea of continuity in time and activates ahistorical and diachronic symbolisms, which spurn political, social and cultural reality. In this atmosphere of facile generalisations, the challenge is that of historicising the history of the Olympic Games and distinguishing it from the ideology of Olympism – or, put another way, of interpreting the modern Olympic movement and the Olympic Games within the framework of the world history of the two last centuries.

No scientific work starts out in a void. It includes an *acquis* of knowledge and engages in a dialogue with earlier bibliography, accepting or rebutting it. The history of the Olympic Games constitutes an exceptionally productive field of historiography, but also an exceptionally diversified and qualitatively uneven one. The numerical abundance of the relevant publications in every language is in inverse proportion to academic quality. On the other hand, this production is in converse with various academic disciplines – history, sociology, anthropology, political science – so that discrete sub-totals are created by differing methods and tools. Contemporary trends in the social sciences, in any event, call for an interdisciplinary approach in the study of the Olympic Games also.

If we were to attempt to record the general tendencies in Olympic historiography⁴ from the time of the revival of the Games to the present, we could distinguish schematically three axes of narration: (a) the history of the ancient Olympic Games; (b) the history of their revival; (c) the history of the modern Olympic Games. There are also composite histories in which these three axes co-exist.

3. The research work of classifying, recording and conserving the photographic archive of the HOC was funded by the General Secretariat for the Olympic Games of the Ministry of Culture and carried out by the Democritus University of Thrace under the direction of the present author.

4. A review of the relevant historiography was presented, in an initial form, as a paper on ‘Historiographical approaches to the ancient and modern Olympic Games: a critical overview (18th-20th century)’ at the 8th International Congress of the European Committee for Sport History, *op. cit.*

The history of the ancient Olympic Games

The ancient Olympic Games are analysed either as an independent entity within the context of ancient history or archaeology, or in comparison with the modern Games. In the latter case, a mood of nostalgia for the symbolisms and values represented by the ancient Games in contrast with the ‘decline in values’ of modern times is sometimes present. This mood is based on an idealised and mythologised picture of antiquity and ancient athleticism. In recent years, however, there have been several studies that have attempted to ‘demythologise’ the ancient Olympic Games in terms of their economic and political aspects and to interpret them within the framework of ancient Greek society. One particular characteristic of this axis of narration is that it is, to a large extent, served by a category of scholars different from that which concerns itself with the history of sport in general. These are archaeologists, classicists, and historians of antiquity who locate the study of the ancient Games within an overall study of ancient society and culture.

The history of the ancient Olympic Games started to be written before their revival in 1896 within the context of the scholarly interest in the ancient world, acquired by the Western world from the eighteenth century onwards. In the Enlightenment the West turned towards ancient Greece to make its acquaintance. For the intellectuals of Western Europe, ancient Greece was a foreign country awaiting ‘discovery’, like the America of the Indians. ‘If the past is indeed a foreign country, men with this perception, must have reasoned, it is necessary to visit a foreign country to find the past.’⁵ The wave of travellers visiting the lands of the classics with Pausanias in their luggage, the philhellenism which blossomed in conjunction with the Romantic admiration for a Greece that had risen in revolution, and the archaeological missions which dug up the ‘greatness’ of classical civilisation were aspects of the ‘visitation’ and ‘discovery’ of ancient Greece by Western Europe.

The Olympic Games, an organic part of ancient Greek civilisation, were also ‘discovered’ in the climate of cult of antiquity. Olympia, moreover, symbolised *par excellence* the classical ideal of the combination of physical and intellectual perfection, an ideal which had found its systematic expression in the work of Winckelmann on ancient Greek art. Winckelmann provided the social circle of dilettanti, writers and artists of the Enlightenment with an aesthetic and a philosophy of art. From the eighteenth century, the desire for knowledge of Greco-Roman antiquities and the admiration for ancient art were basic characteristics of the cultural attitudes of the European world.⁶

Knowledge of the Olympic Games was sought for in the ancient texts, in modern descriptions by travellers, and in the reports on the archaeological finds at Olympia. It was to be found, then, on the one hand, in writings which referred directly back to

5. Richard Stoneman, *Land of Lost Gods. The Search for Classical Greece*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman/London, pp. 144-5.

6. A. Schnapp, *The Discovery of the Past. The Origins of Archaeology*, British Museum Press, London 1999, p. 262.

antiquity, such as editions of ancient texts; editions of Pausanias' *Description of Greece* and of Pindar's 'Epinician Odes', in particular, formed the basic source of knowledge about Olympia and the Games. On the other hand, modern works inspired by antiquity, such as the famous *Jeune Anacharsis* of Abbé Barthélémy, had a wide readership and so popularised knowledge of antiquity. Such writings stimulated the imagination and built up an idealising picture of Greek antiquity. However, in revealing a more palpable and real picture, a decisive role was played by the discovery of the very site of the ancient Games – Olympia. To excavate ancient Olympia had been a dream of Winckelmann; it came to the forefront again in 1852 with the famous talk on 'Olympia' given by the German historian Ernst Curtius in Berlin. It was Curtius who would, in the end, undertake the excavations between 1874 and 1881, by virtue of an inter-state agreement between Greece and Germany. The discovery of the centre of Olympic competition furnished another stimulus for publications concerned with the ancient Olympic Games.

[...] a New Jerusalem, Olympia, is destined hereafter to be the common meeting-place of the distinguished labourers of the intellect and of all the truly wise of the civilised world [...].⁷

Furthermore, the holding of the first Olympic Games of modern times in Athens triggered publications concerning the ancient Games in the country that created them.⁸ The authors of these studies came from the world of archaeology, history, and, more generally, of scholarship that had no connection with physical exercise, but fostered classical culture. The special relationship of modern Greece with its ancient ancestor explains the eagerness to engage in such enterprises of authorship. It is a fact that when the Games were held in 1896, a further connection with antiquity was confirmed in the collective imagination of the Greeks. The idea of continuity through time, from antiquity to the present, as had been established by the work of the romantic national historian Constantinos Paparrigopoulos, was, then, further strengthened by the fact of the revival of the Olympic Games. At the same time, the account of the continuity through time of the physical exercise of the Greeks and their athletic achievements was recomposed, in total keeping with the national history of Greece.

7. G. Spyridis, *To εικονογραφημένον πανόραμα των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων. Ιστορική μελέτη περιέχοντα και τοπογραφικόν της Ολυμπίας χάρτην* [The illustrated panorama of the Olympic Games. A historical study containing a topographical map of Olympia], Paris/Athens 1895, pp. 70-1. For an analysis of the views of Spyridis, who was resident in Paris, as expressed in this work, see in the present volume G. Kokkinos, 'The Greek intellectual world and the Olympic Games (1896, 1906)', p. 146 ff.

8. See Sevasti Kallisperi, *Η Ολυμπία και οι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες*, Athens 1896 (publication of a speech delivered at the Law School of the University of Athens on 11 March 1895); G. Spyridis, *To εικονογραφημένον πανόραμα, op. cit.; Οι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896. Μέρος Α'. Οι αγώνες εν τη αρχαιότητι, υπό Σπ. Λάμπρου και Ν. Πολίτου μετά προλόγου υπό Τιμ. Φιλίμονος (μετά γαλλικής μεταφράσεως των όλων υπό Léon Olivier)* [The Olympic Games 776 BC - 1896. Part I. The Games in antiquity, by Spyridon Lambros and N. Politis with a foreword by Timoleon Philimon (with a translation into French of the whole by Léon Olivier)], Athens 1896; Association for the Dissemination of Useful Books, *Οι Αγώνες* [The Games], Athens 1906.

The history of the ancient Games, which began to be written in Greece a little before the end of the nineteenth century, had therefore a clearly ethnocentric character.⁹ But the history of the revival is no less ethnocentric.

The history of the revival

The history of the revival tends to be confined to being a British, French, and Greek affair, in spite of the fact that there are also noteworthy publications in German. The latent or apparent confrontation concerns the originality of Pierre de Coubertin's idea. The attempts at revival that had gone before – more specifically those of the English physician William Penny Brookes and of the Zappas 'Olympiads' in Athens¹⁰ – are put forward as the basic arguments to show that Coubertin had taken many elements of his inspiration from others, whose contribution he deliberately played down.¹¹ These studies have contributed to dissociating the history of the revival from the 'cult of personality' approach, which Coubertin himself had imposed by his writings, and have brought to light new facts, which have permitted us to gain a better understanding of the revival in the historical context of the nineteenth century.¹² Their critical attitude towards the earlier bibliography, however, led – in certain cases – to a repetition of the same mistake. That is to say, the debate over who was first to conceive the idea of the revival and what exactly was the role of Coubertin neglects the various parameters and consequences of this innovation as such and is, albeit indirectly, itself of an ethnocentric character in describing it as a British, French, or Greek initiative, as the case may be.

The revival, nevertheless, should be interpreted in the light of the encounter in the nineteenth century of two factors: the cult of antiquity, on the one hand, and the re-introduction of gymnastics as a part of education, on the other. Admiration for ancient Greek civilisation, a part of which was such games, was, then, one basis for the revival. The other is to be sought in the legitimisation of physical exercise, a legitimisation arising from a combination of pedagogic care and the tendency towards a concern with health from the eighteenth century on.¹³ It seems that the idea of a

9. It is typical that Sevasti Kallisperi, in condemning cosmopolitanism and the 'insinuation of everything alien', noted that a knowledge of the ancient Olympic Games provided 'a lesson capable of keeping at bay our cult of the foreign': S. Kallisperi, *H Ολυμπία, op. cit.*, pp. 86-7.

10. See W. Decker/G. Dolianitis/K. Lennartz (eds), *100 Jahre Olympische Spiele. Der Neugriechische Ursprung*, Ergon, Würzburg 1996.

11. See, chiefly, the work of D. C. Young, *The Modern Olympics. A Struggle for Revival*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore/London 1996; 'The origins of the modern Olympics: A new version', *Journal of the History of Sport* 4/3 (1987), pp. 271-300; 'Demetrios Vikelas: First president of the IOC', *Stadion* 14 (1988), pp. 85-102.

12. P. Samaras, *H αναβίωση των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων στην Ελλάδα 1797-1859. Νέα δεδομένα – Οι πρώτοι αγώνες* [The revival of the Olympic Games in Greece 1797-1859. New facts – The first games], Athens 1992; K. Georgiadis, *Die ideengeschichtliche Grundlage der Erneuerung der Olympischen Spiele im 19. Jahrhundert in Griechenland und ihre Umsetzung 1896 in Athen*, Agon Sport Verlag, 2000.

13. See Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αρτικής κουνιωνιότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλη-*

revival of the ancient games was actually in the air in many European countries as early as the eighteenth century, and with greater frequency in the nineteenth. Thus the revival of the Olympic Games belonged within the dominant ideological trends of all the European societies – and this, in any event, made possible the success of the undertaking on a world-wide scale. As Coubertin himself wrote: ‘From time to time ideas move around the world spreading like an epidemic. It is very difficult to credit them to a single individual. Generally one finds that, without coming to an explicit understanding or reaching an agreement among themselves, several men were working on the same task at the same time, in different places’.¹⁴

The history of the modern Olympic Games

In the history of the modern Olympic Games, we can distinguish schematically four tendencies: (a) the descriptive narration, which is confined to setting down measurable facts and records; (b) the idealising approach, of a more philosophical, pedagogic, and participatory character; (c) the critical narration, which from varying theoretical viewpoints censures the ‘commercialisation’ and/or the political use of the Games; (d) the social, political, and cultural history of the Olympic Games, which follows the questionings and the methods of modern scientific historiography.

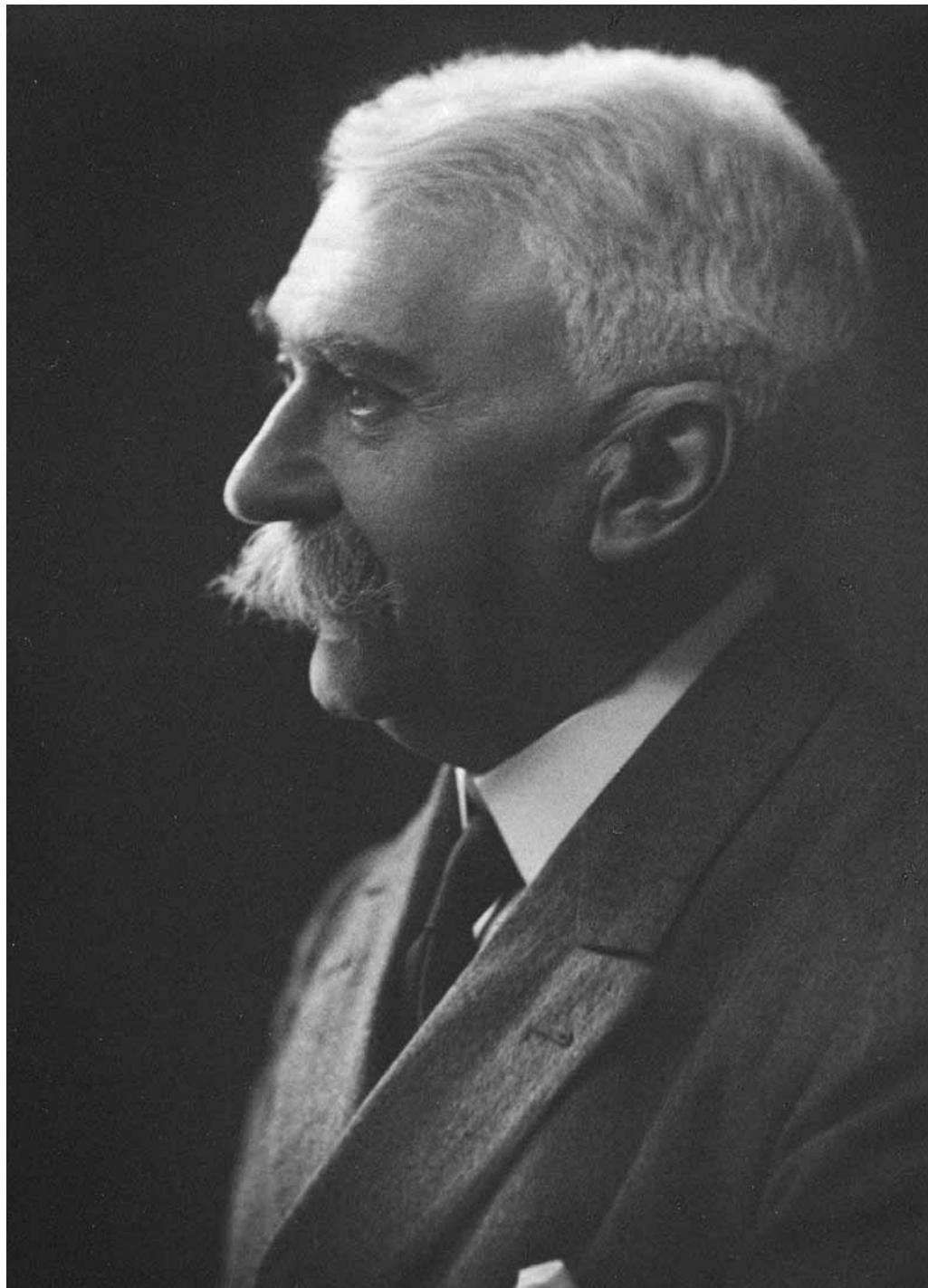
The first trend gives expression to a basic parameter of the Olympic Games, from the time of their revival, which is the listing of records and of Olympic victors. This history, which concerns not only the Olympic Games but also sport more generally, could be described as ‘war history’: it records athletic contests and achievements, with emphasis on the dramatic confrontation of individuals and teams, and the final victory. The achievement, the record, is a constituent of this approach, but also a criterion of assessment for inclusion in the historical narrative. The narrative style is epic, while anecdotal descriptions of outstanding athletes or contests have a part to play. Moreover, what is favoured by the projection of the hero-athlete is not only the cult of personality approach, but also the almost hagiographical type of biography. This history is interested only in the victors. Thus a mythology of athleticism has been built up and continues to be built up which displaces any attempt at interpretation and serves – even if unconsciously or involuntarily – as a support for the commercial exploitation of sport. Athleticism is not a religion, as Coubertin claimed it to be, but a myth, as later researchers have demonstrated.¹⁵

The idealising trend approaches the Olympic Games in the spirit of the educative

τις σωματεία 1870-1922 [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, pp. 48-54.

14. N. Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin. Textes choisis*, vol. II: *Olympisme*, Comité International Olympique, Weidmann, Zurich/Hildesheim/New York 1986, p. 80. See also Christina Koulouri, ‘Στο δρόμο για την αναβίωση’ [On the road to revival], in *Αθήνα 1896 και οι Α' Διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες* [Athens 1896 and the first International Olympic Games], (forthcoming).

15. Georges Vigarello, *Du jeu ancien au show sportif. La naissance d'un mythe*, Seuil, Paris 2002, p. 197.



Pierre de Coubertin (28 April 1927). [HOC Photographic Archive: K3.7]

dimension of Olympism and as a means of realising moral values and ideals. The theoretical foundation is provided by the texts of Coubertin and is renewed by the supporters of the Olympic idea and the ideals associated with it. Often this trend has a participatory character because it is represented by figures from the world of Olympic athleticism.

In the case of the third tendency, the critical, the strongest criticism has come from the neo-Marxist school, which links the development of sport with the development of capitalism. This school condemns the whole Olympic movement as an organ of capitalist imperialism, which hypocritically promotes as its ideal internationalist humanism and peace.¹⁶ Another aspect of the same critique concerns the relation of the Olympic movement with the 'Third' and the 'Fourth' World: the Olympic ideal, born as it was in the age of colonialism, continues to be, according to this view, Western-centred and to promote inequalities and exclusions in the age of 'neo-colonialism'.¹⁷ However, works not belonging to this school have also denounced a linkage between the Olympic Games and international politics, maintaining that the Olympic ideals are simply used to cloak the pursuit of power by individuals, groups, and countries. A number of works, moreover, have focused their criticism on the role of the International Olympic Committee and its presidents. Such condemnation is addressed against (a) the political use of the Games in the exercise of both the domestic and foreign policy of various countries; (b) the domination of money and of commercial exploitation; (c) doping, understood more as a 'moral' corruption of the athlete and as contrary to the rules of Olympic 'fair play'.

In spite of the apparent contradiction between these two trends, the idealising and the condemnatory, there is a shared assumption linking them at their starting-point: the moral content of Olympism. As Georges Vigarello has written,

[...] sport has always been nurtured by the struggle against 'evil'. Its inner struggle is essential. The legitimization of its existence depends upon an exhibited ethic. It must be seen as always governed by moral purity. Its necessary paradigmatic character constructs an orthodoxy: it determines who are exalted and who are exiled.¹⁸

A clear distinction is made, then, between those who are entitled to take part and those who are excluded – amateurs and professionals, the 'doped' and the 'clean', etc. Sport makes manifest an ethic condensing the principal values of modern societies: equality, meritocracy, solidarity, democratic competition. Conversely, the Olympic Games are called upon to serve as a paradigm and to provide ethical models in the

16. See J.-M. Brohm, *Le Mythe olympique*, Christian Bourgeois, Série 'Quel Corps?', Paris 1981. Cf. also a critical presentation of the history of sports by A. Guttmann, 'Recent work in European sport history', *Journal of Sport History*, 10/1 (spring 1983).

17. See J. Bale/Chris Philo (eds), *Henning Eichberg. Body Cultures. Essays on Sport, Space and Identity*, Routledge, London 1998, pp. 100-7.

18. Vigarello, *Du jeu ancien au show sportif*, op. cit., p. 206.

modern world, particularly for young people. The pedagogic function of sport and of the Olympic Games was, moreover, a central point in the thinking of Coubertin. A similar argumentation is, in any event, frequently repeated on the occasion of the Athens Olympiad.

The fourth tendency integrates the history of the Olympic Games into the history of sport. As a special branch of historiography, the history of athleticism had not attracted the systematic interest of researchers because of a more general contempt on the part of intellectuals for physical activities.¹⁹ Sports, in spite of their important position in modern society, were not thought ‘worthy’ of scholarly study, precisely because they were regarded as not belonging to the rational aspects of human activity. The indifference of social scientists towards sport pushed this subject to the margin of academic interests. However, in the 1970s and the 1980s, social history widened the scope of its subject matter and methodology, renewing both the fields of research interest and the tools of analysis, and communicating with ‘neighbouring’ social sciences. In the specific case of the history of sport, the influence of scholars from differing fields was important; among these were Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Johan Huizinga, Norbert Elias, and Clifford Geertz.²⁰ At the same time, the mass nature of sport and the burgeoning of the presence in every form of professional athleticism in the mass media (broadcasting of events, sports news, sports publications, sports goods, sports fashion, advertising, etc.) now make this world highly ‘visible’ to sociologists, historians, and anthropologists.

Thus, in the last 30 years, within the context of the more general upheavals in the field of the social sciences, a sociology, a history, and an anthropology of sport have developed, and specialist journals and organisations have been set up to concern themselves both with the history of sport and that of the Olympic Games.

There were, of course, as early as the nineteenth century periodical publications with a sporting content (magazines and newspapers). More particularly on the history of the Olympic Games, important information is contained in the official periodical publication of the International Olympic Committee; known as the *Revue Olympique*, this has been published under various titles and in different formats since 1894.²¹

19. For a brief review of the international and Greek historiography of sport see Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, op. cit., pp. 17-28.

20. J. Huizinga, *O δύναμος και το παιχνίδι* [Homo Ludens], trans. S. Rozanis/G. Lykiardopoulos, Athens 1989 (1st Dutch edition 1938); R. Barthes, *Μνθολογίες. Μάθημα* [Mythologies. Leçon], trans. Katy Hatzidimou/Ioulietta Ralli, Athens 1979 (1st French edition 1957); C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1st edition 1973); M. Foucault, *Επιτήρηση και τυωσία. Η γέννηση της φυλακής* [Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison], trans. Katy Hatzidimou/Ioulietta Ralli, Athens 1989 (1st French edition 1975); N. Elias/E. Dunning, *Quest for Excitement. Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process*, Blackwell, Oxford 1986 (most of the articles contained in this volume were written between 1966 and 1971).

21. The first title of the periodical was *Bulletin du Comité International des Jeux Olympiques* (1894); this changed in 1896 to *Les Jeux Olympiques*. Publication was interrupted from 1897 to 1900. In 1901, it came out again, this time entitled *Revue Olympique*, but publication was again interrupted in 1916, during the First World War. From 1926 to 1944 it circulated again under the title of *Bulletin Officiel du Comité International Olympique*. (During the period 1938-44, in effect, two periodicals were in circulation at the same time: the

However, we have to wait for the ‘discovery’ of the particular branch of the history of athleticism in order to find specialist scholarly publications and learned societies. A beginning was made with the history of physical education, hence it came to be recognised as a distinct subject taught in the institutions for the training of gymnastics teachers throughout the world.²² The development of sports studies at a university level gave a new boost to publications, conferences, and associations. Today, there are numerous associations of sports historians at a national and an international level.

The International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport is the ‘umbrella’ organisation for historians of sport throughout the world. It emerged from the amalgamation, in 1989, of the International Committee for the History of Physical Education and Sport – which was founded in 1967 in Prague – and the International Association for the History of Physical Education and Sport – set up in 1973 in Zurich. There are associations of sport historians at a national level in Britain, Australia, Brazil, the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, France, and Japan. In addition, there is the North American Society of Sports Historians and the European Committee of Sports History. Furthermore, there is a significant number of journals on the history of sport – almost all of which started publication in the 1980s and the 1990s.²³

Specifically for the history of the Olympic Games, there are two organisations: first, the International Society of Olympic Historians, which was founded in 1991 and publishes the *Journal of Olympic History*, which until 1996 bore the title of *Citius, Altius, Fortius*; second, the International Centre for Olympic Studies, which was founded in 1989 at the University of Western Ontario (Canada), and publishes *Olympika. The International Journal of Olympic Studies*.

The number of readers and the contributors of articles to these periodicals grows larger in proportion to the increase of university departments of physical education and sport throughout the world. As to the academic approach that is adopted, a certain difficulty in fitting together sport with physical training and the Olympic Games is observable, as if these were three completely different fields. This is due to the fact that sport and gymnastics have indeed represented, since the nineteenth century, two parallel but different cultures. Gymnastics has been associated more with education and military training (at least until the mid twentieth century), but does not

Bulletin Officiel du Comité International Olympique and the *Olympische Rundschau*.) In 1946, the journal came out again, under the title *Bulletin du Comité International Olympique*, until mid 1967. From 1967 to 1969, the title of the French edition was *Lettres d'information*, and of the English, *Newsletter*. Since 1970, the English-language edition has been known as the *Olympic Review*, and the French as the *Revue Olympique*.

22. In Greece, the subject of ‘History of gymnastics’ has been included, as far as the present author is aware, in all the curricula of institutions for the training of gymnastics teachers from the time of the first provisional School of Gymnasts, which functioned in Athens in 1884. See D. Antoniou, *Ta προγράμματα της Μέσης Εκπαίδευσης (1833-1929)* [Secondary education curricula (1833-1929)], Athens 1989, vol. III, pp. 216-22, 252-5.

23. The following, quoted indicatively, are some of the titles of the longer-lived of such periodicals: *Stadion*, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, *Journal of Sport History*, *Nikephoros*, *The British Society of Sports History Bulletin* (from 1993: *The Sports Historian*; from 2003: *Sport in History*), *Sport / Histoire, Culture-Sport-Society*.



Priestess Maria Kazazi surrounded by photographers, at the flame ceremony for the Melbourne Olympic Games (2 November 1956).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K9.15]

stress competitiveness, in contrast with sport, which involves democratic organisation and individual-centred competition. The Olympic Games perform a balancing act between these two different cultures, but are more closely linked with sport and the rise of the popular sporting spectacle. It is this side of the Olympic Games that has, moreover, called forth the most interesting studies from the sciences of anthropology and sociology. The impressive spectacle of the Olympic Games, which within the twentieth century became increasingly sophisticated and elaborate, is, according to anthropological analysis, one of the modern secular rituals that have replaced, up to a point, the religious rites of traditional society.²⁴ Ritual, play, festival, and spectacle are examined as constituents of the modern Olympic Games. The spectacle of the Games is not merely a matter of athletic events, but includes all kinds of events, which have accompanied it since the very first Olympiad of 1896. In the post-war period, the reproduction and broadcasting of the Olympic spectacle by means of television took on ever-increasing importance. On the site of the Olympic stadium and at all the venues where the Games are held, the cameras follow the competition, and present the protagonists, the development of the event, the critical moments. The Olympic Games are reproduced as a television spectacle before a world-wide audience.

Historical research has also benefited greatly from the use of the archives of Olympic history and publications dealing with them. The publication of Coubertin's works in French and English, the classification of the archives of the IOC in Lausanne, and recently of those of the HOC in Athens,²⁵ the systematic work done on the German archives (by the Carl Diem Institute in Cologne, for example), and many relevant infrastructure projects, which usually pass unobserved, because they require a great deal of toil but do not attract media attention, have made the greatest possible contribution to our knowledge of the history of the Olympic Games.

The history of the Olympic Games 'from the most ancient times'

There are, finally, works that gather together the three axes – ancient Olympic Games, revival and modern Olympic Games – into a single narrative of the history of the Games from antiquity to the present. This tendency has its roots in the nineteenth century and in the model of narration of national history that is based on the concept of continuity. This found expression, in any event, with Coubertin himself in his own writings, in which

24. See J. J. MacAloon (ed.), *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals Toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia 1984. For a concise review of 'Olympic anthropology' as anthropology of cultural identity and global spectacle see John MacAloon, 'Anthropology at the Olympic Games: An overview', in Arne Martin Klausen (ed.), *Olympic Games as a Performance and Public Event. The Case of the XVII Winter Olympic Games in Norway*, Berghahn, New York/Oxford 1999, pp. 9-26.

25. See Koulouri (ed.), *Aρχεία και ιστορία, op. cit.* For the excellent work that has been done in the IOC Archives under the direction of Cristina Bianchi, see www.olympic.org.

his account of the history of physical exercise and of games includes the Middle Ages. The references to the medieval period are not confined to Western Europe, but extend to Byzantium. According to Coubertin, in the Byzantine Empire, in spite of the fact that ‘athleticism, condemned by the Church, no longer had its temples [...] the glory of athletic achievements continued to exist’.²⁶

In Greek historiography, this tendency found expression as early as the time of revival in 1896, when, as has already been pointed out, yet another link in the descent of the Greeks from the ancient Greek world was discovered.²⁷ The new and interesting feature now emerging is that, apart from intellectual continuity with the ancient ancestors (moral qualities, love of learning, language, etc.), physical continuity was called into play (bodily exercise, strength, contests, etc.). Starting out from a direct linkage with antiquity, this ‘continuous’ history of physical exercise and of contests gradually incorporated the less ‘athletic’ periods of national history as well. The first such period to be integrated into the unifying schema of the history of sport was that of Ottoman rule, exactly as had already been the case with national history, since the 1860s. The *armatoloi* and klephths, protagonists in the Greek War of Independence, warrior-heroes, were now described as the descendants of the ancient Olympic victors. In the contests engaged in by the klephths, continuity from the ancient games was discovered, and in their bodily beauty, a similarity to ancient statues. The Greek Revolution was, then, interpreted as the result of an overall national rebirth, which also included robustness of body. It was more difficult, for obvious reasons, to include Byzantium into the scheme of continuity. In the relatively early publications on the subject, there are only references to the contests in the Hippodrome and attention is drawn to the interest of the Byzantines – as of the Romans – in spectacles. Later, in the twentieth century, the study of Byzantine sources furnished more arguments for

26. N. Müller/O. Schantz (eds), *Pierre de Coubertin. Textes choisis*, vol. III: *Pratique Sportive*, Comité International Olympique, Wiedmann, Zurich/Hildesheim/New York 1986, p. 29 (the text was published for the first time in 1922).

27. Works published on the occasion of the revival and the Intermediate Olympics that adopt the schema of continuity include A. T. Spiliopoulos, *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες διά των Αιώνων. Οι αγώνες παρ' Ελλησ, Ρωμαίους, Βυζαντίνους και Φράγκους. Αρματολικοί και νεώτεροι χρόνοι* [The Olympic Games through the centuries. Games among the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines and Franks. The times of the *armatoloi* and modern times], Athens 1896 and² 1906; A. G. Gagias/M. E. Kazis/G. K. Ioannidis, *Περιγραφή των πρώτων διεθνών Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων* [Description of the first International Olympic Games], Athens 1896; N. D. Dimakis, *Ανάγνωσμα περὶ γυμναστικῆς εν Ελλάδι από των αρχαιοτάτων χρόνων μέχοι των καθ' ημάς. Εκφωνηθέν εν τῇ αιθούσῃ τῆς Λέσχης τη 17η Μαρτίου 1902 και περὶ των αγώνων τῶν Γυμναστικού Συλλόγου Τρικκάλων...* [A reading concerning gymnastics in Greece from the most ancient times until our own. Delivered in the hall of the Club on 17 March 1902 and concerning the games of the Gymnastics Association of Trikala...], Trikala 1904. Similar views on the continuity of physical exercise were voiced in summary form in 1895 by Spyridon Lambros, professor of history at the University of Athens: ‘Επί τοις εγκαίνιοις του γυμναστηρίου του Πανελλήνιου Γυμναστικού Συλλόγου’ [On the occasion of the official opening of the gymnasium of the Panhellenic Gymnastics Association], *Λόγοι και άρθρα* [Speeches and articles], Athens 1902, pp. 241-5. The work of P. I. Stavropoulos, *Οι αρχαίοι και νέοι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες* [The ancient and modern Olympic Games], Athens 1906, does not link the two eras – ancient and modern – but contains two separate and independent sections.

the organic inclusion of Greek medieval history within the schema of the continuous history of sport ‘from the most ancient times down to our own’.

The first systematic, unified history of Greek sport is to be found in the work of the well-known professor at the Gymnastics Teachers’ Training College, and later General Inspector of Gymnastics, Evangelos Pavlinis, *Iστορία της γυμναστικής* [History of Gymnastics], which was published in 1927. Pavlinis, in order to lend support to the schema of continuity from antiquity to the twentieth century, adopts a distinction between gymnastics, which he defines as ‘a conscious use of movement for the moulding and advancement of man’,²⁸ and games and contests. In the light of this distinction, he establishes that the period from the abolition of the Olympic Games in AD 393 to the founding of the Greek state was marked by an indifference towards gymnastics and a lack of a ‘gymnastics consciousness’, but that competitions and admiration for those endowed with bodily strength continued. Furthermore, he linked Byzantium with Western European history by identifying games and competitions of Western European origin in late Byzantium.

Faithful to this schema of Pavlinis, the history of sport and of the Olympic Games ‘from the most ancient times down to our own’ continues to be cultivated in Greece today, and to be taught as the ‘history of physical education’. But is it possible, and correct, to write such a ‘continuous’ history of the Olympic Games? Is it also possible to write a ‘national’ history of the Olympic Games?

The Olympic Games as ‘invented tradition’ and as an internationalist project

The history of sport, as written by modern historians, emphasises the concept of ‘discontinuity’ and interprets the appearance of sport as a symptom of the transition from the traditional to the modern, industrial society. Thus, the revival of the Olympic Games cannot be understood within the context of continuity, but, on the contrary, within the framework of the great changes – economic, social, ideological, and cultural – that took place in Western societies from the eighteenth century on. In any event, the very term ‘revival’ or ‘re-establishment’, the name adopted for the decision that the Olympic Games should be held once again after fifteen centuries, leads us to assume such a discontinuity. Constant parallels drawn with the ancient Games, from the time of the revival, and, moreover, on the part of those whose inspiration it was, created from the very beginning a confusion as to the affinity between the ancient and modern Games. The references to antiquity were made, of course, because of the prevailing climate of the cult of antiquity, which we have described, but they were also deliberate, in order to endow with authority an idea that was looked upon with a certain distrust in the circles of the learned, whose attitude to athletic activity ranged from alienation to

28. E. Pavlinis, *Iστορία της γυμναστικής* [History of gymnastics], Athens 1953, p. 381.

hostility. On the part of Coubertin, moreover, the reference to the shared roots of European civilisation, in an age of nationalisms, safeguarded his idea from identification with one nation only – in this instance, the French.²⁹ At the Sorbonne Congress, at which the reconstitution of the Olympic Games was resolved, Vikelas stressed that those taking part were not ‘aliens’, but ‘grandchildren of the ancient Greeks, cousins who have come together with the memory and in the name of shared grandfathers’.³⁰

It was, in fact, Coubertin’s ambition to create, in his own words, ‘a universal and eternal work’, and not something ‘local and ephemeral’.³¹ He himself wrote, again, in an assessment of the Athens Games:

The Olympic Games which were recently held in Athens were modern in character, not only because of their programmes, which replaced chariot races with bicycle races and the barbarity of boxing with fencing, but because their origin and regulations were international and universal, and, consequently, adapted to the conditions in which athleticism has developed up to the present.³²

The revival of the Olympic Games, therefore, as Coubertin envisaged it and as, finally, it was effected, gave expression to basic tendencies at the close of the nineteenth century, such as that towards ‘invented tradition’ and an internationalist project.

According to the definition of Eric Hobsbawm, “‘Invented traditions’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past’.³³

The Olympic Games possess all the distinguishing characteristics of an invented tradition – the ritual nature, the rules, the repetition, the association with the ancient Greek past, and, finally, the pedagogic intention. Socialisation and the inculcation of values, convictions, and models of behaviour have indeed been distinguishing features of ‘invented traditions’ after the Industrial Revolution.³⁴ In the case of the modern

29. Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

30. *Bulletin du Comité International des Jeux Olympiques* 1 (July 1894), p. 1. See also D. Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνεῖς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’ [The international Olympic Games], in Alkis Angelou (lit. ed.), *Δημήτριος Βικέλας. Απαντά* [Demetrius Vikelas. The collected works], vol. VIII, Athens 1997, p. 132.

31. *Οι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896. Μέρος Β'. Οι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες 1896, υπό Δ. Κούμπερτεν, Τιμ. Φιλήμονος, N. Πολίτου και Χαρ. Αννίνον (μετά γαλλικής μεταφράσεως του όλου υπό Léon Olivier)* [The Olympic Games 776 BC - 1896. Part II. The Olympic Games 1896, by D. Coubertin, T. Philimon, N. Politis and C. Anninos (with a translation into French of the whole by Léon Olivier)], Athens 1896, p. 8.

32. Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin 1863-1937. Olympism. Selected Writings*, IOC, Lausanne 2000, p. 350 (a text published immediately after the Games of 1896).

33. E. Hobsbawm/T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1985, p. 1.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 9. For a more detailed examination of the various parameters that define Olympism as an ‘invented tradition’, see in the present volume Kokkinos, ‘The Greek intellectual world’, pp. 133 ff.

Olympic Games, the models of behaviour are contained in the ideology of amateurism, on the one hand, and of Olympism, on the other.

The ‘bourgeois doctrine’ of amateurism

Amateurism was the first concern at the Sorbonne Congress, and was the object of discussion of one of the two committees that were set up – the other discussed the restoration of the Olympic Games. Its application to the holding of the Games, as a criterion and condition of taking part, determined from the very start the bounds of social discrimination and social exclusion for the newly constructed institution. An ideology of aristocratic inspiration, amateurism constituted a ‘bourgeois doctrine’, informally excluding the lower classes.³⁵

The first principle of amateurism is that sport is practised as ‘recreation’, is an end in itself, and is far removed from any practical usefulness. It is thus contrasted with work and implies ‘conspicuous leisure’, which ensures the symbolic superiority of the ‘leisure class’.³⁶ Consequently, the professional athlete, who did not take exercise for ‘pleasure’, but for the financial reward, was excluded from the amateur Olympic Games. The moral alibi for this manifest class discrimination was that physical superiority, possessed by reason of his occupation by the professional athlete, cancelled out genuine, democratic competition.

The second feature of amateurism was the so-called ‘fair play’, that is, the ‘civilised’ competition, governed by rules voluntarily accepted by those taking part. The rules of athletic competition were determined by modern, bourgeois values: meritocracy, equality, solidarity, and individualism. The contest on the track or the pitch was based on ‘democratic’ competition between ‘equals’, and the ‘best man’ won not because of social status or inherited right, but because of his individual worth and his individual effort. As in the case of universal franchise all voters are ‘equal’, so in athletic competition, opponents are ‘equal’, and any previously existing social differences are not taken into account. It was on these moral values, inherent in sport in the nineteenth century, and, by extension, in the Olympic Games, that their pedagogic function was based. The same values, moreover, lent to the Olympic Games the contradictory paradox of ‘serious play’.³⁷

35. See Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αυτικής κουνωνιότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-9.

36. See the famous work by T. Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, August M. Kelly, New York 1991 (1st edition 1899).

37. MacAloon regards the paradox of ‘serious play’ as a further obstacle to the scientific analysis and understanding of the Olympic Games. John J. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol. Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago/London 2001, p. xi.



Torch-bearers at the Berlin Olympic Games flame ceremony (22 July 1936).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K3.87]

Moral and pedagogic values of Olympism

The content of Olympism was also presented as *par excellence* pedagogic. ‘Olympism’ was a neologism devised by Coubertin himself, of which, in 1917, he gave the following definition:

It is the religion of energy, the cult of the strength of will that develops through exercise in manly games which are based on health and *civisme* and are invested with art and thought.³⁸

Olympism has a philosophical and an educational dimension. It is, on the one hand, a spiritual and moral stance, a ‘*religio athletae*’, which includes the ‘advance to an ideal of a higher life and a pursuit of perfection’, the moral qualities of ‘chivalry’ – belonging to an elite of ‘equal origins’ – and an aesthetic that glorifies beauty.³⁹ For both amateurism and Olympism, the ‘gentleman’ is the model for behaviour. On the other hand, Olympism takes the form of Olympic education, which is based on ‘the cultivation of effort and the cultivation of bodily harmony – and so on the combination of the desire for pre-eminence and the desire for the measure’.⁴⁰

The famous Olympic motto ‘*citius, altius, fortius*’, introduced by the Dominican priest Henri Didon in 1891 and adopted by Coubertin in 1894 in fact distils not only athletic values (better performances in specific events), but, more generally, moral and pedagogic values as well.⁴¹ At the same time, athletic achievement through competition – precisely what is meant by the motto ‘*citius, altius, fortius*’ – symbolises the whole of the values of modernity, which also mark creativity and innovation in industry, science, and art.⁴²

Olympism was, moreover, put forward as a, politically neutral, internationalist movement, with the promotion of world peace as its aim, particularly after the First World War. In 1918, Coubertin determined that the role of Olympism was ‘to maintain and spread social peace’.⁴³ However, as early as the time when the idea of reviving the Olympic Games was born in Coubertin, there was an ideological affinity with the international peace movement, which was represented by important members at the Sorbonne Congress.⁴⁴ In fact, the balance between internationalism and

38. Pierre de Coubertin, ‘Les Jardins de l’Effort’, *Almanach Olympique pour 1918*, Lausanne [1917], p. 4, in Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

39. See G. Rioux (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin. Textes choisis*, vol. I: *Révélation*, Zurich / Hildesheim / New York 1986, p. 20.

40. Lettres Olympiques V, *Gazette de Lausanne* 325 (28 Nov. 1918), pp. 1-2, in Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

41. See Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 442.

42. Cf. Arne Martin Klausen, ‘Introduction’, in Klausen (ed.), *Olympic Games as Performance and Public Event*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

43. Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 396.

44. According to Dietrich R. Quanz, the international peace movement was strongly represented among

patriotism that we find in Coubertin's writings reflects basic principles of the peace movement of the time, which, though recognising the variety of nations and the concept of conflict as being interwoven with human action, promoted the need for 'civilised' solutions instead of war. Peace was, then, advanced through 'enlightened patriotism' and not through 'utopian and superficial cosmopolitanism', while a love for one's country was balanced by a love for mankind.⁴⁵

Olympic internationalism, at one and the same time realistic and reformatory, used the language of symbols in order to promote the ideals of international co-operation and the peaceful co-existence of the world's peoples. Coubertin believed in the need for celebrations as a 'mirror of true ideals'.⁴⁶ And the ritual of the Olympic Games had to mirror precisely the values of Olympism. The symbols and ceremonies do indeed give material substance to the abstract pacifist content of the ideology of Olympism and make it accessible to those whose part in the Olympic happening is only that of spectators.⁴⁷ Such symbols are the Olympic rings and the Olympic flag, the Olympic anthem and the Olympic oath, while ceremonies such as the torch relay, the opening and closing ceremonies of the Games, and the parade of athletes play a similar role.

The Olympic rings, which also appear on the Olympic flag, were designed by Coubertin himself in 1913 and presented at the Fifth International Olympic Congress in Paris in 1914, when the 20th anniversary of the Olympic movement was celebrated. The five rings, in five different colours, symbolise 'the five parts of the world' and, together with the white of the flag, 'all the nations without exception'. It is, then, 'a truly international emblem': all the nations and all the continents were represented without discrimination in the international institution of the Olympic Games.⁴⁸

The doves released for the first time at the closing ceremony of the first Olympic Games in Athens and then at the opening ceremonies of Olympic Games since 1920 also had a reference to peace.⁴⁹ During the same period (since 1920), the athletes

the honorary members of the Sorbonne Congress: 'Civic pacifism and sports-based internationalism: Framework for the founding of the International Olympic Committee', *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 2 (1993), pp. 9-10.

45. *Ibid.*

46. N. Müller, 'From Athens (1896) to Amsterdam. Definition of Ceremonies Protocol in Accordance with Pierre de Coubertin's Ideal' in Miquel de Moragas / John MacAloon / Monserrat Llinés (eds), *Olympic Ceremonies. Historical Continuity and Cultural Exchange*, IOC, Lausanne 1996, p. 96. Cf. also P. de Coubertin, 'Une Olympie moderne. Chap. VI: Les cérémonies', in *Revue Olympique* (March 1910), pp. 41-4, in Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 464-5.

47. See John MacAloon, 'Olympic ceremonies as a setting for intercultural exchange', in De Moragas / MacAloon / Llinés (eds), *Olympic Ceremonies*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

48. The quotations are from Coubertin. Karl Lennartz has analysed the history of the Olympic rings and has demonstrated that, in the thought of Coubertin, they symbolised the five continents; he thus differs over this point from other researchers: see Karl Lennartz, 'The story of the rings', *Journal of Olympic History* 10 (Dec. 2001 - Jan. 2002), pp. 29-61.

49. At Antwerp (1920), each dove wore a ribbon in the colour of one of the nations taking part in the Games.

have taken the Olympic oath, while the Olympic anthem, which was heard at the Games of 1896 and 1906 in Athens and at all the Games from 1932 to 1956, was officially established as such in 1958 at the 55th Session of the IOC.⁵⁰ This picture of world co-operation and peaceful co-existence is further reinforced by the parade of the athletes at the opening ceremony, which was established at the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906.⁵¹ The order of appearance of the teams and other details of the ceremonies have been determined and have acquired a fixed form from Olympiad to Olympiad, but the symbolism remains the same: participation on an equal basis of all the nations, acceptance of world-wide rules of ‘fair play’, international peace and solidarity. A ‘public event’ and a ‘secular ritual’, the Olympic Games have served as an institution whose ideological basis has been the promotion of a ‘transnationally common human identity’.⁵²

In 1936, a new Olympic ceremony was added: the torch relay, which was to symbolise both the linkage of the modern Olympic Games with antiquity and the co-operation of different peoples in the Olympic task. The progress of the flame from ancient Olympia to the city hosting the Games signifies, then, the progress of the Olympic spirit through history. At the same time, it required the opening up of frontiers and the participation in the relay of runners from different nations in carrying the Olympic fire. For Greece, the torch relay had an additional symbolic significance, since it confirmed the ‘Greekness’ of the Olympic Games and bestowed upon it a special place of honour in the Olympic ritual, similar to that which gave it the right to be first in the procession at the opening ceremony.⁵³ Apart, however, from the internationalist and ‘popular’⁵⁴ content of the torch relay, its direct connection with German nationalism, particularly on the occasion of the Berlin Games, should not be overlooked. As George L. Mosse has shown, the sacred flame was one of the most important symbols of Germanism, and its use by German nationalism can be traced to the early nineteenth century. Constituent features of its symbolism were the idea of ‘constant rebirth’ and of the victory of light over darkness. In the Nazi ideology more specifically, it meant ‘purification’, symbolised ‘brotherly community’, and was reminiscent of the ‘eternal life process’. The swastika itself was, in any event, thought of as a wheel of fire.⁵⁵ In spite of the ideolo-

50. Until the Melbourne Olympics of 1956 the composers and the lyric-writers of the Olympic anthems were different. The Olympic anthem of Samaras-Palamas was heard only at the Athens Olympics and at the Intermediate Olympiad and, now as the official Olympic anthem, since 1960. See Jürgen Buschmann/Karl Lennartz, ‘From Los Angeles (1932) to Melbourne (1956). The Olympic torch’s protagonism in ceremonies’, in De Moragas/MacAloon/Llinés (eds), *Olympic Ceremonies*, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-9.

51. On the introduction of the various Olympic symbols and the corresponding organisation of the Olympic ceremonies see De Moragas/MacAloon/Llinés (eds), *Olympic Ceremonies*, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-18.

52. MacAloon, ‘Anthropology at the Olympic Games’, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

53. Since 1928, at the Amsterdam Olympic Games.

54. MacAloon considers the torch relay the most ‘popular’ Olympic ritual since it is ‘public, free, open, local, mobile, face-to-face, largely un-mass mediated, human in scale, subject to spontaneous decision-making by potential audiences, and closely inflected by concrete local communities and cultures and because it keeps elites – including IOC – in their place’. John MacAloon, ‘Olympic ceremonies’, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

55. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses. Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in*

gically-weighted occasion of the introduction of the torch relay, the Olympic flame followed its path as an internationalist Olympic symbol and was permanently incorporated into the Olympic ceremonial.

The internationalist projects

The international character of the Olympic Games, which is underscored by the rituals and symbols that have been selected and gradually established, define them precisely as a ‘modern’ phenomenon. In order to understand all the features of the organisational structure of these modern Olympic Games, we must compare them with the internationalist projects that were contemporaneous with them: the international exhibitions,⁵⁶ on the one hand, which gave expression to the increasing internationalisation of competition, and the ‘idealistic internationalisms’,⁵⁷ on the other.

The inspirer himself of the internationalisation of sport explained in 1896 that this internationalisation had been made possible in an age when the speed of transport and communication between people had increased, communication that led to the knowledge of other peoples and the comparison of achievements through international exhibitions. Knowledge increased rivalry and competition – now at an international level. The extension of this competitiveness to sport was more or less to be expected: ‘How, should the athletes’, wrote Coubertin, ‘not seek to meet, since rivalry is the very basis of athletics, and in reality the very reason of its existence?’⁵⁸

The internationalisation of the economy in the nineteenth century through the expansion of industrialisation, public transport, and communications, movements of people, capital, and goods, and through the quest for markets and raw materials created the conditions for the establishment of permanent international institutions and organisations. Between 1851, when the first international exhibition was held in London, and 1914, 42 similar exhibitions were held in 30 different cities throughout the world.⁵⁹ These exhibitions were a magnet that attracted a large number of visitors and were at the starting-point of mass tourism. The renowned Thomas Cook, who had organised his first tourist trip in 1841, set up his company in 1851 and in the same year brought 165,000 people to the Great Exhibition in London.⁶⁰

These festivals of ‘progress’ and of trade had their roots in the tradition of the Enlightenment, which – at the time of the French Revolution – introduced a new type

Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich, Cornell University Press, Ithaca / London 1996 (1st ed. 1975), pp. 40-2.

56. See, in the present volume, Yannis Yannitsiotis, ‘Urban space and national self-presentation’, pp. 251-2.

57. In the words of John Hoberman: ‘Toward a theory of Olympic internationalism’, *Journal of Sport History* 22/1 (spring 1995), p. 5.

58. *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896. Μέρος Β'*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

59. F. S. L. Lyons, *Internationalism in Europe 1815-1914*, A. W. Sythoff, London 1963, p. 16.

60. André Rauch, *Vacances en France de 1830 à nos jours*, Hachette, Paris 2001, pp. 292-3.



The priestesses of the flame ceremony in a car of the Organising Committee (in the back seat: the high priestess Koula Pratsika and the priestess Aleka Mazaraki-Katseli). On the door the route map for the Berlin Olympic flame can be seen (20 July 1936). [HOC Photographic Archive: K3.78]

of festival which, on the one hand, served as a means of social cohesion and instruction and, on the other, promoted faith in the universality of knowledge and the ‘unity of human kind’.⁶¹ From 1867, when Paris hosted the international industrial exhibition, these exhibitions also included athletic events.⁶² Nor is it any accident that, apart from the Athens Olympics, all the first Olympiads (1900, 1904, and 1908) were connected with the world exhibitions held in the same years in the same cities. A similar co-existence of industrial exhibitions with sporting and artistic competitions occurred at national level in various countries, among which we can quote the example of the Zappas Olympics.

The four Zappas Olympics (1859-89) were a combination of intellectual and athletic events, in which the latter had only a marginal and understated position; they aimed rather at the entertainment of the spectators than at the recording of athletic achievements. The chief purpose of the ‘Olympia’, as they were called, was to call attention to the achievements of Greece in the various areas of the economy and artistic activity. Thus, following the international model, the Olympia were industrial exhibitions that also accommodated artistic and athletic competitions.

Apart from international industrial exhibitions, which gave expression to economic internationalisation, at the same period, reforming internationalist projects with political, social and cultural dimensions were also formulated. Coubertin, a ‘figure in transition’ between a world that was disappearing and a new one that was appearing, distinguished the vision of ‘real internationalism’ from the reality of ‘cosmopolitanism’. The cosmopolitanism of ‘good society’, as he described it, did not lead to rapprochement among peoples and to ‘mutual respect’. ‘Real internationalism’, on the other hand, was represented and promoted by the Olympic Games and the Esperanto of sport.⁶³ The aim, then, of ‘real internationalism’ was international co-operation and peace, through the meeting and the mutual acquaintance of different peoples. Olympism met up at this point with other *fin-de-siècle* ‘idealistic internationalisms’, with which it shared a totality of common values and behaviours, as well as overlapping clienteles.⁶⁴ According to Hoberman, this core of attitudes and behaviours that characterised the groups active in internationalist projects can be summed up as follows: ‘a rhetoric of universal membership, a Eurocentric orientation that limits universal participation, an insistence on political neutrality, the empowering role of wealth, social prominence and aristocratic affiliations, a professed interest in peacemaking or pacifism, a complex and problematic relationship between national and international loyalties, the emergence of a (marginalized) “citizen-of-the-world”-

61. Otto Schantz, ‘Französische Festkultur als Wegbereiter der modernen Olympischen Spiele’, *Stadion* 21-22 (1995-96), p. 69.

62. See Walter Borgers, ‘From the temple of industry to Olympic arena. The exhibition tradition of the Olympic Games’, *Journal of Olympic History* 11/1 (January 2003), pp. 7-21.

63. See MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-9.

64. Hoberman, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

style radical supranationalism, and the use of visual symbols such as flags and anthems'.⁶⁵

'Idealistic internationalisms', heirs to the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, proclaimed that they could transform the modern world by 'training' the younger generations. Such, for example, was the nature of the Boy Scouts movement, which had much in common with Olympism: it was world-wide, apolitical, classless, non-racial. Political neutrality in particular was projected equally by all the non-socialist internationalist enterprises of the second half of the nineteenth century (such as, for example, the Red Cross, founded in 1863) as absolutely necessary for their success.

It was, nevertheless, obvious that no internationalist project could succeed without powerful social and political underpinning. The athletic internationalism of Coubertin made use, in its first phase, of the relations of its inspirer with the European aristocracy⁶⁶ and the support of royal houses. The most fervent support, of course, was forthcoming from the Greek dynasty, which saw in the revival of the Olympic Games an opportunity to reinforce its prestige and power on the domestic political scene. However, Edward VII was present at the London Olympics of 1908 and performed the official opening, while Gustav V, King of Sweden, attended the Stockholm Games in 1912.

At the same time, an organisational structure was planned on which the whole enterprise of the revival and regular holding of the Games every four years would be based. This organisational structure was also typical of other internationalist projects of the same period.

The organisational model of Olympism

As early as the period at which preparations for the Sorbonne Congress were being made, Coubertin's concern in terms of organisation centred on two main points: first, the setting up of a central organ to regulate the smooth and unimpeded holding of the Games, and, second, the formulation of the terms and rules of participation for the athletes.⁶⁷ In fact, before the Sorbonne Congress broke up, it had appointed an international committee of 14 members, the International Olympic Committee, to supervise and carry out the task of reconstituting the Olympic Games. It was decided at the Congress that school athletics would be excluded from the Olympic Games, that only adults and amateurs could take part, except for the fencing contests, that each country could be represented only by those who belonged to its nation, and that heats would be held before the Olympics so that only real champions would be taking part. It was

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

66. In 1908, 68% of the members of the IOC were of aristocratic origin, a figure that fell to 41% in 1924. Hoberman, *ibid.*, p. 16.

67. See the circular issued by Coubertin in May 1894 on the convening of the 'International Athletics Congress': *Bulletin du Comité International des Jeux Olympiques* 1 (July 1894), p. 2.

determined which sports would be represented at the Games, and the holding of the Olympics every four years in a different city of the world was decided upon. In each country a national committee would be formed, to be responsible for the participation of its country in the Olympic Games until the year when it would be its turn to organise them.

The model of organisation that Coubertin chose for the Olympic movement was common at that time: first, a central organ - 'bureau', with representatives of various countries on an absolutely equal footing, which was linked with similar bodies in each country; second, the periodical holding of international congresses on the initiative and under the supervision of this central organ.⁶⁸

The IOC truly functioned as a self-recruiting 'International Sports Bureau', which maintained its autonomy in relation to the other international sports federations,⁶⁹ which were set up more or less in parallel with the IOC. From 1880 onwards sports federations were established for each event at a national level in most countries. These federations were responsible for the holding of contests between the various associations and for the formulation of the rules under which they were held.

Thus the members of the IOC were not to be elected by the sports federations of each country, but, on the contrary, they would represent the Olympic movement in their country. Nor were the national Olympic committees to be drawn from the federations and associations, but were to be made up of independent figures, who could put themselves above the various quarrels between sports.⁷⁰ Equality among the various sports was, anyway, a principle that Coubertin vigorously upheld from the time of the revival of the Olympic Games.

In Greece, unlike the other countries of Western Europe, the Hellenic Olympic Committee was set up before the sports federations. The first federation of athletics associations for all sports indiscriminately was the Union of Greek Sports and Gymnastics Associations (UGSGA), which was founded in 1897, immediately after the first Olympic Games in Athens.⁷¹ Special unions of associations for individual sports were set up after 1922 (the first being the football unions), seeking a share in the jurisdiction of UGSGA. Both the HOC and the UGSGA were closely dependent upon the state, particularly after a series of legislative regulations on gymnastics and sport in the years 1899-1900. The UGSGA had absolute control over sports associations, given that only those enrolled in the Union had the right to take part in Panhellenic contests. At the

68. Up to the First World War, Olympic conferences were held in 1894 (Paris), 1897 (Le Havre), 1905 (Brussels), 1906 (Paris), 1913 (Lausanne), and 1914 (Paris) on subjects relating to education, sport, physical education, and, of course, the Olympic Games.

69. Most international athletics federations were founded in the early twentieth century. It was only for ice-skating (1892), rowing (1892), and gymnastics (1897) that such federations were set up before the end of the nineteenth century. See Arnd Krüger, 'The unfinished symphony. A history of the Olympic Games from Coubertin to Samaranch', in Arnd Krüger/James Riordan (eds), *The International Politics of Sport in the Twentieth Century*, E & FN Spon, London/New York 1999, p. 6.

70. Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin*, vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 599-601.

71. See Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αυτικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-51.

same time, the state subsidised the associations that distinguished themselves in the Panhellenic Games and those that allowed their gymnasiums to be used for school students' training. Thus, because of the financial support, there was a complex of dependences between the central political power (Ministry of Education and Ministry of the Interior), the UGSGA, and the sports associations. There were also relations of dependence with the HOC, in spite of the fact that the UGSGA was an organ elected by the representatives of the associations while the HOC was appointed by royal decree and had close connections with the Palace. In reality, the Palace had complete control over the HOC. Until the year 1914 the Committee was presided by Constantine (in his capacity as the Crown Prince until 1913, and as the King for the following year), who was also proposing its members. Furthermore, up to 1905, all the meetings of the HOC had been held in the palace building.

There was between the UGSGA and the HOC, up to the second decade of the twentieth century, significant overlapping, since the same individuals held positions on the Board of the UGSGA and were members of the HOC. The administration of Greek sport was therefore clearly centralised in character and was put in the hands of a social elite, a small group of people, who were associated with one another through personal relations, which extended beyond the bounds of sport. It was in this climate of co-operation between the two sports authorities that the Intermediate Olympic Games of 1906 were successfully held in Athens. The harmonious relations between the UGSGA and the HOC were disturbed when the 'intra-bourgeois' political quarrel that brought about a confrontation between the royalists and the Venizelists declared itself. Because of the close relations of dependence of these two organs upon the central political authority, their composition was affected by the alternations in government of the two political factions. These developments swept along with them the representation of Greece with the IOC, and in 1920, Alexandros Merkatis, a personal friend of Constantine, was replaced as a member of the IOC by Miltiadis Negrepontis, Minister of Finance in the Venizelos government and at that time President of the HOC.⁷²

The case of Greece points out the obvious: that the functioning of the IOC was not independent of political developments at a national and international level. Coubertin relied upon a small group of personal friends to safeguard the power of the IOC in the domain of the organisation of the Olympic Games against any form of crisis. A crisis arose from the request of Greece, in 1896, to monopolise the holding of the Games, invoking its historic right. In the twentieth century, the 'age of extremes',⁷³ the crises with which the IOC has had to deal have been much more wide-ranging and much

72. By a decision of the HOC: 'HOC Minutes', session of 5 Feb. 1920. Nevertheless, because of the fall of the Venizelos government in the same year, Merkatis seems to have remained in the end a member of the IOC and was not replaced by Negrepontis.

73. Eric Hobsbawm, *H εποχή των άκρων. Ο σύντομος εικοστός αιώνας 1914-1991 [The Age of Extremes. A History of the World, 1914-1991]*, trans. Vasilis Kapetanyannis, Athens 1995.



Commemorative photograph of the members of the IOC at the Academy of Athens at the 31st Session of the Committee (16 May 1934). In the front row, from the left: Johannes Sigfrid Edström (Vice-President, IOC, Sweden), Jiří Guth-Jankovský (Czechoslovakia), Henry de Baillet-Latour (President, IOC, Belgium), Angelos Volanakis (Greece). [HOC Photographic Archive: K3.16]

more serious because of the dramatic events that have affected the whole of the planet.

In spite of the upheavals at local and world level, the IOC has managed to retain the role that it undertook from the start and to keep control of the holding of the Olympic Games, with a jurisdiction and by procedures that were determined more precisely in the early twentieth century.⁷⁴ Whereas up to the Stockholm Olympics, the organising committee in each country had been responsible for the programme and the regulations of the Games, in the case of the Olympics of 1912, the IOC, together with the federations, undertook the unification of the rules for each event. At the Olympic Congress of 1914, which was held in Paris, the items on the agenda were precisely concerned with the unification of the Olympic events and the terms of participation.

According to the Regulations of 1911, the aim of the IOC was:

1. To ensure the normal celebration of the Games.
2. To increasingly perfect this celebration, making it worthy of the glorious past and in accord with the lofty ideals by which their revivers were inspired.
3. To cause or to organise all the events and, in general, to take all the appropriate measures in order to orientate modern athleticism in the desirable directions.⁷⁵

Furthermore, the IOC created a bureaucratic structure, which was based on national representation: first, its members represented countries and nations, and, second, the athletes did not compete as individuals but as members of a nation. Olympic internationalism did not ignore the nations but, on the contrary, was based upon them.

Olympic Games: Between internationalism and nationalism

The concurrence of internationalism and nationalism characterised the modern Olympic Games from the moment of their revival. The organisation and celebration of all the Olympic Games since 1896 have been marked by the co-existence and the interaction of the international, the national and the local element at a political, ideological and cultural level.

There can be no doubt that today the Olympic Games are a world institution that unites peoples in every corner of the planet and widely differing cultures, and that such a thing would have been unthinkable before their revival. In this sense, they translate Coubertin's internationalist vision, as that has already been described, into reality. Nevertheless, already on the occasion of the Athens Olympics in 1896, the

74. The exclusivity of the use of the name 'Olympic Games' was also a concern of the IOC, but above all, of Coubertin personally. See Comité International Olympique, *Réunion tenue les 11, 12 et 13 juin 1910 à l'Hôtel de Ville de Luxembourg. Procès-verbaux des séances*, Imprimerie Protat Frères, Macon 1910, p. 9.

75. Comité International Olympique, *Annuaire*, Lausanne [1911], p. 9.

Frenchman Charles Maurras, known for his extreme nationalistic views, who found in the ancient Greek model the inspiration for a totalitarian ideology, wrote – with satisfaction, naturally: ‘A cosmopolitan gathering in its conception and organisation provided ready ground in the competition between races and languages’.⁷⁶

In fact, in a strange way, the first consequence of the internationalisation of the Olympic Games was the close association of athleticism with nationalism. The Olympic Games became, from the moment of their revival, a further field for national confrontation, albeit symbolic. As has already been pointed out, the organisation of the actual Games and of the IOC was based on the national criterion. The nation did not always coincide with the state, and usually took precedence. On the choice of Coubertin himself, there was, as to the composition of the national teams and their representation at the Olympic Games, an ‘athletics geography’, which was not necessarily identical with the political geography. Thus nations that were not autonomous states, such as Bohemia and Finland, had the right of autonomous representation at the Games, while the same right had not been granted to Ireland, Catalonia, and the Basques.⁷⁷

The nations are present also in the stadium. The parade of athletes during the opening ceremony is held on the basis of nationhood, while the flag comes first in each national team. The victories of the athletes are also classified on the basis of nations (states) and the Olympic victors are treated as national heroes. The playing of the national anthem and the raising of the flag at the award of the medals is also a reminder that the athletes do not compete as individuals but as members of a nation – precisely as the decisions taken at the Sorbonne Congress provided.⁷⁸ On not a few occasions, moreover, victories in the stadiums and pitches have been used to redress the balance in rivalries between nations. Mainly on the pitch, but also in the stadium, ‘small’ nations can conquer the ‘great’, or a nation can humiliate its historic ‘enemy’. During the Cold War, moreover, countries of the Eastern bloc – chiefly the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic – supported the Olympic events so that they could gain first place in the Olympic Games. These victories had great symbolic force in the interior of each country – but also internationally – as victories of communism over the capitalist world. Athletic competition became yet another Cold War substitute for war.⁷⁹

The whole history of the Olympic movement reveals the close connection between sport and politics. Exclusions – voluntary or imposed – and boycotting of the Olympic Games run through all the period from the First World War to the war in Yugoslavia

76. Ch. Maurras, *Αθήνα 1896. Οι πρώτοι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες* [Athens 1896. The first Olympic Games], trans. Panaghiota Pantazi, Athens 2000, p. 89.

77. See P. de Coubertin, ‘Géographie sportive’, *Revue Olympique*, April 1911, pp. 51-2, in Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin 1863-1937, op. cit.*, pp. 589-90. Cf. also Krüger, ‘The unfinished symphony’, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

78. See, above, pp. 28.

79. See J. Riordan’s studies of sport in communist countries: *Sports, Politics and Communism*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1991; *Sport in Soviet Society*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1977; *Soviet Sport, Mirror of the Olympics*, Blackwell, London 1980.

(1991). A ban on a nation to take part in the Olympic Games is a ‘sanction’ in the language of world politics. Conversely, to take part in the Games is a legitimisation comparable to that conferred by being member of the UN.⁸⁰

On the Olympic track, national competition used a shared international language, that of the quantification of achievements. The codification of the athletic contest, through a system of international operating rules of athletic institutions and the holding of the Games, ensured the ‘objective’ documentation of national superiority. The setting down of the records was from the very beginning a constituent feature of the Olympic Games and led to specialisation on the part of the athletes, the cult of achievement, and the use of any means of breaking a record (even doping).

The prestige of a nation was, then, measurable: it depended on the number of its Olympic victors, with the records that they had achieved, and – where a particular country had undertaken to host the Games – on its success in this undertaking. This feeling is already encountered in the first Olympiad: in 1896, ‘little Greece’ held the first Olympic Games in the modern world and produced a significant number of Olympic victors, disproportionate to its actual size. This success performed a compensatory function. Greece at the end of the nineteenth century, with its irredentist visions a living force, felt that by its Olympic victories it was securing, in the eyes of foreigners, its glorious past. The Athens Olympiad contributed, therefore, to the revival of the idea of ancient renown and reinforced, at the level of fantasy, the collective self-image and self-confidence. The internationalist vision of the Olympic Games was reflected as a nationalist vision of Greece.

The history of the Olympic Games is in fact a constant balancing between internationalist and nationalist pressures, the strength of which increases or declines reciprocally depending upon the historical circumstances. Moreover, at a cultural level, a similar ‘balance’ is observable: on the occasion of each Olympic Games, a constant redefinition of the international, ‘globalised’, institutions, practices and representations through contact with the national and local cultures takes place. In spite of the formulation of standard rules for the holding of the Games, in spite of the establishment of a more or less uniform Olympic athletic spectacle – which becomes increasingly uniform through television broadcasting –, in spite of the standardisation of the functioning of the Olympic institutions and of the Olympic bureaucracy more generally, the cultural differences are perceptible, particularly in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Games. Each country that organises the Games projects its own individual image, selecting its traditional and/or modern face, with references to history and/or other features of national self-definition.⁸¹

80. MacAloon, ‘Olympic ceremonies’, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

81. Another aspect of the relation between sport and national identity to which various researchers have drawn attention is the preference of a nation for some specific event; for example, soccer has not been particularly developed in America, in contrast with ‘American football’; cycling is more popular in France than in Germany, etc. As early as 1859, a correspondent in the *Southern Australian Register* wrote: ‘a nation indicates its character by its sports’. See Wray Vamplew, ‘Preface’, in *Sport: Nationalism and Internationalism*, ASSH Studies in Sports History: No. 2, 1987, p. 1.



The Greek football team at the Antwerp Olympic Games, 1920. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.79]

From the Athens of today to the Athens of yesterday

This marriage of the global, the national and the local is also expected to mark Athens as the place where the Olympic Games are held in 2004. What face, of course, Greece will choose to project, how it will define itself and how it will present itself, what features of the national past will be regarded as appropriate to such an undertaking, and what synthesis of (selected) past and (selected) present will provide the final image are questions to be investigated and, in the end, for scholars to work upon. Already, however, the decision that the ceremony of the lighting of the flame will take place on 25 March, the date of the inauguration of the Olympic Games of 1896, points to a symbolic linkage with the revival of the Games and with the fact that Athens was the first Olympic city of the modern world.

The present volume of essays attempts precisely to investigate the parameters that relate to the holding of the Olympic Games by Athens in the past. The Intermediate Olympic Games of 1906, in spite of the fact that it did not belong to the four-yearly series of the Olympic Games, was an Olympic event not only because its official name was ‘Olympic Games in Athens, 1906’,⁸² but also because its magnitude and the way in which it was organised corresponded fully to the term ‘Olympic’.

The questions, then, from which this venture of research and writing starts out have to do with how Athens hosted the Olympic Games of 1896 and 1906, how it functioned as an Olympic city, how it was seen by foreign visitors and athletes and what were their experiences, what were the consequences of these Olympic events for Greek domestic and foreign policy and for the image of the city itself, and what was the relation between the expectations of local people and foreigners and the reality, between the ideal and the real Athens.

These questions presuppose interdisciplinary approaches, which take into account demographic, social, economic, political and cultural parameters of the two Olympic events in Athens. Thus the history appearing in the chapters of this volume will not be an ‘inside’ and ‘introspective’ history of the Games, which contents itself with a record of the names of the athletes, athletic achievements, the nature of the events, and, in general, all those features that go to make up what is called the athletic side of the Olympic Games. The emphasis is put on the *people* (who travelled to Athens, who lived there, who attended or took part in the Games), on the *place* – real and invented – of the revival of the Games and on the *festival* (of athletics, but not only) itself.

The real Athens

Athens at the turn of the nineteenth century, capital of the Greek state since 1834, had emerged as a pole of attraction for the agrarian population and for the urban popula-

82. See the minutes of the 8th meeting of the IOC, Brussels 1905: IOC Archive.

tion of the Greek provinces and the Ottoman Empire. The population multiplied five times between 1879 and 1920, but the concentration upon Athens, as Christos Loukos shows in his article entitled ‘The Greek capital, 1890-1912’, was not only demographic; it was at the same time political, economic and cultural. These changes were connected with an expansion of the middle and, particularly, of the petit bourgeois strata, as is revealed by the detailed tables of occupations of the residents of Athens, which this article includes. The social stratification of the capital is reflected, on the one hand, in the activities of its people, and, on the other, in the space. There are, then, differences in income, in education, in the way and quality of life, in the consumption of cultural goods, and in the use of leisure time.

The spread of the practice of sport and physical exercise in Athens in the late nineteenth century also depended upon the expansion of the bourgeois class, which manned the first sports clubs. As was the case with the rest of Europe, rowing, cycling, tennis, rambling, football, and sailing, which symbolised the new bourgeois values, were added alongside the traditional ‘aristocratic’ sports of fencing and riding as basic leisure activities of the rising bourgeois class. But involvement in certain specific sports was socially determined and corresponded to internal distinctions within the middle class depending upon the various levels of social position and status. The middle and lower bourgeois class engaged in track and field and gymnastics (and later in cycling), while sports such as riding, fencing and tennis rallied the small numbers of the elite of the upper bourgeois class.⁸³

The spread of sporting activities also left its imprint on the urban space. Gradually, from the end of the nineteenth century, the premises used for physical exercise became one of the sites for the consumption of spare time, together with others, equally specialist, such as the theatre, the opera, the reading-room, the club, the coffee-shop. In Athens, these were originally located on the fringes or a little outside the limits of the city. Kiphisias Avenue (now Vasilisis Sophias), Patision Street and the area around the Panathenaic Stadium were the places where, in the early twentieth century, the particular premises intended for sporting activities were concentrated. With the very rapid expansion of the city, these places were soon included within its bounds, before branching off – in the inter-war years – into districts.⁸⁴

At the same time, the individual social profile of the districts of Athens took shape. As, again, Christos Loukos explains, little ‘cities’ were created within the city and gradually there was a division between ‘good’ bourgeois districts in the east and working-class districts in the west. In the Athens of the Olympic Games, there was truly a split between the ‘new’ neo-classical Athens of the central streets and squares, the Palace and the big hotels, and the ‘other’ Athens with its dirty neighbourhoods, its dust, its rubbish, and its bad smells. This real city was not visible during the Games. The districts that lay outside the bedecked centre were shut off from sight, and the

83. See Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*

84. *Ibid.* pp. 93-6.

image projected for the benefit of the visitors was that of the modern, neo-classical Athens. The Athens of the Olympic Games was the ‘visible’ city.

Constructed idealisation

In his article on ‘Urban space and national self-presentation’, Yannis Yannitsiotis analyses – using the tool provided by the concept of ‘constructed visibility’ – how a new city, the Athens of the Olympic Games, was constructed within the real Athens of everyday experience. We could, in fact, identify three versions of the city on the occasion of the Olympic Games: the real Athens (which included the ‘other’, hidden city), the modern idealised Athens (as a Westernised capital), and the classical idealised Athens (as a re-experienced ancient Greek past).⁸⁵

Athens was, then, ‘constructed’ in view of the Games (of 1896 and 1906). The materials were provided by the representations of the foreigners who had already visited it and by the expectations of those who were to visit it. The enterprise was guided by the wishes of the Greeks themselves, by the way in which they chose to present themselves in the eyes of the ‘foreigners’ – those who came from the West, but also the Greeks of the diaspora, who flowed in from the various centres of the Ottoman Empire.

Drawing upon the Athenian press and the tourist guides to Athens (some were brought out specially for the Intermediate Olympic Games of 1906), Yannis Yannitsiotis shows exactly that Athens was converted into a ‘locus for invention and representation of the national self’. The ‘householders’ received the ‘guests’ in a place that had been embodied into the European fantasy as a cradle of European civilisation. Nevertheless, the concern of the Greeks was not so much to project the ancient heritage as the modernity of Athens. So the capital was projected as a modern cosmopolitan city, completely adapted to the Western model, embellished in accordance with the bourgeois values of cleanliness and good order. It was to this modern Athens, which confirmed its European identity and was ‘worthy’ to contain the ancient monuments, that the Greek ‘literature of welcome’ and the press directed the gaze.

National capital and national centre

Capital of the nation-state, Athens was at the same time a national centre for the whole of Hellenism – inside and outside the state. This role received confirmation in both the Olympic events, in 1896 and 1906, with the mass attendance of Greeks of the diaspora. In fact, the greater part of those who visited for the Games came from the Greek communities outside the state. Alexander Kitroeff, in his article ‘The international

85. The first version is presented in the article by Christos Loukos, the second in the article by Yannis Yannitsiotis, and the third in that by Eleana Yalouri.

dimension of the preparations for the Intermediate Olympics', demonstrates the major support that the Intermediate Olympics received from the middle bourgeois class of the Greek communities of the Eastern Mediterranean, which maintained strong ties with the homeland. The wealthy Greeks of Egypt gave their financial support to the Games of 1906, just as had been the case with the Olympics of 1896, at which the generous gift of Georgios Averoff in financing the refacing of the Panathenaic Stadium with marble stood out.

The Intermediate Olympic Games, of course, was widely supported at an international level, in spite of Coubertin's opposition, and confirmed the leading role that Greece wished to undertake in the Olympic movement. The 'foreign committees', which were set up specially for the preparations for the Intermediate Olympiad, in the absence of national Olympic committees, were manned by distinguished figures from the local social elites and co-ordinated by Greek diplomats. The Americans played a dynamic and enthusiastic role, in their wish to promote the lead they had in athletics (and indirectly their moral superiority) over the Old World.

The journey of the imagination and the encounter with modern Greece

The encounter between the Old and New World had already taken place on similar terms at the Olympic Games of 1896, as described by Eleana Yalouri in her article entitled 'When the New World meets the Ancient'. At the Athens 'meeting', two different cultures, the Greek and the American, had the opportunity for interaction and self-definition through communication and contact. This process of reciprocal 'construction' was, nevertheless, determined by the asymmetrical relations of power that existed at that period between Greece and the USA.

The journey of the Americans to the Greece of 1896 was, on the one hand, one of the imagination (as a 'visit' to ancient Greece), and, on the other, real (a visit to modern Athens). The journey of the imagination, structured through the discourse of philhellenism, was much more familiar to them than the real journey, which filled them with insecurity because of the dangers that they expected to encounter in a distant and unknown country. The travellers who came from America were for the most part 'pilgrims' to the sacred spot of classical Greece. It was through their expectations that the third version of Athens was delineated: the classical idealised city in which the ancient Greek past lived again.

The Americans were popular in Greece, much more so than the Europeans, perhaps because 'they lived so far away, [...] almost beyond the sphere of jealousies and antipathies'.⁸⁶ The Greeks offered their hospitality as a gift to the American visitors, in this way expressing their gratitude for the part played by the Americans in an event of national importance and for their support in the cause of holding the Olympic Games permanently in Greece.

86. See Yalouri, in this volume, p. 322-3.

Athens as an Olympic city and a tourist ‘sight’

Greece’s claim that it should host the Olympic Games on a permanent basis and the firm resistance of Coubertin led to the compromise solution of the Intermediate Games, which, however, were not established as an institution after their first and only occurrence in 1906. The Athens of 1906 was, of course, different from the city of 1896. Already, in 1896, the first motor car had appeared in the streets of Athens; in 1905, the asphalting of the central streets began; in 1903, the construction of the city’s widest road, Syngrou Avenue, was begun; the use of gas and electricity became more widespread (trams were powered by electricity from 1904), and the city was embellished as a result of private and municipal initiative and acquired infrastructure works. The sports venues that had been constructed for the Olympic Games of 1896 (the Velodrome at Neo Phaliro, the Shooting Range at Kallithea, together with the renovated Stadium and the Zappeion) provided Athens with the infrastructure for international sporting events. Nevertheless, the reception of a vast number of visitors such as on the occasion of the Olympic Games called for a hotel infrastructure, adequacy of public transport, a sufficient number of restaurants and, generally, proper organisation of the city as a tourist destination. The readiness of the Greek capital to host so many visitors was the basic worry of the organisers and of the Athenian press.

Transport in Greece had, of course, been modernised, mainly during the Trikoupis period (the 1880s), while the international revolution in the material conditions of travel, with the railway and with steamships, permitted rapid and cheap journeys. It was in the nineteenth century that the transition from the journey of the travellers, which represented the model of ‘cultivated leisure’ (in the form of the Grand Tour, whose aim was to make the acquaintance of the ‘East’, of the ancient and the Christian world), to the mass tourist trip, which was dominated by travel agencies, guide-books, and maps, took place.

Vassiliki Tzachrista, in her article entitled ‘Travelling to Athens’ describes the conditions, the means and the routes of the journey to the Olympics of 1896 and the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906, and the infrastructure for the reception of the visitors in Athens. Athletes, journalists, Greeks of the diaspora, Greeks from the provinces, visitors from Western Europe and the United States – representatives of a well-to-do bourgeois and middle class, but also the nobility and royalty – travelled on the occasion of the Games to attend the athletics spectacle and to get to know Athens. The Olympic Games of 1896 created a new incentive for the journey and introduced a new type of travel. At that period, of course, the sporting spectacle was marginal, particularly in Greece. Athletic contests as a public event had taken place within the framework of the sports associations, with a limited public, and it was only the Zappas Olympiads that had attracted a larger number of spectators⁸⁷ – but on a

87. According to the press of the period, the ‘Olympia’ were attended by 25,000-30,000 people. On the significance of the Zappas Olympiads for the popularisation of the sports spectacle in Greek society see Koulouri, ‘Στο δρόμο για την αναβίωση’, *op. cit.*

purely occasional basis. When the sports spectacle took on a mass character, in the twentieth century, sports tourism also developed, and this included travel for the purpose of attending the Olympic Games.

For those who travelled to Athens in 1896 and 1906, the athletics event was not of central significance, but served to complement other, more important, incentives. For the foreigners who made the journey from Western Europe and America, the ancient Greek idealised past and the fascination of its revival were the basic motives. For the Greeks from abroad, on the other hand, it was the nostalgic ‘return’ to the national centre, to the homeland, again through the revival of the common Greek past, that directed their steps towards the Greek capital. In spite of the fact that in both cases it was the same relieved past that carried weight, the difference was that in the first case ancient Greece was understood as a supranational symbol and in the second as a national one.

The Olympic Games and the Greek nationalism

The linking of the culture of sport with the national ideal, the ‘biologistic’ approach to athleticism, and the mandates of eugenics, the conjoining of sport with masculinity and the male model of beauty, the spread of physical exercise as a reflection of the dominance of bourgeois values, the legitimisation of gymnastics and sport as a means of military preparation of the nation are, of course, constituent features of the European ideological environment at the turn of the nineteenth century. Giorgos Kokkinos, in his article ‘The Greek intellectual world and the Olympic Games (1896, 1906)’, taking the Western European paradigm as his starting-point, discusses the way in which apprehensions regarding the culture of sport, and more particularly the Olympic Games, took shape in the Greek intellectual climate. The presentation of the views of leading figures involved in the Games of 1896 and of 1906 and in Greek intellectual life – such as Demetrios Vikelas, Spyridon Lambros, Timoleon Philimon – and of minor scholars, educationalists, etc., as well as of representatives of the Greek Orthodox tradition reveals the complete subservience of the event of the revival to the Greek national ideology. It is for this reason, moreover, that concern with the Olympic Games was purely fortuitous and marginal; it had no autonomy and belonged within an already existent ideological system, which was determined by Greek nationalism.

Apart from isolated individual views (such as those of the professor of history Pavlos Karolidis), the Greek intelligentsia shared a common approach, which could schematically be summarised under three headings: the genealogical linkage of ancient and modern athleticism, the use of the Olympic Games as evidence of the descent from ancient Greece and of the cultural progress of modern Greece, and the use of the Olympic Games as a political tool.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the schema of national regeneration whereby the Greek nation had been reborn after a ‘lethargy’ of centuries (the Byzantine and Ottoman periods) had largely given place to the schema of unbroken continuity,



Priestess Maria Kazazi and the high priestess Aleka Katseli sitting at the Couberlin altar at the flame ceremony for the Melbourne Olympic Games (2 November 1956).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K9.43]

according to which the Greek nation had always played a living and active part in history. The ‘re-establishment’⁸⁸ of 1896 and the history of Greek athletics⁸⁹ were fitted into this scheme of things. At the same time, the Olympic Games were presented as a milestone in the assessment of modern Greece, of the ‘progress’ that had been achieved in relation to the Western model of development.

It is characteristic that women’s discourse of the same period also attempted precisely to project the ‘European face’ of the Greek woman and to confirm that the whole nation shared the values which the West represented. In her article ‘The olympism of the ladies’, Eleni Fournaraki analyses the discourse of the *Ladies’ Journal*, the first periodical exclusively for women, which gave expression to women’s contestation and protest in the Greek society of the turn of the nineteenth century, and particularly to the views of its editor, Kallirrhoe Parren, a ‘moderate feminist’ who represented the feminism of ‘equality in difference’. The way in which Parren handled the exclusion of women from the Olympic Games – over which she protested – shows the limits of women’s contestation. In reality, the assumption, shared by the *Ladies’ Journal*, that there is a special female ‘nature’ legitimated exclusions or restrictions in the access of women to competitive sport. The route taken for the legitimization of women’s physical exercise was, on the contrary, via ‘patriotic motherhood’, the duty, that is, to the nation of bearing healthy children and brave soldiers.

Women’s presence at the Olympic Games was not, therefore, identified with their competitive participation but was blended with activities more compatible with Parren’s moderate feminism. Parren’s discourse, a class discourse, with ‘aestheticism’ and ‘elitism’, rejected as a women’s anti-model Stamata Revithi, who sought to take part in the marathon. A woman of humble origins, who was in search of monetary rewards, Revithi did not fit into the feminism of the period, as expressed through its principal journalistic organ. Nor did she fit in with the Western model of the Greek woman that Parren wished to promote with the foreign visitors.

Consequently, women’s discourse on the Olympic Games went along harmoniously with the dominant nationalist discourse, in which the nation was represented as organically united regardless of distinctions of social class and gender. The Olympic Games thus became a milestone in collective self-knowledge and an opportunity for the awakening of patriotism, one year before the Greek-Turkish War and at a time when a belligerent mood, orchestrated by the National Society, prevailed. It is in the context of this ideological climate that the use of the Olympic Games as a political tool, above all by the Greek Royal Family, is to be interpreted.

Lina Louvi, in her article ‘The royal family and the first Olympic Games’ discusses the political dimensions of the undertaking for Greece to hold the Olympic Games in a troubled period in which prime ministers and governments were changing, the

88. The term mainly used at that period was precisely *anastasis* (re-establishment) of the Olympic Games, translating the French term *rétablissement*, which clearly has a different ideological content from the term ‘revival’.

89. See above, p. 14 ff.

country was bankrupt and lacked creditworthiness abroad because of its debts, and the ideology of the '*Megali Idea*' ran riot. In spite of the state's major economic problems, the Olympic Games were seen, in the period before they were held, as a 'life raft' and a means of restoring the prestige of Greece in the eyes of the West. At the same time, they found their place in the two-party political game after the refusal of Trikoupis to undertake them.

An important role was played by the Crown Prince, who, spotting an opportunity to gain popular support and to reinforce the standing of the dynasty, took the decision, *in absentia* of the Prime Minister, that Greece should hold the Games. The active part also played by Princes George and Nicholas in the matter of the Olympic Games is a clear indication of the political investment of the Palace in an event that flattered the national vanity. The Olympic Games Committee was, in any event, manned by individuals who enjoyed the Crown Prince's confidence, and he – from the position of its President – retained a leading role in their whole organisation. The success of the Games was in the end associated with his qualities of leadership.

King George also undertook the role of protagonist in at least two instances. The first was in his official opening of the Games in the Stadium: 'I declare the first International Olympic Games in Athens open. Long live the Nation! Long live the Greek people!'. The invocation of the nation on this occasion clearly confirmed the politicisation of the Games by the Greek dynasty to its own benefit. The second instance was when George, at a breakfast which he gave for Olympic victors and journalists at the end of the Games, officially and clearly voiced the claim that the Olympic Games should always be held by Greece.

The political expediency of this demand was to maintain – through a periodical international event – the gains that the dynasty had made, purely opportunistically, while at the same time it reflected the dominant ideological atmosphere of Greek society. In 1896, three historical stages in the progress of the nation co-existed symbolically in the Athenian Olympiad: classical antiquity, the Greek Revolution of 1821 (with the coincidence of the celebration of its 75th anniversary on the day that the Games began), and modern Greece. The symbolisms of national regeneration were further strengthened by the celebration, at the same time, of Orthodox Easter and the Christian Resurrection.

The ideological grounds for this claim were the strongest, as is demonstrated by the fact that two years after the defeat in the Greek-Turkish War (1897), when the prestige of the dynasty and the political parties had been eroded, Law BXKA/1899 'Concerning gymnastics and contests of gymnastics and sports' laid down that the Olympic Games Committee 'shall be responsible for the continuation every four years of the Olympic Games, held in the year 1896' (Article 37). This provision, which was introduced unilaterally and despite the decisions of the IOC, clearly could not be implemented without international consent. The solution of the Intermediate Olympics brought partial satisfaction to the Greek side without disturbing the periodical alternation of the cities that held the Olympic Games. Nevertheless, it is no accident that, as is generally accepted, the Games of 1896 and 1906 were the most successful of

this first uncertain period of the Olympic movement. Greece, in spite of the fact that it possessed neither the financial means or the necessary culture of sport, invested ideologically in the institution of the revived Olympic Games and acted as a magnet on those from the West who were involved in this ambitious undertaking. The country also proved more effective in the organisation as such, because, by its own standards, the Olympic Games were a major public event, something that did not hold good, for example, for Paris in 1900, with its great experience of international exhibitions and other major events, where the Olympic athletics event was marginalised. This was the most important way in which the Athens Games, both of 1896 and of 1906, were different: the athletic contests occupied a central position and they were not embodied in the framework of some other wider-ranging event. This difference, however, ceased to apply from the London Olympics of 1908 onwards. At the same time, the planning of the Intermediate Olympiads flagged.⁹⁰ The political developments of the early twentieth century (the military coup at Goudi in 1909, and the National Rift from 1915 to 1920) and the involvement of Greece in military adventures from 1912 to 1922 undoubtedly contributed to the *de facto* abolition of the institution.

After 1906, Greece held only regional international games (Balkan, Mediterranean, Pan-European) and in 1934 the Classical Games, to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games.⁹¹ Thus in 2004, a century later, Greece will be holding the Olympic Games again. This return to the place that gave birth to the Olympic Games and where they were revived in the nineteenth century may serve as a new turning point for collective self-knowledge – in a way comparable to but different from that in which it functioned in 1896. It is precisely to this process of self-knowledge that this volume of essays is intended to contribute.

90. At the meetings of the HOC, the issue of the Intermediate Olympics came up again in 1910, 1914, and 1922, and programmes and budgets were drawn up, but in the end none of the scheduled events took place.

91. See Y. Yannitisiotis, ‘Η τεσσαρακονταετηρίδα της αναβίωσης και οι Κλασικοί Αγώνες’ [The fortieth anniversary in 1934 and the Classical Games”, in Koulouri (ed.), *Aρχεία και ιστορία*, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-104.



Commemorative medals of the 31st Session of the IOC and for the 40th anniversary
of the revival of the Olympic Games, 1934.
[HOC Photographic Archive: K85.84]

The Greek capital, 1890-1912

CHRISTOS LOUKOS

In the 1890s and 1900s, when Olympic Games were staged in Athens, the Greek capital, already with a considerable population that was increasing at high annual rates, had become the centre for the most important political, economic, social and cultural activities of the Greek state. This meant that the once flourishing provincial centres such as Hermoupolis and Patras had gone into decline or had been assigned secondary roles.¹ Concurrently, towards the end of the period, Athens had become the undisputed national centre for the whole of Hellenism, as leading figures of the diaspora had decided to settle permanently in the city.²

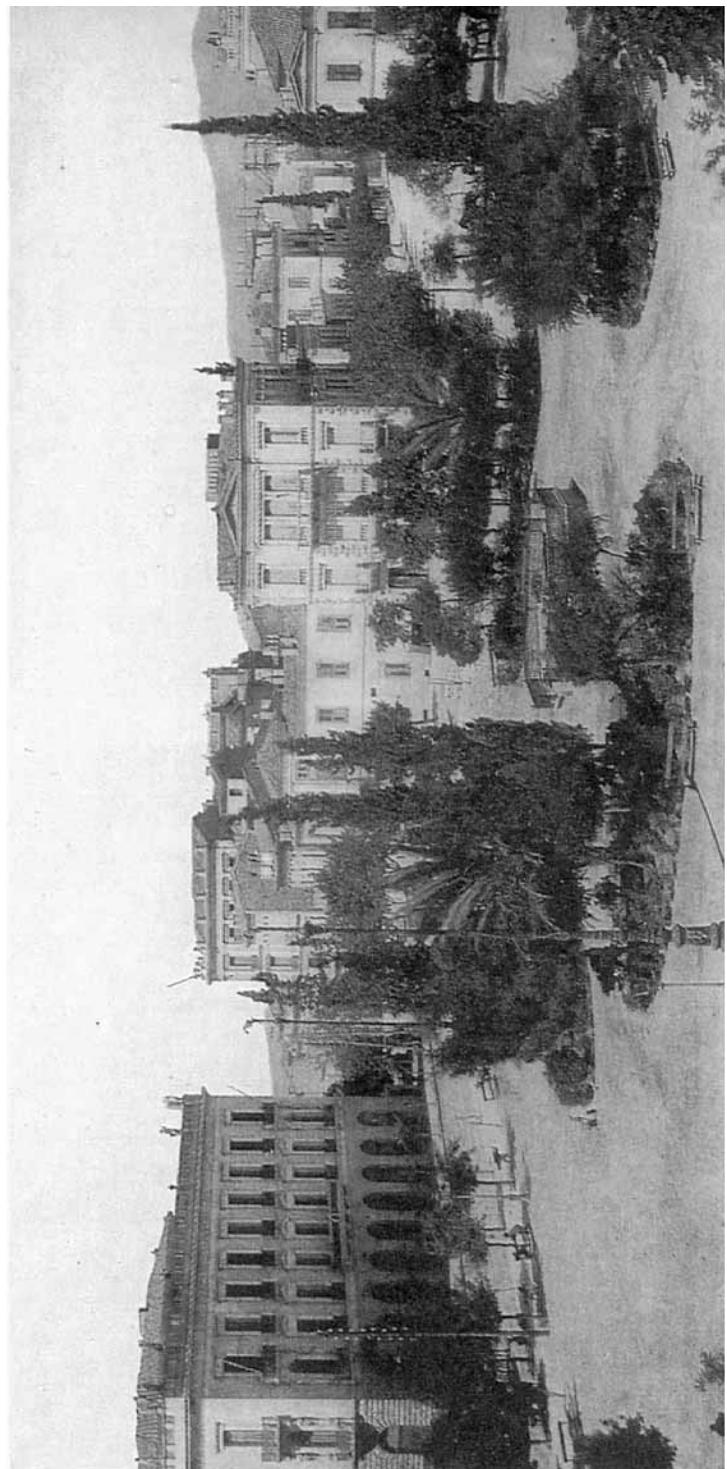
The following is a sketch of the Greek capital, which could already be termed a megalopolis, prior to the country's great venture with the Balkan Wars and its involvement in the First World War that would lead to major changes. Attention will be drawn chiefly to the built space, the people who lived in it, their occupations, the social stratification, the different ways of life.

The people

To begin with, we shall attempt to investigate who lived in Athens in the period under examination – the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (actual and ‘legal’ population, those registered in the Athens Municipality, those registered in other municipalities, and foreigners) –, how this population behaved demographically, what changes occurred over time, and what were the causes of these changes. The existing data are incomplete and often inconsistent. They do, however, permit the sketching of certain trends that draw attention to the individual demographic character of the capital. It

1. See Guy Burgel, *Aθήνα: Η ανάπτυξη μιας μεσογειακής ποωτεύονσας* [Croissance urbaine et développement capitaliste, le miracle athénien], trans. Petros Rylmon, Athens 1976.

2. See Christos Hatziosiph, ‘Introduction’ to the first volume of *Iστορία της Ελλάδας των 20ού αιώνων. Οι απαρχές 1900-1922* [History of Greece in the 20th century. The beginning 1900-1922], Athens [1999], pp. 13-14.



Omonoia Square in 1890. [C. Biris, *Al Athínaí ató ton 1900 eis ton 20όν αιώνα*, Athens 1996, p. 238]

should be noted from the very beginning that the absence of any historical archive of the Municipality of Athens – a result of the criminal indifference of those responsible at the time – has deprived research of basic and reliable sources (e.g., the municipality roll, censuses, etc.). We are thus forced to have recourse to other forms of evidence, such as city guides, which, in spite of their importance, must be used with appropriate caution, because, in most cases, they do not give the source of the information provided so that its completeness and authority can be checked. Nor do we yet possess a basic study of the social problems in Athens during the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth. Fortunately, we do have a first approach in the case of Piraeus.³

The most obvious feature is the rapid growth of the population of Athens: from 65,499 residents in 1879, this reached 110,262 in 1889, 123,001 in 1896, 167,479 in 1907, and 292,991 in 1920; that is to say, in the space of 40 years, it increased by almost five times. Such an increase at that period is encountered only in the major capitals of Western Europe.

TABLE 1
*Actual population of Athens*⁴

Year	Males	Females	Total	Without districts	Mean annual increase
1870	23,271	21,239	44,510		1870-1879 4.39
1879	35,435	30,064	65,499	(63,416)	1879-1889 5.35
1889	61,015	49,247	110,262	(107,278)	1889-1896 1.57
1896	68,669	54,232	123,001	(111,486)	1896-1907 2.85
1907	89,811	77,668	167,479	(162,678)	1907-1920 4.40
1920	164,050	128,941	292,991		

It is obvious that Athens was ‘fed’ by residents of the countryside and of the small, and even large, towns. The crisis in agriculture (particularly in currant growing) in the last decades of the nineteenth century, in spite of the outlet which tens of thousands of Greeks found in emigration to the other side of the Atlantic, greatly increased the mobility of the population, and not only of the unemployed or underemployed. The capital, in which the country’s major economic and cultural activities were now concentrated, seemed like, *par excellence*, the privileged place for employment, exploitation of opportunity, upward social mobility and improvement in the quality of life – in other words, for integration into a social formation which promised a means of trans-

3. Yannis Yannitsiotis, ‘Η διαμόρφωση της αστικής τάξης του Πειραιά 1860-1909’ [The shaping of the bourgeois class in Pireaus 1860-1909], unpublished doctoral thesis, Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens, Athens 2001.

4. I. G. Michalopoulos (director of the General Statistics Service of Greece), ‘Statistical information’, in the entry ‘Athens’ in the *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυροπαίδεια* [Great Greek Encyclopaedia], vol. II, p. 278.

cending the various impasses in which individuals and groups found themselves. It is no accident, then, that farmers from the Peloponnese, workers from Hermoupolis, but also bourgeois from the same city who were attempting to escape from ‘the monotony of the provinces’ took refuge in Athens. Businessmen found the capital an easy source of money for their activities, an abundance of raw materials for their craft industries, a large market for their products; they were also close to those organs which mapped out economic policy and, generally, took decisions on the country’s future.

The advantages that every capital inevitably has, seemed in the case of Athens to expand gradually to such a degree that, in conjunction with a lack of any policy to support the regional centres, led the latter to economic and cultural stagnation and mediocrity. The centralism of the Greek capital with its greater area (by which, here, Piraeus is chiefly meant) was to be a basic constant in the development of the Greek state from the late nineteenth century onwards.

This continuous demographic supply of Athens from other regions of the Greek state, and with Greeks who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire, is obvious in every piece of evidence which deals with the geographical origins of its inhabitants. In the beginning it was mainly men, of differing ages, who arrived, tentatively, to determine whether they could secure satisfactory and, above all, steady work; for that reason, males were clearly more numerous than females (see Table 1). Many found only seasonal work and returned to their place of origin. The next step was permanent settlement,⁵ with registration on the roll of the Municipality of Athens. In 1879, there were 29,634 registered Athenian citizens, 24,148 registered in other municipalities, 7,423 aliens, and 2,169 of ‘unknown municipal registration’.⁶ That is to say, approximately one in every two residents of the capital was not a registered citizen of it. The proportion changes somewhat in 1907 – two in every three: 107,007 Athenian citizens, 57,865 registered in other municipalities, 10,558 foreigners.⁷ Nevertheless, registration on the municipal roll, chiefly for electoral reasons, was, to begin with at least, a purely formal registration and did not in any way mean that individuals and, above all,

5. This ‘strategy’ has been graphically described in the case of those whom migrated chiefly to Piraeus by Yannis Bafounis, ‘Ο σχηματισμός του εργατικού δυναμικού στον Πειραιά’ [The formation of the workforce in Piraeus], in *Πρακτικά των Διεθνούς Συμποσίου Ιστορίας ‘Νεοελληνική πόλη. Οθωμανικές κληρονομές και ελληνικό κράτος’* [Proceedings of the International History Symposium ‘Modern Greek city. Ottoman inheritances and Greek state’], vol. II, Athens 1985, pp. 561-4; *idem*, ‘Ο έλληνας “επαρχιώτης” του 19ου αιώνα μπροστά στην πόλη’ [The Greek ‘provincial’ of the 19th century faced with the city], in *Πρακτικά των Β' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου ‘Η πόλη στους νεότερους χρόνους. Μεσογειακές και βαλκανικές σύγχρονες πόλεις (19ος-20ός αι.)’* [Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference ‘The city in modern times. Mediterranean and Balkan aspects (19th-20th century)’], Athens 2000, pp. 491-8.

6. A. Mansolas, ‘Απογραφή της πόλεως Αθηνών’ [Census of the city of Athens], *Parnassos*, V / III (31 Oct. 1881), p. 858. Of the foreigners, 2,788 were ‘Greeks from different parts of Turkey (Ottoman subjects)’, 457 Italians, 372 British, 235 French, 175 German, 105 Austrian, 89 Russian, 3,202 ‘of various other nationalities’. Of all the foreigners, 1,066 did not speak Greek (*ibid.*).

7. Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Census Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της γενικής απογραφής του πληθυσμού κατά την 27 Οκτωβρίου 1907* [Statistical results of the general census of the population on 27 October 1907], vol. I, Athens 1909, Table 8.

groups of common origin discarded their various local particularities: speech, dress, food, songs, festivals – their social and cultural behaviours in general. As is the case elsewhere, and in spite of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the residents of Athens were Orthodox Christians, there were small ‘cities’ within the city, large sections of the population who had as yet no place or only a very small place in the image of the Athenian that the dominant classes regarded and shaped as a model.

How small a part ‘real’ Athenians played in the life of the city can be seen, indicatively, from the fact that only 28.91% of those dying⁸ in the month of January 1896 are entered as such, that is, as having been born in Athens. The rest, as can be seen from Table 2, came from many different regions where Greeks, either free or Ottoman subjects, lived.⁹

TABLE 2
Origin of those dying in Athens in January 1896

Aegina	3	Genoa	1	Leonidio	3	Poros	1
Agrinio	1	Germany	1	Lidoriki	2	Psara	1
Akrata	1	Gortynia	3	Liossia	1	Pylia	1
Amorgos	1	Gytheio	2	Livadeia	1	Siphnos	1
Amphissa	2	Hungary	1	Macedonia	2	Smyrna	2
Andros	4	Hydra	6	Megalopoli	2	Sparta	1
Argos	8	Ioannina	1	Meliti	1	Syros	4
Athens	61	Itylo	1	Menidi	1	Thessaly	1
Cephalonia	2	Kalamata	1	Mesolonghi	2	Thira	3
Chalkida	4	Kalavryta	1	Metsovo	1	Thiva	3
Chios	3	Karystos	1	Mykonos	1	Tinos	7
Constantinople	4	Kea	2	Mytilene	1	Triphylia	1
Corfu	2	Kranidi	1	Nafplio	2	Tripoli	4
Corinth	4	Kynouria	2	Naxos	3	Valtos	1
Crete	9	Kythera	4	Paros	4	Volos	1
Dimitsana	1	Kythnos	1	Patras	3	Zakynthos	1
Domvraina	1	Lakonia	1	Philiatra	1		
Epirus	8	Lavrio	1	Piraeus	1	(Total	212)

The presence of the Cyclades, in proportion to their population, is strong (31) – evidence of the economic crisis through which the islands were passing. Of those who died that month, 40 were from the Peloponnese, 22 from central Greece and Evia, 10 from the islands of the Argo-Saronic Gulf, 10 from Epirus, 9 from Crete (clearly refugees), 9 from the Ionian Islands, 5 from the islands of the Eastern Aegean, 4 from Constantinople, 2 from Thessaly, 2 from Macedonia, and 2 from Smyrna. Finally, 4 were foreigners.

8. In this percentage infants and juveniles are not included; all of them were presented as born in Athens. The data have been drawn from the deaths register of the Athens Registrar’s Office.

9. See also the origins of the students at the University during the academic year 1889/90 in *Πανελλήνιος Σύντροφος 1891* [The Panhellenic Companion 1891], publ. Vlasis Gavrillidis, Athens 1890, p. 977.

In a period of crisis, such as 1897 and, still more so, during the Balkan Wars, the capital was swollen in terms of population by the mass passage of conscripts on their way to the front. The same phenomenon occurred during the Olympic Games with the arrival of the foreign athletes, delegations, spectators from the provinces, and other interested parties.

Also indicative are certain other demographic statistics for Athens: in 1890, there were 22 deaths per 1,000 residents, as compared with 18 from the state as a whole, and 7.55 marriages.¹⁰ In 1896, 2,765 people died in the four sections of the city (1,498 in Sections A + B and 1,267 in Sections C + D). Deaths rose to 3,563 in 1906.¹¹ In 1879, there were 15,209 families in Athens, and the average number of persons per family was 4.31; this average rose in 1920 to 4.83 in a total of 60,639 families.¹² In 1907, 64,547 were unmarried men and 43,518 unmarried women; 27,160 were married men and 27,637 married women, 2,045 were widows and 9,971 widowers, 232 were divorced men and 320 divorced women.¹³

The space

The question that arises here is where and how the above-mentioned population of Athens lived. Concerning the development of town planning, Costas Biris relates the following:

In the last years of the nineteenth century, building had completely covered the area of the old city, extending, but not completely, towards Amalias Avenue, towards Kolonaki, towards Neapoli, and towards Metaxourgeio. There were still unimproved sites in these directions [...]. Outside the limits of this relatively densely populated area, building was more scattered and continued sporadically as far as the limits of the street plan, the extent of which was essentially disproportionate to the population. More specifically, in 1900, the street plan covered 1,410 hectares, reaching, at the end of the first decade, 1,943 hectares.¹⁴

10. *Πανελλήνιος Σύντροφος 1891*, *op. cit.*, pp. 795, 802-3.

11. 1906: Section A 550, B 253, C 520, D 315, E 1,049, F 876. The figures for 1896 and 1906 come from the deaths register of the Athens Registrar's Office.

12. I. G. Michalopoulos, 'Στατιστικά πληροφορία', *op. cit.*, p. 283. See *ibid.* for the distribution of families by police section, districts and parishes. Mansolas ('Απογραφή', *op. cit.*, pp. 852-3), who calculates the residents of Athens in 1879 at 63,374, also quotes 15,209 families, but 4.17 as the average number of individuals per family, as compared with 4.62 for Greece as a whole. See *ibid.*, p. 851, the males and females per police section recorded in 1879.

13. *Απογραφή του πληθυσμού 1907* [Census of the population 1907], *op. cit.*, Table 20. For the figures of 1879, see Mansolas, *op. cit.*, p. 853.

14. Costas Biris, *Αι Αθήναι από τον 19ον εις τον 20όν αιώνα. Μέρος δεύτερον, 1900-1966* [Athens from the 19th to the 20th century. Part II, 1900-1966], Athens 1966, p. 246.

In 1889, there were 10,098 buildings, of which 9,257 were residences and 841 various shops, schools, churches, museums, etc. As against 1879, when there were 8,080 buildings, the increase was of 2,018 buildings, that is, 25% in 10 years. The increase in houses was disproportional to the increase in population. Thus the residents in this decade were perforce more densely housed: in 1879, there were 8.66 residents to each house, while in 1889, the figure was 11.63. This increase in density led to a rise in rents. In 1879, each square kilometre of the city was inhabited by 15,843 residents; in 1890, the figure had more than doubled (38,278). In one year alone, 1889-1890, 400 new residences were built.¹⁵ In 1920, the buildings within the city plan numbered 26,277.¹⁶

We have more detailed facts about the buildings only from the census of 1879: of the 8,080 buildings, 7,405 were stone-built, 608 of brick, and 67 were wooden structures. There were 7,316 residences: 3,661 were owner-occupied, 3,572 were occupied by tenants, and 83 were in the course of construction. Information as to height was collected on 6,630 residences:¹⁷

Single-storey	2,643
Two-storey	768
Three-storey	2,504
Four-storey	694
Five-storey	21
<i>Total</i>	6,630

Around 1880, enterprises dealing in building sites were set up to exploit the great demand for housing.¹⁸ Moreover, the high number of rented residences indicates that many of the residents of Athens relied on income from renting private property. A variety of pressures led to the rapid extension of the city plan, without the state always being capable of deterring arbitrary uses, such as the construction of private roads, while the creation of large squares and the extension of green areas were neglected.¹⁹ The adaptation of the expansion of the city to the logic of private interest provoked the reaction of the Minister of the Interior N. Triantaphyllakos, who in 1909 asked Parliament to ban the extension of the town plan of the capital for at least fifteen years.²⁰

15. All these figures are taken from *Πανελλήνιος Σύντροφος 1891*, *op. cit.*, p. 802.

16. Michalopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 283: of 26,277 buildings, 23,539 were houses; the rest were buildings under construction or repair, public establishments, ‘group cohabitutions’, etc. 55,909 households corresponded to 23,539 residences.

17. Mansolas, *op. cit.*, 854-5.

18. Biris, *Αἱ Ἀθῆναι*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 274. See also vol. I, pp. 198-9, on the interest of businessmen in building ready-made residences in the Neapoli area for sale or rent.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 274-5.

20. Aleka Karadimou-Yerolymbou, ‘Πόλεις και πολεοδομία’ [Cities and town-planning], in *Ιστορία της*

Rapid building is eloquently reflected by the annual number of permits issued for the construction of new buildings in the period 1890-1912.²¹

TABLE 3
Permits for new buildings (1890-1912)

Year	No. of permits	Value in drachmas	Year	No. of permits	Value in drachmas
1890	303	3,893,000	1902	335	3,973,000
1891	246	2,630,000	1903	441	5,000,000
1892	281	3,053,000	1904	495	5,732,000
1893	340	3,767,000	1905	513	5,275,000
1894	292	3,159,000	1906	480	4,489,000
1895	263	2,876,000	1907	490	4,850,000
1896	266	2,934,000	1908	403	4,325,000
1897	163	1,784,000	1909	404	4,331,000
1898	323	3,435,000	1910	434	4,763,000
1899	271	2,887,000	1911	520	5,664,000
1900	320	3,377,000	1912	553	5,409,000
1901	329	3,596,000			

The average for the period 1890-1912 is 368 permits per annum. This figure is more than three times the average for the years 1870-1879, when it was 112.²²

Athens, with its imposing stone neo-classical buildings must have impressed the observer who confined his movements to the area between the Palace and Omonoia Square. The picture would have been different when he approached other districts: dust on the earth streets, filth as the result of the lack or incomplete construction of a drainage network, a defective water supply, rubbish on unimproved sites, domestic

Ελλάδας του 20ού αιώνα [History of Greece in the 20th century], vol. A1, p. 229. See *ibid.*, pp. 227-8, that Athens, from occupying 400 hectares in 1879, had reached 1,918 in 1907.

21. C. Papandopoulos, ‘Οικοδομική κίνηση Αθηνών’ [Building movement in Athens], in the entry ‘Athens’ in the *Mεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυρωταιδεια*, vol. II, p. 225. The figures in the table are drawn from statistics from the City Master Plan office. See also Vika Gizeli, *Κοινωνικοί μετασχηματισμοί και προέλευση της κοινωνικής κατοικίας στην Ελλάδα 1920-1930* [Social transformation and the origin of social housing in Greece 1920-1930], Athens 1984, pp. 91-2: number of building permits in Athens 1890-1921; the buildings are recorded on the basis of the number of their storeys. See the same table in Manolis V. Marmaras, *Η αστική πολυκατοικία της μεσοπολεμικής Αθήνας. Η αρχή της εντατικής εξμετάλλευσης των αστικών εδάφων* [The urban apartment block in inter-war Athens. The beginning of the intensive exploitation of the urban terrain], Athens 1991, p. 78: number of new buildings in Athens (1890-1921); *idem*, ‘Αθηναϊκά πολεοδομικά της περιόδου 1910-1921’ [Athenian town planning 1910-1921], *Ta Istorika* 11 (Dec. 1989), pp. 395-411.

22. Mansolas, ‘Απογραφή’, *op. cit.*, p. 856: ‘according to information from the police, from the year 1870 to 1879, 1,121 building permits were granted by it’.

animals wandering in the streets, establishments generating pollution next to houses, etc. The slaughter of animals often took place in front of the butchers' shops.²³ The novelists give eloquent pictures of this other Athens.²⁴ A foreigner, Charles Cheston, noted:

The new city has the appearance of so much wealth and so much prosperity that it is difficult to relate it to the poverty and dirt which has existed for five hundred years. It is a fact that the old city still exists; in order to see the houses in which the Athenians lived around the end of the past century, all that is required is for one to leave the new broad streets and to enter the narrow alleyways of the old city.²⁵

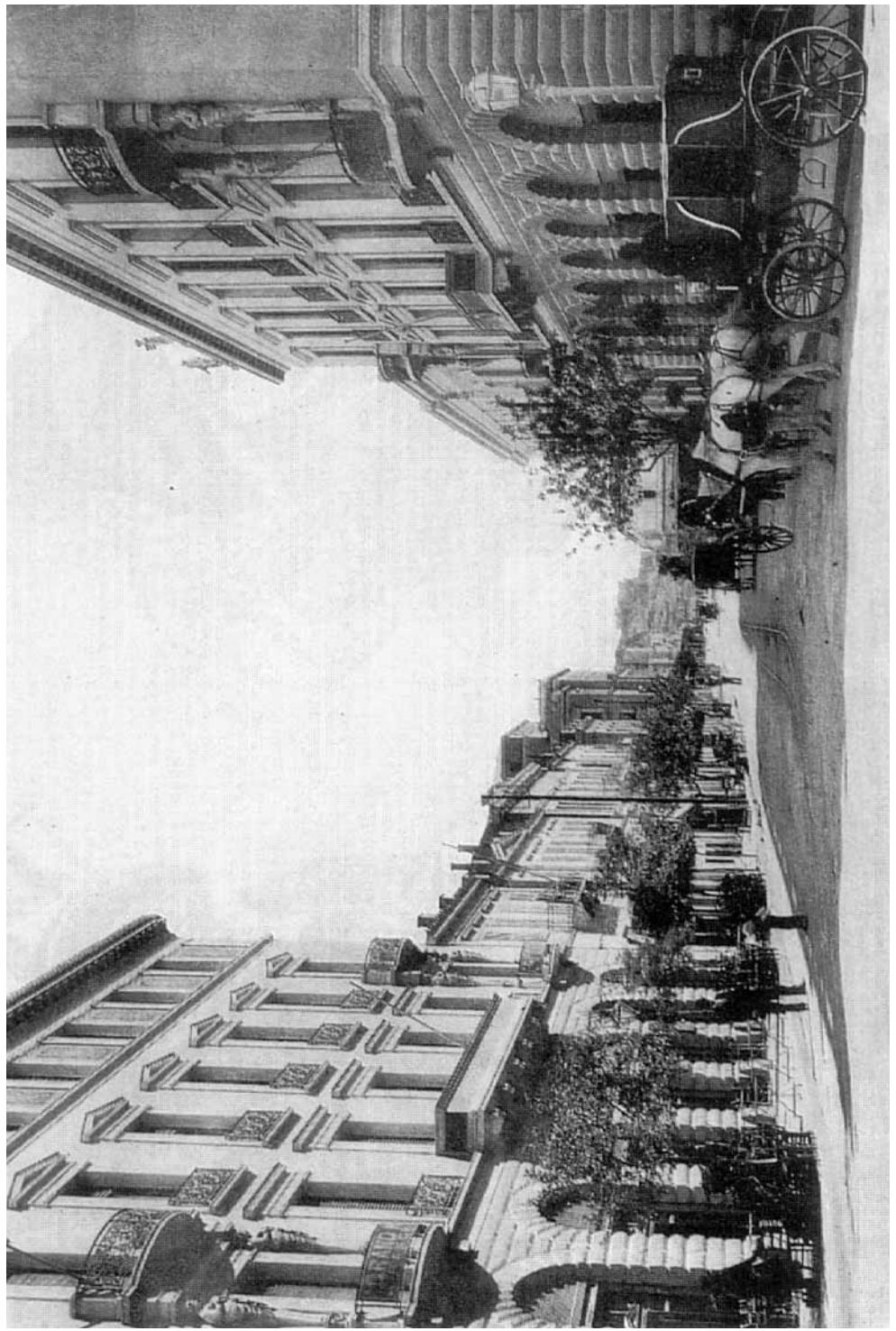
As to who lived, worked and came and went in the Psyrra district, the description (1890) by Mikhail Mitsakis is incomparable:

Through the narrow little street, as of a Turkish city, of Psyrra, a varied mob passes, men and beasts, children and women, householders and workers; a crowd of the lower orders, coming and going, dressed in a medley of manners, as in carnival fancy-dress hastily put on, fills the little street with buzzing. Girls carrying pitchers in their hands often head to the nearby faucet in the square to fill them, schoolboys returning from their lessons, shoppers carrying home their purchases, shoeblocks, washer-women, little seamstresses, merchants' clerks, lawyers, sometimes with briefs under their arm, coming from the nearby criminal court, sometimes clergy in their cassocks, now and then men in baggy drawers, the caps and boots of the military, an odd old woman's black kerchief, the trousers, baggy behind, of native Athenians, reaching only to the knee, multi-coloured leggings below, appear, move about, hurry by, loiter, cross the little street, are swallowed up in the other footpaths of the district, labyrinthine arteries, narrow but teeming with life, serving Ermou, Vlassarous, Aghios Philippos, Yerani, Eleftheria Square, Piraeus Avenue, the parts around the railway. Carriages or carts clatter by from time to time, rolling forward with care, with only just enough room for them to pass, occupying the whole width of the alley, with their wheels scraping against the pavement on either side. Groups of Carpathians, mostly quarrymen, employed in the quarries around the city, returning thence in order to rest and amuse themselves, tomorrow, Sunday, show off with their tall stature flexed and their eccentric clothing. Itinerant greengrocers slowly lead on their animals,

23. Athens acquired proper slaughterhouses around 1915: Biris, *Ai Athína*, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 256.

24. On the importance of literary testimony in the study of Athens and of the city in general see Lizy Tsirimokou, 'Τραγουδολογία της πόλης. Λογοτεχνία της πόλης, πόλεις της λογοτεχνίας' [Study of literature of the city. Literature of the city, cities of literature], in *Νεοελληνική πόλη* [The modern Greek city], *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 167-96. See *eadem*, *Γραμματολογία της πόλης. Λογοτεχνία της πόλης. Πόλεις της λογοτεχνίας*, Athens 1987.

25. Ch. Cheston, *H Ελλάς τω 1887, μεταφρασθέν εκ του Αγγλικού υπό M...*, [Greece in 1887, translated from the English by M-], Athens 1887 (reprinted: Athens 1990, intro.-index by Christos P. Baloglu, p. 105).



Athinas Street in 1902. [C. Biris, *Al Athinas aπό τον 19ον εις τον 20όν αιώνα*, Athens 1906, p. 246]

loaded mainly with grapes [...]. Inside the shops around, always on the ground floor or in the basement, the tenants work: grocers in a small way of business, haberdashers, tobacconists, a jeweller displaying in his murky windows prehistoric rings, chains of the greatest antiquity, silver teaspoons and icons of saints, taverna-owners or butchers or greengrocers. The cook next door, Tassos, has his cookshop open and sits in front of it, short, fat, with his long apron, his sinewy arms tolerating only the clothing of a shirt. The patrons of the coffee-shop of Mr. Polychronis are crowded on to the pavement, which serves as a mere border to the street, two spans wide at most, performing miracles of balancing with their bodies and the two legs of the chair upon it, and their own and its other two in the adjacent gutter in most cases. A woman in a fez came past a little while ago, decked out, plump, her tassel swinging, buttocks undulating, magnificent. From one side to the other conversations are pursued, dialogues are opened, jokes are often cracked, shouts and invocations are exchanged, usually noisy, merry, clamorous, with a familial ease. A tall Lidorikiot passed by just now carrying a live lamb wrapped round his neck, which he held on either side with his hands; it seems the fellow was taking it somewhere to sell. And there was quiet laughter for a moment and ironic glances all round at the way he was holding the candidate for slaughter, with its head sticking out alongside his own, at the side. Two bullyboys went past together, entwined like drunks, fedora at an angle, brim turned down, pretending to be ostentatiously staggering, singing in a hoarse, deep-throated voice a popular song new-born from the alleys of Psyri:

*Stab me with the stiletto,
and when the blood flows, drink it!...²⁶*

In 1893, the existing drains met only 1/8 of the needs of the city. Thus, the soak-away cesspits polluted the wells that had been dug. Subsequently, the central drain that was constructed in 1882 under Marni Street (the Vatheia streambed) simply removed the waste from the centre of the city for it to pour out into the countryside. ‘From there, the market-gardeners channelled it by means of ditches on to their property, in order to water with it the vegetables which the Athenians ate. Typhus and enteric disorders generally were endemic in Athens.’²⁷

The aqueduct of Hadrian was incapable of meeting the needs of the increasing population. In the districts of the city, drinking water was in short supply and was not

26. Mikhail Mitsakis, ‘Θεάματα του Ψυρρί’ [Spectacles of Psyri], in the volume: Mikhail Mitsakis, *Eίς Αθηναίος Χρυσοθήρας. Αθηναϊκά σελίδες – Φύλλα εκ των ιδιαιτέρων ογκεωματαράριών μου – Μία φιλολογική σελίς εις δύο γλώσσας* [An Athenian Gold-digger. Athenian pages – Leaves from my private notebook – A literary page in two languages], Athens 1971, pp. 120-2. For pictures of Athens at the turn of the century see *Ενθύμημα των Αθηνών* [Memento of Athens], Athens 1985.

27. Biris, *Αι Αθήναι, op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 256. According to one source, in 1881 the typhus epidemic took 1,000 lives in a short period: G. P. Paraskevopoulos, *Οι δήμαρχοι των Αθηνών (1835-1907). Μετά προεπικαγγής περί δημογεροντίας* [The mayors of Athens (1835-1907). With a preliminary introduction concerning the *Dimogerontia*], Athens 1907 (photocopied reprint Athens 2001, p. 319).

available every day. Nor was it of good quality. Many Athenians obtained their water from the water-sellers, who brought it from Marousi, Penteli, Kaisariani, and elsewhere.²⁸

Towards the end and the turn of the century, efforts were intensified to improve the public health conditions that were responsible for the various infections and epidemics. In 1902 an agreement was signed with a contractor who undertook to keep the city clean by the use of 70 ‘covered carts of neat appearance’ and 70 street-sweepers, one for each district. Another contractor undertook in 1900 the construction of new public urinals, while in the major squares underground urinals were also constructed. Thus little by little ‘the most barbarous and squalid spectacle in Athens’ disappeared.²⁹

As to the introduction of the new technologies which were gradually to change the appearance of the city and, to a certain degree, the daily lives of the Athenians, the following could be cited by way of indication: in 1896 the first motor car, brought from France by Constantinos Christomanos, made its appearance. In 1902, the new plant for the production of electricity, at Neo Phaliro, systematically met the electric lighting needs of Athens and Piraeus and at the same time supplied current for industry and transport. In 1904 The Athens - Piraeus railway was provided with an additional line and the steam locomotives were replaced with electric units. Two years later, a contract was signed with a Belgian company for the installation of electric trams in Athens and Piraeus; these gradually replaced the horse-drawn vehicles. The process of constructing Andrea Syngrou Avenue began in 1900. The first asphalted streets made their appearance in 1905 and the first telephones were installed in 1908.³⁰

In 1908, the city was partitioned, by a resolution of the Municipal Council, into 59 districts, arranged in four sections. Those names of districts which were judged to be ‘most vulgar and bringing shame upon the perfect harmony and grandeur of the Greek language’ were replaced, in accordance with the consistent practice of the time, with a nomenclature derived from ancient times, so that the city would recover ‘its ancient renown’.³¹ These districts, with their new names and their population in 1920, are shown in Table 4,³² while the following map shows the spatial division of these districts:

28. Biris, *Αι Αθήναι, op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 255-6.

29. Paraskevopoulos, *Οι δήμαρχοι των Αθηνών, op. cit.*, pp. 473-7. See also Yannis Kairophylas, *Η Αθήνα της μετελ επόκη* [Athens of the belle époque], Athens 1983, pp. 117-19.

30. On all this see Biris, *Αι Αθήναι, op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 250-3.

31. Athanasios S. Georgiadis, *Νέα διαίρεσις της πόλεως Αθηνών κατά κώμας και συνοικίας αρχαίας και νεωτέρας υπό νομομηχανικού επί του σχεδίου της πόλεως και των δημ. κτιρίων. Μετά του σχεδίου της πόλεως και πίνακος της ονοματοθεοίσας των τε οδών και συνοικιών* [New division of the city of Athens by ancient and more modern villages and districts by prefecture engineer, on the city plan and public buildings. With the city plan and a table of the nomenclature of the streets and districts], Athens 1908. The table with the new names was checked and amended by W. Dörpfeld, director of the German Institute, Nik. Politis, and P. Kavvadias. The Municipal Council approved it by a resolution of 13 May 1908. In this publication, pp. 11-13, it can be seen how the 59 districts were distributed among the four sections of the city.

32. Michalopoulos, ‘Στατιστικά πληροφορία’, *op. cit.*, p. 282; see *ibid.*, pp. 280-2, information on which

TABLE 4
Population by districts

<i>Name of district</i>	<i>No. of residents</i>	<i>Percentage of total Athenian population</i>	<i>Area in stremmata</i>	<i>Residents per stremma</i>
Acharnon	16,554	5.80	607.76	27.24
Adrianou	2,767	0.97	90.40	30.61
Aghion Theodoron	3,233	1.14	103.28	31.30
Aghiou Constantinou	8,735	3.06	212.24	41.16
Aghiou Pavlou	5,747	2.02	161.12	35.67
Agoras	13,003	4.56	236.64	54.95
Akademias Platonos	4,863	1.71	503.68	9.61
Akropoleos	1,087	0.38	44.40	24.48
Alopekis	1,681	0.59	195.20	8.63
Ambelokipon	4,257	1.50	1,086.48	3.92
Anaktoron	123	0.05	203.60	0.60
Ardittou	2,144	0.76	113.04	18.97
Areiou Pagou	5,882	2.07	80.32	73.23
Attalou	2,473	0.87	66.48	37.20
Attikis	5,742	2.02	542.56	8.94
Averofeiou	3,083	1.08	295.60	10.48
Dimarcheiou	3,099	1.06	92.88	33.37
Dimotikou Nosokomeiou	215	0.08	231.36	0.93
Dionysiou Areopagitou	5,280	1.85	202.40	26.09
Dionysou	3,602	1.27	224.72	16.03
Dipylou	4,130	1.45	228.24	18.09
Ethnikou Mouseiou	2,304	0.81	131.76	17.49
Evangelismou	5,788	2.03	468.16	12.58
Ieras Odou	4,517	1.59	221.36	20.41
Ilissou	1,392	0.49	374.08	3.72
Imittou	5,319	1.87	756.88	7.03
Kallirois	1,246	0.44	99.84	12.48
Kerameikou (outer)	19,587	6.87	647.52	30.25
Kilos	955	0.35	104.32	9.54
Kimitiriou	2,130	0.75	522.48	4.08
Kolonou	13,231	4.64	1,150.19	11.50
Kyklovorou	6,440	2.26	194.24	33.15
Kynosargous	6,953	2.44	516.72	13.46
Kypselis	5,184	1.82	822.72	6.30

streets enclosed each district; see also (pp. 282-3) the parishes of Athens and a table of the population by parish. Nikolaos G. Inglesis (*Οδηγός της Ελλάδος* [Guide to Greece], Year 3, vol. I, 1910-1911, Athens, s.a., pp. 42-3), lists the old and new districts. Table 4 is also printed by Marmaras, *Η αστική πολυκατοικία, op. cit.*, but converts the *stremmata* (1 *stremma* = 1,000 m²) into hectares. See *ibid.*, p. 104, 'Indices of density of housing of the Athens districts (1920)' and on pp. 105-8 maps showing the extensions to the approved plan of Athens.

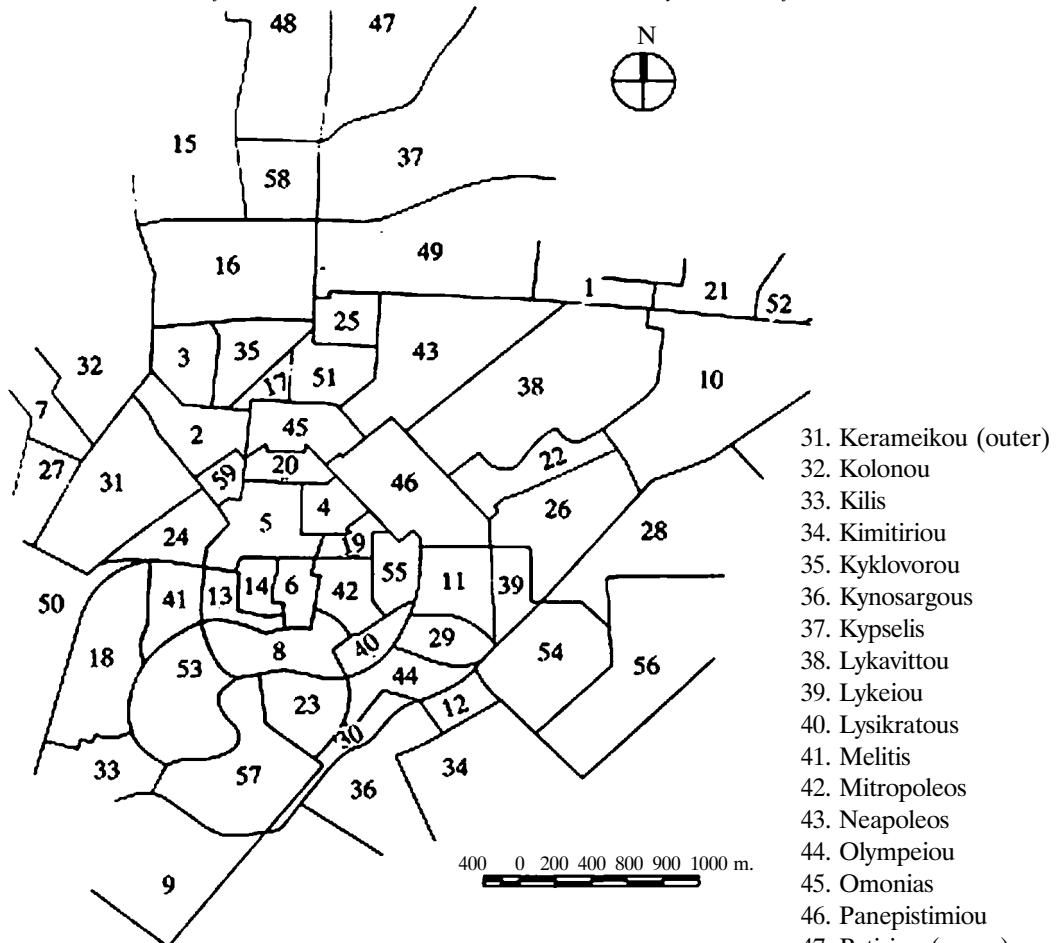
TABLE 4 (*cont.*)
Population by districts

<i>Name of district</i>	<i>No. of residents</i>	<i>Percentage of total Athenian population</i>	<i>Area in stremmata</i>	<i>Residents per stremma</i>
Lykavittou	7,609	2.67	428.16	17.77
Lykeiou	1,157	0.41	111.68	10.36
Lysikratous	3,335	1.17	88.72	37.59
Melitis	3,101	1.09	88.96	34.86
Mitropoleos	6,433	2.26	146.48	43.92
Neapoleos	22,152	7.77	524.32	42.25
Odeiou	2,127	0.75	61.20	34.75
Olympeiou	1,302	0.46	141.84	9.18
Omonias	9,243	3.24	198.56	46.55
Panepistimiou	6,738	2.36	427.84	15.75
Patision (lower)	3,898	1.37	1,605.56	2.43
Patision (upper)	5,635	1.98	1,308.12	4.31
Pediou Areos	3,228	1.14	721.36	4.47
Peiraios	2,702	0.95	279.68	9.66
Philopappou	5,016	1.76	458.56	10.94
Phylis	3,502	1.23	242.24	14.46
Pnykos	—	—	15.44	—
Polytechneiou	5,284	1.66	176.64	29.91
Ptochokomeiou	807	0.29	349.12	2.31
Stadiou	4,708	1.65	423.04	11.13
Syntagmatos	2,945	1.04	122.16	24.11
Varathrou	7,546	2.65	325.28	23.34
Vatheias	1,590	0.56	59.68	26.64
Voulis	2,503	0.88	73.04	34.27
Zappeiou	15	0.01	139.68	0.11
<i>Total</i>	285,322	100.00	20,050.03	14.23

Society

It is by no means easy to define Athenian society towards the end of the nineteenth century. A hierarchy based chiefly on wealth, education and relations with the political system is obviously discernible. Nevertheless, the *desideratum* is to trace the complexity of the social realities, rather than to confine ourselves to patterns which would not go beyond simple classifications. In 1887, Mikhail Mitsakis, in his short story ‘Summer’, distinguished, on the basis of the manner of social association and entertainment, three classes: the upper (which was supported by wealth and imitated the way of life of the European leading classes), the middle (minor office workers, professionals, pensioners, persons with small private incomes, students), which, without yet having a personality of its own,

Division of Athens into districts in accordance with the Royal Decree of 7 June 1908



- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Averofeiou | 11. Anaktoron | 21. Dimotikou Nosokomeiou | 50. Peiraios |
| 2. Aghiou Constantinou | 12. Ardittou | 22. Dionysiou Areopagitou | 51. Polytechneiou |
| 3. Aghiou Pavlou | 13. Areiou Pagou | 23. Dionysou | 52. Ptochokomeiou |
| 4. Aghion Theodoron | 14. Attalou | 24. Dipylou | 53. Pnykos |
| 5. Agoras | 15. Attikis | 25. Ethnikou Mouseiou | 54. Stadiou |
| 6. Adrianou | 16. Acharnon | 26. Evangelismou | 55. Syntagmatos |
| 7. Akadimias Platonom | 17. Vatheias | 27. Ieras Odou | 56. Imittou |
| 8. Acropoleos | 18. Varathrou | 28. Ilissou | 57. Philopappou |
| 9. Alopekis | 19. Voulis | 29. Zappeiou | 58. Phylis |
| 10. Ambelokipon | 20. Dimarcheiou | 30. Kallirois | 59. Odeiou |

SOURCE Manolis V. Marmaras, *H αστική πολυναποικία της μεσοπολεμικής Αθήνας. Η αρχή της εντατικής εξμετάλλευσης των αστικών εδάφων* [The urban apartment block in inter-war Athens. The beginning of the intensive exploitation of the urban terrain], Athens 1991, p. 97.

anxiously attempted to imitate the upper class ('an imitation of an imitation'), and 'the people', who, in spite of the influences of the other classes (e.g., they were beginning to drink beer instead of wine) amused themselves in an entirely different fashion.³³

The Englishman R. A. H. Bickford-Smith, who visited Greece during the period 1890-92, distinguished four leading groups in Greek society, effectively in the capital: (a) old noble families (but without their titles entailing privileges); (b) families whose ancestors distinguished themselves in the War of Independence of 1821; (c) 'those who had made their fortune in one way or another' (the most important of the groups, consisting of figures such as Syngros, Skouzes, etc.); (d) the political world. He also drew attention to the democratic nature of Greek society, which, apart from anything else, could be seen from the fact that the criteria for receiving invitations to social events at Court were not strict.³⁴

Tracing the occupations of working Athenians permits more subtle approaches to the character of the structure of society. Given below is a catalogue of 6,147 tradesmen and others in Athens who in 1887 were liable to occupation tax:

TABLE 5
Tradesmen of Athens (1887)

Type of occupation	No. of tradesmen	Tax per person [in Drs]
Agencies	12	360.00
Animal merchants	20	136.08
Architects and contractors	88	106.32
Bakers	180	93.60
Bankers	16	1,350.00
Banks	5	7,200.00
Barbers with furniture	17	76.45
Barbers without furniture	136	26.25
Basket makers	9	32.80
Bath attendants	2	144.00

33. Mitsakis, 'Το θέρος' [Summer], in *Eίς Αθηναίος Χρονοθήρας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-5. See also the analysis undertaken by I. P. in his article 'Social development' in the entry 'Athens' in the *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυρωταιδεία*, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-76: domination of the plutocratic aristocracy, which elbowed out the old families and, assisted by the modernising policy of Charilaos Trikoupis, imposed the European way of life; appearance of 'new classes' with the tenure of civil servants, 'working-class private employees', and the gradual admission of women to shops, craft industries, and factories.

34. R. A. H. Bickford-Smith, *Η Ελλάδα την εποχή του Γεωργίου Α'* [Greece Under King George], translation-intro.-commentary Lydia Papadaki, Athens 1993, pp. 319-27. See also K. Gardika-Alexandropoulou, 'Η ελληνική κοινωνία στην εποχή του Χ. Τρικούπη' [Greek society in the time of Charilaos Trikoupis], in D. G. Tsaousis (ed.), *Όψεις της ελληνικής κοινωνίας του 19ου αιώνα* [Aspects of Greek society in the 19th century], Athens 1984, pp. 177-91. For more general assessments of the social changes in Greece in 1880-1910 see Yorgos Dertilis, *Κοινωνικός μετασχηματισμός και στρατιωτική επέμβαση 1880-1909* [Social transformation and military intervention 1880-1909], Athens 1977.

TABLE 5 (*cont.*)
Tradesmen of Athens (1887)

<i>Type of occupation</i>	<i>No. of tradesmen</i>	<i>Tax per person [in Drs]</i>
Bath contractors	89	77.42
Beer and lemonade sellers	19	198.69
Blacksmiths	39	8.31
Bookbinders	19	47.62
Booksellers	31	133.05
Bread manufacturers	1	600.00
Bread sellers	30	36.36
Breweries	4	360.00
Butchers	149	48.30
Candle sellers and candle makers	17	60.56
Carpenters	236	59.13
Carriage painters	20	42.80
Carriage repairers	22	110.78
Carriage-makers	9	155.20
Carters	351	28.90
Chair repairers	3	30.00
Charcuterie sellers	15	33.24
Chimney-sweeps	3	21.60
Coachmen	170	38.05
Coal and firewood merchants	51	80.19
Coffee sellers	74	40.67
Coffee-roasters	50	29.66
Coffee-shops with billiards, drinks	50	214.67
Coffee-shops without billiards	223	116.58
Confectioners	40	255.42
Cookshops with wine	53	165.12
Cookshops without wine	137	68.93
Coopers	14	41.91
Dancing teachers	16	21.60
Dentists	11	111.27
Dressmakers or simple seam-stresses	38	58.28
Earthenware pottery makers	14	57.26
Earthenware pottery vendors	7	46.29
European hat sellers	28	137.12
Fencing teacher	1	21.60
Fez makers	4	168.75
Fishermen and fishmongers	31	29.96
Flour millers	31	55.16
Flour sellers	4	27.00

TABLE 5 (*cont.*)
Tradesmen of Athens (1887)

<i>Type of occupation</i>	<i>No. of tradesmen</i>	<i>Tax per person [in Drs]</i>
Fruiterers	56	44.49
Furniture manufacturers	3	200.00
Furrier	1	21.60
Gasworks	2	180.00
Glassware etc. vendors	25	119.82
Goldsmiths	20	52.74
Greengrocers	103	42.83
Grocers	421	176.08
Gun repairers	4	37.80
Gunpowder manufacturers	1	600.00
Gunpowder millers	2	18.00
Halva makers	24	49.88
Hat makers	25	41.06
High-value iron vendors	12	257.85
Hotels with rooms and food	48	193.05
Hotels with rooms	18	300.67
Household utensil decorators	13	40.29
Household utensils vendors	23	196.49
Insurance companies	2	1,200.00
Iron merchants	9	315.33
Ironsmiths	116	103.48
Jewellers	15	290.07
Kerchief manufacturers	2	76.80
Knife-sharpeners	2	21.60
Lamp oil and lamp sellers	12	123.80
Leather and skin merchants	12	182.25
Luxury goods vendors	37	339.28
Merchant tailors	39	156.06
Metal utensils manufacturers	1	360.00
Midwives	80	43.20
Milkmen	98	29.59
Money lenders	29	189.68
Money-changers	22	84.44
Musical instrument makers	5	53.04
Notaries	24	108.00
Olive oil sellers	6	134.40
Olive-presses	6	12.00
Ovens, public	18	46.20
Paint vendors	11	138.65
Pasta manufacturers	9	175.05

TABLE 5 (*cont.*)
Tradesmen of Athens (1887)

Type of occupation	No. of tradesmen	Tax per person [in Drs]
Paving and floor-tile merchants	8	120.00
Pharmacists	48	161.08
Photographers	12	171.70
Physicians	172	181.40
Piano teachers	23	86.40
Plaster-millers	5	43.20
Printers	36	70.90
Private carriages	65	44.86
Private school headteachers	35	89.18
Quarrymen	19	58.42
Quilt-makers	20	40.50
Railway companies	4	1,200.00
Ready-made clothing vendors	121	271.56
Ribbon makers	24	42.49
Roof-tile manufacturers	4	99.00
Ropers	2	43.20
Saddle makers	7	23.14
Saddlers	4	111.60
Sandal makers	48	42.18
Shoemakers	143	63.51
Shoe-tree makers	8	23.40
Snuffbox makers	2	36.00
Soap makers	5	130.08
Spirituous liquor vendors	6	336.60
Stationers	23	126.00
Steam-mills plant	3	272.00
Steam-saw plant	7	171.43
Steelyard makers	7	46.29
Stone-carvers	33	130.36
Tailors	173	39.99
Tanners	19	65.37
Textiles vendors	135	254.27
Timber merchants	5	120.00
Tinplaters and copperplaters	28	38.50
Tinsmiths	55	48.57
Tobacconists	285	138.32
Town criers	19	21.60
Traditional footwear makers	38	43.47
Typefounder	2	57.60
Wall-paintings contractors	1	120.00

TABLE 5 (*cont.*)
Tradesmen of Athens (1887)

Type of occupation	No. of tradesmen	Tax per person [in Drs]
Watch repairers	14	27.00
Watch sellers	15	210.08
Watchmen	2	64.80
Weavers	3	51.93
Whitewash sellers	9	51.20
Wholesale merchants	4	915.00
Wholesale/retail merchants	23	200.92
Wine sellers	475	27.39
Wineries	2	240.00
Woollens	1	48.60
<i>Total</i>	6,147	

SOURCE *Πανελλήνιος Σύντροφος 1891* [The Panhellenic Companion 1891], Athens 1890, pp. 750-3. In the source, the ‘simple’ tax for the whole of those engaged in an occupation, as well as the ‘additional tax of 20%’, is given. Here these two sums have been added together and divided by the number of those engaged in that occupation in order to arrive at the tax that corresponds to each one.

In the table above, bankers and factory-owners are given side by side with fruit-erers, coachmen and coopers. One thing that they have in common is that their work was independent. The tax which each paid for his ‘occupation’ shows some ranking, by the criteria of the time. The grouping together of these occupations, with a view to sketching some social stratification, is beyond the scope of this article, particularly because other parameters, which at the moment we do not possess, would be called for if our hypotheses were to carry greater weight.³⁵ We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to certain observations from a reading of the table.

To begin with, the name itself indicates in a number of cases whether we are speaking of the manufacture of products or trading in them: bread bakers and bread sellers, coffee-roasters and coffee sellers, makers of earthenware pottery and sellers of earthenware pottery, etc. Without this meaning that it was not possible for a bread baker to be at the same time a vendor of individual loaves, the distinction between production and trading could serve as a first basic differentiation. The internal rankings within each occupation are not apparent, since they are all shown as paying the

35. See how Yannis Yannitsiotis approaches the bourgeois of Piraeus in ‘Η διαιμόρφωση της αστικής τάξης του Πειραιά 1860-1909’, *op. cit.* See also Lila Leontidou, *Πόλεις της σιωπής. Εργατικός εποικισμός της Αθήνας και του Πειραιά, 1909-1940* [Cities of silence. Workers’ colonisation of Athens and Piraeus, 1909-1940], Athens 1989, p. 107: ‘Structure of employment in Athens and Piraeus, 1840-1920’.

same tax. Only the four wholesale merchants are singled out, and it is likely that the textile merchants who each paid 254.27 Drs in occupation tax were in a more advantageous position than the sellers of ready-made clothing who paid scarcely half the sum (137.12 Drs).

Most of these tradesmen were involved with food and drink: 421 vendors of food-stuffs, 149 butchers, 103 greengrocers, 98 milkmen, etc. The rapid development of building is reflected in the presence of 88 architects and contractors, 89 wall-painting contractors, 33 stone-carvers and 19 quarrymen, and it is likely that a number of the 236 carpenters and the 116 ironsmiths had some connection with constructions of some kind. Carters (351) lead the field in transport, followed by coachmen (170). The only clearly female presence is that of the midwives (80) and dressmakers or simple seamstresses (38).

In the Athens of the closing decades of the nineteenth century, populations with differing economic capabilities, but also with cultural differences, co-existed. The presence of only four fez-makers shows how far the hat had gained ground: 25 hat-makers, 20 vendors of European hats. The same applies to footwear: 143 shoemakers, but 48 sandal makers, 38 makers of traditional footwear, 8 shoetree makers. There are vendors of earthenware pottery (7), but also glassware merchants (25).

At least some Athenians could eat and drink outside the home at the 137 cook-shops without wine and the 53 with wine, or, if they preferred, drink beer and lemonade at 19 other shops; they could enjoy their coffee at 223 coffee-shops without billiards and at 50 with billiards and alcoholic drinks; they could buy tobacco at 285 tobacconists; they could print books with 36 printers and buy books at 31 bookshops; they could call or visit 172 doctors and 11 dentists; they could have their photographs taken at 12 photographers, and they could learn fencing, piano, and dancing with special teachers (1, 23, and 16 respectively).

Among the above ‘tradesmen’, we can trace basic constituents of the upper, middle and petit bourgeois classes, with their various gradations. To these could be added the civil servants, who in 1879 were estimated to number 1,327 in Athens, the municipal employees (65), the military men not on active service (305), civil pensioners (114), schoolmasters (318), schoolmistresses (299), journalists (54), and ‘persons of private means’ (1,167).³⁶

As to the lower class, in 1889, there are reported to have been 5,439 labourers and 11,210 manservants and maidservants, representing 8.70% and 17.93%, respectively, of the employed population, which was calculated at 62,508.³⁷ The 24 ‘factories’ or ‘plant’ that appear in the table above, together with still more craft industries, explain, to some degree, the presence of these labourers. These businesses were often located in residential areas. As has been pointed out, ‘contrary to the familiar stereotypes about the “parasitical” character of the capital, Athens was and remained the city of the small craft industry [and later of industry], which produced a full range of con-

36. Mansolas, ‘Απογραφή’, *op. cit.*, p. 856: also given are 603 farmers and 155 shepherds.

37. *Πανελλήνιος Σύντοροφος 1891*, *op. cit.*, p. 856.

sumer goods (from basic necessities to luxury goods).³⁸ In 1874/75, 8 industrial establishments, employing 252-257 workers, were recorded. The corresponding figures for 1882/83 are 8-9 and 302-327, for 1890/91, 12-13 and 555-650, and for 1899/1900, 19 establishments and 825-900 labourers.³⁹ In 1896 there were at least two fatal accidents at the Moraïtinis fireworks and gunpowder factory.⁴⁰

The very large number of manservants/maidservants (almost one in five of those working) could be partly explained by the fact that behind the term ‘manservant’ is often concealed an employee, usually young, who worked in a grocer’s shop, coffee-shop, or hotel – generally in a smaller or larger occupational unit.⁴¹ This does not mean that manservants, and above all maidservants, who were employed in Athenian households were not numerous. On the contrary: even petit bourgeois families with a relatively low income did their best to have servants. We know that from an early date the provinces supplied the capital with maidservants and nurses, and that young girls, from the Cyclades and elsewhere, became maidservants in order to amass from their pay and savings the coveted sum for their dowry. The frequent references in literary works of the period to cases where these young women fell victim to exploitation and seduction⁴² certainly reflect painful realities. In the register of deaths, entries for young servant girls who died of tuberculosis, pneumonia, or other infectious diseases are relatively frequent:

2 January 1896, Olga Stringou, 19 years, maidservant, from Corinth, pneumonia, died in the Municipal Hospital.

3 January 1896, Neratzoula Renieri, 12 years, maidservant, from Tinos, tubercular meningitis, died in the Municipal Hospital.⁴³

Perhaps it would not be an entirely groundless hypothesis to suppose that behind the exposures of infants, which in the Athens of the period reached high figures, were concealed the despairing actions of maidservants.⁴⁴

38. Christina Agriantoni, ‘Συνοικία Μεταξουργείο’ [The Metaxourgeio district], in Christina Agriantoni/Maria Christina Hatzioannou (eds), *To Μεταξουργείο της Αθήνας* [Metaxourgeio, Athens], Athens 1995, p. 163.

39. Christina Agriantoni, *Οι απαρχές της εκβιομηχάνισης στην Ελλάδα τον 19ο αιώνα* [The beginnings of industrialisation in Greece in the 19th century], Athens 1986, pp. 407, 413-14, 416.

40. 27 January 1896: Constantinia Kamaterou, 14 years, housework, from Liosia, ‘dismemberment as a consequence of an explosion at the Moraïtinis fireworks factory’; 8 September 1896: Dimitrios Ventikos, 23 years, from Gytheio, ‘asphyxia as a consequence of an explosion in the gunpowder factory’. See the entries in the deaths register of the Athens Registrar’s Office.

41. See remarks of Agriantoni, *Οι απαρχές της εκβιομηχάνισης*, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

42. See, by way of indication, the *Αθλοι των Αθηνών* [Les misérables of Athens] by Ioannis Kondylakis, Athens 1980, and the short story ‘Kyra-Kostaina’ by Mikhail Mitsakis, *Είς Αθηναίος Χρονοθήρας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-9. See also Michalis Riginos, *Μορφές παιδικής εργασίας στη βιομηχανία και τη βιοτεχνία 1870-1940* [Forms of child labour in industry and craft industry 1870-1940], Athens 1995, p. 28.

43. See the deaths register of January 1896 (Sections A-B) in the Athens Registrar’s Office.

44. Cf. reservations in this connection of Maria Korasidou, *Οι άθλοι των Αθηνών και οι θεραπευτές*

As to salaries and day wages around 1890, the following could be quoted indicatively:⁴⁵

Monthly salary in drachmas

Ministers	800 + 450 carriage rental
Full university professors	400-450
Secondary school teachers	200-280
State primary school teachers	170, with the rent of their house
Judges of first instance	350
Police court judges	1st class 180
Grocers' employees	15-120, with food and accommodation
Confectioners' employees	60-70, with food
Waiters at coffee-shops and hotels	30-100, with food and gratuities
Ironworks labourers	30-120

Day wages in drachmas

Printers	1-5
Barbers	up to 4
Shoemakers' labourers	0.50 - 5
Shoemakers' cutters	up to 7
Tailors	up to 5
Clothing cutters	8-10
Builders	6-10
Navvies	3-4

In order to evaluate the purchasing power of the above salaries and day wages, below are some average prices (Drs per *oka*) of basic commodities in Athens in 1887:⁴⁶

Meat	1.50	Olive oil	1.50
Bread	0.52	Tobacco	6.00
Salt	0.20	Olives	0.80
Potatoes	0.50	Rice	1.05
Wine	0.50		

τονς. Φτώχεια και φιλανθρωπία στην ελληνική πρωτεύουσα τον 19ο αιώνα [Les misérables of Athens and their champions. Poverty and philanthropy in the Greek capital in the nineteenth century] Athens 1995, p. 206.

45. Πανελλήνιος Σύντροφος 1891, *op. cit.*, pp. 816-21. Charles Cheston, *H Ελλάς τω 1887, op. cit.*, p. 40, states that on average the day wage of builders was, in Athens in 1887, 4.50 Drs and for carpenters 5 Drs. See also Christina Agriantoni, 'Βιομηχανία' [Industry], in *Iστορία της Ελλάδας τον 20ον αιώνα, op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 199: In the years 1911-13, in industry 'the average day wages ranged from 3 to 5 Drs for men and from 0.50 to 2.50 Drs for women and children, levels that we also encounter at the end of the 19th century'. A comparative table of worker's day wages and salaries in Athens and Piraeus the years 1914-20 is printed by G. Leontaritis, 'Το ελληνικό εργατικό κίνημα και το αστικό κράτος 1910-20', in *Μελετήματα γύρω από τον Βενιζέλο και την εποχή του* ['The Greek labour movement and the bourgeois state 1910-20', in Studies on Venizelos and his times], (supervised by Thanos Veremis and Odysseas Dimitrakopoulos), Athens 1980, pp. 49-84.

46. Cheston, *H Ελλάς τω 1887, op. cit.*, p. 39. One *oka* was equal to 1,280 grams.

On the eve of the Balkan Wars, twenty years later, that is, the figures for occupations given above had grown and been added to, reflecting the increase in the population of Athens and the new needs of its residents. Cited below, indicatively, are some occupations recorded in the *Guide to Greece 1910-1911* [in Greek] by N. Inglesis (for all the entries, see the Annexe), which show that the capital adopted first and rapidly all the European innovations in the various parameters of social life.

TABLE 6
Occupations of Athenians 1910-1911

Antiquities, traders in	8
Artificial flower manufacturers	9
Beer sellers	42
Bicycle merchants	7
Bicycle repairers	13
Brassiere manufacturers	18
Building contractors	170
Dancing teachers	15
Dentists	69
Electrical goods vendors and installers	18
Electricians	24
Engineers	271
False teeth makers	2
Foreign languages teachers	57
Gaming clubs	16
Journalists	184
Lawyers	89
Mechanical engineers	5
Microbiology laboratories	13
Painters	52
Photographers	38
Physicians	419
Printers	57
Renters of furnished rooms	21
Sewing-machine repairers	14
Sewing-machine sellers	7
Theatre-owners	13
Typewriter importers	2
Women dressmakers	171

As has been pointed out above, the occupations themselves give a first picture of social stratification. In spite of the systematic attempts of the leading groups to conceal, supposedly for reasons of national unity, the widening class structure of Greek society,⁴⁷

47. Agriantoni, 'Βιομηχανία', *op. cit.*, pp. 174-5.

this was particularly apparent in the big cities, where most of the units of craft industry and industrial production and the various services – that is, dependent labour – were concentrated. Class differences were especially visible in the capital and involved, *inter alia*, income, way and quality of life, education, cultural goods, and the use of spare time.⁴⁸

We do not have data on the level of incomes in Athens. How high these were in certain groups can be conjectured from the luxury houses, the servants, the receptions, the sums spent on clothes, food and the purchase of ‘modern’, that is, European, goods, on children’s education, etc. At the other end of the scale, the indirect taxation, which was heavily weighted on consumer goods, forced down the incomes, in any event, not very high, of the working-class strata.⁴⁹ The highlighting of certain high day wages, mainly for specialised jobs, is often misleading, since it is not taken into account that the work was not regular. The increasing proportion of income ascribed to women in the making up of the family budget, by their work in factories, workshops or at home (chiefly using sewing-machines, whose sales constantly increased), was, over and above the other changes which this entailed, indicative of the economic needs of households. The 38 women dressmakers or seamstresses in the tax list of 1887 had grown to 171 in the list of 1910-11 (as compared with 229 tailor’s shops for men’s clothing). These were clearly women who were independent traders employing other women workers in their establishments. In 1907 the number of ‘linen tailors and manufacturers’ is given as 5,644, of whom 3,905 were women.⁵⁰

If to the problems of finding steady employment and coping with the cost of living we add a diet deficient in basic calories, the 10 to 12 hours work on premises which were often unsuitable and the frequently squalid living conditions of the working classes, as well as the endemic and epidemic illnesses that all this entailed, we will appreciate that the idyllic picture of an Athens of the *belle époque* certainly did not include a large section of its residents. In the particular case of workers’ housing, the investigation which was undertaken on the orders of the Ministry of the National Economy in 1920 in Athens and Piraeus discovered that many were living in basements ‘totally dark, like veritable tombs’, or in makeshift houses built with unsuitable materials, with very little or no furniture, with tenants who were afflicted with various diseases.⁵¹

48. See the remarks of Mikhail Mitsakis in 1887, ‘Το θέρος’, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60: ‘However reluctant we are to admit it, it is beyond all dispute that social classes have already begun to harden and form with us, once considered the democratic people *par excellence*. And although an aristocracy, in the meaning attributed to the word elsewhere, has not been formed, nor will it ever be possible for it to be formed, it would not, of course, be easy to deny the power and the existence of the plutocracy’.

49. Agriantoni, ‘Βιομηχανία’, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-9. On women’s work in the late nineteenth century see also Efi Avdela, *Δημόσιοι υπάλληλοι γένους θηλυκού. Καταμερούμός της εργασίας κατά φύλα στον δημόσιο τομέα, 1908-1955* [Civil servants of the female gender. Division of labour by gender in the public sector, 1908-1955], Athens 1990, pp. 17-27, where maidservants, women workers and schoolmistresses are discussed.

51. Vika Gizeli, *Κοινωνικοί μετασχηματισμοί*, *op. cit.*, p. 111; see the whole chapter on ‘Conditions of workers’ housing in the centre and on the outskirts of the city’ (*ibid.*, pp. 102-14). Antonis Liakos, *Εργασία και πολιτική στην Ελλάδα των Μεσοπολέμου. Το Διεθνές Γραφείο Εργασίας και η ανάδονη των κοι-*

It was not a matter of chance that tuberculosis decimated chiefly these populations.⁵²

Another differentiation, which also had its class dimension, was the gradual development, from the late nineteenth century, in the capital, of ‘good’ bourgeois districts to the east, in contrast with the working-class districts in the west.⁵³ This dichotomy can be seen paradigmatically in the way in which Christina Agriantoni unfolds the shaping of the Metaxourgeio district into a place of settlement of working-class and petit bourgeois strata.⁵⁴ Something similar can be noted, as has already been pointed out, in literary texts of the period.

The city’s ‘pathology’, nevertheless, can be seen particularly from the fate that lay in wait for its weaker members: the infants, the children, and the young people. In the period 1895–99, 6,311 infants were abandoned at the Municipal Foundling Hospital, that is, an average of 1,262 each year, when the population of Athens was in 1896, with the surrounding suburbs, 123,000. Half of these did not survive.⁵⁵ Even taking into account that some of these abandoned infants came from Piraeus and from other areas of Attica, the numbers are striking, and point to the major problems which lay behind these exposures, common to all great cities.⁵⁶

As far as child labour is concerned, the figures for those who were pupils at the Parnassos Society’s ‘School for Indigent Children’ give us some indication. In 1889–

νωνικών θεσμών [Labour and politics in Greece in the inter-war years. The International Labour Office and the rise of social institutions], Athens 1993, pp. 34–43. In spite of the fact that in 1920 Athens had been burdened with the first refugees, the situation described does not seem to have been very different one or two decades earlier.

52. Vika Gizeli, *Kοινωνικοί μεταοχηματισμοί*, *op. cit.*, p. 102. In January 1896, in Sections A and B of Athens, 27 of 126 adults, that is, 21.43%, are reported as having died of tuberculosis; most of them belonged to the working-class strata. See the relevant deaths register at the Athens Registrar’s Office.

53. Agriantoni, ‘Συνοικία Μεταξουργείο’, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

54. *Ibid.*, passim. See how this dichotomy in the Athens of 1930 can be seen on the criterion of the place of residence of 3,533 traders (surnames beginning with K and Π) who appear in the *Οδηγός της Ελλάδος 1930* of N. Inglesi: Dimitra Vasileiadou, ‘Επαγγελματική και χωροταξική κατανομή στη μεσοπολεμική Αθήνα’ [Occupational and town-planning distribution in inter-war Athens], seminar study in the postgraduate programme on Modern Greek and European History of the History and Archaeology Department of the University of Crete, Rethymno 2002.

55. Athens Municipal Foundling Hospital, *Συγκριτικός πίναξ της κυνήσεως και των δαπανών κατά τας δύο τελευταίας πενταετίας 1895–1899 και 1900–1904* [Comparative table of movement and expenses during the last two five-year periods 1895–1899 and 1900–1904], Athens 1905, where in the table given at the beginning it is noted that the percentage mortality rate of the abandoned infants was: in 1895 52%, in 1896 57%, in 1897 45%, in 1898 53%, and in 1899 40%. See also Maria Korasidou, *Οι άθλοι των Αθηνών και οι θεραπευτές τους*, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–30. See also Pelagia Marketou, ‘Προνοιακές πολιτικές για τα έκθετα βρέφη: το Δημοτικό Βρεφοκομείο Αθηνών, Αθήνα 1905 α.ι.’, ανέκδοτη διπλωματική εργασία στο μεταπτυχιακό πρόγραμμα του Τμήματος Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών [Welfare policies for abandoned infants: The Athens Municipal Foundling Hospital, nineteenth-century Athens, unpublished degree thesis in the postgraduate programme of the History and Archaeology Department of the University of Athens] Athens, May 1999.

56. For Hermopolis see Christos Loukos, ‘Τα έκθετα βρέφη της Ερμούπολης’ [The abandoned infants of Hermopolis], in *Αριέρωμα στον πανεπιστημιακό δίσκαλο Βασ. Βλ. Σφυρόερα* [Tribute to the university teacher Vasilis V. Sphyroeras], Athens [1994], pp. 247–64.

1890, 1,044 pupils were registered, 751 of these being orphans. Their origins were: Megalopoli 179, Athens 168, Macedonia 103, Corinthia 89, Cyclades 77, Crete 72, Tripoli 43, Gortynia 31, Andros 29, Epirus 20, islands of the Argo-Saronic Gulf 24, and fewer from other regions. Their principal occupations were: shoeblocks 205, servants 136, waiters 85, building site suppliers 66, carpenters 44, cobblers 43, builders 35, ironworkers 30, stone-carvers 23, street traders 20, newspaper-vendors 20.⁵⁷

Some of the children from the provinces had been indentured by their parents to craftsmen, in exchange for accommodation and food. Those who could not find work wandered the streets and spent the night on benches in the market, in railway trucks, in carts, on building sites. Between 22 June and 5 July 1918, on the orders of the Minister of Health, Spyridon Simou, some 250 children and adolescents of both genders were arrested by the police; these were either orphans or separated from their families and their way of life was felt to threaten good morals and the image which the authorities wanted the city to present. Those arrested were confined in a kind of reformatory.⁵⁸

A considerable number of children died from hardships and diseases:

4 January 1896, Ioannis Karapatsakis, 15 years, from Crete, celiac typhus, died in the parish of Aghia Photini.

10 January 1896, Constantinos P. Bobas, 13 years, shoe-cleaner, from Gortynia, bronchial pneumonia, died in the parish of Aghios Pavlos.⁵⁹

How the leading groups of Athens attempted to cope with the problem of poverty which afflicted adults and children by the setting up of a poorhouse, a foundling hospital, orphanages, a school for indigent children, special workshops for women, etc., and what discourse was structured to support this philanthropic activity cannot be detailed here.⁶⁰ This belongs within a more general endeavour to relieve, in the name of Christian charity and the need to improve the morals of society, the various tensions and to balance the impasses of individuals and groups before they took on dimensions that would menace the social equilibrium. The upheavals which had already occurred in the advanced countries of the West – particularly the Commune of Paris⁶¹ –, the realisation, *inter alia*, that the degradation of the masses threatened all

57. Liakos, *Εργασία και πολιτική στην Ελλάδα των Μεσοπολέμου*, *op. cit.*, p. 280. See also Maria Korasidou, *Οι άθλιοι των Αθηνών και οι θεραπευτές τους*, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-5.

58. Vaso Theodorou, ‘Επαιτεία και αλητεία στην Αθήνα και τον Πειραιά. Οι πρώτες απόπειρες “αναμόρφωσης παραστρατημένων παιδιών” (τέλη 19ου - αρχές 20ού αι.)’ [Begging and vagrancy in Athens and Piraeus. The first attempts at the ‘reform of delinquent children’ (late 19th - early 20th century)], in *H πόλη στους νεότερους χρόνους*, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-13. On the procuring of children and child labour see also M. Riginos, *Μορφές παιδικής εργασίας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

59. Data from the deaths register of the Athens Registrar’s Office.

60. See principally the works of M. Korasidou and V. Theodorou.

61. For the reaction of the Greek press in Constantinople to this event, see Efi Kanner, ‘Αφρονες εναντίον φρονίμων, όχλος εναντίον λαού. Ο ελληνικός Τύπος της Κωνσταντινούπολης απέναντι στην

the groups in society (as was made dramatically obvious during the epidemics, particularly the cholera), and the spread of socialist ideas led gradually some more developed consciences to different evaluations of the causes of poverty and the ways of dealing with it. Instead of suppression and an attempt to shift all the responsibilities on to the impoverished themselves, other ways were sought, by the Greek state as well, of dealing with the social problem. The labour legislation of the first administrations of Eleftherios Venizelos moved in this direction with the solving of chronic problems of the working class and measures for children and women. These measures were opposed by those who, insisting upon the classless nature of Greek society, wanted to hold down wages and control labour relations by systems of patronage.

This brief identification of some of the social phenomena of Athens at the turn of the century could not ignore the swelling of the ranks of the middle and, above all, the petit bourgeois strata at this period. Both in the tax table of 1887 and even more so in the census of occupations of 1910-1911, these classes are represented in large numbers. To those with smaller or larger occupational units – whether these were the producers or the vendors of various products, or both together – must be added the increasing number of those employed in the constantly expanding area of public and private services, as well as members of the professions (doctors, engineers, architects, etc.). What delineated the boundaries between these, the upper class⁶² and the working class is an object for research.

Many of these professionals, organised into unions, made their political and social presence felt in critical events in the capital, particularly in the movement of 1909.⁶³ In the episodes connected with the translation of the Gospels into Demotic, in November-December 1901, ‘the bakers, the tanners, the milkmen, the confectioners, the barbers, the cookshop employees, the silkworkers, the hoteliers, the ironworkers, the shoemakers, the printers and other “guilds” of the city’ mobilised, together with the professors and the students, forming a joint committee.⁶⁴ In 1910-11, the following guilds/associations were recorded:

Κομμούνα του Παρισιού’, [The foolish against the prudent, the mob against the people. The Greek press of Constantinople on the Commune of Paris], *Mνήμων* 18 (1996), pp. 89-108.

62. See below, pp. 88-90, what Mikhail Mitsakis notes.

63. It has, moreover, been argued that the petit bourgeois strata and the unions that represented them had, as of 1905, distanced themselves from the political parties and had shifted ideologically towards anti-parliamentarian views: Thanasis Bochotis, ‘Εσωτερική πολιτική’ [Domestic policy], in *Iστορία της Ελλάδας τον 20ού αιώνα, op. cit.*, vol. A2, pp. 54-61. Nikos Potamianos is preparing a doctoral thesis at the University of Crete (Department of History and Archaeology) on the petit bourgeois in Athens, and, indicatively in the rest of Greece, in the period 1880-1922.

64. Stratis Bouratzos, ‘Η εκπαίδευση στο ελληνικό κράτος’ [Education in the Greek state], in *Iστορία της Ελλάδας τον 20ού αιώνα, op. cit.*, vol. A2, p. 270.

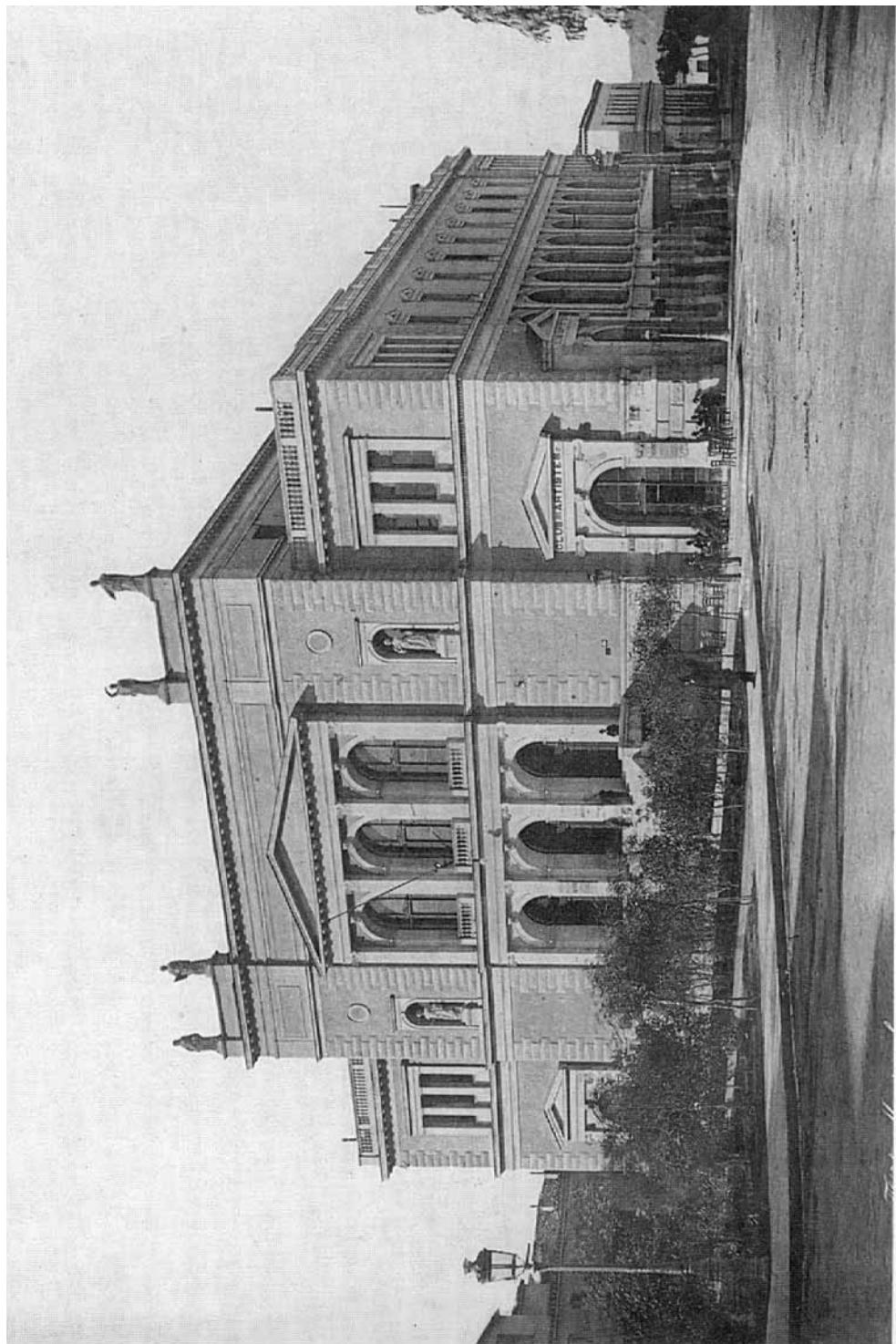
TABLE 7
*Guilds - Associations of Athens*⁶⁵

Bakers' labourers	Furniture-gilders	Painters & decorators
Barbers	Furniture makers' labourers	Painters' & decorators'
Bookbinders' employees	Goat's milk vendors	labourers
Bootmakers	Goldsmiths	Panel-beaters
Box makers	Greengrocers	Printers-bookbinders
Bread bakers	Grocers & wine-merchants	'Goutemvergios'
Butchers	Hairdressers	Sandal makers
Carpenters	Hatters	Shoemakers
Carters	Hoteliers	Shoemakers' employees
Cigarette manufacturers (tobacco factory)	Ironworkers	Shoe-shop keepers
Cigar makers	Lamp-glass sellers	Silkworms
Coachmen	Light-fittings vendors	Silversmiths
Coffee-roasters' employees	Lithographers	Steam-mill labourers
Coffee vendors	Marble-engravers	Tailors
Confectioners' employees	Market gardeners	Tanners
Cookshop employees	Merchant tailor shopkeepers	Tobacconists
Coopers	Merchant tailors' employees	Tramway employees
Distillers	Milkmen	Watchmakers
Fishmongers	Non-commissioned officers, retired	Wine-merchants

As to the labour and trade-union movement in Athens before 1912, it could be said that the associations were usually 'mixed' – employers and employees together – and strikes sporadic and without broader aims. However, in the first decade of the century, certain phenomena that foreshadowed subsequent developments became more frequent: in 1907, the Union of Greek Industrialists was formed and *To κοινωνικόν μας ζήτημα* [Our Social Issue] by Georgios Skliros was published; in 1908, the Sociology Society and the Association of Working Classes of Greece of Platon Drakoulis were set up; in 1909, the Greek Socialist Party, again of Platon Drakoulis, and in 1911, the Socialist Centre of Nikos Yanniou were founded.⁶⁶

65. Inglesis, *Οδηγός της Ελλάδος 1910-1911*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-5. Cf. differences from the list of guilds published by the same guide for 1905-1906, pp. 447-8.

66. Costas Fountanopoulos, 'Μισθωτή εργασία' [Wage-earning labour], in *Iστορία της Ελλάδας των 20ού αιώνων*, *op. cit.*, vol. A1, pp. 104-7.



The Athens Municipal Theatre, the work of Ernst Ziller. [C. Biris, *Al Aθήνα από τον 19ον εις τον 20όν αιώνα*, Athens 1996, p. 205]

The cultural dimension – Ways of life

From an early date, Athens was the centre not only of the economic, social and political activities of the Greek state, but also of the most important educational and cultural activities. The resistance of certain regional centres to this draining was overcome towards the end of the nineteenth century. Even the rapidly developing Piraeus was unable to maintain its autonomous cultural identity: intellectuals, periodicals and institutions sought a better fate in the capital.⁶⁷ The exceptions, in Piraeus and elsewhere, confirmed the rule.

All the figures were overwhelmingly in favour of Athens, in proportion to its population: the daily and periodical press, other publishing activities, education (public and private), the theatre, etc.

In the first record of Greek books in the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archives (E.L.I.A.), printed in the period 1864-1900, Athens comes first with 3,518 titles, followed by Hermoupolis, Corfu, and Patras, with only 184, 116, and 108 titles, respectively.⁶⁸ In 1879, when Athens had 63,374 residents, there were 5 schoolmasters, 4.7 schoolmistresses, 3.2 doctors, 1.2 pharmacists, 1.3 midwives, 5.5 lawyers, 10.9 artists, and 0.9 journalists per 1,000 of the population. The other cities followed with lower percentages.⁶⁹ The gap widened even further in the following years. Up to the 1920s, Athens had the only university, and the weight that it carried in the intellectual life of the whole country is an established fact. At the same time, the presence of more than 3,000 students⁷⁰ gave vitality to the life of the capital.

As to the literacy of the residents of Athens: in 1879, the percentages of literate residents were 62% and 39% in the case of males and females respectively.⁷¹ The corresponding figures for 1907, are 72.17% and 51.31%.⁷² In 1879, in Athens there were 62 elementary schools (25 for boys and 37 for girls). Of these, seven were public (3 for boys and 4 for girls). The total of 1,845 attending school divided up as follows: in public schools, 815 boys and 1,040 girls; in private schools, 1,845 boys and 1,998 girls. In general, of all the children of school age, 74 out of 100 attended public and private elementary schools (67 boys out of 100 and 82 girls out of 100).⁷³

67. Vasias Tsokopoulos, ‘Τα στάδια της τοπικής συνείδησης. Ο Πειραιάς, 1835-1935’ [The phases of local consciousness. Piraeus, 1835-1935], in *Νεοελλήνική πόλη*, *op. cit.*, vol. I, σ. 245-9.

68. Popi Polemi, *Η βιβλιοθήκη του ΕΛΙΑ. Ελληνικά βιβλία 1864-1900. Πρώτη καταγραφή* [The E.L.I.A. library. Greek books 1864-1900. A first inventory], Athens 1990.

69. Christos Loukos, ‘Les petites villes en Grèce (1830-1912). Problèmes de définition et de hiérarchie’, in Olivier Zeller (ed.), *Petites villes d'Europe = Cahiers d'histoire XLIII/3-4* (1998), p. 599.

70. *Πανελλήνιος Σύντροφος 1891*, *op. cit.*, p. 977: in the academic year 1889/90, 876 new students registered, the registration of 2,426 was renewed, and at the School of Pharmacology another 29 enrolled. Total of old and new students: 3,331.

71. Mansolas, ‘Απογραφή’, *op. cit.*, p. 857.

72. *Απογραφή των πληθυσμού 1907*, *op. cit.*, table 18.

73. Mansolas, ‘Απογραφή’, *op. cit.*, p. 857. For the numbers of those studying around 1910 see Inglesis, *Οδηγός της Ελλάδος 1910-1911*, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-4.

Athleticism and sport were, up to the 1920s, a concern exclusively of the upper and middle strata of the city. In these the rising bourgeois class sought new activities for spare time, to support its superiority and its cohesion. The middle and lower strata of the middle class turned towards the gymnastics associations that had ‘patriotic’ aims. The purely athletic associations, in which recreational sport, such as fencing and cycling, was cultivated, were ‘clubs’ and their members were exclusively of the upper class. Indeed, such was the separation between the various sections of the bourgeois class that when a sport, cycling in the present instance, was popularised because the purchase of a bicycle had become easy due to falling cost, it was abandoned by the representatives of the leading groups.⁷⁴ Between the years 1870 and 1914, 46 sports associations were founded in Athens and 15 in Piraeus (of a total of 200 for the whole country). In the capital, the training grounds were initially on the edge of the city or a little way outside of it, but were subsequently integrated into its fabric. In the early twentieth century, these premises were in Kiphisias Avenue (now Vasilisis Sophias), Patision St, and in the area round the Panathenaic Stadium. The Panhellenic Gymnastics Association, which was open to enrolment, numbered among its members princes, ministers, Members of Parliament, industrialists, people with private incomes, bankers, engineers, doctors, but also students, office workers, merchants, even barbers, butchers, purveyors of hay, and bakers. Almost all the occupations were on parade here.⁷⁵ A typical example of a ‘closed’ club was the Lawn Tennis Club, which, however, like the other purely sporting associations (the Athenian Club, the Riding Club), were accessible to women of the upper class.

Until the second decade of the twentieth century, for working people, with their exhausting working hours, spare time was too limited to spend on training and sport. The other obstacles were of an economic form and a matter of mentality. The change came about gradually from the 1920s, when the working classes were able and willing to take part in sport, above all in football, which came to express their special identity. Before that period, among the improvised amusements in the working-class districts were stone-throwing fights: usually on Sundays, gangs of young men, but also of toughs, representing a certain district, would clash with gangs from other, usually neighbouring, districts. The opposing gangs contested victory, on patches of waste ground and other unimproved sites, and with ammunition of which there was then an abundance in the city, by throwing stones or firing at them with catapults, often with bloody consequences.⁷⁶

74. On athleticism and sport, I am using the studies – pioneering for the Greek bibliography and also exemplary – of Christina Koulouri: *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, and ‘Αθλητισμός και σπορ’ [Athleticism and sport], in *Iστορία της Ελλάδας του 20ού αιώνα, op. cit.*, vol. A2, pp. 401-19.

75. For the full list of members see Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας, op. cit.*, pp. 244-5. See *ibid.*, pp. 166-9, for the athletics associations founded between 1870 and 1914.

76. Kairophylas, *Η Αθήνα της μπέλ επόκ*, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-41.

For many Athenians, however, the Olympic Games of 1896 were their first initiation into the matter and rules of athleticism. A host of people, including those from the provinces, watched the contests in the Stadium and at the Velodrome. All of them celebrated enthusiastically, in the bedecked capital, the victory of Spyros Louis. The next such mass attendance at games would again be in Athens, when the Intermediate Olympics of 1906 were held.⁷⁷

Dances – mostly at the Palace, but also at foreign embassies and the grand bourgeois mansions – provided the model for entertainment to which both the upper and the middle strata of the bourgeois class looked. The dresses, the hats and the jewellery of the ladies, the general appearance of the men (with special attention being paid to the moustache), skill in the dances and much else were eagerly discussed for days afterwards. In January 1884, on the occasion of the arrival of Grand Duke Paul of Russia at the head of a squadron of the Russian fleet, Queen Olga laid on a dance at the Palace and declared that this would also include the mazurka. Those expecting an invitation were seized with panic, and they hastened to learn the dance from a special dancing-master. At the reception, the Queen stood out in her diamonds, while Madame Syn-grou wore a necklace of fabulous value. The evening gown that made the greatest impression had come direct from Paris.⁷⁸

Sixteen teachers of dancing are recorded in the tax list of 1887.⁷⁹ Around 1910, there were fifteen schools of dancing, four indoor theatres (the Royal, the Municipal, the Panhellenion, and the Polytheama) and eleven open-air theatres in operation. The nine indoor cafés had the following names: Eden, Étoile, Alhambra, Achilleion, Alexander the Great, Mon Plaisir, Monte Carlo, Moulin Rouge, and Splendid. There were, in addition, four open-air cafés and ten halls for concerts, dances, celebrations, etc.⁸⁰ During the Intermediate Olympics of 1906, the *Guide for Foreigners*⁸¹ recommended, apart from the theatres, the following places of entertainment:

The Zacharatos coffee-shop in Syntagma Square, where a first-class orchestra plays all the time.

The Zacharatos-Kaperonis beer-hall in Omonia Square, where the Neopolitan Tarantella can be heard.

The ‘Kastalia’ beer-hall, Patision St, opposite the Polytechnic, where another Tarantella is sung.

Cafés: Gaieté, Proasteiou St; Alexander the Great, Athinas St.

77. Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αυτικής ποιωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-14.

78. Kairophylas, *Η Αθήνα της μπελ επόκη*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

79. See above, Table 5.

80. Inglesis, *Οδηγός 1910-1911*, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-6.

81. *Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 1906. Οδηγός των Ξένων* [Olympic Games 1906. Guide for Foreigners], Athens 1906, p. 61: ‘Οδηγός ημερονυκτίου’ [A Guide for a day and night].

On the basis of the penetrating description by Mikhail Mitsakis, in 1887, of the way of life by social class and entertainment of the Athenians, it could be pointed out again that the upper bourgeois class, by adopting the European way of life, was seeking, as can be seen in the case of sport, to confirm its superiority over the other classes and to ensure its cohesion; that the middle class, which was aptly personified in the paterfamilias with a 300 drachma income, sacrificed everything to achieve an outer image which would approach, albeit as something of a travesty, the models of the leading groups and would clearly distinguish its members from the working classes (petit bourgeois and working strata); and that these strata, the '*laos*', the people, on general lines, preserved their own form of entertainment: they had their own theatre shows, their own coffee-shops and wine-shops, they expressed their unrestrained enthusiasm at the sight of 'Leonidas at Thermopylae defeating the Persians by gunfire' and were moved at hearing the singing of an *amané* or the music of a violinist from Smyrna. Below are the more important passages from Mitsakis's inimitable text:

[The upper class]

The imitation of the manners of the great European world is total, the sole, very small difference being that it is... an imitation [...]. The lady of the house has certain days of the week at which she is 'at home'. To the decoration of the special rooms of the house into which she introduces her guests she pays exceptional attention [...]. Apart from the soirées, the matinées and the après-midis and the five-o'clocks – the *imerides*, the *apogeigmatinai*, the *deilina*, or however else they have been Hellenised – flourish greatly. The master of the house, if he wishes to indicate that he wants you to spend the evening with him, invites you, as he puts it, to take tea. Pieces from Verdi or Wagner, of the *Othello* of the Scala of Milan, or the *Valkyries* of Brussels, are played on the piano. At carnival time in the salons, which have been thrown open, blazing with lights and with the slippery parquet gleaming, lively and well-attended dances are given – des bals travestis, costumés, parés et masqué. The American flower of the salons, that exotic plant so successfully transplanted into Europe, flirtation with the girls (shall we dare to translate it as *erotopaidia*?) is more fully in use. Expeditions into the country and elsewhere are made very frequently, des picnics, parties de plaisir, courses à pied ou à cheval. The most popular places of resort are Phaliron and, above all, cool Kiphisia, a truly aristocratic centre with its elegant villas and its two large hotels and its hydrotherapy establishment. If there is a French play, it is to the owners and the visitors of these salons that the best seats inevitably belong; if there is not, the same happens – because it could not possibly be otherwise – in the case of an Italian play, but at a Greek play their presence could never occur. [...] Those who frequent these salons are usually diplomats, financiers, Greeks from abroad, bankers, ambassadors, secretaries, chargés d'affaires, courtiers, senior civil servants. [...] If, moreover, the salon has even the smallest connection with politics, it is not slow, within a short space of time, to take on the appearance of a coffee-shop in Hafteia or Dimopratirou. [...] The young ladies sing solos or duets, sit at the piano, or exchange pleasantries with the perfumed young men, while the ladies talk

about the event of the day, publicise the little scandals which inevitably are not lacking from time to time from their circle, gossip, or converse about the latest success in the theatre or the recent book causing a stir of which news has arrived from Paris. [...]

[The middle class]

Of all, the most amorphous and lacking in a personality of its own. Junior office workers, professionals and traders, pensioners, those with a small private income, students. If the life of the upper class with us is a copy of the life of the upper classes elsewhere, the life of our bourgeois is a copy of the copy, an imitation of the imitation. [...] The spectacle of a paterfamilias with an income of 300 drachmas attempting with all his might to reproduce in his circle, in miniature, the image of the life of a wealthy man with ten thousand talents is by no means the rarest or least pitiable of phenomena and symptoms. These are the external appearances which, as far as is possible, are sought. The young ladies of the family necessarily speak French. The *Saison* and any other journal of fashions gives them to hand the models for their dresses and hats. The piano is a presence in the main room, which is appropriately furnished – even if to this end the rest of the rooms have to remain bare and looking like rooms in a cheap hotel in which a gang of tramps is putting up, ready to leave the next day. The ladies affect the same free and easy manners with the gentlemen – regarding these as the most effective means of securing sons-in-law and an essential accessory to civilised behaviour. In winter, dances and soirées are also given, at which tea is likewise drunk and the circle dance (*enkyklos*) performed. Attendance at every public spectacle, at every gathering of a crowd, at every celebration is a *sine qua non*. The *Parnassos* concerts are fully subscribed to. The descent to Phaliron is performed without fail every summer, and the *Olympia* hosts the rest. At the gatherings or ceremonies at the Palace, the husband or father is usually invited with his spouse or daughters, and it is not infrequent that some newspaper, in narrating the events of the day in the manner of chronicling, which has prevailed for some time now, refers from time to time to one of the young ladies as being distinguished by her grace and beauty. In the meantime, the young men of the family roam the streets and the squares, adorn themselves on credit, drive a carriage, play billiards in the cafés, and run up debts.

[*Laos*]

The people have sustained – because this is inevitable – the influence of these manners and customs. They have already become used to drinking beer instead of their retsina. They have their own country spots, to which they are disgorged on Sundays, with women and children. They have their own special coffee-shops, their own wine-shops, their own theatres. They have their own festivals, their own gatherings, their own celebrations. But how different these are from what they once were! In winter, when the other classes complain as a rule that there is no theatre, they have certain little theatres of their own for pantomime or comic shows. Crowded beer-halls provide them at little cost with bitter beer to drink and a dirty Italian or

Greek woman serving it to look at. A quantity of hostelries, in which wine, beer and food, tripe for preference, is provided, remaining open for their benefit throughout the night, and introducing with strange success the system of private rooms, invite them to all-night feasts. But their chief entertainment is confined for the most part in winter to wandering on foot or by carriage the alleyways and the suburbs and the surrounding districts, enjoying the wonderful and unique *sunshine*.

In summer, however, they are packed in their thousands into the damp and wretched gardens by the Ilisos, where they watch in a state of patriotic exaltation and enthusiasm Leonidas at Thermopylae defeating the Persians by gunfire, of Constantine Palaeologus dying on the wooden ramparts of a worm-eaten stage, or the remarkable sufferings of Genevieve, or the fight by means of mysterious designs of Athanasios Diakos against the onslaught of the Turks and his fatal impalement. At other times, they stand before the daring acrobatic paces of some starving athlete, or applaud the death-defying leaps of a ten-year-old girl, or split their sides with guffaws at the monstrous grimaces of a repulsive clown. Or at other times, with the impetus of all their bestial instincts aroused, they beat the chairs and benches as if to break them to show their approval of some vulgar dancer or a singer with a hoarse throat and discordant voice, but with plump calves. [...]

But although they seem in such high spirits, they do not truly enjoy themselves in this fashion. Where you must be to see them truly enjoying themselves is in the slightly out-of-the-way gathering-places of the working population, in Eleftherias Square, at the railway stations, in the Thiseion district, where eccentric coffee-shops with singing are set up and itinerant companies of instrumentalists or singers from Asia Minor establish themselves, or a violinist from Smyrna enchants those present with his agile bow and the fine voice of an Armenian or Jewish woman throws out the sighs and moans of a passionate *amané*. There they return somewhat to their traditions, there they return to their natural inclinations, there they return to their true feelings. There their character can be seen as it truly is – that of a southern people, disposed towards enjoyment and idleness. There they abandon themselves to the outpouring of their innermost longings, their inner tendencies, their unfeigned appetites.⁸²

As far as musical entertainment is concerned, it is worth mentioning that from the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century and for about ten years, the dominant presence in the streets of Athens was the barrel organ, that popular mechanical, stringed musical instrument. Pushed on wheels, it brought to all the districts Italian songs to begin with, and then Greek songs, successes from the Athenian revues, and even patriotic and political songs.⁸³

82. Mitsakis, ‘To θέρος’, in *Eίς Αθηναίος χρονοθήρας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-5.

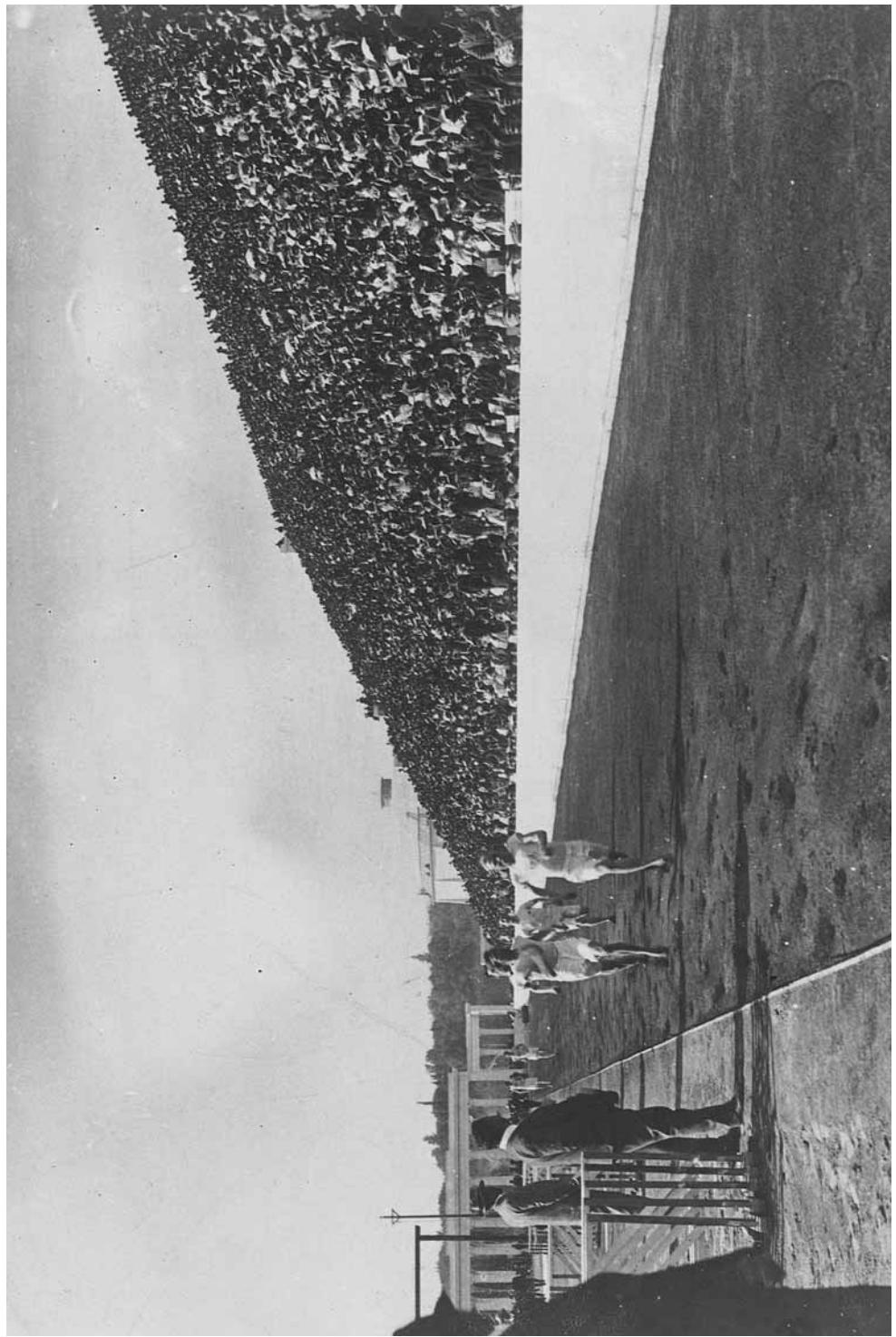
83. Kairophylas, *H Αθήνα της μπελ επόκη*, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-4.

INSTEAD OF AN EPILOGUE

In 1896 and 1906, the foreigners who visited Athens on the occasion of the Olympic Games saw, of course, one side of the city, perhaps its finest. This sketch has attempted to bring to light its other sides, and above all to highlight the inevitable inequalities and contrasts which a great city hides and which are imprinted on all the parameters of social reality: the built space, labour relations, the distribution of wealth, the quality and way of life, etc. The individual character of the Greek capital has also been stressed; at the turn of the century it had become, as was pointed out at the beginning, the undisputed centre of the whole of Hellenism, while at the same time its superiority in all fields over the other cities of the Greek state was now overwhelming. Thus its residents, to a greater or lesser degree, as protagonists or simply as ‘extras’, took part in the major events that were to determine the fate of all the Greeks, whether they were subjects of the Greek state or Greeks from abroad.

In August 1894, before the eyes of watching Athenians, Greek officers wrecked the printing-works of the *Acropolis* newspaper of Vlasis Gavriilidis, because the publisher had dared to tell the truth about the state of the Greek army. The officers were acquitted in triumph, the all-powerful National Society was emboldened and by means of demonstrations and other pressures dragged the Diliyannis government into war with Turkey and the humiliating defeat of 1897.⁸⁴ The people of Athens, headed by the unions, welcomed and supported the Goudi movement by a massive popular demonstration in the Pedion tou Areos on 14 September 1909. The same people gathered a year later in Syntagma Square to hear the views of Venizelos on a change in the terms of the political and social situation. All this, and much more, not only related to political events, confirm that the centre of development was Athens, but also led individuals and groups to new experiences and realisations which, from the second decade of the twentieth century, would prompt them to lay claim more resolutely to other prospects for their lives.

84. Yannis N. Yanopoulos, ‘*Η ενγενής μας τύφλωσις...*’ *Εξωτερική πολιτική και Εθνικά Θέματα* από την ήττα του 1897 έως τη Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή [‘Our noble blindness...’. Foreign policy and ‘National Issues’ from the defeat of 1897 to the Asia Minor Disaster], Athens 1999, the early chapters.



Runners in the Stadium at the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906. [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.37]

ANNEXE

Occupations in Athens around 1910

Accountants	77	Body shops	102
Aerateddrinks machines	2	Boilermakers	2
Agencies	56	Bookbinders	28
Alcohol distillers	2	Bookbinding goods	10
Animal merchants	17	Books, second-hand	7
Antiquities, imitations	4	Bookshops	38
Antiquities, photographs of, sellers	13	Box manufacturers	14
Antiquities, vendors of	8	Brassiere manufacturers and sellers	18
Architects	67	Breweries	3
Artificial flower manufacturers	9	British goods, merchants of	6
Artificial tile manufacturers	2	Brokers	<i>see</i> Commercial brokers, Estate agents, Banking brokers
Asbestos merchants	13	Bronze / brass smiths	29
Assorted goods, sellers	<i>see</i> Haberdashers	Brush factories	6
Bakeries (retail)	56	Building contractors	170
Bakeries (wholesale)	332	Building materials	3; <i>see also</i> Iron girders, merchants
Bakeries, steam-powered	3	Building materials, merchants	40
Ballot manufacturers	1	Building timber importers	26
Bandage manufacturers	4	Butchers	200
Bankers	52	Button manufacturers	2
Banking brokers	41	Cafés	8
Banking bureaus	103	Cage manufacturers	2
Barbers	296	Candlemakers and candle sellers	16
Barley granaries	2	Cap makers and sellers	16
Basket makers	13	Carbide importers	3
Bathing-cabin renters	3	Carpenters' shops	217
Baths, European and Turkish	3	Carpet manufacturers	1
Bed manufacturers	3	Carpet merchants	14
Bed sellers	6	Carriage and cart repair shops	22
Bicycle merchants	7	Carriage-painting works	3
Bicycle repairers	13	Cart makers	28
Billiards goods	5	Carton manufacturers	38
Billiards manufacturers	1	Cartridge manufacturers	1
Biscuit manufacturers	6	Cartridge sellers	<i>see</i> Gunpowder sellers and Gunsmiths
Blacksmiths	22	Cement merchants	2
Bobbin manufacturers	1		
Bobbin warehouses	1		
Body shop goods	4		

SOURCE Nikolaos G. Inglesis, *Oδηγός της Ελλάδος...* [Guide to Greece], Year 3, vol. I, 1910-1911, Athens, s.a., pp. 310-98: the full name of the trader or the title of the enterprise, or the address, are given. Here the names of the occupations and the number of those engaged in each of these are shown. It has not been possible to check on some overlapping; these probably alter the number of traders slightly.

- Cesspit emptiers 4
 Chair makers - chair vendors 21
 Chair repairers 3
 Charcuterie manufacturers 8
 Cheese and butter sellers 15
 Chemical fertiliser merchants 1
 Chemical laboratories 12
 Chemical products, merchants 7
 Chemists 37
 Chick-pea processors 16
 Children's clothing merchants 12
 Children's clothing, tailors *see* Children's clothing merchants
 Chinese and Japanese goods 1
 Chocolate manufacturers 4
 Christening goods, merchants 9
 Cigarette merchants 28
 Clerical garments, tailors 8
 Clothes presses 70
 Coachmakers 29
 Coachmen 204
 Coal merchants (retail) 43
 Coal merchants (wholesale) 107
 Coffee-grinder repairers 3
 Coffee-roasters 68
 Coffee-shop goods 5
 Coffee-shops 565
 Coffin makers 14
 Cognac distillers 16
 Colleges of double-entry accounting, etc. 1
 Colleges of law 8
 Colonial goods *see* Grocers
 Commercial brokers 43
 Commission agents 229
 Confectioners 47
 Confectionery and bread-ring manufacturers 7
 Confectionery sellers 14
 Confetti manufacturers 6
 Construction engineers 9
 Contractors 5
 Contracts, bureaus 2
 Cookshops 105
 Coopers 15
 Copper goods, manufacturers 4
 Coppersmiths 8
 Cork makers 3
 Cotton merchants 5
 Court bailiffs 131
 Cowsheds and cowshed proprietors 23
 Cretan products, merchants 2
 Currant importers 1
 Customs brokers 14
 Cylindrical shutters, manufacturers 2
 Dairies 121
 Dancing schools 15
 Dealers 14
 Dentists 69
 Designers 8
 Detonator manufacturers 1
 Diamond merchants 21
 Diamond-setters 5
 Discounters of pensions and salaries 8
 Dockers 2
 Door and window-frame manufacturers 1
 Dowry goods 5
 Drinking-water 1
 Drinks makers, sellers *see* Spirituous liquor distillers *and* Spirituous liquor sellers
 Dutch products, merchants 1
 Duty stamp sellers 4
 Dyer's shops *and* dyers 32
 Egg sellers 8
 Electrical engineers 2
 Electrical goods, sales and installations 18
 Electricians 24
 Electricians' workshops 10
 Electroplaters 1
 Embroidery makers 10
 Engineers 271
 English, French, German language teachers
see Foreign language teachers
 Engravers 13
 Envelope makers 4
 Estate agents 56
 Explosives manufacturers 3
 False teeth makers 2
 Fashion magazines, sellers 4
 Feathers, artificial, manufacturers and
 merchants 6
 Fencing teachers 2
 Fez makers 1
 Fireworks manufacturers 2
 Fish glue manufacturers 2
 Fishmongers 22

- Fitters 12
Flag manufacturers 1
Flannel makers 6
Florists 8
Flour merchants (retail) 27
Flour merchants (wholesale) 4
Foreign language teachers 57
Foreign language teachers 6; *see also*
 Schoolmasters
Foundries 3
Frames 5
Fringe-makers *see* Silk factories
Fur merchants 2
Furnished rooms, renters of 21
Furniture makers 123
Furniture sellers 15
Furniture upholsterers 27
Gaming clubs 16
General stores with cookshop 11
General stores 860
Gilders *see* Goldsmiths
Glass gilders 3
Glassplate merchants *see* Body shop goods
Glassware manufacturers 1
Glassware sellers 37
Glove manufacturers 6
Gold-embroiderers 6
Goldsmiths 76
Gramophone sellers 9
Grape must, concentrated 1
Grape residue dealers 1
Grape-sugar manufacturers 1
Greek costumes, tailors *see* Traditional
 costume tailors
Greengrocers and fruiterers 217
Grinders 9
Grocers 44
Gunpowder manufacturers 1
Gunpowder sellers 5
Gunsmiths 6
Haberdasheries 208
Haberdashers 94
Hairdressers 40
Hair-dyers 8
Halva makers 2
Handcart makers *see* Carriage makers and
 Cart makers
Handicrafts designers 1
Handicrafts manufacturers 2
Handicrafts vendors 2
Harness makers *see* Saddlers and Saddle
 makers
Hat factories 1
Hat repairers 46
Hat shops 23
Hat-making goods 3
Hay vendors 72
Heating equipment 7
Heating materials 2
Heel makers 2
Herrings and pickled fish merchants 2
Home products suppliers 20
Horse vendors 2
Hotels 98
Hunting equipment 3
Ice manufacturers 6
Icon-painters 11
Industrial goods, merchants 6
Information bureaus 1
Inns 41
Insurance companies (life, marine, fire) 34
Interpreters 6
Interpreters, embassies 6
Interpreters, hotels 32
Iron girder manufacturers 16
Iron sellers 27
Ironmongers 15
Ironworks 84
Jewellery engravers 43
Journalists 184
Kataifi and pastry manufacturers 6
Kerchief manufacturers - vendors 5
Kernel oil producers 1; *see also* Soap manu-
 facturers
Kerosene manufacturers 1
Key makers 2
Knife makers 9
Knitted goods sellers 4
Knitting factories 3
Lamp sellers 8
Lamp wick makers 1
Lathe-working shops 23
Lawyers 889
Lead piping and lead goods sellers 2

Leather goods sellers	12	Musical instrument repairers	1
Leather merchants	26	Musical instrument sellers	5
Ledger makers	5	Must salt and retsina exporters	1
Lemonade manufacturers	12	Naphtha manufacturers	3
Lighting goods	32	Naphtha merchants	1
Lime merchants (wholesale and retail)	13	Nickel-plating plant	2
Linen manufacturers	39	Norwegian products, sellers	1
Linseed oil sellers	1	Notaries public	36
Lithographers	11	Novelties and men's goods, merchants	33
Luxury goods, merchants	26	Oenological laboratories	5
Machine shops	15	Oil and olive-oils merchants	11
Machinery repairers	3	Oil merchants	1
Marble cutters	39	Old clothes vendors	18
Marble masons	85	Olive-presses	3
Marble masons' plant	26	Optical goods	14
Marble sellers	3	Orthopedic goods manufacturers	1
Marble, hewn	1	Oxygen manufacturers	2
Margarine manufacturers	1	Paint sellers	22
Masseurs	5	Painters	52
Matting manufacturers	3	Paper bags, manufacturers	3
Mechanical engineers	5	Paper warehouses	8
Medallion (lapel badges, etc.) makers	2	Paraffin manufacturers	2
Men's cloth merchants	36	Pasta manufacturers	9
Men's tailors	229	Pawnbrokers	13
Merchant tailors	101	Perfume manufacturers	4
Metal goods manufacturers	1	Perfume sellers	40
Metallurgists	2	Perfume shops	<i>see Barbers and Perfume sellers</i>
Metals, unprocessed, merchants	11	Pharmaceutical goods	<i>see Pharmaceuticals merchants</i>
Microbiology laboratories	13	Pharmaceuticals bottles, merchants	1
Midwives	119	Pharmaceuticals merchants	33
Military goods merchants	4	Pharmaceuticals warehouses	<i>see Pharmaceuticals merchants</i>
Military headgear manufacturers	8	Pharmacies	107
Military tailors	10	Photographers	38
Mineral water warehouses	5	Photographic goods and cameras	6
Mineralogists	9	Photozincographers	8
Mines, purchases and sales	14	Physicians	419
Mining engineers	22	ear, nose and throat specialists	8
Mirror manufacturers	10	general practitioners	225
Money-changers	22	gynaecologists - obstetricians	36
Money-lenders	10	microbiologists	6
Motor vehicle companies	1	neurologists and mental disorders	14
Motor vehicle repairs	2	ophthalmologists	18
Music publishers	2	paediatricians	28
Music teachers	50	stomatologists	8
Musical composition sellers	5		
Musical instrument makers	7		
Musical instrument merchants	5		

- surgeons 27
urologists 4
venereal diseases 45
- Piano repairers 2
Piano stores 6
Piano teachers 32
Piano tuners 2
Picture publishers 2
Picture-frame makers and sellers 24
Pig fat sellers 1
Plaster and mortar merchants 1
Plaster manufacturers 5
Plastics manufacturers 5
Pleated cloth manufacturers 2
Plumbers 51
Plumbing equipment manufacturers 22
Plumbing lime sellers *see* Cement merchants
Postage stamp sellers 8
Postage-stamp sellers *see* Stationers
Potteries 7
Pottery sellers 30
Poultry and game sellers 11
Priests 90
Printers 57
Proof-readers (newspapers, periodicals, books) 11
Public and municipal works contractors 74
Publishing houses 16
Quarrying plant 2
Quilters 31
Radiator installations 1
Rag merchants 3
Ready-made clothing, merchants 25
Restaurants 61
Retailers 7
Road-making contractors 1
Ropers 6
Saddle makers 4
Saddlers 31
Safes (for valuables), sellers 2
Sandal makers 45
Scientific instruments 8
Sculptors 28
Servants' employment agencies *see* Servants' employment agents
Servants' employment agents 14
Set designers 3
- Sewing-machine repairers 14
Sewing-machine sellers 7
Shipowners 11
Shirt makers *see* Linen manufacturers
Shoe repairers 25
Shoemakers 293
Shoemaking goods 11
Shoeshine parlours 4
Shoe-tree makers 12
Shoulder-padding manufacturers 1
Sign-makers 12
Silk manufacturers 21
Silks, Greek, sellers 6
Silkworm importers 1
Silversmiths *see* Goldsmiths
Singapore pepper importers 1
Sketching contractors 3
Skins, untreated, merchants 22
Snuff sellers 3
Soap manufacturers 2
Soap sellers 10
Spirituous liquor distillers 16
Spirituous liquor sellers 45
Stage directors 3
Stamp makers *see* Engravers
Stationers 35
Statue makers *see* Sculptors
Steam laundries 6
Steam-mills 5
Steam-saw works 9
Steelyard makers 4
Sticking-plaster manufacturers 2
Stocking manufacturers 2
Stocking-making machine vendors 2
Stonecutters 45
Stoves 2
Straw hat manufacturers 2
Straw hat sellers *see* Hat shops
Street-cleaning contractors 2
Sugared almond manufacturers and sellers 5
Sunshade and umbrella manufacturers *see* Umbrella makers
Surgical instrument makers 2
Surgical instrument sellers 7
Syros Turkish delight merchants 9
Syrup (grape) manufacturers 1
Tailoring goods merchants 4

Tallow candle manufacturers	1	Varnish manufacturers	3
Tallow manufacturers	1	Veterinary surgeons	21
Tanneries	21	Vinegar warehouses	2
Tape and braid makers	2	Wallet makers	14
Tax-farmers	2	Watch repairers	35
Tea merchants	<i>see</i> Grocers	Watchmakers	16
Telephones 1; <i>see also</i> Electrical goods		Water-sprinkling contractors	1
Terrazzo tiles	26	Weapon repairers	12
Textiles, Greek-made, merchants	4	Weaving goods	1
Theatre proprietors	13	Weaving shops for silks or otherwise	21
Thread manufacturers	1	Wedding wreaths	7
Thread sellers	6	Weighing scales, manufacturers	2
Tie makers	8	Wheat merchants	3
Tile manufacturers	13	Wick makers	1
Tin-platers	11	Wig makers	10
Tobacco machine proprietors	4	Wine distillation	2
Tobacco merchants	14	Wine products, importers	1
Tobacconists	256	Wine shops with food	105
Towels, Greek, merchants	1	Wine shops	509
Town-criers	1	Wine warehouses	54
Toy merchants 1; <i>see also</i> Haberdashers and Stationers		Wineries	4
Traditional costume tailors	3	Women dressmakers	171
Traditional footwear manufacturers	13	Women's cloth merchants	77
Travel agents	<i>see</i> Agents	Women's garments, tailors	<i>see</i> Women dressmakers
Travel goods, sellers	20	Women's hat manufacturers	76
Tree-planting contractors	1	Women's hats, factories	<i>see</i> Hat factories
Turkish delight manufacturers	4	Women's traditional shoes, manufacturers	1
Turpentine merchants	<i>see</i> Paint sellers	Wood-carvers	6
Tutors	3	Wooden tripod makers	2
Typefounders	4	Wood-engravers	20
Typewriter importers - operatives	2	Woollen cloth tailors	5
Umbrella makers	3	Woven goods, merchants	<i>see</i> Textile mer- chants
Umbrella repairers	2	Zincographers	<i>see</i> Photozincographers
Uncut precious stones, merchants	5	Zographeia, Thessaly, products	1
Upholsterers	<i>see</i> Furniture upholsterers		
Vaccine suppliers	4		

The royal family and the first Olympic Games

LINA LOUVI

A year or so after the undertaking of the first Olympic Games of modern times by Greece, Demetrios Vikelas observed that, even before they had been held, an important ‘good’ had already been achieved; they had brought ‘into more immediate, more frequent, and greater contact’ the Crown Prince with his fellow-citizens, allowing them the opportunity to appreciate his ‘outstanding qualities, his zeal for every task beneficial to the nation, [...] his straightforwardness, his vigour, his decisiveness’. They had also been given the chance of becoming better acquainted with his brothers, ‘adored by the people’, as they were, to love them even more and thus to increase their gratitude towards the king, to whom they owed ‘these hope-inspiring offshoots of his throne'.¹ The concern of Vikelas to enhance the prestige of the royal family and to reinforce its image in the eyes of the Greek public opinion was expressed at a period in which the credibility of the Greek state and the standing of the dynasty itself had been eroded. At this juncture, a resort to national greatness, which was to develop into an aggressive nationalism, was the only visible way forward. In any event, the approach that wished to see the Head of State as responsible *par excellence* for the territorial integration of the kingdom was more than ever an issue of the moment and the need to support him was the chief concern of his political environment – but also of the European Powers.

The involvement of the royal family in the issue of the revival of the Olympic Games was regarded by its inspirers as virtually self-evident, given that the aristocratic theory of amateurism which believed that athleticism should be far removed from any practical usefulness determined, as it is known, their spirit.² The issue of amateurism,

1. D. Vikelas ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’ [The international Olympic Games], in Alkis Angelou (lit. ed.), *Δημήτριος Βικέλας. Έπαντα* [Demetrios Vikelas. The collected works], vol. VIII, Athens 1997, p. 139.

2. In any event, the presence of King George had lent the necessary prestige to the Zappas Olympiads that had been held in Athens during the preceding decades. George had also provided a cup for the winner of the pentathlon in the 5th National Olympic Games that were held in 1877 at Shrewsbury and had been organised by the British physician William Penny Brookes. The latter had come to an understanding with the Greek Chargé d’Affaires in London, John Gennadius, to the effect that the Greek monarch should lend, through his – albeit indirect – participation, prestige and Greekness to the Games. See Christina Koulouri,

furthermore, had been the chief reason for the convening of the Paris International Athletics Congress in 1894, at which the King of Belgium, the Prince of Wales, and the Crown Prince of Sweden were nominated as honorary members; it was there that the revival of the Olympic Games was decided upon.³ The President of the Panhellenic Gymnastics Association, Ioannis Phokianos, was initially invited to take part in this Congress on behalf of Greece. Eventually, however, as it was not possible for Phokianos to attend the Congress, Greece was represented by the man of letters, cosmopolitan, and confidant of the royal family Demetrios Vikelas, who, on his own admission, had nothing in common with sport.⁴ The heir to the Greek throne was nominated an honorary member of the Congress. King George, moreover, in a telegram, forwarded through the Paris Embassy, hastened to thank the Congress for this honorific distinction accorded to the Greek royal family. This ‘favour of the Greek Throne manifested towards the Congress predisposed its members in favour of Greece’ and facilitated, according to Vikelas, the acceptance of his proposal, ‘unanimously and wholeheartedly’, that the first Olympic Games should be held in Athens. Vikelas – unable to renounce ‘an honour done to Greece’ – was appointed President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that was entrusted with the organisation of the first Olympic Games.⁵

However, although Vikelas’s initiative in proposing Athens as the venue for the first Olympic Games had the support of the royal family, it did not have the approval of the Greek government. Given that Hungary had also laid claim to the holding of the 1896 Games in Pest, it was thought necessary that ‘proximity talks’ should be held.⁶ Vikelas and Pierre de Coubertin, who travelled successively to Athens in autumn 1894, very soon became aware of the political difficulties. The bankruptcy which the Greek state had declared in 1893 had dealt a heavy blow to its credibility at a time when it was more powerless than ever to manage its meagre resources, to satisfy its domestic and foreign creditors, and, above all, to cope with the pressure upon it for the satisfaction of its irredentist policy. So the holding of the Olympic Games, under the circumstances, struck the political leadership as, to say the least, a

‘Στο δρόμο για την αναβίωση’ [On the road to revival], in ‘Αθήνα 1896 και οι Α’ Διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’ [Athens 1896 and the first International Olympic Games] (forthcoming).

3. N. Müller (ed.), *Pierre de Coubertin. Textes choisis*, vol. II: *Olympisme*, Zurich/New York/Hildesheim 1986, p. 9, in Christina Koulouri, ‘Η ώρα της αναβίωσης και η τέλεση των σύγχρονων Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων στην Αθήνα’ [The time of the revival and the holding of the modern Olympic Games in Athens], ‘Αθήνα 1896 και οι Α’ Διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, *op. cit.*; I. Chrysaphis, *Οι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες* [The modern international Olympic Games], Athens 1930, pp. 176-94; Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, pp. 102-14.

4. ‘My first instinct was to refuse. I did not even know that an international athletics congress was to be convened in Paris. What is there in common between sport and myself? But how could I say no to dear friends?’, Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 135-6.

needless and expensive luxury that it wished to avoid. The efforts of Vikelas and Coubertin were in the end successful mainly thanks to the unwavering support of the Crown Prince.

The Trikoupis government had been in power since October 1893 and was a part of that troubled period which started at the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century and, with short intervals of calm, finished at the end of the first decade of the twentieth. The elections of October 1890 were held in a heavily charged atmosphere that had formed in Athens because of the ‘unfortunate’ Cretan uprising of 1889. Charilaos Trikoupis, who, with the exception of the years 1885-1887, had been in power since 1882, was defeated. His rival, Theodoros Diliyannis, undertook to manage, on the one hand, the public finance problems that had arisen from the borrowing policies of his predecessor, and, on the other, the displeasure of public opinion over the neutrality of the previous government on the Cretan issue. At the same time, the Palace had already started, in its turn, to be the recipient of a part of the popular reactions at its inertia over this major national concern. George was called upon to keep a balance between those who pressed him to undertake his role – at whatever cost – as the responsible administrator of the nation’s affairs and the European Powers that recommended prudence and moderation.

In order to deal with the public finance problems and to ensure extra funds for the state, Diliyannis took a series of measures that brought him into conflict with a considerable portion of the capitalists. This confrontation elevated the ‘third party’, which was supported by the same capitalists, into a political force to be reckoned with. The financier Andreas Syngros, Member of Parliament and a member of the ‘third party’, was the protagonist of this movement. He attempted to convince King George, with whom he had close ties, of the harmful consequences that the Diliyannis government would have for the interests of Greece. George, violating the principle of the *dedilomeni* (that no leader should take or continue in office unless there were clear indications that he commanded a parliamentary majority), ousted, in February 1892, the Diliyannis government, which had enjoyed the confidence of Parliament. However, the new prime minister, Constantinos Constantopoulos, who came from the ‘third party’, proved inadequate for the management of the country’s problems. Trikoupis, who emerged victorious from the elections of May 1892, continued, with the support of the British, the policy of concluding new loans, which brought upon him the displeasure not only of the Opposition, but also of the French creditors. On the refusal of George – on the recommendation of Syngros – to ratify a new loan, Trikoupis, in May 1893, resigned. Nevertheless, the plummeting of Greek securities on the international markets brought about, in October of the same year, the fall of the Sotirios Sotiropoulos government (Sotiropoulos was a member of the ‘third party’), which had succeeded that of Trikoupis.

Trikoupis again formed a government and two months later announced the cessation of payments by the Greek state. The reactions of the foreign capitalists who had bought Greek state securities, and particularly of the Germans, who had invested for the first time on the Greek market on the occasion of the marriage of the Crown



The royal families of Greece and the United Kingdom in a commemorative photograph with officers (1906). [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.5]

Prince to the German Emperor's sister, had begun to take on a menacing form. The Trikoupis government had completely lost its credibility abroad, while it was progressively losing control at home. Having undertaken political responsibility for the cessation of payments, it attempted to deal with the pressures of the Opposition, the demands of the financial world, the displeasure of the Throne, and the frenzied dedication to the *Megali Idea*, which yet again had seized upon the Greeks. About a year after the economic collapse of the Greek state, in the prevailing climate of humiliation and defeatism, a group of officer intellectuals, journalists, etc., in a desire to transcend this political, economic and national impasse that had been generated, founded the National Society, which had a manifestly nationalistic and conspiratorial character; the part that this Society played was, a little later, to prove fatal. In the meantime, all sections of the Opposition, setting aside the very acute disagreements which existed between them, united in a common front against Trikoupis, which was joined by King George, in the belief that the removal of Trikoupis would permit a relative restoration of the country's international credit. Diliyannis, who had been removed two years earlier by George, allied himself with the king in order to strengthen the anti-Trikoupis front. The presence of the Crown Prince, on horseback, at the large anti-Trikoupis demonstration held in Athens in January 1895 prompted Trikoupis, immediately afterwards, to submit his resignation to George, who fully defended the Heir's unconstitutional behaviour. In the meantime, the country was run by a caretaker government with Nikolaos Diliyannis as premier. Elections were called for April 1895 and Theodoros Diliyannis emerged as the victor.⁷

When, therefore, Vikelas and Coubertin came to Athens in autumn 1894 (in October and November, respectively) to announce the great success of Greece in undertaking the holding of the first Olympic Games, they were greeted with the hesitations and refusal of the Greek government. Prime minister Charilaos Trikoupis, in a meeting with Vikelas, did not, in principle, voice any opposition to the undertaking of such a responsibility; he merely expressed his reservations because of the unfavourable economic state of the country. He added, moreover, that since this was what had been decided he would do everything possible to ensure their success. Later, however, having, it seems, done his sums as to the cost, he adopted a negative attitude. His close associate, and member of the *Olympia* Committee – the committee that managed the Zappas bequest – Stephanos Dragoumis undertook the thankless task of officially expressing the refusal of Greece to accept the organisation of the Olympic Games. The reason was, naturally, ‘the meagre means possessed today by the Greek people’ for undertaking a task which was ‘beyond its powers’.⁸

7. K. Vergopoulos, ‘Οι κυβερνήσεις Δηλιγιάννη, Κωνσταντόπουλου, Τρικούπη, Σωτηρόπουλου (1890-1893)’ [The Diliyannis, Constantopoulos, Trikoupis, Sotiropoulos governments (1890-1893)], and ‘Η τελευταία κυβέρνηση Τρικούπη και η πτώχευση’ [The last Trikoupis government and the bankruptcy], in *Ιστορία των Ελληνικού Έθνους*, vol. XIV, Athens 1977, pp. 30-5; G. Aspreas, *Πολιτική ιστορία της νεωτέρας Ελλάδος 1821-1960* [Political history of modern Greece 1821-1960], vol. I, pp. 191-210.

8. IOC Archive, Vikelas to Coubertin, Athens, 5 October 1894, in Christina Koulouri, ‘Η ώρα της αναβίωσης’, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

This attitude attracted negative comments from the press, as well as from those involved in the matter of the Olympic Games.⁹ Nevertheless, Coubertin, with the valuable support of the Crown Prince, continued his efforts to reverse the negative climate. ‘He employed’, says Vikelas, ‘every means to smooth over the obstacles which presented themselves, banishing absurd misgivings, restoring shaken convictions, enlightening interested parties as to the details of the matter. Interviews with journalists, a reading at the “Parnassos” [Literary Association], official presentations, everything contributed to the success of the purpose’. Finally, ‘thanks to the zeal and vigour of the noble Frenchman, Greece has escaped from the danger which threatened’.¹⁰ The ‘noble Frenchman’, however, did not conceal his bitterness, even his anger, over his initial unfavourable treatment by the Greeks and, above all, by the politicians, who not only did not accept his offer, but also told lies about the final cost of the Games, thus representing as unreliable his own first estimate.¹¹ The greatest problem which Coubertin and the supporters of the revival of the Olympic Games had to face, following the refusal of the government to undertake any obligation, was to ensure funds from private individuals in order to circumvent state subsidisation. This was, in any event, one of the main purposes of his activities in Athens.

However, this enthusiasm was not considered constructive by the associates of the Crown Prince. They charged him with having been ‘mistaken’ in addressing himself to private initiative without reaching an understanding with the government in a period when the country was in a ‘state of bankruptcy’. Their concern centred on the possible consequences that the failure of such an undertaking could have for the Prince. Certain fears were therefore expressed as to how far the latter, who had accepted the proposals of Coubertin for private funding, would be able to respond to these needs, since the success of such an ambitious task was far from certain, while at the same time he himself ‘is not rich enough to get us out of this difficult position’.¹² Moreover, the Prince’s secretary Georgios Melas subsequently informed Coubertin of the difficulties of finding funds and of the – in any event – negative attitude of the government. He stressed the will and enthusiasm of the Crown Prince to carry out this undertaking at ‘whatever cost’, even to the extent of providing the whole sum. Nevertheless, Melas reiterated to Coubertin that the Prince’s private fortune was not sufficient for such a gesture and that, on the other hand, it was not in keeping with his prestige and dignity to reduce the revival of the Olympic Games to purely a matter of money. He also pointed out the difficult position in which those who were involved already found themselves, between ‘the patriotic enthusiasm of our Prince and the

9. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Vikelas, Athens, 28 November 1894.

10. Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

11. Coubertin’s barbs were particularly reserved for the vice president of the HOC, Stephanos Skouloudis, whom he accused more or less of being a ‘fraud’, because he gave false particulars to the Committee and, consequently, tricked them. Nor did Charilaos Trikoupis, to whom he attributed ‘childish obstinacy’, escape his accusations; he blamed him for the negative effect the rejection on the part of Greece of such an event would have in Europe. HOC Archive: K1-Φ5, Coubertin to Melas, Paris, 29 December 1894.

12. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Vikelas, Athens, 28 November 1894.

hostile attitude of a government which takes away from us any means of action'.¹³

The hesitations and initial refusal of the government to respond to the proposal with which it had been honoured was exploited politically by the Opposition, which brought up the matter in Parliament. Constantinos Papamichalopoulos, a member of the Diliyannis party and deputy for Epidavros Limiras blamed the government, but also the Greek people, for their indifference and dereliction of duty when faced with so important an event: 'This news ought to have been heard with emotions of enthusiasm by every Greek [...], but, wrongly, it did not galvanise us here to the degree that it should have done [...]. What has the government done in this matter? Did it say yes? Did it accept? Did it invest with its authority the action to be taken?'. He then went on to accuse the Greeks of not making use of the opportunity with which they were presented 'as a life raft' to save the reputation and prestige of Greece, which at that moment was 'totally despised and scorned [...] throughout the civilised world'. Papamichalopoulos was also concerned about the success of the event, and about the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Greeks and their government; he feared that the 'foreigners', who played a leading role in the revival of the ancient institution, would undertake it completely, while the Greeks, by remaining indifferent, would do no more than simply provide their soil. His disquiet reached a climax when he wondered whether the foreigners would be in a position to lend a 'fittingly Hellenic, ancient, classical character to this whole initiative'. Trikoupis, in his reply, confined himself simply to accepting that 'The government has not undertaken the direction and the burdens of the Games'.¹⁴

The debate was then limited to the role of the *Olympia* Committee in the matter of the Olympic Games. It was made clear that the committee in question had not even been asked and had no involvement; this provoked a reaction on the part of the Opposition, which considered the government responsible for this inertia.¹⁵ However, the duration and degree of intensity of the whole debate – which was gone through quickly and was interposed with other matters such as the damage 'caused by hail throughout the property region of Lechaina' – as well as the fact that this was the only time that parliament concerned itself with the specific issue, made it clear that the Olympic Games, at least for the political leadership, were treated as a matter of minor importance, compared with the enormous problems which preoccupied the country at that time.

In the meantime, the Crown Prince now formally undertook the cause of the

13. 'Son Altesse le Prince Royal [...] désire à tout prix que les Jeux Olympiques soient célébrés en Grèce, prêt à en prendre lui-même l'initiative. Mais je sais fort bien que sa propre fortune ne lui permet absolument pas d'offrir, comme il le voudrait peut-être, la somme totale; et d'un autre côté il doit repugner à sa dignité de réduire la chose à une question purement pécuniaire. Nous allons donc nous trouver dans un dilemme fort embarrassant entre l'élan plein de patriotisme de notre Prince, et l'hostilité d'un gouvernement qui nous ôte tout moyen d'agir.' HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Coubertin, Athens, 1/13 December 1894.

14. *Εφημερίς των συζητήσεων της Βουλής* [Gazette of the Debates in Parliament], period XIII, Term IV, Session 17, 24 November 1894, pp. 176-7.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-83.

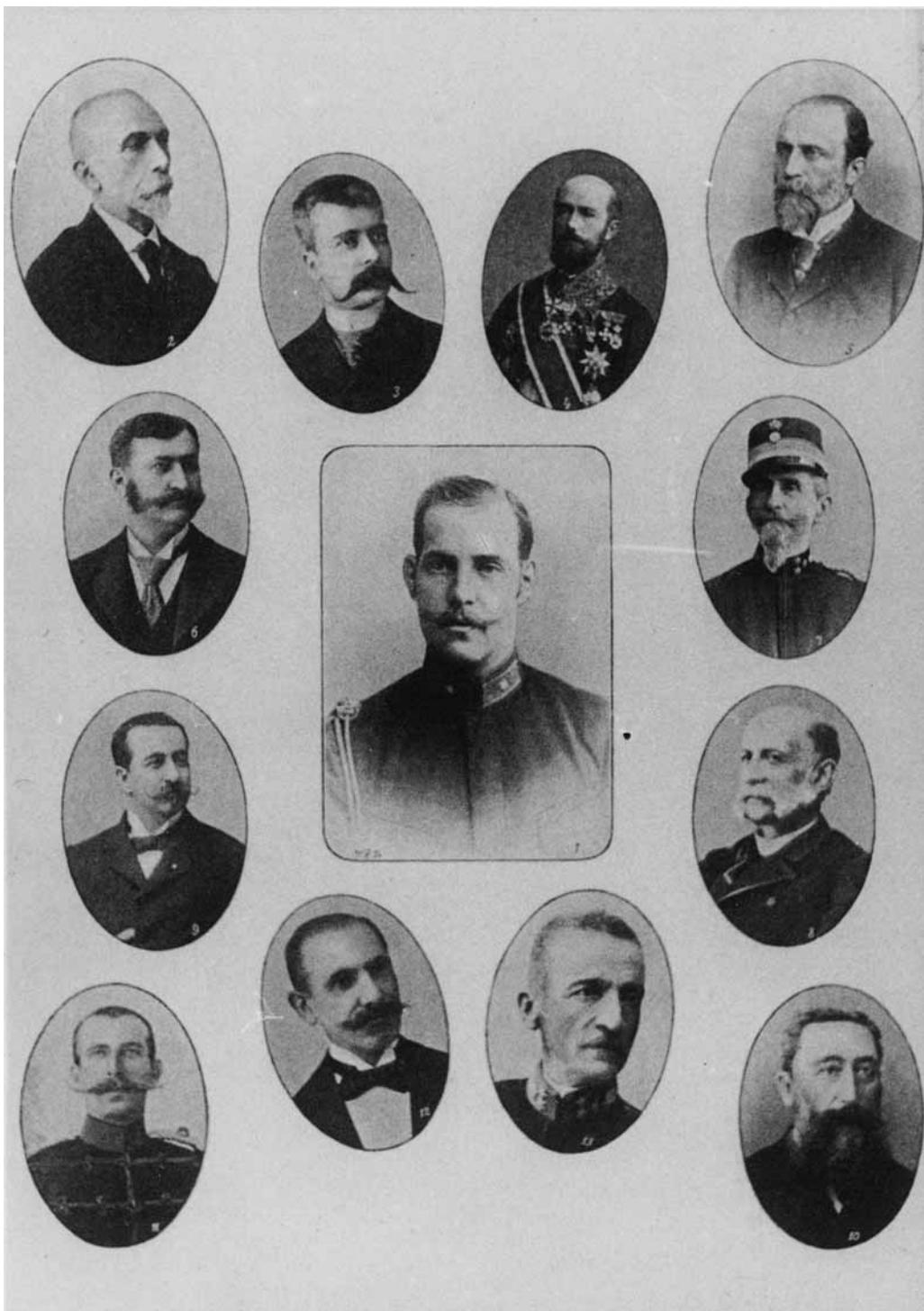
revival of the ancient institution. He was nominated president of the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC), which shouldered their organisation. This Committee consisted of a seven-member council and 28 members. Most of these were politicians, belonging both to the government and the opposing parties, diplomats, military men, well-known businessmen, and trusted friends of the royal family; many of them were also members of the National Society. Thrasyvoulos Manos was appointed vice-president of the Committee. Manos was a well-known military man, an opponent of King Otto, who had taken part in most of the revolutionary movements of the ‘unredeemed’ Greeks, and one of the first members of the National Society. The politicians Stephanos Skouloudis and Alexandros Soutsos and the Mayor of Piraeus, Theodoros Retsinas, a well-known businessman, were also appointed vice-presidents. The banker and businessman Pavlos Skouzes was appointed treasurer. The positions of secretaries of the Committee were occupied by two trusted personal friends of the Crown Prince: his secretary, Georgios Melas, and his childhood friend and Chamberlain Alexandros Merkatis, the scion of an aristocratic family, former secretary to Elisabeth, Empress of Austria. Among the members of the Committee were the deputies Andreas Syngros, Constantinos Karapanos and Epameinondas Embeirikos, the diplomats M. Paparrigopoulos and M. Dragoumis, and the president of the Panhellenic Gymnastics Association, Ioannis Phokianos.¹⁶

The debate in parliament, the attitude of the Committee’s vice-president Stephanos Skouloudis, and the disagreements of many of its members were unwelcome, as has already been pointed out, by the supporters of the revival of the Games and, naturally, by the Prince, who, with support from the Opposition, the press and the public opinion, decided to intervene dynamically, to overcome all the obstacles, and to take the matter into his own hands. Having already sought, after the disagreements that had been expressed, the resignation of the members of the Committee, but without ever having activated it,¹⁷ the Crown Prince proceeded to dissolve it. Thus the Committee was dissolved when it had, in effect, met only once.¹⁸ In January 1895, in the highly charged political climate of the demonstrations, a new Committee was appointed with fewer members. Its president was again, naturally, the Crown Prince. The indifference and then the unfavourable treatment by Trikoupis of what later proved to be the popular cause of the revival of the Olympic Games only added to the erosion of his governance. The new Committee was formed only a few days after the tumultuous demonstration, the resignation of Trikoupis and the appointment by George of the new caretaker government under Nikolaos Diliyannis. The new prime

16. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-11; E. Skiadas, *100 χρόνια Νεότερη Ολυμπιακή Ιστορία, 1896-1996* [A hundred years of modern Olympic history, 1896-1996], Athens 1996, pp. 67-8.

17. Chrysaphis, *ibid.*, p. 210.

18. The strange thing is that the meeting of the Committee had been scheduled for 24 November, a day that coincided with the meeting of parliament and the emergency debate on the matter of the Olympic Games. Coubertin himself had been invited to attend the meeting. HOC Archive: K1-Φ5, Melas to Coubertin, Athens, 9/21 November 1894.



*Members of the Organising Committee of the 1896 Olympic Games with its President,
Crown Prince Constantine, in the centre. [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.31]*

minister was also appointed a member of the HOC by the prince. Nikolaos Diliyannis, a cousin of Theodoros and Ambassador of Greece in Paris, was a trusted friend of the Crown and had played the role of mediator in the reconciliation of the Palace and Theodoros Diliyannis. The Crown Prince's choice was reinforced by the conviction that the next prime minister to emerge from the elections to be held in a few months would be Theodoros Diliyannis, who was also prepared to support the cause of the Olympiad.¹⁹

After what had happened with the first Committee, the new one, on which some of those who had served on the first remained, was made up of leading members of the Opposition and men who enjoyed the trust of the Crown Prince. Among its members were Nikolaos Diliyannis, Leonidas Deliyeorghis (brother of Epameinondas, publisher of the *Gazette of Debates* and an enemy of Trikoupis), Alexandros Zaïmis (the well-known moderate politician who, with the support of the Crown, was always chosen as stop-gap prime minister in times of crisis), Constantinos Karapanos (renowned for his devotion to the ancient world, formerly a Member of Parliament with the Trikoupis party, and subsequently a minister in Theodoros Diliyannis' governments), Kyriakos Mavromichalis (also a Diliyannis deputy, a minister, and later that party's leader), and Nikolaos Metaxas (an army officer and War Minister in the war of 1897). Alexandros Skouzes, Georgios Typaldos-Kozakis, Georgios Romas, Dimitrios Soutsos and Theodoros Retsinas were also appointed members of the Committee. Georgios Melas and Alexandros Merkatis remained as its secretaries, but were joined in that office by Constantinos Manos, son of Thrasyvoulos, and the jurist and diplomat Georgios Streit. The latter was subsequently minister of Foreign Affairs in the Venizelos government; during the National Rift, as he disagreed with the prime minister over his pro-Entente options, he supported the king's pro-German policy, and, after withdrawing from the government, became adviser to Constantine and followed him into exile. The well-known man of letters, journalist, friend of Vikelas and former secretary of King George Timoleon Philimon was appointed general secretary of the Committee. Pavlos Skouzes was again its treasurer.

This 'spontaneous' act of the prince in dissolving the Committee naturally called forth the displeasure of Trikoupis; indeed, according to Coubertin, it made even greater the 'mutual hostility' which divided them.²⁰ Nevertheless, it was soon understood that the prince was determined to overcome all the obstacles and go ahead with the realisation of his ambitious plan. The new Committee met almost immediately after it had been set up. At its first meeting, which was held in the Zappeion on 13 January 1895, the Prince, in a speech 'replete with enthusiasm and hope [...] inspiring confidence in all as to the certain success of the objective',²¹ made clear its orienta-

19. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Coubertin, Athens, 4/26 January 1895.

20. 'It is known to everyone in Greece that Trikoupis was very angry with the Heir to the Throne over this spontaneous act, and their mutual hostility was not wholly unconnected with his fall from power.' Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνεῖς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

21. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Coubertin, Athens, 14/26 January 1895.

tions and announced its action plan. One of the first problems that this new Committee, which to begin with was temporarily accommodated in the Palace, had to attend to was the collection of contributions for the Games. Timoleon Philimon drafted a circular letter in which Greeks were called upon to contribute to the organisation of the Olympic Games. The circular was accompanied by a speech of the Crown Prince, in which the importance of the Games for the national cause was stressed.²²

The presence of the prince was to determine developments from this point on. His dynamic intervention at the critical moment, the removal of Trikoupis and his supporters, and the favourable attitude of the new governments of Nikolaos and Theodoros Diliannis resulted in Constantine being regarded by many historians of the Games as the ‘patron and protagonist’ of the revival of the Olympic Games and the holding of the first Olympiad in Athens being credited ‘exclusively to him’.²³ This was, naturally, the view of Vikelas, who attributed ‘above anyone else, to the attitude of the Heir to the Throne’ the ‘saving of the cause’.²⁴ Constantine’s investment in this cause was similarly advertised by his entourage. The problems that had arisen in connection with the collecting of the money, the organisation and, above all, the budget of the project gradually began to lead to friction within the Committee. At this stage, attention was drawn to the leadership of the Crown Prince, his selfless contribution, and the effectiveness of his action.

His personal secretary, who was also Secretary of the Committee, Georgios Melas, protested strongly even against Coubertin, who, according to Melas, had made a completely erroneous estimate of the cost of the Games, providing a totally ‘ridiculous’ budget.²⁵ His ‘anger’ against the inspirer of the Games became even greater when he detected his ‘dilatoriness’ and his ‘refusal’ to send the regulations of the Games. More or less the same was true of Timoleon Philimon, whom he accused of ‘not having served our purpose well’ in seeking to obtain so much money from the diaspora sponsor Georgios Averoff for the Stadium alone, ‘because in this way the issue of sport is transformed into an archaeological matter’. He also accused the president and the secretary of the special Games Reception Committee, who had sought an excessive sum ‘in order to illuminate the Acropolis and the streets by electric light’, of ‘foolishness’ and ‘lack of judgement’.²⁶

The failure of those responsible to rise to their lofty mission was contrasted with the industriousness and maturity of the Crown Prince, who ‘always works vigorously and seriously’, in order to stress that he was the only person in whom one could hope

22. ‘I do not doubt that the economic circumstances today are far from flourishing [...] but we shall show by deed that we understand the most lofty meaning of international athletic contests, that we have not forgotten the much loved traditions of ancient Greece, and that we prize the traditions of other nations no less.’ IEEE Archives, 23591/20, in Koulouri, ‘Η ώρα της αναβίωσης’, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

23. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-12.

24. Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

25. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Vikelas, Athens, 6/18 March 1895.

26. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to Vikelas, Athens, 8 April 1895.

for the success of the project, because, apart from anything else, he was able to anticipate ‘the possible foolishness and thoughtlessness of others’.²⁷ This attitude on the part of the Crown Prince’s entourage, in conjunction with the displeasure which Coubertin himself had started to voice because his name was not mentioned as the inspirer of the project either by the newspapers or by the Crown Prince, and because the international character of the Games had not been made clear,²⁸ militates in favour of the view that the royal family wished to benefit from the issue of the revival of the Olympic Games, which evolved into a major, popular national festival, at a period, moreover, when nationalist feelings were running high. The involvement of the Crown Prince’s two brothers, princes George and Nicholas, as presidents of the committees for the maritime events and the shooting, respectively, reinforces the picture of a royal family which was working ceaselessly and ‘jointly for this good work to prosper’.²⁹

With its chief concern the finding of funds from private individuals, the Committee, amid friction, competition and recriminations, continued the preparations for the Games. Apart from the major contributions from Greeks abroad, and smaller ones from members of the Committee (the Crown Prince contributed the sum of 5,000 drachmas), significant financial support was provided, in an indirect way, by the new government of Theodoros Diliyannis. Constantinos Papamichalopoulos, Member of Parliament for the ruling party, who had raised the question of the Olympic Games in parliament some six months earlier, managed to gain parliament’s approval for a law which permitted the issuing of a series of postage stamps commemorating the Olympic Games. This action brought in for the Committee, according to Philimon, the sum of 400,000 drachmas. The law also contained a reference to the possibility of the Committee, under the Crown Prince, raising a loan.³⁰

At this same period, in the tense climate of preparations for the Games, another confrontation emerged in Athens: between an elite who believed that the athletic ideal was embodied only by amateur athletes – among them the term ‘amateur’ was synonymous with ‘gentleman’ – and the athletes who belonged to the associations, who were usually professional gymnasts coming from the middle classes. Prince Constantine was among the chief supporters of the first group, and it was thanks to his support that the Athens Sports Club, whose articles of association set strict limits on professionalism, became the centre *par excellence* for the training of athletes for the Olympics. This provoked a reaction from the rest of the associations, and particularly the Panhellenic and its president, Ioannis Phokianos. Founder of the Athens Sports

27. *Ibid.*

28. Vikelas’s Archives, Coubertin to Vikelas, Paris, 2 February 1895, in Koulouri, ‘Η ώρα της αναβίωσης’, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

29. Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, *op. cit.*, p. 136. It was to this end, in any event, that the environment of the royal family was working, taking care even of the smallest detail in the image of the princes as responsible contributors to the success of the Games. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6, Melas to the Crown Prince, Athens, 5 August 1895.

30. Skiadas, *100 χρόνια*, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

Club was Constantinos Manos, a young man ‘of good class’ and secretary of the HOC.³¹

If, however, it seems that the cause of the Olympic Games was of serious concern to the royal family, its entourage, an Athenian elite, and a limited group in society concerned with sport, this does not mean that the wish for the revival of this ancient institution was the result of collective planning or a collectively held vision. Moreover, the speech of the Diliyannis deputy in Parliament about the absence of ‘emotion’ or ‘galvanisation’ of the Greeks, as we saw above, expressed precisely this conclusion. It is obvious that the Olympic Games, inspired by the devotion to antiquity and philhellenism of Coubertin, were gladly adopted by this section of Greek society that, at the given time and within the framework of the dominant irredentist ideology which defined it, wanted to shore up – effortlessly and by peaceful means – the shattered national self-confidence of the Greeks. This ‘voluntaristic’ initiative is evidence of the more general disregard for the institutions of the state themselves and of the distance between the real and the ideal Greece. It was precisely the interests and the rights of this ideal Greece that certain ‘self-appointed’ or ‘collective’ saviours wished to express or defend when they decided, at one of the most critical junctures of the territorial issue, to act as a catalyst and to take the situation into their own hands by setting up secret patriotic organisations. A number of members of the National Society and the ‘Hellenism’ Society belonged to the team preparing for the Olympic Games. The Olympiad, a painless and popular event, was to give them a marvellous opportunity – *inter alia* – of legitimating and confirming their messianic role in the collective consciousness.³² At the same time, the active involvement of the Throne in the matter of the Olympic Games was an attempt to recover its diminished authority.

The successive humiliations endured by the Greeks (the undeclared war of 1885/86, the failure of the Cretan revolution in 1889, and bankruptcy) had offended public feeling, which was attempting to find escape routes and scapegoats. In the prevailing climate of defeatism, the army tried, by shaking off the charge of inactivity with which it had been stigmatised in the last two national crises, to regain lost ground and to play the leading role in the national struggles. But this enhanced role which it was called upon to play brought it into conflict with the Crown, from which it demanded dynamic and unrestricted intervention in the supreme struggle for the national destiny. George was accused of moderation and a willingness to reach political and diplomatic compromises, while at the same time the Crown Prince started to come under sharp critical scrutiny, as being officially responsible for the matter of the army. The crisis which was looming in the army, addressed chiefly against the royal family, forced George to ‘give in to the pressure of the mob’ and of the National Society, and to adapt his policy to public feeling and the demands of the officers; this culminated, a little later, in a complete *volte-face* on his part, and his consent to the beginning of hostilities with Turkey.³³

31. Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-6; Chrysaphis, *Οι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-84.

32. G. Kokkinos, ‘The Greek intellectual world and the Olympic Games’, in this volume, pp. 149-51.

33. D. Vikelas, ‘Ο πόλεμος του 1897’ [The war of 1897], in Alkis Angelou (lit. ed.), *Δημήτριος Βικέλας*.



Την 11 Ιανουαρίου 1895

Αγαγεῖον
της Α.Β.Υ. Διαδόχων.

Αγορακε Κύριε

Επειδή της Α.Β.Υ. των Διαδόχων
για την έργη της νέας περιόδου, στα
της 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ώρες μ.μ. της 13 ολυμπίου
σαφευρεδηλώς ήταν ζωντανός, ηδε δε
οντισμένη ήταν την διεύθυνσιν Οργανώσανται
Αγίουν Εστρωνή, ήτη δε ωροεδρεύοντας ή
Α.Β.Υ. ο Διαδόχος.

Εν γένει προτείνεται νέος σαφευρεδηλώς
σαφευρεδηλώς νέα εποχήν πάντα.

Μετ' εγκαύπτελον Βιώσησεν.

Α.Β.Υ. Διαδόχος
Οργανώσανται

Πρόεδρος Κύριος
Γ. Μελάς

Invitation to Georgios Melas to a meeting of the Olympic Games Committee in the Zappeion (11 January 1895).
[HOC Historical Archive: K1-Φ1-E3]

The change in course of the national policy of the kingdom was at the same time confirmed by the return of Diliyannis to the premiership in April 1895. The successful realisation – by any means – of the irredentist vision which Diliyannis preached now bore no relation to the realistic national policy which Trikoupis had attempted to implement, at least as long as he was prime minister. The redefinition of the content of the *Megali Idea* ideology, which, after the failures of the Russo-Turkish War and the crisis in Eastern Rumelia, seemed to once more be taking on an aggressive dimension, set its seal on the policy of the new prime minister. The Diliyannis party, even though it had been charged with failure over the national issues a decade previously, seemed able to speak more the language of a ‘romantic transcendental patriotism’. Now it presented itself as more able to respond more effectively to the visions of public opinion of ‘national glories’; the myth and the authority of the past would become their main constituent.³⁴

Therefore, when the Olympic Games were held in April 1896, the Greek government and the Palace were at the most critical stage of their political options. More particularly, the Crown was on the cusp, before its *volte-face* and full identification with the options of the National Society, the army and the majority of Greeks, an option which was totally opposed to the wishes of the European Powers, who lost no time in issuing grave warnings of the consequences of such a policy. Their negative attitude towards such initiatives on the part of Greece became clear from the beginning of the resurgence of the Cretan issue. When, in 1896, the question of Crete flared up again – the anti-Turkish reactions of the Europeans after the slaughter of the Armenians had contributed to this – their attempts at mediation fell flat. Seeing that the government and the Palace were in danger of being ‘towed’ by the strong patriotic trend, the Powers, united, declared categorically their refusal to countenance such a violent solution to the Cretan issue. They therefore dissociated themselves from such options on the part of the Greek political leadership, in spite of the fact that a large section of European public opinion looked favourably upon the fresh uprising in Crete.

Although British policy, after the Empire’s consolidation of its position in Egypt, had given up the doctrine of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and with its aim now its stabilisation in the Middle East, it did not differ from the other Powers over the Cretan issue. Salisbury’s Conservative government maintained the traditional balances with the Greek government and the Palace, but attempted to avert any initiative on their part to disturb the *status quo* in the region, a policy which provoked the opposition of the Liberals, who applied pressure to obtain support for the Christian populations who revolted against the autocratic Muslim regime. Thus, the policy of the Foreign Office could be summed up, yet again, as an attempt to impose reforms

Απαντα [Demetrius Vikelas. The collected works], vol. I, Athens 1997, pp. 281-2. See also N. Maroniti, ‘Πολιτική και εθνικό ζήτημα, 1895-1903’ [Politics and the national issue, 1895-1903], doctoral thesis, Department of Political Science, University of Athens, Athens 2001, pp. 80-8.

34. Maroniti, ‘Πολιτική και εθνικό ζήτημα’, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-7.

on the Sultan and to find a peaceful solution to the Cretan question. The approach of France (a champion of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire because of the large number of its investments) to the Greek cause was roughly the same. Its reaction over the Cretan question was entirely negative, but, finally, under pressure from the reactions of a liberal and philhellenic public opinion, it adopted a moderate policy and a common line with Britain. Italy, though a member of the Triple Alliance, was inclined in the end more towards the Britain-France axis, because, here too, of the philhellenic reactions of public opinion. Russia, too, rejected the possibility of armed conflict and the disturbance of the *status quo* in the region. However, although Russia did not wish to betray its role of protector of the Christian peoples of the Balkans, in its efforts to maintain, in parallel, peaceful relations with the Porte, and given its competition with Great Britain, it finally went along with Germany on the Cretan question.³⁵

For the Germany of Wilhelm II, the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was a basic axis of its policy. Thus from the very beginning, the Cretan question called forth the negative reaction of Wilhelmstrasse, which regarded any disturbance in the region as a threat to its interests in the East. Its policy towards the Greek government and the Palace was far from encouraging the efforts of the Greeks to achieve union. Nevertheless, although it had become clear that German policy favoured Turkey, at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs there was a lack of clarity as to its real orientations. A decisive contribution to this had been made by Greece's Ambassador in Berlin, Kleon Rangavis, son of Alexandros, who, believing in the dynamism of Germany, wished to persuade Athens to smooth out its differences with Turkey and to orientate itself towards seeking support in German policy.³⁶ The proposals of Rangavis were not, of course, heeded, since Greek policy had already taken totally different options from those promoted by Germany, while at the same time the climate was entirely unfavourable towards Greece: after bankruptcy, German bondholders and German public opinion had turned against the country. The situation worsened after the developments on the Cretan issue and the frenzied enthusiasm of the Greeks for union there and then. In vain did Rangavis in Berlin attempt to reverse the hostile image of Greece and arouse the philhellenic sentiments of the Germans. It would seem, however, that German philhellenism, taking the ancient Greek past as its model, remained unconvinced of the relation between the glorious past and modern Greece, and especially with the picture of decline presented by the Greek state, particularly after its bankruptcy. German public opinion, expressed chiefly through the press, was

35. On the policy of the European Powers towards the Ottoman Empire at this period, see, indicatively, R. Girault, *Diplomatie européenne et impérialismes, 1871-1914*, Paris 1979, pp. 160-8; P. Renouvin, 'Le XIX^e siècle. De 1871 à 1914. L'apogée de l'Europe', in *Histoire des relations internationales*, Paris 1955, vol. VI, II, pp. 157-77, 192-4. On the attitude of the Powers towards the Cretan question in particular see G. Pikros, 'Η διπλωματική κατάσταση στην Ευρώπη από το 1895 ως τις αρχές του 1897' [The diplomatic situation in Europe from 1895 to early 1897], in *Iστορία των Ελληνικού Έθνους* [History of the Greek Nation], vol. XIV, Athens 1977, pp. 100-1; also Maroniti, 'Πολιτική και εθνικό ζητημα', *op. cit.*, pp. 49-71.

36. Foreign Ministry Archives, B', Archives of the Berlin Embassy, 1896, Rangavis to Skouzes, Berlin 27 May/8 June 1896, 14/26 June 1896, 18/30 June 1896, 25 January/4 February 1897, in Maroniti, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

extremely suspicious of contemporary Greece, and, moreover, regarded the political leadership and the Palace as responsible for that picture.³⁷

The revival of the Olympic Games provided, then, an important argument, which would serve to dissipate the unfavourable impressions that prevailed in German public opinion. But the quarrel that had broken out between the athletics circles in Germany and the International Olympic Committee, and Coubertin, did nothing to contribute to an improvement in the climate.³⁸ It very rapidly became clear, of course, that this confrontation reflected far more the unbridgeable gap of competition between France and Germany, which, after the humiliation of the French in the Franco-Prussian War was constantly growing, than differences purely about athletics between the two countries. Nevertheless, this happening gave the German gymnastics organisations the excuse they needed to reiterate their distrust of Greece, as they announced that they would not attend the Olympic Games. For them, modern Greece was no more than a ‘state of thieves’. The unfavourable climate prevailing in Germany had, naturally, also influenced German sports enthusiasts.³⁹

These developments struck panic into the Games Committee in Greece. An alarmed Philimon hastened to renounce Coubertin in an effort to placate the Germans,⁴⁰ all the more so when the French newspaper which publicised the dispute which had arisen between the IOC and the French baron maintained that the latter had declared that ‘the Greek royal house is on the worst of terms with the Hohenzollerns’.⁴¹ The dispute was, of course, resolved and Coubertin denied what had appeared in print. But the climate in the relations between Coubertin and the Greeks had totally changed. Indicative of this was an article in the *Nea Imera* newspaper of Trieste, a monarchist journal *par excellence*, which accused ‘Kouerten’ of being ‘guilty of intemperate speech’, and by his stance of risking depriving the Olympic Games of the participation of ‘one of the greatest of European nations’. The newspaper maintained that the reasons for this dispute were purely political and dissociated the position of Greece: ‘We Greeks are not to blame if the French were beaten at Sedan, [...] we have not taken leave of our senses to the point of bringing shows of anti-German feeling from the Seine to the Ilisos’.⁴²

37. Foreign Ministry Archives, B', Archives of the Berlin Embassy, 1897, Rangavis to Skouzes, Berlin 29 January/10 February 1897, in Maroniti, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

38. The situation worsened after the publication of an article in the French newspaper *Gil Blas*, in which it was stated that France was the country that had been put in charge of the world-wide efforts in favour of the Games; this called forth a storm of protest in Germany, where it was thought that Coubertin had instigated everything, that he had deliberately kept Germany out, etc. *Acropolis*, 20 December 1895; Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-3; K. Georgiadis, *Die ideengeschichtliche Grundlage der Erneuerung der Olympischen Spiele im 19. Jahrhundert in Griechenland und ihre Umsetzung 1896 in Athen*, Agon Sport Verlag 2000, pp. 228-45.

39. W. Gebhardt, *Soll Deutschland sich an den Olympischen Spielen beteiligen*, Berlin 1896, in Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Acropolis* newspaper, 20 December 1895.

42. *Ibid.*

At the same time, the Greek delegation in Berlin made every effort to persuade the Germans to take part in the Games, assuring them that Greece had no connection with the views of the French or of Coubertin, even if it was true that these views had been expressed.⁴³ Rangavis, engaged in an ‘indefatigable effort’, and bringing into play his acquaintances in the German capital, set up a committee for German participation in the Games, at the head of which was the son of Germany’s Chancellor, Prince of Schillingsfürst. This committee appealed to various German princes and princesses to sensitise German public opinion and the athletics associations so that they would take part in the Olympic Games – among them was Sophia, sister of the emperor and wife of the Greek Crown Prince. At the same time, the rumour began to circulate that the Emperor Wilhelm himself had a ‘lively’ interest in the matter.⁴⁴

Interest of the German royal family had also been shown earlier by the mother of the German emperor. The success of the Olympic Games to be held in Athens, under the auspices of the Greek Heir to the Throne, seems to have been a matter of concern to the Dowager Empress Frederick. The revival of the ancient institution would perhaps contribute to improving the negative climate that had been created in Germany in recent years. The bonds of family relationship between the two families were, in any event, an important motive. The anxiety felt by the Dowager Empress and mother of the Greek Crown Prince’s wife and the concern that she showed for the success of the Olympic Games precisely confirm the efforts made by the German royal family, which were aimed at supporting – albeit partially – the Greek dynasty. Thus the invitation that she issued to Kleon Rangavis and his family to visit the ‘newly-built Friederichshof’ had as its exclusive purpose to prepare for the promotion of Greece. The Olympic Games provided the ideal context for awakening the philhellenic sentiments of the Germans and, at that crucial moment when Greece had hit rock-bottom in the estimation of German public opinion, for improving the climate by a reminder of the direct connection between modern Greece and its glorious ancient past. The Dowager Empress Frederick felt that the Olympic Games should prove ‘useful’ for the country by making it more widely known. She thus proposed that Rangavis, with a view to promoting Greece as well as possible by exploiting the opportunity of the major athletics meeting, should contact the big travel agents to persuade them to undertake the organisation of trips to Greece at the time of the Olympic Games and excursions ‘to the most worthwhile sights of the country’ for foreigners who wished to acquaint themselves with ‘classical Greece’.⁴⁵

43. *Acropolis* newspaper, 20, 21 December 1895 and 3 January 1896.

44. *Acropolis* newspaper, 3 January 1896; Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-3.

45. [The Empress] explained to me that, with the Olympic Games coming up in the spring, if I came to an understanding with the major Berlin travel firm of Stangen – the German Cook – it could probably be persuaded to undertake the organisation not only of group trips to Greece at the time of the festivals, but also of excursions to the country’s most worthwhile sights for the foreigners who will be pouring into Athens from every part and who will not be satisfied with the sights there alone, but will want [...] to visit the interior of our classical country. The Empress said, moreover, that if Stangen reached an understanding with the

The Olympic Games developed into a major national ‘fair’. Their success was beyond all expectations. The response of the Greeks was enthusiastic and the Greek successes in the events reinforced national self-confidence even further. The successful revival of the ancient institution served as a substitute for a great national victory. Mourning for the death of Charilaos Trikoupis,⁴⁶ who, anyway, had hardly contributed to this success, ‘was postponed’ – as Gregorios Xenopoulos wrote, by way of apology, some years later – because of the intoxication of the crowds with the great national festival, because of the ‘obligations to the ancient spirit, which on those days [...] had come to life again’.⁴⁷ The royal family, having claimed, and won, a leading role, now enjoyed the fruits of the glory of this new national achievement. The enthusiastic cheers of the crowds that had overrun the renovated Panathenaic Stadium confirmed the recognition of its contribution to that great national event, while the President of the Games, Prince Constantine, in a speech addressed to his father, King George, assured the Greeks that Greece, following the revival of the Olympic Games, was now associated ‘more closely with the rest of the civilised world’.⁴⁸ The constant presence in the Stadium of the members of the royal family – the Crown Prince, as president of the Games, and Prince George, as president of the Ephors and of the *Hellanodikai* Committee, were there every day – lent to the Games even greater glamour.

Nevertheless, in spite of rumours to the contrary, the foreign crowned heads that had been expected did not eventually come to Athens. The greatest confirmation of the international resonance of the great athletics event was to have been the attendance of the Emperor of Germany, which would have lent ‘a special brilliance to the world festival’. Rumours that represented the Emperor’s yacht as having anchored at Genoa, and Wilhelm to have boarded it on his way to Greece, after his meetings with the emperor of Austro-Hungary and the King of Italy, were not confirmed.⁴⁹ Nor was the King of Sweden in the end present at the Games, though information to the contrary had been spread by the Swedish Consulate in Thessaloniki.⁵⁰

The only crowned head to attend the Olympic Games was the King of Serbia, Alexander. The press gave particular emphasis to this fact, regarding the presence of

steamship and railway companies [with hotels, etc.], it could be hoped that these excursions could be kept up in the future of our country, to our inestimable benefit, by including it in the extensive programme of the firm of Stangen, which already includes Italy, Egypt, and Palestine. The idea seemed to me [...] capable of bearing the fruit of good consequences.’ Foreign Ministry Archives, 1895, B.12, 2, Rangavis to Diliyannis, Berlin 29 September / 11 October 1895.

46. Charilaos Trikoupis died, after a short illness, on 30 March 1896, in Cannes, where he had taken refuge in his disillusionment after his major defeat in the elections of April 1895. The Diliyannis government refused to send a warship to bring the body home. The funeral was held in Athens on 11 April.

47. G. Xenopoulos, ‘Τρικούπης’ [Trikoupis], *Neon Asty* newspaper, 30 March 1907, in Aikaterini Flerianou (ed.), *Χαρίλαος Τρικούπης. Η ζωή και το έργο του* [Charilaos Trikoupis. His life and work], Athens 1999, vol. II, p. 1109.

48. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 310-11.

49. *Acropolis* newspaper, 28 February and 3 March 1896.

50. *Acropolis* newspaper, 9 March 1896.



Les Princes notant les concours.
Οἱ Πρίγκηπες λαμβάνοντες σημειώσεις τῶν Ἀγωνισμάτων.

The princes as judges of the Games in the Stadium at the Intermediate Olympics of 1906.
[HOC Photographic Archive: K85.65]



King George with Queen Alexandra of the United Kingdom and her husband, King Edward VII, with Queen Olga arrive at the seats for the distinguished guests (9 April 1906).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K2.10]

'the young leader of a nation so dear to us' as a great honour for Greece.⁵¹ However, the presence of the Serbian leader was not due so much to his sporting sentiments as to his desire to marry Princess Maria of Greece, daughter of king George. But his journey proved unnecessary, given that when the Serbian king reached Athens, the Princess had already become engaged to George Mikhailovich, Grand Duke of Russia, who was present, together with his Serbian rival, on the stands of the Panathenaic Stadium.⁵² The encomiums of the Press over Alexander's appearance and brilliance, as well as the political dimension that had been attributed to his visit, and the unfortunate outcome of the matchmaking,⁵³ do not seem to have been shared by the royal family. Prince Nicholas described the Serbian leader as a 'repellent man' with the 'appearance of a degenerate'.⁵⁴ As to his brilliance, he narrates a typical incident: when at the finish of the marathon, a little before Spyros Louis made his appearance in the Stadium, all the crowd was cheering enthusiastically and waving Greek flags, in this pandemonium the Serbian king, with a puzzled air, asked King George what nationality the victor was! And George, 'without even smiling', with the sense of humour for which it seems he was known, replied: 'To judge by the enthusiasm of the crowd, he must be either a Turk or Bulgarian'.⁵⁵

The enormous and unexpected success of the Olympic Games, which in the collective consciousness took on the dimensions of a great national victory, contributed, as has been pointed out, to strengthening the national self-confidence of the Greeks, but also their image in the 'civilised' world. It also proved to those who had their doubts about them and thought them unworthy of their ancient ancestors that the

51. *Acropolis* newspaper, 3 March 1896.

52. Πρίγκιπος Νικολάου, *Τα πενήντα χρόνια της ζωής μου* [Prince Nicholas, The fifty years of my life], Athens 1926; *Acropolis* newspaper, 4, 6, 13 and 23 March 1896; Chrysaphis, *Οι σύγχρονοι διεθνεῖς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, p. 316. This 'misfortune' of the Serbian king almost caused a political crisis in Belgrade. Alexander felt that the Serbian prime minister was greatly to blame for the making public of the reasons for his journey to Greece: *Acropolis* newspaper, 10 April 1896.

53. In Athens, great 'political importance' was attached to the visit of the Serbian king, as it was linked to the critical nature of the Macedonian problem and the possibility of a rapprochement between Serbia and Bulgaria (cf. *Acropolis* newspaper, 6 March 1896). The choice of the Russian Grand Duke instead of the Serbian king was seen as the interference of the Russians, and indicative of the intention of Russia of dominating the Balkans and elbowing out the smaller states (cf. *Acropolis* newspaper, 8 April 1896).

54. 'A more repellent man it would be difficult to find. He had a receding forehead, the back of his head was high, and his dishevelled black hair reached to his eyebrows. He had small black eyes and wore spectacles pinched on to his nose; a thick hooked nose; an obstinate chin; a long thick neck, and he wore very small collar lapels. He had the appearance of a degenerate.' Prince Nicholas, *Τα πενήντα χρόνια της ζωής μου*, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 171: 'The whole crowd became frenzied. They took flags out of their pockets and tied them to long poles – God knows where they came from. They ran about and shouted and roared and cheered and danced and threw their hats in the air. I have never seen such an exhibition, I have never heard such pandemonium. And we were all seized by the enthusiasm of the people and shouted too. The king cheered. Who could have contained himself? At precisely this crucial moment, King Alexander turned to my father and asked him "What nationality is the victor?" Without even smiling, my father replied: "To judge by the enthusiasm of the crowd, he must be either a Turk or a Bulgarian".'

modern Greeks were not ‘etiolated’, they were not a ‘stillborn product’, but an ‘inexhaustible race’ which could compete worthily with the rest of the peoples of Europe.⁵⁶ The great gainer by this success was, of course, the Greek royal family. Coubertin and the international character of the Games were forgotten,⁵⁷ and they became, for Greek public opinion, a purely Greek affair, which had been undertaken and carried through just by Greeks, with the help of the Throne. The Crown Prince was now eulogised and his contribution questioned by no one. The press as a body acknowledged the work which he had done and the whole of the political world accepted and praised his leading role in that great national event.⁵⁸

Thus new factors were created in the institution of the revival of the Games. In the intense irredentist climate that prevailed at that period, the Greeks completely appropriated the cause of the Olympic Games, refusing to recognise their international character and to yield to anyone ‘the right to claim the monopoly of a name which has belonged to the country of Greece since time immemorial’.⁵⁹ This great victory of Greece had to be repeated. Such an achievement could not be wasted nor could foreign states be allowed to enjoy its glory. This approach began quickly to gain ground in the circles of the Committee. The possibility of gathering together such great crowds every four years filled the organisers of the Games with hope. King George, his enthusiasm fired by this climate, which had, of course, intensified with the winning of the marathon, overlooking the rules which were established at the Sorbonne Congress, proposed that the Olympic Games should be held permanently in Greece. George’s proposal was made immediately after the victory in the marathon, during a reception that he gave at the Palace, in an atmosphere of emotion and enthusiasm. Philimon, in his speech, assured George that after this great achievement of the Olympic Games he had shown, at last, that he was ‘King of all the Hellenes living in as yet unliberated countries’. The great *desideratum*, then, which was that he should prove that he was responding to his mission of leading all the Greeks so that their national destiny could be fulfilled, had, in part, been achieved. After this declaration, ‘the king’s eyes filled with tears, the Heir and the Princes wept’.⁶⁰ It was in his speech in reply that George proposed the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in Greece.

The proposal may have been the product of the enthusiasm of the moment. But according to Coubertin, it was an idea that those responsible had been cultivating for some time.⁶¹ The proposal thrilled the press and – if we accept that it reflected public opinion – the Greeks generally. The newspapers urged the government to circumvent

56. *Acropolis* newspaper, 3 April 1896.

57. Coubertin himself says that most of those whom he had met in Athens over the issue of the revival of the Games now avoided meeting him or pretended that they did not know him. The press, in its ‘victory’ articles nowhere mentioned his name. Exceptions to this were *Asty* and the Francophone *Messager d’Athènes*, which stressed the decisive role of Coubertin and Vikelas.

58. *Acropolis* newspaper, 4 and 5 April 1896.

59. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 April 1896.

60. *Acropolis* newspaper, 1 April 1896.

61. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-9.

the decisions of the International Olympic Committee and establish the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in Greece.⁶² Diliyannis, already ‘towed along’ by the outburst of patriotism of that time and the mandates of the National Society, hastened to satisfy the enthusiastic, and certainly less dangerous, mandates of public opinion. He submitted to parliament a draft law ‘concerning the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in the Stadium in Athens’. He also sent a telegram to the *Times* of London, which that newspaper published, in which it was stated that the victory of the Greeks in the matter was conclusive and that the IOC, in supporting Athens as the permanent site for the Games, had abandoned its original plan that the Games should be held every four years in different countries.⁶³ However, the Crown Prince, as President of the Olympic Committee and acquainted since 1894 with the principles of the IOC and of Coubertin, perhaps realising that such an initiative would mean an open conflict, did not lend his support – at least openly – to this high-handedness on the part of the Greeks. The President of the IOC, Demetrius Vikelas, a friend of the royal family, undertook to handle the reactions of the IOC and Coubertin towards the actions of the hot-blooded Greeks. On the handing over – according to the rules – of the Presidency of the IOC to Coubertin, and the denial by the *Times* of the contents of the notorious telegram, the members of the International Committee were appeased; at the same time, Vikelas attempted to persuade George of the impracticality of his proposal.

Vikelas’s proposal that permanent International Olympic Games should be held in Athens every four years in between the normal ones was a ‘middle way’ solution and the only possible compromise between the realities of the situation and the impulses of the Greeks and of the Crown. The Olympic Games presented themselves as an excellent opportunity, as has been explained above, for the royal family to claim an important national victory – without cost –, for them to be vindicated in the eyes of

62. Typical of this line of thought is an article in *Asty* (5 April 1896) in which the ‘avoidance’ of jealousy amongst the candidate states is quoted as a justification for the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in Greece: ‘Now when the Olympic Games have ended and success has crowned them, we must take thought as to their continuation in the future in the capital of the Greek Kingdom. Greece will become the peaceful meeting-place for the European states. [...] Any other idea, in our opinion, is unfortunate. It was in Greece that athleticism was born, it is in Greece that it must revive. Moreover, by the establishment of the Games in Greece every four years, any jealousy and quarrelling and favouritism among the great states is avoided as to the choice of the capital in which they will be held on each occasion’.

63. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνεῖς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 352-3. Under the pressure of public opinion it is possible that the prime minister tabled a draft law in parliament – a practice that was usually followed by governments to placate popular demands – and then interest in the matter flagged and it was never debated. The draft law has not been found. The information about it is given only in Chrysaphis. The same applies to the telegram to the *Times*. Nevertheless, the *Asty* newspaper reprinted a part of the *Times* article, in which, *inter alia*, it is stated that in spite of the fact that Paris had been chosen as the city of the Olympic Games of 1900, ‘because no final decision has been taken as to the celebrations in future, the just claims of Athens may be heard. The idea prevailing at the Congress – that the cause of peace would be promoted by the successive holding of the Games in various capitals – is praiseworthy and deserving of attention, but Athens has special attractions, while there is a Stadium nowhere else’ (*Asty*, 11 April 1896). *Acropolis* (2 May 1896) reprinted an article from an English weekly newspaper in which it was claimed that ‘the only place for the revived Olympic Games is Greece’.

those who cast doubt upon them and accused them of failing to keep pace with popular feeling, and of being in tutelage to the European Powers, at a time that was critical for Greece's national rights, at which they were called upon to confirm themselves in the role that they should have undertaken: to be at the head of the national mission. The repetition of the Games and their institutionalisation after the triumph of the first experiment would perhaps help to dispel remaining doubts.

However, the role of the royal family continued to be called into question after the Games. The Throne was called upon to give much further proof of its patriotism. The role of the king as leader of the national mission of the Greeks did not stop at peaceful national celebrations. He had to show in practice his support for the national struggle for Crete. He had to keep one move ahead when the crisis became more general. He had to adopt the intransigent position of 'Union or Death'. The union of Crete with Greece had now become a one-way street for the Cretans in their revolt and for the fervent Greeks of the mainland. The compromise proposals of the European Powers, for a diplomatic solution and for a transitional period of autonomy, were perceived as betrayal and the politicians who dared to begin the slightest negotiation as traitors. A few months after the Olympic Games, in his address to the nation in November 1896, George, choosing to overstep the bounds that he had hitherto set on his policy, gave his consent to the National Society. The national struggle was now to have royal leadership. Setting aside any involvement of the European Powers, the Crown would show itself determined to retain its power by adapting itself to the mandates of public opinion. The direct involvement of the Crown Prince in the war, which began a year after the Olympiad, was the best proof.

However, after the defeat in the Greek-Turkish War, in April 1897, the prestige of the royal family was brutally eroded. Its position now was much worse than it had been before, when it hesitated to go along with the principles of the National Society and the wild devotion to the *Megali Idea* of public opinion. Now it was regarded as responsible for the defeat and, moreover, was accused of betrayal of the nation, because at a time when it could have done so, it did not prevent the war since its sole aim was to preserve the institution of monarchy. In spite of the fact that the European Powers made every effort to support the Crown, the king's popularity continued to decline, and the idea of betrayal continued to hang menacingly over the royal family; for the first time, the foreigners appeared to fear the possibility of his dethronement.⁶⁴ George, however, made a systematic effort to remedy the anti-monarchist climate. The candidacy of Prince George for the governorship of a now autonomous Crete, which was supported by the European Powers and, above all, by Russia, was certainly a 'gift' for the Greek royal family. It did not, however, suffice completely to acquit them of the charges against them arising out of their stance in the 'unfortunate' war. The lifting of the unfavourable climate began only after the unsuccessful

64. Maroniti, 'Πολιτική και εθνικό ζήτημα', *op. cit.*, pp. 170-5; Aspreas, *Πολιτική ιστορία της νεωτέρας Ελλάδος*, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-6; Spyridon Markezinis, *Πολιτική ιστορία της νεωτέρας Ελλάδος* [Political history of modern Greece], vol. II, Athens 1966, p. 344.

assassination attempt against George. This act, by serving as a catalyst, stirred the emotions of the crowd and succeeded in bringing about the ‘expiation’ of the king by converting him from a culprit into a victim. A successful tour of the Peloponnese and direct contact with the problems of farmers confirmed the improvement in the climate. George had once again proved his ability to adapt to and harmonise with the ups and downs of the system.⁶⁵

After all this, Vikelas’s proposal no longer had any topical relevance. At the Congress which was convened at Le Havre in July 1897, to discuss the question of a permanent intermediary holding of the Games in Greece as well as the organisation of the next Olympic Games in Paris, Greece was not even represented and Vikelas’s proposal was not discussed. Together with the vision of the realisation of national yearnings, that of the revival of the glorious past – at that moment at least – had also been lost. It was out of the question, when the Turks were just outside Lamia, for ‘Greece to lay claim to rights of permanently undertaking and holding international games and festivals’.⁶⁶

When in 1899, by the law on gymnastics, the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in Greece was introduced,⁶⁷ the circumstances were different. Defeat had brought the Greeks to earth abruptly, and the quest for ‘Greekness’ would be the basic pivot for the shaping of their new identity and the redefinition of national aims. To the quest for the glorious past, which continued to be the driving force for the rallying of the Greeks and national concord, other features that contributed to the more effective defence of ‘Greekness’, such as language, culture, religion, and physical exercise, would be added. Thus the Olympic Games, apart from reviving the glorious past and reinforcing national self-confidence, this time also confirmed the correct preparation of the Greeks for national integration.

In spite of the total opposition of the IOC, the new Olympic Games Committee, again headed by the Crown Prince, having secured the consent of the government after the voting of the Eftaxias’ law, laid claim, just a year after the opening of the second Olympiad in Paris, to the introduction of permanent Olympic Games in Athens. The opinion of the IOC was, it seems, of no account. But the Greek claims did not affect its rules and its original decisions. The Olympic Games of Paris and then of St Louis put a stop to the claims of Greece. Nevertheless, the solution of permanently holding Mid-Olympics in Athens every four years, in between the normal Games, was not abandoned, and the Crown Prince, as president of the new Committee, after the compromise proposal of the IOC that they should be called

65. Maroniti, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-30; Prince Nicholas, *Ta πενήντα χρόνια της ζωής μου*, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-205.

66. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

67. Law BXKA', tabled in parliament by the minister of Education in the Theotokis government, Athanasios Eftaxias. The law introduced the teaching of gymnastics in elementary and secondary schools, and the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in Greece. *Εφημερίς των συζητήσεων της Βουλής* [Gazette of the Debates in Parliament], period XV, Term I, Session 68, 3 July 1899, pp. 1294-304. Law BXKA', ‘Concerning gymnastics and athletics contests’, ΦΕΚ [Government Gazette] I, 141, 12 July 1899; Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνιότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-9.

'Athenian Olympic Games', again personally took up the cause of the new Olympic Games. By means of mobilising Greeks abroad, the royal courts of Europe, the government, and all the Greeks, the Intermediate Olympics of 1906 was a huge success. The presence, moreover, of the English king and his consort – the sister of King George – lent the Games the grandeur that their organisers wished for. It is a matter of history that the experiment of the Intermediate Olympics was not repeated. Nevertheless, the royal family monopolised the Presidency of the HOC.

In the new realities that took shape after the defeat of 1897, state policy and 'corrupting' parliamentarianism were regarded by a portion of the Greeks as responsible for the national disaster. This rejection of the holders of political power encouraged the need to find a charismatic 'Messiah'-leader. Thus Constantine was projected by a select circle of his supporters as capable of uniting 'in one symbolic thread the destiny of the nation, the destiny of the Greek state, and the destiny of the Greek Throne',⁶⁸ an ideal which conflicted a few years later with that of Venizelos and the Liberal party. Within this framework, the management of the cause of the Olympic Games, which filled public opinion with enthusiasm, as it combined the revival of the glorious past with the demonstration of bodily strength, was, from now on, to be, together with the army, a privileged field of action for the Heir to the Greek Throne.



From the visit of the King of Italy to Athens (20 March 1907). [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.70]

68. Maroniti, 'Πολιτική και εθνικό ζήτημα', *op. cit.*, pp. 203-4.

The Greek intellectual world and the Olympic Games (1896, 1906)

GIORGOS KOKKINOS

THE EUROPEAN IDEOLOGICAL AND INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

*Idealisation of antiquity, dominance of modernity.
The marriage of the two in the body of the athlete*

It is a recognised fact that the modern ideal of masculine beauty has its source of inspiration in the ancient Greek sculpture of the Classical period, which was regarded as the most sublime and most refined form of ancient Greek art. Wilhelm von Humboldt, who in 1795 put forward the idea that ‘only the Greeks succeeded in achieving transforming the individual into an abstract ideal’, but above all Johann-Joachim Winckelmann, in his books *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (*Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture*, 1755) and *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (*History of Ancient Art*, 1764), were the founders of the intellectual tradition which elevated the aesthetic values of Classical sculpture and the ways of life that it reproduced into an unsurpassed aesthetic and moral model; they approached the works of sculpture as tangible reproductions, as symbols of abstract ideas that transcend the individual physique.¹ The nodal point of this tradition is the expressive stance of ‘calm grandeur’, ‘quiet strength’ and ‘noble simplicity’ of the ancient Greek statues, which was seen by Winckelmann as the range of virtues that are only masculine and confirm the particularity and superiority of the male sex. It is no accident, in any event, that ‘the sculptures that Winckelmann analyzed as the paradigm were mostly those of young athletes who through the structure of their bodies and their comportment exemplified power and virility, and also harmony, proportion, and self control’.² By degrees, the aesthetic standard of idealised masculine beauty, which continued to influence artistic production, as is illustrated, for example, by the work of Jacques-Louis David, an artist who gave expression to the ideas

1. George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man. The Creation of Modern Masculinity*, Oxford University Press, New York/Oxford 1998, pp. 28-9, 33.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

of the French Revolution, became an integral part of the German bourgeois ideal of inner cultivation that is described by the term *Bildung*.³ At the same time, through the German gymnastics movement of the nineteenth century, the views of Winckelmann, invested with fresh meaning, imbued, as George Mosse remarks, the ‘construction of modern manliness’.⁴

The citing as a paradigm of the ancient Greek aesthetic model towards the end of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century met the need both of expressing the dynamism of the modern ethos and of the national community, and of harmonising the inner world of the individual with the dynamics of constant change which were characteristic of the age of modernity. At the same time, however, it served as over-compensation for the lost harmony of urban life, which had been shattered by the rupture of the relation between civilisation and nature and the dissolution of the organic bonds that gave cohesion to traditional pre-modern societies.⁵

The soldier and the athlete as heroes of the nation. The symbolification of bourgeois values

As George L. Mosse points out, after the French Revolution, the activation by it of the German national consciousness and, more generally, the dynamics of the nationalist movements on the European continent in the nineteenth century, the cult of the nation, the culture of the national ideal, which was made up of myths, rituals and symbols, began to take shape.⁶ With a Germany that was gradually being unified in the vanguard, national anthems were introduced, while poets who hymned the continuity of the nation and its struggles were raised to the status of prominent symbols of the national mythology. At the same time, gymnastics associations were set up, their members mainly students who combined the national ideal with gymnastic exercise, regarding the latter as a method for ensuring the health and robustness of the national community, but also for forging the military valour of young men, with the obvious aim of defending the frontiers of the nation state and achieving its irredentist ambitions. It was in this spirit that the concepts of the volunteer-soldier and the citizen-soldier were understood by such leading members of the German intellectual world as Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich-Ludwig Jahn and Ernst Moritz Arndt, as models of the free man,⁷ while, at

3. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 45. These ideas were commonplaces of the dominant German ideology, subsequently incorporated into Nazi ideology and aesthetics, as can be seen from the example of Arno Breker, official sculptor of the Nazi regime. See *ibid.*, p. 46.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-5.

6. George L. Mosse, *De la Grande Guerre au totalitarisme. La brutalisation des sociétés européennes*, trans. Edith Magyar, Hachette, Paris 1999, pp. 26-7.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 34. As George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man*, *op. cit.*, p. 43, himself points out, it was Friedrich-Ludwig Jahn, within the historical context of the struggle against Napoleon, who was the first to treat physical

the same time, the cult of dead heroes who had fallen on the field of battle in the defence of the national ideals made its appearance.⁸ For the first time, cenotaphs, war memorials and monuments began to be erected to honour ordinary soldiers, sons of the people, whose sacrifice had demonstrated the heroism and manliness of the nation, and not, as had been customary up to then, kings, princes, and generals.⁹

During the nineteenth century, the participation of the people as a whole in national struggles, mass national mobilisation and, finally, a heroic death for the homeland made a decisive contribution to the apotheosis of violence in the collective fantasy and to the democratisation of the pantheon of the collective historical memory, a development that reached its culmination after the end of the First World War.¹⁰

It is generally accepted that ‘the re-appearance of athleticism on the centre stage of History became possible in the nineteenth century after a series of economic, social and cultural changes (anthropocentrism of Enlightenment thought and a critique of religion, development of the sciences of the body, the Industrial Revolution and the integration of the body into the process of production’.¹¹ Although the bourgeois ethos privatised the body, nonetheless, it also assigned it a public function. It transformed the body of the fit, and above all of the athlete, into a symbolic equivalent of the bourgeois values of industriousness, rationalism, health, productiveness, self-control, discipline, individual interest, and performance. The living language of the body of the athlete proclaimed power and progress, but also the inner compulsions of bourgeois society. Seen from this angle, physical training and sport, apart from their

training as ‘an activity of a public character which forges bonds of social activity and creates a collective spirit with the ultimate aim of forming a future aristocracy of the German nation’. It was *par excellence* in the case of Germany that gymnastics and individual, rather than team, contests were seen as a mechanism for shaping the political standards and the national spirit, as they ensured effective national mobilisation and superiority on the battlefield. In this way, masculinity – both as a martial virtue and as an aesthetic and moral value – was indissolubly bound up with the idea of the homeland engaged in a struggle. Mosse (*The Image of Man, op. cit.*, p. 44) believes that although inherent in the logic of Jahn there was the messianic notion that the physique of the male body points to a ‘higher ideal’ that combines aesthetic and moral idealisation with the militarisation of masculinity, in spite of all this, this militarised masculinity did not refer to the regular army, but was an expression of the voluntary offering of oneself without ulterior motives for the higher purpose of the salvation of the homeland. Similar, though certainly less idealised, views were put forward at the same period by the French Colonel François Amoros in his book *Manuel de l'éducation physique et morale* (1830). In his view, the desirability of physical training was not confined to the improvement of the moral and physical image of man, to the shaping of standards and ideals, and the safeguarding of the health, but extended to the forging of a team spirit, to the firm establishment of military discipline, and the creation of a patriotic spirit and martial valour. See in this connection George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man, op. cit.*, p. 45.

8. Mosse, *De la Grande Guerre, op. cit.*, pp. 40, 44.

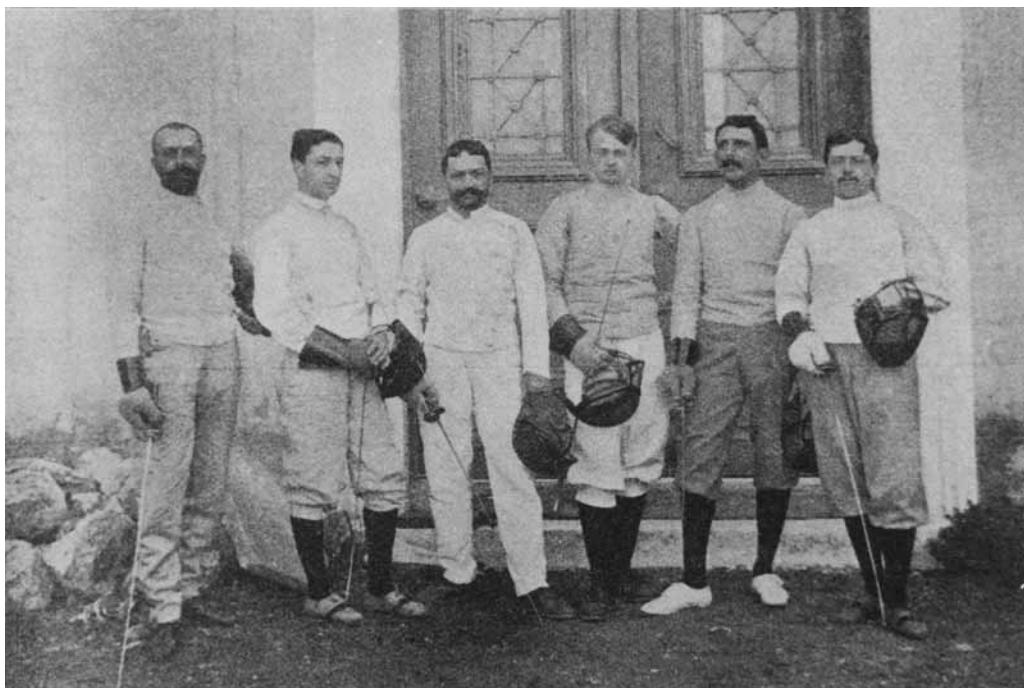
9. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

11. Christina Koulouri, ‘Εισαγωγή. Η Ελληνική Ολυμπιακή Επιτροπή συναντά την ιστορία της’ [Introduction. The Hellenic Olympic Committee meets its history], in Christina Koulouri (ed.), *Αρχεία και ιστορία της Επιτροπής Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων* [Archives and history of the Olympic Games Committee], Athens 2002, p. 22.



The Austrian E. Steinbach, first in the weightlifting 'with both hands', at the Intermediate Olympiad (15 April 1906).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K2.29]



French fencers at the Athens Olympic Games (26 March 1896). [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.56]

anthropological dimension, which has to do with the creativity and the discharge of the emotions provided more generally by play and bodily exercise, also perform functions of a mechanism of self-idealisation of the fit and dexterous body, but also, at the same time, of disciplining and segregation of the individual and the group, given that they implement not only universalising but also individualised policies of management of the body.¹²

Centring on the inculcation of moral standards, the culture of bodily exercise and sport spread after the mid nineteenth century chiefly within the English bourgeois class, but also, gradually, within the working class.¹³ Already, of course, by the introduction of the gymnastics lesson in a number of European states, physical training had contributed to the health of society, but first and foremost to the transformation of young people into virtuous citizens, with the ulterior purpose of averting the danger that, to the establishment, was embodied in the labour movement, socialist ideology in its various manifestations, internationalism, the alienation of the masses from religion, and nihilism.¹⁴ However, in contrast with continental Europe, where individual physical exercise remained the rule, in Britain the shaping of the moral character was decisively bound up with taking part in team games, so-called sports, which made their appearance in the schools where the offspring of the aristocracy and of the upper social strata (public schools) were educated, and were based on the rules of fair play.¹⁵ Towards the end of the nineteenth century also incorporated into the culture of physical exercise in Britain, which was heavily charged with modern bourgeois values and the homologue of the dominant ‘competition ethic’, based on rules, was the ideological concept of racial, cultural and national superiority in which both Victorian ethics and the imperialistic demands and claims to world rule by the British Empire were amalgamated. It was precisely at this period that this ideological concept came to correlate with the ideological concept of decline and decadence, which was diffused throughout all classes of society not only in Britain, but in Germany and France and throughout Europe generally, giving rise to the quasi-scientific illusion that moral and physical sickness determined one another or were identical.¹⁶ At this historical and ideological juncture, it was chiefly intellectuals of the radical Right who sanctified the

12. Michel Foucault, *Επιτήρηση και τιμωρία. Η γέννηση της φυλακής* [Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison], trans. Katy Hatzidimou/Ioulietta Ralli, Athens 1989, p. 183. For a critical account of the interpretative schema of the ‘confining society’ proposed by Foucault, cf. J. G. Merquior, *Foucault*, trans. Dimitris Mellos, Athens 2002, pp. 145-83.

13. Mosse, *The Image of Man*, op. cit., p. 137.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-6.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 46. As Roger Chartier notes (*On the Edge of the Cliff. History, Language, and Practices*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore/London 1997, p. 142), the historical appearance of sports in England was not a chance event, given that the institutionalisation of rules of competition for the meritocratic gaining of victory was the equivalent of the introduction of specific principles, rules and practices within the framework of the British two-party parliamentary system (Whigs/Tories). It could be argued that the parliamentary game at the practical level and the game of sport at the symbolic established practices of social pacification on the basis of respect for a commonly accepted framework of rules.

16. Mosse, *The Image of Man*, op. cit., p. 138.

sporting spirit and war as the most suitable weapons with which to overcome ‘urban decline’, as a means of therapy for the collective body, sick with the ailments of a degenerate civilisation, but also, at the same time, as symbolic social practices for the domination of the strong – that is, in accordance with the codes of the time, the healthy. These ideas, which were subsequently bequeathed to Fascism and Nazism,¹⁷ find expression in a typical fashion in the *sui generis* book by the French novelist, poet, essayist, and, above all, playwright of the First World War generation Henry de Montherlant (1896-1972) *Les Olympiques*, (I: *Le Paradis à l’ombre des épées*, II: *Les onze devant la porte dorée*, 1924). In the view of this important French writer, war and sports, with the bonds of comradeship and solidarity that they create within the male group, serve as an antidote to the pathology of urban decline.¹⁸

However, in the linking of athletic culture and national ideal, other events, which were enacted within the spheres of intellectual and social life, played a substantial role. Among these, particularly deserving of attention is the fact that in the last decades of the nineteenth-century youthful masculinity and manliness, instigated by the Nietzschean will to power, socio-Darwinian theories, and the Bergsonian philosophy of energy and *élan vital* served as social models - antidotes to the chaotic modern world of ever-accelerating time and the decay of traditional values, ideas and practices which had given meaning until then to human existence. The invocation of the ideological concepts of decline and degeneracy and their popularisation led to the conception of society on terms which owed much to biology, as well as to the diffusion of the mass fear that the end of Western civilisation was at hand and that the fall of the parliamentary political system to the masses in revolt was imminent. It is worth mentioning here, as G. L. Mosse notes, that in the well-known novel by the French writer J. K. Huysmans entitled *À Rebours* (Against the grain), which was published in 1884, decline was defined as the ‘gradual feminisation of men’, as the renunciation of the characteristics of the ideal human type, who had as typical features strength, inner energy, and external calm.¹⁹ It was then, at precisely this historic juncture that the impetuosity of youth and manly strength were elevated into ruling values and were looked for either on the playing-fields or, later, in the First World War, on the field of battle, in the extreme experiences of the trenches.

It is also worth pointing out that the emphasis on bodily exercise and athleticism, which is observable from the mid nineteenth century, and the gradual establishment of the athletic ideal within the framework of the measures for so-called ‘positive eugenics’ served as a mechanism for individual and collective improvement and idealisation. Gymnastics and sports, by making the knowledge of the workings of the body

17. For Italian Fascism, the male body served as a major political symbol of the flourishing state of the national community and the strength of its charismatic leadership, while for the Nazi ideology, the nude male body symbolised beauty, symmetry, health, and power, but also the harmony of the pre-modern world, which was founded on the balanced relationship between man and nature. See in this connection Mosse, *The Image of Man*, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

19. Mosse, *De la Grande Guerre*, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-6.

power over the body, were at the same time given the status of technologies of liberation and disciplining of bourgeois individuality. They liberated the individual from earlier compulsions, they structured new forms of sociability, and they shaped new normative models for public health and the discipline of the masses.

Nevertheless, it was not only the revival of the classical model that contributed to the rise of the athletic ideal, as it is usually suggested, but also the Evangelical and Pietist strand in Protestantism in Britain and Germany. More specifically, the adherents of those two religious trends believed that ‘muscular Christianity’ would not only give expression to the Christian values of self-control, discipline, abstinence and endurance, but would combat sin with greater effectiveness, enabling the nation state to achieve greatness.²⁰

As can be ascertained, through the convergence and osmosis of different ideological traditions and intellectual trends, a new discourse about the human organism was created, at the centre of which the male body, idealised and converted into a symbol, was placed. In the words of George Mosse, ‘The use of the idealized male body as a national symbol was shrewdly chosen, for it already reflected society with its need for both a dynamic and order. Moreover, [...] the very ideal of beauty served [...] as an addition to, and often as a virtual substitute for, established religion’.²¹ But for this to occur, the modern patriot warrior and hero, who came from the general mobilisation of the French Revolution, from Prussia’s war of liberation against the troops of Napoleon, as well as from the national movements of the peoples of Europe in revolt, had to have been associated with the classical ideal and, at the same time, with his self-sacrifice on the battlefield to have subjugated aristocratic honour to democratic virtue, thus investing the idea of a heroic death for the homeland with not only moral, but also aesthetic content.²² It was in this spirit that the journalist and jurist Georgios Pop (1872-1946) wrote in 1896, in the reverberations of the holding of the first Olympic Games of modern times in Athens, the following extremely revealing words: ‘Now from that nursery of strong muscles and supple bodies, of slender bodies and rosy cheeks, a vigorous youth emerges, noble in feelings and bold in its enthusiasms, sending off its first representatives to Crete in its struggle and disputing the prize of the peaceful olive bough in the Olympic Games with foreign competitors who have been in training for years and have already set as the programme of their life to increase their strength and to show forth their skill in gymnastics’.²³

It is obvious that the ‘biologising’ approach to sport permitted deduction from it of evolutionary, eugenic and racist theories. This approach remained dominant from at least the middle of the nineteenth century until the fourth decade of the twentieth, when, with the sufferings brought about by Nazi totalitarianism as a historical back-

20. Mosse, *The Image of Man*, op. cit., pp. 48-9.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 171. 22. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

23. Georgios K. Pop, ‘Οι γυμναστικοί σύλλογοι’ [The gymnastics associations], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896. Πανελλήνιον εικονογραφημένον λεύκωμα* [Greece during the Olympic Games of 1896. Panhellenic illustrated album], Athens 1896, p. 317.

ground, it was replaced by the cultural approach to the phenomenon of sport, which gave priority to the social, historical and educational dimensions of athleticism.²⁴

The linking of the national ideal and athletic culture was made easier by a structural characteristic shared by nationalistic ideology and the mythology of athleticism: centring on a hero – an exceptional and charismatic figure – and emotionally and symbolically identifying with him.²⁵ This linkage created a new field for political and cultural management of bourgeois socialisation, a new mechanism for social control, a new discourse on the physical form of the competing athlete serving as ‘a source of meaning and of derivation of pleasure’ chiefly for the spectators. This discourse presupposes the elevation of athleticism into a crucial parameter of the rising cultural industry and, above all, the internationalisation of sports institutions, and the transformation of sport into a spectacle of symbolic conflict (with a view to the controlled discharge of the violence of the masses, the self-control of the spectators, and, more generally, the management of the ‘emotional economy’ of modern society). Preponderant importance in this discourse acquired the achievement of a victory, the individual or team skill, the absolute discipline, the self-control and the will for a constant exceeding of limits through an improvement of performances and the demonstration in practice of superiority. In this way, the classical athletic ideal of nobility, friendly competition, individual distinction and meritocracy was adulterated almost from the very start, while sports events were imbued with symbolic violence and aggressiveness, which is, nevertheless, as Eric Dunning argues, inherent in, at least, modern sporting events.²⁶ Moreover, the increasing intensity of the symbolic violence gradually transformed sport, and particularly team games, into ritual conflicts, into symbolic re-enactments of real battles, into effigies of ‘warfare’ conflicts between states.²⁷ In the more particular case of international contests, the idealised – dematerialised, one might say – violence transformed athletic competition in laying claim to victory into a symbolic arena, sometimes for the demonstration of the racial, biological and intellectual superiority of the nation and, consequently, of its natural superiority over its opponents, and sometimes for fantasy over-compensation for traumatic historical experiences or for the cultural backwardness of the national community.²⁸

The athlete who took part in international contests in the national colours, and

24. Jacques Defrance, *Sociologie du sport*, Éditions La Découverte, Paris 1995, pp. 101-2.

25. Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, p. 115.

26. Eric Dunning, ‘Ο αθλητισμός, οχυρό ανδρισμού: για τις κοινωνικές καταβολές και τους μετασχηματισμούς της ανδρικής ταυτότητας’ [Sport, a stronghold of masculinity: on the social origins and transformations of the male identity] in Norbert Elias/Eric Dunning, *Αθλητισμός και ελεύθερος χρόνος στην εξέλιξη των πολιτισμού* [Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process], trans. S. Heirdari/G. Kakarouka, Athens 1998, p. 343.

27. Norbert Elias, Εισαγωγή [Introduction], in Norbert Elias/Eric Dunning, *ibid.*, pp. 39-89.

28. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses. Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich*, Howard Fertig, New York 1975, p. 8, footnote 28, stresses the role played in the context of the code of German nationalist ideology as early as the first

particularly the champion, tended to lose his individuality and particularity and to become a soldier of the homeland, a symbol of the continuity of ancient renown as he unselfishly consumed his powers on the altar of symbolic recognition for the achievement of the national aims or the proclamation of national rights, or even the recognition of the rights of the racial or class community to which he belonged, an event that marked the symbolic transcendence of established ethnic-cultural and socio-political stereotypes (e.g., immigrants, Afro-Americans, etc.).²⁹ That is to say, the victory or the individual distinction and performance of the athlete began to function as a symbolic equivalent of the collective vigour and the flourishing biological and cultural state of the nation, the class, the race or the group, and sometimes, moreover, as a mechanism for the homogenisation of the heterogeneous groups which made up the collective body. Through the collective communion provided by the enthusiasm and pride in victory on the tracks of international sports contests, the scattered or competing parts of the collective body now recognised one another in the light of a ‘common destiny’, that is, they were homogenised by internalising the ideological concept of the indissoluble national continuity, unity and cohesion and transcending their various racial, class, religious, cultural and localist differences. In this sense, individual or collective distinctions in international athletic contests played a decisive role in the structuring of the quasi-fantasy community of the nation. Indicative here are the cases of Louis in the first Olympic Games in Athens in 1896, who ‘paraded and was photographed always in the national costume – the *foustanelas* – virtually dissociated from athletic performance, and maintaining the position of a national symbol’,³⁰ and of Tofalos in the 1906 Intermediate Olympics, and, above all, of Tsiklitiras in the Olympic Games of London in 1908 and of Stockholm in 1912. The latter was installed in the national pantheon not only for his Olympic victories, but also because he died at the time of the Balkan Wars, which demonstrated the direct and virtually absolute coincidence of the roles of patriot athlete and warrior hero.³¹

Olympism as an invented tradition

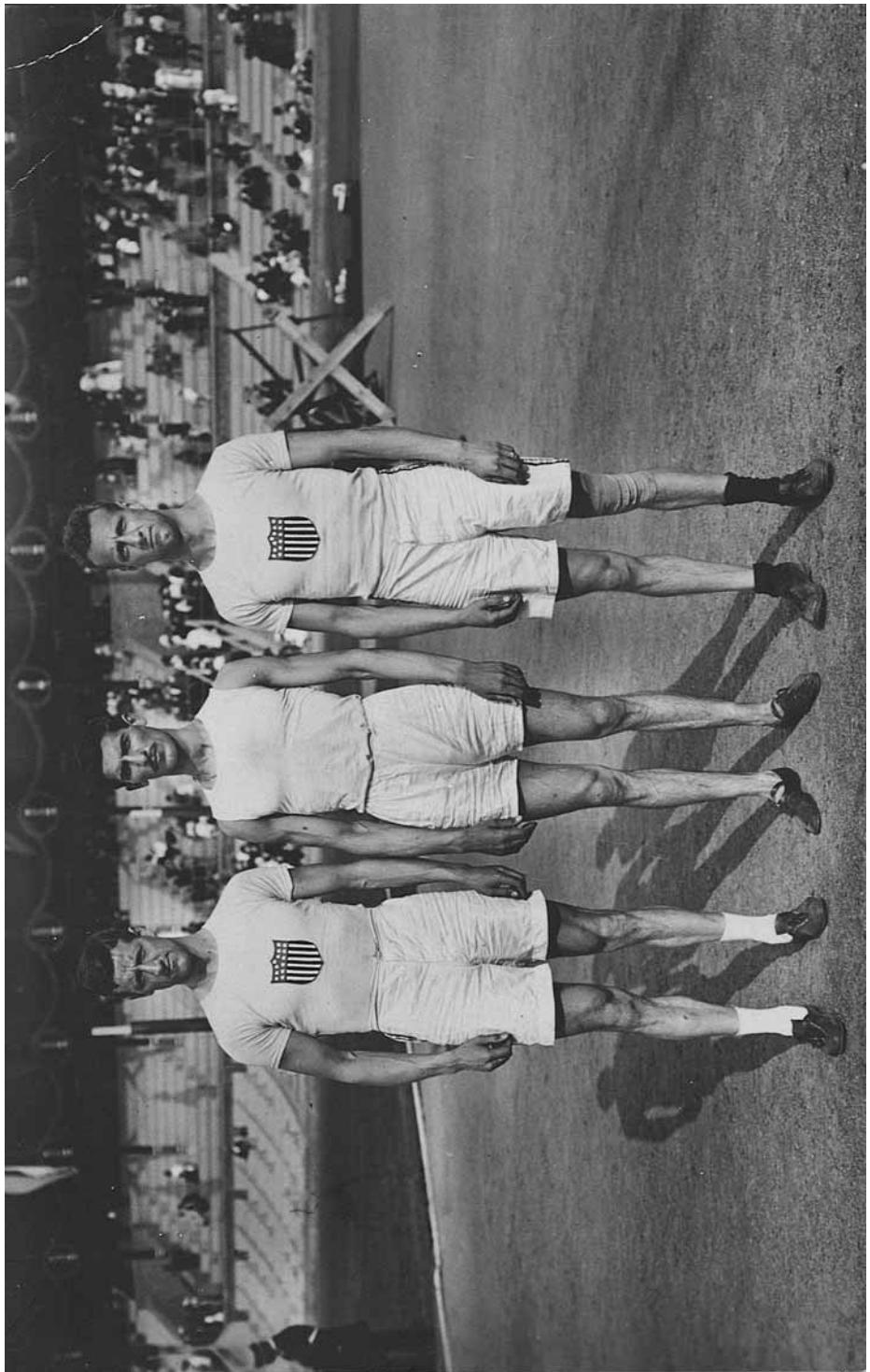
In favour of the line of interpretation above – that is, that of an organic, in one sense, linkage of the modern Olympic Games with nationalism and the bourgeois world-image as constituents of modernity for the redefinition of the semiology and the management of a principally European and, secondarily, a world cultural heritage – is the theory which sees the Olympic Games as an ‘invented tradition’, as a modern institution, a

decades of the nineteenth century by the beauty of the body of a physically fit man or athlete as an indication of the biological robustness and superiority of the nation.

29. Defrance, *Sociologie du sport*, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

30. Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 118.



Constantinos Tsiklitiras (between the high jump victory), first in the long jump and third in the high jump at the Stockholm Olympic Games, 1912.
[HOC Photographic Archive: K85.76]

modern and universal secularised ritual whose meaning can be understood not only in relation to its usefulness in the present, but, above all, in the light of its ‘triumphant progress’ in the past, its *ex post facto* invented glorious history, that is, and its paradigmatic function. It is the construction of a schema of cultural reference and historical continuity whose purpose is, on the one hand, the legitimisation of the present through the past and, on the other, the creation of a new code of values and practices, of a new sense of community and universality which attempts by means of competition between individuals and nation states in the symbolic field of athleticism to vindicate the triumph of the competitive spirit and of meritocracy as distinguishing features of the bourgeois culture and ethic. Within this interpretative framework it could be maintained that, in the idea of the revival and the periodical staging of the Olympic Games, the selective use of and re-ascribing of meaning to cultural features from the past did not have as its purpose the faithful recapitulation of the past in the present or an uncritical reversion to tradition (traditionalism),³² or possibly a nostalgic and aestheticist aspiration to selected aspects of the ancient Greek past as mutually determined features in an unsurpassed mode of life. On the contrary, we would argue that the revival of the Olympic Games had as its purpose the vindication of the present, the reinforcement of bourgeois values and practices, and their symbolic ratification from on high – through the state or the socio-political and intellectual leaderships – by the use of the past as a paradigmatic and normative model, as an irrefutable and universally accepted argument.³³

The movement of Olympism structured a new and special discourse on the relation between the individual, the nation state, and the international community. However, for this to happen, the institutionalisation of physical training in school, the multiplication of gymnastics associations at a national level, and the creation of international sports institutions had to have already taken place, as had the mobilisation of international public opinion and of scientific interest in the practices of individual or collective physical exercise, as well as popular demand for gymnastics and sport as a spectacle, that is, its transformation into a special productive sector of the culture industry.

Although at the outset of the Olympic movement its class affinity with the aristocracy and the upper middle classes is obvious – and it is from this fact that the elitism of its discourse and the imprint upon it of anachronistic values and class

32. On the concept and the ideological-political role of traditionalism as an undertaking to rescue tradition see David Gross, *Ta ερείπια του παρελθόντος. Παράδοση και κριτική της νεοτερικότητας* [The ruins of the past. Tradition and criticism of modernity], ed. Yorgos N. Mertikas, trans. Constantinos Geormas, Athens 2003, pp. 146-9.

33. Eric Hobsbawm/Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1983. The genealogical relation between ancient and modern events and contests is rejected by Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process*, Blackwell, Oxford 1986. Pierre Bourdieu (“Comment peut-on être sportif?”, in *Questions de sociologie*, Éditions de Minuit, Paris 1980, pp. 173-95, special reference 176), also rejects, following Elias and Dunning, the genealogical relation between ancient and traditional events or physical activities and modern contests and events, in spite of the fact that he accepts that the latter are in part the former with new meaning ascribed to them.

stereotypes stem –, its development, reasonably enough, could not have been realised except in dependence upon the more general democratisation of political life and culture and with the advanced collapse of social cliques, as well as in reference to the rapidly increasing interest of states, the political leaderships, and the mass media, who turned the organisation of the Olympic Games into a political propaganda machine, mainly, of course, after the climb to power of the German Nazi party.³⁴

In the discourse of Olympism we should recognise, on the one hand, the homogenising logic of social discipline and ideological imposition, and of the symbolic idealisation of the differences between individuals and between states, but also, on the other, the counterbalancing logic of the formation of new anti-conventional ways of apprehending the subject and of managing individuality in relation to the shaping of new forms of socialisation, together with new international institutions which would be capable of contributing to the mutual acquaintance and understanding of peoples, and, consequently, to the peaceful resolution of inter-state disputes and international problems, by cultivating the idea of a periodic truce, symbolic competition, and the victory of the meritocratically best. This is an inherently utopian and idealised dimension of athleticism, which would be unthinkable without the simultaneous reference to the framework of the ethical and political principles of the ancient Olympic Games and to the ideology of economic and political liberalism, which sees as innate the ideas of freedom, individual competition, and the final balancing out of social oppositions and individual interests. In this sense, the revival of the Olympic Games was no more than one aspect of the modernising and rationalising dynamic that developed in Western modernist societies. This dominant theoretical approach, which articulates a *par excellence* secularised modern myth, an alternative utopia, which temporarily transcends national and cultural differences and class distinctions thus creating a sense of participation in a universal ritual – unintelligible, of course, without the capitalist unification of markets – was given expression with great clarity in a text by Pierre de Coubertin, written on the occasion of the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens in 1896: ‘The XIX century’, this French aristocrat writes, ‘saw the taste for physical exercises revive everywhere [...] At the same time the great inventions, the railways and the telegraph have abridged distances and mankind has come to live a new existence; the peoples have intermingled, they have learned to know each other better and immediately they started to compare themselves. What one achieved the other immediately wished also to endeavour [...] Universal exhibitions brought together to one locality of the globe the products of the most distant lands; Literary or scientific congresses have brought together, into contact, the various intellectual forces. How then should the athletes not seek to meet, since rivalry is the very basis of athletics, and in reality the very reason of its existence?’.³⁵ In thus regarding the athletic competition as the equivalent of economic, scientific/literary and inter-state emulation, and, at the

34. Defrance, *Sociologie du sport*, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-8.

35. Pierre de Coubertin, ‘Πρόλογος’ [Foreword], in *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896* [The Olympic Games 776 BC - 1896], Part II: *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 1896* [The Olympic Games 1896], Athens 1896, p. 1.

same time, the institutionalisation and internationalisation of sport as an organic constituent of the universalising historical process of modernisation, Coubertin reaches the conclusion that ‘sport will emerge from this [i.e., the institutionalisation and internationalisation of the Olympic Games] great and uplifted, while the world’s youth will derive from it a love for peace and a respect for life’.³⁶ However, in spite of Coubertin’s ardent wishes, the institutionalisation of the international Olympic Games only became possible in reality in 1912, with the participation of 2,000 athletes coming from more than 20 countries, and, most of all, after the end of the First World War, a period in which the painful end of the old order of things was accompanied by a persistent search for transcendence, whether in the field of politics with the dynamic of the revolutionary movements in the countries of Central Europe and in Northern Italy, or on the aesthetic stage with its artistic and literary *avant-gardes*, or in the field of social interaction, where the creation of new institutions capable of forming poles of common interest between the opposing social classes was being attempted. The constitution of institutional frameworks for sport at a national and international level fitted precisely into this favourable inter-war situation.³⁷

The idealised landscape as a frame of reference for the athletic ideal

As Ian D. Whyte observes, ‘modern societies create their cultural heritage in accordance with their needs and manage it for the fulfilment of their purposes’.³⁸ Landscape is ‘a crucial feature of the modern cultural heritage’.³⁹ From the time of the French Revolution, space was invested with meaning as a determinant element in the diachronic presence of the national community, while, more specifically, landscape was a privileged field for the promotion of ideologies, aesthetic ideas, and the emotional charge of nationalism. Place was transformed into a symbolic cradle of the national soul, geographical relief was organically linked with the distinguishing characteristics of the nation. National identities differentiated and colonised space, inscribing cultural particularity on nature and geography. In this sense, national space reflects national time; it is transformed into a cultural and political code, the stereotyped pattern of the national mythology. Moreover, those areas that did not recall the historically manufactured archetype of the particular natural space of the cradle of the nation were marginalised, passed over in silence, ceased to play the role of a signifier or symbol of the national self-image. In any event, only the aesthetic harmony of the poetics of the national space is in a position to give expression to the uniqueness and superiority of the nation.⁴⁰

36. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

37. Defrance, *Sociologie du sport, op. cit.*, p. 97.

38. Ian D. Whyte, *Landscape and History since 1500*, Reaktion Books, London 2000, p. 206.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-3.

For Greek nationalism of the period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the revival of the Olympic Games could only be understood as the universalisation of a national cultural heritage, but in parallel as recalling the paradigmatic and normative way of regarding the ancient Greek ideal, as that, of course, had been created in the West by the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism. More specifically, the ancient Greek ideal recalled the paradisiac character of nature in Greece, the archetype of the organic co-existence of nature and civilisation and, consequently, the ethic of nobility, and the symmetrical cultivation of body and spirit.⁴¹ In the code of Greek nationalism of the period and in that of the Western revivers of the Olympic Games, Athens and Olympia operated as the two centres of a mythical system, as metaphors of the ancient Greek ideal. In these idealised locations, time was compressed and the past seemed to stretch out to the present. That is to say, a sense of nostalgia was engendered for a past that operated in a mythopoeic way in regard to the present, which was given meaning ambiguously or approached critically in terms of a fall from the paradisal time, or decline or alienation because of the deterioration caused in nature, in the cultural tradition, in the individual and in the bonds of social solidarity by economic modernisation, instrumental rationalisation, urbanisation and the alienation of the modern era.

41. Both the ancient Greek and the Judaeo-Christian tradition approached human nature by means of a dualistic hierarchical antithesis: soul/mind/spirit versus body, an antithesis that devalued or instrumentalised the body. The classical aesthetic, more particularly, approached the harmonious and symmetrically developed male body as proof of the correspondence between the inner world of man, society, and the universe, between the heavenly and the earthly. In this sense, bodily strength and beauty were regarded as a model for life, a virtue, which, within the framework of the city-state depicted and turned into a symbol the uniting of the cultivated mind with the trained, beautiful, resilient, disciplined, self-controlled and healthy body. Beauty and health were in this way transformed into an ethic. At the dawn of modern times, the classical body and the aesthetic rules that it obeyed formed the basis for the ideal world of the aesthetic philosophy of the Renaissance, and particularly of the aesthetic approach of Michelangelo, which subsequently served as perhaps the strongest academic tradition of art. Within the context of this pre-modern tradition, the body was elevated into an ethical symbol, which depicted the 'triumph of civilisation over barbarism'. On the above, see Roy Porter, *Bodies Politic. Disease, Death and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900*, Reaktion Books, London 2001, pp. 67, 69, 87. As has been demonstrated by Mosse (*The Image of Man, op. cit.*, p. 47), the modern bourgeois ethos ascribed new meaning to and transformed the classical and pre-modern male aesthetic ideal so that it symbolised the virtues of modern society and the flourishing state of the nation. The apprehension of the body as an object of scientific investigation and, consequently, the recording of the historicity of the ideas about it was a consequence of the cultural revolution of the 1960s, which led to the 'sexual revolution'. In the formation of this new scientific interest a catalytic role was played by the feminist movement and the history of women, but also by cultural studies, to the degree that they managed to go beyond the stereotyped antithesis of nature versus culture. See in this connection Roy Porter, 'History of the body', in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1991, pp. 206-32. In this text, Porter documents the view that the body is not a biological datum, but is mediated by cultural semiotic systems, which alter in the course of historical time and inscribe on the body approaches, roles and practices.

THE GREEK INTELLECTUAL WORLD AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The Athens Olympic Games and the mapping of their ideological co-ordinates

The holding of the first Olympic Games and of the Intermediate Olympics in Athens created, as was to be expected, in the ranks of Greek intellectuals – in the broader sense of the term – and, self-evidently, particularly in the ranks of the historians, archaeologists and literary journalists, a special cognitive interest in the history of ‘gymnastic contests’ in antiquity. This interest manifested itself in the publication of historical essays, but also of topographical, archaeological, historical and tourist guides, as well as the expression of interpellated comments in works alien to this subject or, more commonly, of the expression of views in the press, or the inclusion of texts in collective volumes and albums not only of archaeological and historical interest, but also with ideological and political content.

Two important publications, in the nature of academic popularising albums, undertook to inform the Greek and international public of the history of the Olympic Games, and, at the same time, of the state of modern Greece in the political, economic, social and intellectual spheres: *Η Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896. Πανελλήνιον εικονογραφημένον λεύκωμα* [Greece during the Olympic Games of 1896. Panhellenic illustrated album], Athens 1896, and *Οι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896* [The Olympic Games 776 BC - 1896], Athens 1896, Part I: *Οι αγώνες εν τη αρχαιότητι υπό Σπ. Λάμπρου και Ν. Γ. Πολίτου* [The Games in antiquity by S. Lambros and N. G. Politis]; Part II: *Οι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες 1896, υπό Βαρώνου Κουμπερτέν, Τιμολέοντος Φιλήμονος, Ν. Γ. Πολίτου και Χαραλάμπους Αννίνου* [The Olympic Games 1896, by Baron Coubertin, Timoleon Philimon, N. G. Politis, and Charalambos Anninos]. The latter publication made its appearance in February 1896, while the former, as can be seen from the epilogue, which is dated ‘June 1897’, and whose author was Gerasimos Vokos, contrary to the wishes of its inspirer, Vlasis Gavriilidis, saw the light of day after the painful outcome of the Greek-Turkish War.⁴²

42. Gerasimos Vokos, ‘Επίλογος’ [Epilogue], in *Η Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, writes in this connection: ‘The sad fact is the pitiable results of this foolish war. The sure progress of a state in which sooner or later well-intentioned efforts would have prevailed and the administrative reforms through which alone Greece could be made all-powerful enough to one day lay claim to its indefeasible rights in the ideal of Greek unity has been halted. But perhaps this trial was one of Divine Providence. The Greek race is not, as a result of the present misfortune, going to disappear from the face of the earth. [...] As to this work, depicting as it does a whole era, it was destined in its epilogue to also note its sad end. It began with the best of hopes. Its publisher intended it for a higher purpose than that which it now has to fulfil. He wished it to be, apart from its purpose of chronicling, also a means of progress and civilisation. It has remained simply a monument to a whole era that is now dead, but for that reason its value as a work is greater as a contribution to our national history’. It is also worth drawing attention to the fact that in the foreword to the album, which was written by Dimosthenis Tsivanopoulos, (*ibid.*, p. 4), the purpose of the publication is defined in the following way: ‘The editor of the “Acropolis”, then, realising that international athletic

The first work is a panorama of modern Greek civilisation. Although it has a pluralistic and polyphonic character, the will for the realisation of the *Megali Idea* through domestic restructuring and the creation of infrastructures stands out in relief in its pages. In this work, which, in spite of its critical character, is permeated with historical optimism and faith in the future of the Greek nation – though the distance between the lofty expectations that direct the collective consciousness and reality that was a travesty of these is denounced (an intellectual stance that imbued both the political world and the collective fantasy)–,⁴³ the Athens Olympic Games are not apprehended exclusively as an athletic event, but are defined as an indication of more general cultural progress, as a milestone for an assessment of the state of Greek society, as an opportunity for an awareness of achievements and the noting of deficiencies, weaknesses, discrepancies, and the inertia of mentalities that hold back the proclaimed modernisation of the state. As a more indicative instance of the divergence of Greece from Europe, the discrepancy between the political authorities and society is put forward,⁴⁴ together with the non-organic character of Greek constitutional institutions, which, as is argued in the foreword of the publication, are not a product of the historical particularity of Greek society, but the result of political imposition, an ideological compulsion ‘by revolutionary law’.⁴⁵ This is an interesting

contests are closely bound up with intellectual, political, commercial and industrial progress, judged it reasonable that he should benefit from the assistance of various men of letters specialised in various branches of science. Many distinguished scholars saw fit to contribute by means of some intellectual offering to the celebration of the Olympic Games. The time is, then, at hand for us to give an account both to ourselves and to foreigners of our works and to obtain a clear awareness of our situation’.

43. Tsivanopoulos, ‘Πρόλογος’ [Foreword], in *Η Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 5: ‘Only the excessively optimistic, those who dreamt of the age of Pericles in the resurrection of Greece, can condemn us for not being worthy of their expectations! Consequently, the greater were the hopes of the modern Greeks, the greater is the despondency in them when they see that not all of this has come to pass’.

44. G. Vokos, ‘Επίλογος’, *op. cit.*, p. 357: ‘There is a great popular force, an obvious trend towards progress, a sense of the good as a supreme obligation imposed by a knowledge of one’s origins and of the future that as a nation we should lay hold of in relation to the civilised peoples. There is also a spirit of reform, which is none other than the spirit of progress. In other words, there is something good. What has been lacking, however, is good direction, timely foresight, conscientious work of a higher authority, which provides the perfect system of administration and the means for more rapid development and improvement’.

45. Tsivanopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 4: ‘The constitutional institutions by which we are governed have not stemmed everywhere from convened assemblies, as for example in England, where they have a constitution, but not all of it has been generated by a constitutional assembly, having been created and perfected by the social happenings of the nation. With ourselves, however, the whole of the constitution has stemmed from an assembly held for its compilation. The history of the second National Assembly is a picture of nothing else than the competition between the extreme liberals and the conservatives, and certain provisions of the political system in force, having been inscribed after the revolution, resemble a declaration of war against tyranny rather than the mutual agreement of certain principles on which a peaceful community can be founded. It has been forgotten that true freedom not only grants rights but also imposes duties. [...] The extension with ourselves of education and particularly of basic education among the people and the clergy will contribute to the social and political upbringing of the people and to the firm establishment of a nation that is enlightened and ripe for a constitutional political system’.

critical assessment of modern Greek political culture and the institutional expressions that embodied it, which, without having the totalitarian character of the ideology of anti-parliamentarianism, reflects an atmosphere of a moderate and elitist approach to the newly-established Greek political institutions, deriving meaning and arguments from the pathology of the Greek political system, as that had taken shape with the voting of the constitution of 1864. This assessment takes as its starting-point the idea that universal suffrage for men not only possesses the character of an inalienable political right, but also of a political-public functioning, that is, on the one hand, of a sense of the responsibilities and the obligations of the citizen, and, on the other, of a privilege which is accorded by the state on the criterion of the nation's interest to citizens who fulfil the conditions of its 'correct and prudent use'.⁴⁶ For the author of the text, the most fundamental condition for the exercise of political rights is literacy and education.

In the second of these albums, mainly, the official ideological discourse on the Olympic Games is given expression, particularly as that was voiced in the speeches delivered by Prince Constantine, who was charged with their organisation and international promotion. On 13 January 1895, just a few months before the beginning of the Games, the Crown Prince, on the occasion of the meeting in the Zappeion of the 'Committee for the holding in Athens of the first International Olympic Games', he built up his argumentation in favour of the necessity of Greece's undertaking of the Games on the direct genealogical relation and the cultural continuity between ancient and modern Greece, and on the need to bridge the gap which separated the Greek state from the states of the Western world and, consequently, on the function of the Olympic Games as a mechanism for creating material and intellectual infrastructures to ensure the integration of the underdeveloped Greek state into the cultural life of the European family.⁴⁷ At the opening ceremony of the first international Olympic

46. On the relevant debate see Giorgos C. Sotirelis, *Σύνταγμα και εκλογές στην Ελλάδα 1864-1909. Ιδεολογία και πράξη της καθολικής ψηφοφορίας* [Constitution and elections in Greece 1864-1909. Ideology and practice of universal suffrage], Athens 1991, pp. 60-3. On the ideological dimensions of the issue see also Giorgos Kokkinos, *Ο πολιτικός ορθολογισμός στην Ελλάδα. Το έργο και η σκέψη του Νεοκλή Καζάζη (1849-1936)* [Political rationalism in Greece. The work and thought of Neoklis Kazazis (1849-1936)], Athens 1996, pp. 91-130; Lina Louvi, *Περιγέλωτος βασιλείου. Οι σατιρικές εφημερίδες και το Εθνικό Ζήτημα (1875-1886)* [The ridiculous kingdom. The satirical newspapers and the National Issue (1875-1886)], Athens 2002; Athanasios Bochotis, *Η φιλοσοπαστική Δεξιά. Αντικουνοβούλευτισμός, συντηρητισμός και ανολοκλήρωτος φασισμός στην Ελλάδα, 1864-1911 (Έρευνες για σύγχρονες πολιτικές ιδεολογίες)* [The radical Right. Anti-parliamentarianism, conservatism, and unfulfilled fascism in Greece, 1864-1911 (Research into modern political ideologies)], Athens 2003. In spite of my strong disagreement with the proposed interpretative schema and the conclusions of the research, I believe that Thanasis Bochotis's book is capable of serving as a starting-point for substantive thinking on the problems involved.

47. Quoted by Timoleon Philimon. See *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part II, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13: 'I do not doubt that today's general economic situation is not in a flourishing condition. Greece, having just emerged from the glorious ruins accumulated by long centuries, and Athens more particularly, is not able to provide all the facilities and comforts, nor the outward splendour, which large and colossal capitals of other States supply in generous measure to international Fairs. But questions are often posed to which, once

Games, the prince stressed again that the holding of the Games in Athens was demanded by the historical rights of the Greek nation, without, nevertheless, resting content with ancestral renown, since he hastened to state that this athletic event linked Greece ‘more closely with the rest of the civilised world’. At the same time, Constantine insisted upon the idealised picture of the Olympic Games as an international institution which forged bonds of peaceful co-existence, friendly competition, and friendship between peoples, while he expressed the hope that the revival of the Games ‘will strengthen the bodily exercises and the morale and contribute to the shaping of a younger Greek generation worthy of its forefathers’.⁴⁸ This national expectation in terms of the *Megali Idea* was apprehended in the collective fantasy as an extension of national renascence; it was for this reason, in any event, that the date of the opening ceremony of the Athens Olympic Games was chosen to coincide with the celebration of the national anniversary of 25 March. Finally, in full awareness of the fact that, for perhaps the first time since its liberation, Greece was ‘under the eyes of Europe and of the New World’, and already convinced that the Games had been a success, King George himself this time, at a dinner given at the palace in honour of the Olympic victors on 31 March 1896, did not hesitate to air the venturesome idea that the international sports community should ‘nominate our country as a peaceful meeting-place for the nations, as nations, as a constant and permanent site for the Olympic Games’.⁴⁹ This was a proposal which, as he and his ideological staff had planned it, would, if accepted, bring Greece to the centre of international interest, would safeguard its borders and its territorial claims, and would transform it into a place of worship for the whole of mankind, into a temple of the reborn Olympic ideal.

It should, however, be stressed from the very beginning that cognitive interest in ancient athletic contests was not concerned only with Greece itself, but more generally with the places where Hellenism had been a presence through the ages, as is shown by the essay of Georgios D. Pachtikos *Oλυμπιακοί Αγώνες εν Βιθυνίᾳ* [Olympic Games in Bithynia], which was published in Athens in 1893, having first been read to the ‘Anatoli’ association of Greeks from Asia Minor, which was founded in the Greek capital in 1891. The Asia Minor philologist and musician Georgios Pachtikos attempted in this work to demonstrate the survival of the ancient Greek athletic ideal on the Asia Minor coast within the framework of Christian religious rites and folk practices, such as the feast of St George in the Bithynia region. In parallel, however, he also undertook to show the modern function of these traditional athletic contests, on the one hand, as informal institutions of symbolic competition between the nationalities of the Ottoman Empire, since not only Greeks took part in these contests

they have been formulated in a more positive manner, there is only one possible and permissible answer. [...] It is incumbent upon us to accept, without reservation, the wish that has been expressed [=by the International Athletics Congress in Paris] and that we show in practice that we understand the supreme meaning of international athletic Contests, that we are not forgetful of the beloved traditions of ancient Greece, and that we prize those traditions no less than other nations’.

48. Quoted by Charalambos Anninos, *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part II, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

49. Quoted by Anninos, *ibid.*, p. 100.

but also Turkish and Armenian athletes, and, on the other, as a mechanism for forging bonds of local and national cohesion and solidarity. The naming of these contests through direct genealogical reference to ancient Greece, as a consequence of intellectual and ideological elaboration by local men of letters, seems to have been based, *inter alia*, on that fact that the same or similar events were held, such as the horse race, wrestling, boxing, races, discus-throwing, javelin-throwing, jumping, and hoplite races. Even the place where the contests were held had been chosen in such a way as to be directly reminiscent of the idealised landscape of Olympia.⁵⁰

The publication of tourist guides to inform the visitors of the archaeological site of Olympia was one of the most characteristic aspects of cognitive interest in the Olympic Games. These guides were the work of individual authors. They served – directly or indirectly – two obvious ideological purposes: on the one hand, the reference of the rising athletic ideal to the ancient Greek model, in order to show the paradigmatic and normative function of ancient Greek antiquity, and, on the other, the establishing of a genealogical connection between ancient and modern Hellenism by means of the idea of organic evolution or the revival of athletic practices and their value content. At the same time, this cognitive interest served a third, more practical, expediency – that of acquainting the Greek public and the international community with the topography and history of the places where the athletic contests were held, following the recent discoveries of the archaeologists' spade. These were, then, tourist guides with quasi-academic characteristics, as can be seen from the faithful description of the archaeological 'documentation' and the reproduction by narrative or drawings of the arrangement of the site and the monuments. For the Greek public this acquaintance operated as a recovery of its tradition, and for the international community as a guided tour of the first beginnings of Western civilisation. In any event, of course, the new knowledge provided by archaeological digs was transformed into a normative discourse, into a complex of ideas, approaches and practices which established new methods of managing the body and spare time.

Of particular interest is the guide compiled by a junior high school teacher from Pyrgos, Dimitrios G. Papageorgiou, entitled *Ολυμπία και Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες. Μετά εικόνων και τεσσάρων λιθογραφικών πινάκων* [Olympia and the Olympic Games. With illustrations and four lithographic plates], published in Athens in 1890. Clearly, the publication of this book of 180 pages was not part of the conjuncture of the Greek mobilisation for the organisation of the first modern Olympic Games, but it attempted to rationalise the stir caused by the finds of the German excavation at Olympia after the Greek-German agreement of 1874 and to show the organic relation between the athletic ideal and ancient Greek culture, in spite of the individual reactions of certain ancient Greek intellectuals as to the value of the

50. Georgios D. Pachtikos, *Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες εν Βιθυνίᾳ* [Olympic Games in Bithynia], Athens 1893. See also the presentation of the book by Dionysis M. Kokkinos under the title 'Σχόλιο' [Comment], in the *Δελτίον Κέντρου Μιχαηλιανών Σπουδών* [Bulletin of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies] 11 (1995-1996), pp. 452-4.

Olympic Games.⁵¹ In reality, it can, nevertheless, be examined as a noteworthy document for the tracing of similar interests in Greek society and of themes in Greek literature, given that already in Western Europe, but also in Greece to a lesser degree, interest in physical exercise was a reality and was beginning to be institutionalised; moreover, this book came from the pen of an ordinary teacher and not a functionary of the high or academic intellectual world, in which case it might have had the nature either of a mere transference of alien standards or an attempt at programmatic re-ordering of reality. The book is of ‘cut and paste’ nature, and is intended, according to its author, to fill a gap caused by the need for a reliable guide in Greek for a conducted tour by the educated visitor of the antiquities of Olympia, so as to inspire him with an ‘affection and love for the ancient treasures’.⁵² It is based both on the ancient Greek authors such as Pausanias, chiefly ‘for the understanding of the finds’, and on the guides of K. Baedeker, E. Curtius, F. Adler, and A. Boetticher, of which it is an amalgam, ‘so that in this way the reader will have to hand those things needful for study, without being compelled to refer back to other books’.⁵³ However, the internalisation of the normative model of Greek antiquity and the positivistic naivety which run through its pages lead the author to reproduce uncritically at some points of the book anecdotal information from his sources, without even the reservation ensured by the use of sayings which note the source of the information.⁵⁴ Papageorgiou’s book is divided into four parts; these are concerned successively with a historical review of the Olympic Games, the buildings of the Altis, the exhibits in the Olympia museum, and a description of the events in the ancient Olympic Games. It is worth noting that considerable space (32 pages) is devoted to the description of the exhibits in the museum, not only because the institution of the archaeological museum symbolises in itself the national ideal, but because the building of a museum at Olympia proves the sensitivity and the economic well-being of modern Greece. As Papageorgiou observes, the archaeological museum at Olympia is a ‘splendid and large’ building, which was constructed ‘according to the designs of the Germans Adler and Doerpfeld and under the supervision of the architect Siebold, at the expense of Mr Andreas Syngros’.⁵⁵ Moreover, Papageorgiou does not miss the opportunity of referring to the plague of pilfering and illegal trading in antiquities, which deprived the Olympia

51. Dimitrios G. Papageorgiou, *Ολυμπία και Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες. Μετά εικόνων και τεσσάρων λιθογραφιών πινάκων* [Olympia and the Olympic Games. With illustrations and four lithographic plates], Athens 1890, p. 170: ‘Although there is no lack of judgements among poets, particularly in Euripides and some philosophers, who speak very scornfully of the value of the skills exhibited in the Olympic Games, nevertheless these opinions remained always isolated ones and could not diminish either the love for the Games or the reputation of the victors in the eyes of the public’.

52. *Ibid.*, Foreword, p. ε.

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*, p. 35: ‘In the first century AD, the half-insane Caligula wanted to have this statue [of Zeus] taken to Rome and his own head placed on it instead of that of Zeus, but terrible signs from the god prevented the emissaries from carrying out this act of impiety’.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 83, footnote 1.

museum of important finds that had come from earlier excavations and were in the possession of major European museums, such as that of Berlin.⁵⁶

The history of Olympia and of the ancient Olympic Games follows faithfully, according to the author, the division into periods of the history of ancient Greece.⁵⁷ There are four themes that are of particular interest in Papageorgiou's approach: the national character of the Olympic Games, the relation between social class and participation in the Games, his opposition to the wrestling, boxing, and *pankration* events, and, more generally, his refusal to admit the professionalisation of sport. Papageorgiou accepts as axiomatic the national-homogenising character of the Olympic Games, but ascribes at the same time this quality to the Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian Games.⁵⁸ In spite of all this, he notes that the Olympic festivals gradually took on their national character as they transcended the narrow local and geographical framework of the Peloponnese and rallied on the track and on the seats of Olympia only those 'thoroughly Greek as to their homeland' as early as 'before the fourth century'.⁵⁹ On the second issue, Papageorgiou, taking as his starting-point the 'genuine Greek concept' of democracy, that is, the absence of 'a barrier of any social class or property', is forced to admit that this principle was only of a formalistic character, since in reality 'it was natural that the lowest classes in terms of office and property were rarely or never able to take part in the games, because the long period of preparation, the journey, and the expenses of the celebrations demanded of them an impossible sacrifice'.⁶⁰ As to the third issue, the critique of Papageorgiou starts out from two points: on the one hand, the idea of the culturally correct and acceptable, as this has been structured by the traditions of Christianity, humanism, and the Enlightenment, and, on the other, ancient Greek moral principles themselves, blunted by successive re-assessments of meaning, which, though in reality they did not subject the irrational to the rational and the natural to the civilised, were nevertheless regarded by Western civilisation as solid and monolithic. Papageorgiou, firmly attached to 'the feelings prevailing today', was unable to explain the barbarity of athletic practices such as wrestling, boxing, and *pankration*, or to understand 'how a people of such education and fine feeling was capable of finding pleasure in the spectacle of two men striking each other in the face with their heavily armed fists until one of them admitted defeat or was rendered incapable of battle. Because it was not only in Roman times, but also in Greek times that this kind of event was no longer a contest, but a bloody business, and extremely dangerous, because often one of the boxers was killed in this place of

56. *Ibid.*, p. 102: 'This picture belongs among the finds at Olympia, but not during the latest excavations by the Germans, but before these, and by means of illegal traders in antiquities, came into the ownership of the museum of Berlin. And such handles, which have been found at Olympia already, though representing precisely this type, are, however, of lesser value'.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 5: 'As with the political history of Greece, so we can divide the history of Olympia with the site of its contests and other buildings into four parts: (1) that from the foundation of the festival until the Persian Wars; (2) that of the political zenith of Greece, which is also that of Olympia at its zenith; (3) the period under the rule of the Macedonians and their successors, and (4) that of Roman rule'.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 115. 59. *Ibid.*, p. 124. 60. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

the contest'.⁶¹ On the fourth matter, Papageorgiou did not hesitate to denounce the professionalisation of sport and its conversion into a spectacle; he attributed the roots of the phenomenon to the 'entrepreneurial sport' of late antiquity, which, he maintains, arose out of 'those most brutal of exercises, wrestling and the *pankration*', and in the framework of which 'the athletes hastened from festival to festival in search of victory, no longer for the honour, but in the interests of making a living'.⁶²

The third example that will be examined here does not date from before the set of circumstances of the holding of the Olympic Games of 1896, but exactly reflects the immediate ideological and political expediencies from which it stemmed. I refer to the book by G. Spyridis, a man of letters established in Paris,⁶³ *To εικονογραφημένον πανόραμα των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων. Ιστορική μελέτη περιέχουσα και τοπογραφικόν της Ολυμπίας χάρτην* [The illustrated panorama of the Olympic Games. A historical study containing a topographical map of Olympia], which was published simultaneously in Greek and in French in 1895, when the fact that Greece had undertaken to hold the Olympic Games of 1896 had become known. The primary purpose of the publication, which, as the author states in the foreword, is a section 'taken in part from an unpublished text of my own' entitled 'Ιστορία της Ευρωπαϊκής Αγωγής ανάμεσον των αιώνων' [History of European education down the ages], is to enliven the interest of public opinion in the Olympic Games both within the Greek state and among the international community, in conjunction with the promotion of figures who, according to the author, played a leading role in the revival and holding of the Games in the Greek capital (these are, in this order, Demetrios Vikelas, Baron de Coubertin, Georgios Averoff, Crown Prince Constantine, and Timoleon Philimon). In this foreword, the revival of the Olympic Games is placed within the pattern of the idealisation and normative function of ancient Greek civilisation, so that 'the very great importance attached by our ancestors of old to bodily exercise having to do with the invigoration and reinforcement of the strength, beauty and intelligence of the free citizen' should be 'made apparent'. At the same time, however, it also reflects the ideological concept of the superiority and diachronic importance of the Greek nation as the agent, *par excellence*, of the civilisation of mankind. This importance becomes apparent, according to the author, from the fact that the modern civilisation of the West is not self-illuminating, but is due to the 'pouring from one vessel into another' of the Greek spirit, made possible by the enforced migration of 'Greek refugees in the fifteenth century', as well as from the expectation that 'the nineteenth [century] is destined to inaugurate a new era of a Renaissance of the physical education of the ancients, of which the wonderful results are known to all today', following the reactivation of the Socratic ideal of the symmetrical cultivation of body and spirit. In the

61. *Ibid.*, p. 138. 62. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

63. As is noted on the book's cover, G. Spyridis was an *officier d'Académie*, a professor of languages at the École Académique of Accounting in Paris and author of *Πρακτική Γραμματική Μέθοδος της καθ' ημάς Ελληνικής διά των αλλογλώσσους* [A practical grammatical method for Greek as we speak it, for speakers of other languages].

consciousness of Spyridis, Western civilisation after the Middle Ages has been nothing more than a process of constant reference to the ancient Greek ‘sources’, to cultural archetypes, and of experiencing the present as a constant retrospection to the ancient Greek past.⁶⁴

Spyridis links the emergence of the *gymnikoi* contests of the ancient Greeks, on the one hand, with the shaping of military skills and, on the other, with primitive religious rites, and takes the view that they are historical evidence for the transition of the Greek world from barbarism to civilisation.⁶⁵ In the course of their history, however, they developed into organised institutions, which, particularly in the case of the Olympic Games, had as their purpose ‘to gather together for a common purpose, at certain times, the representatives of all the Greek tribes, though separated and scattered [...], nevertheless bound to one another, as children of one mother, through sharing the same blood and the same language, and through legends and religious traditions’.⁶⁶ According to the author, the Olympic Games and the ideal of the symmetrical development of body and spirit contributed decisively to the shaping of the particularity of the ancient Greeks and their cultural superiority. Moreover, bursting with nationalistic idealism, Spyridis goes so far as to maintain, with a string of superlative adjectives, the view that for racial, historical and cultural reasons, the ancient Greeks – and indirectly, of course, their descendants – were the ‘bravest, most beautiful, most brilliant, wisest and most philanthropic of the peoples whom the rays of the sun ever illumined and warmed upon earth’.⁶⁷ Also of interest is the fact that precisely the same view is included in the relevant section of the French edition, since it was not thought advisable to excise it as reflecting adversely on the Western European self-image. The decisive importance of the Olympic Games for ‘the shaping of the Greek race for eleven whole centuries’ is demonstrated by the cultural backwardness into which Hellenism declined in succumbing to ‘the ineluctable law of decline under the influence of Roman despotism, and above all to the spirit, unfavourable by its very nature, of the new religion that made its appearance’.⁶⁸ It is clear that in the historical consciousness of the French-educated Spyridis, medieval Hellenism was not only not regarded as being of equal status with its ancient form, but the reference to it, and particularly to its distinguishing political and cultural characteristics – Roman despotism and Orthodoxy – involved an indirect description of cultural degeneration. For this reason, in any event, the discovery of the archaeological site of Olympia after 1877, when excavations brought to light the Altis and ‘the ruined monuments round about it’, as well as the revival of the Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 are apprehended by Spyridis as symbolic evidence of the rebirth ‘of the Greek Nation, resurrected from the dead and from the ruins of time’, as a linkage,

64. G. Spyridis, ‘Πρόλογος’ [Foreword], in *To εικονογραφημένον πανόραμα των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων. Ιστορική μελέτη περιέχουσα και τοπογραφικόν της Ολυμπίας χάρτην* [The illustrated panorama of the Olympic Games. A historical study containing a topographical map of Olympia], Paris / Athens 1895, pp. 1-2.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 3. 66. *Ibid.*, p. 5. 67. *Ibid.*, p. 6. 68. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

that is, of the past with the present, as a transcendence of the ‘dark centuries’.⁶⁹ In parallel, nevertheless, the ancient and the revived modern Olympic Games are projected by Spyridis – in accordance, in any event, with the European ideological coordinates of the period, which centred on the ambiguous apprehension of modernity that sometimes ended in historical pessimism – as the poles of a new redemptive, idealistic, elitist and, at any rate, non-universal utopia, which would relieve the unique and far-famed Western civilisation from the miasma of materialism and decline. ‘At last’, Spyridis writes, ‘a new Jerusalem, Olympia, is destined hereafter to be the common meeting-place of the distinguished labourers of the intellect and of all the truly wise of the civilised world, who, oppressed by the sick blandishments of materialism, thirsting for ideals, will come hereafter, immersing their soul in the limpid and life-giving waters of Kastalia and the Alpheus, and inhaling the gentle breeze and the sweet aroma of the most noble of mankind’s memories in the sacred land of Greece, the cradle of divine beauty and home of immortal genius, which has enlightened the modern world’.⁷⁰

It is worth noting that Spyridis’s interest in physical training and athleticism as mechanisms for shaping the collective morale and, secondarily, for safeguarding public health did not slacken after the Olympic Games in Athens in 1896. On the contrary, it remained very much alive, in the reverberations, of course, of that important event, and was probably strengthened, as appears to be evidenced by Spyridis’s membership of the Board of Management of the Phokaïs Gymnastics Society in Marseilles. In a speech which Spyridis delivered in 1898, ‘on the second anniversary’ of the Society, he linked the ‘feminisation’ of the male population, which is a consequence of ‘despising physical exercises’, with the ‘corruption of morals’, the undermining of ‘individual dignity’, and the contempt for a ‘love of true freedom’ – features of the social pathology, which leads, over time, according to Spyridis, like an inexorable law of history, to the abandonment of the patriotic ideal and, ineluctably, to ‘the decline and fall [even] of great Empires’.⁷¹ In this argumentation, one of the crucial dimensions of the rising bourgeois ethos, the setting up of gymnastics and athletics associations is invested not only with the aura of nationalist ideology, which organically linked gymnastic exercises with the militarisation of youth, but also with the ideological notions of feminisation and decline, which were organic features of the selective polemics against modernity. In a way which is reminiscent, at a first level, of the ancient Greek ideal of nobility, but also indirectly of the atmosphere of historical pessimism of the late nineteenth century, Spyridis does not hesitate to ascribe to bodily exercise and athleticism functions of serving as antidotes to the social pathology

69. *Ibid.*, p. 6. 70. *Ibid.*, p. 70-1.

71. G. Spyridis, ‘Δόγος εκφωνηθείς επί τη β’ επετηρίδι της εν Μασσαλίᾳ Γυμναστικής Εταιρίας “Η Φωκαΐς” υπό του μέλους του Διοικητικού αυτής Συμβούλιου Κου Γ. Σπυρίδου’ [Speech delivered on the second anniversary of the Phokaïs Gymnastics Society in Marseilles by the member of its Board of Management Mr G. Spyridis], in *Ημερολόγιον Γυμναστικού Συλλόγου Κυμαίων 1899* [Journal of the Kymaians’ Gymnastics Association 1899], pp. 116, 118.

of the industrial age, which, he believed, had a double nature, since, on the one hand, it liberated, but, on the other, enslaved the individual. He notes in this connection: ‘But in this century, in which steam and electricity, those two gigantic agents, have relieved man of a very large part of his manual labour, it is to be feared that, in the end, public health may be eroded, since most of the functions to which we are now limited require long periods of confinement in narrow places and profound mental activities. [...] What then is the effective medicine that one would venture to propose against this social sickness, which extends its talons in an ever more menacing way?’.⁷²

The organic interweaving of the athletic ideal and the national ideal is particularly instructive in the case of the preparations for the undertaking and holding of the Olympic Games of 1896, but also in that of the mobilisation of Greek public opinion, in which a decisive role was played by the National Society through its distinguished members such as Demetrios Vikelas, Spyridon Lambros and Emmanouil Lykoudis. Moreover, as Giorgos Margaritis points out, although the National Society was founded on 12 November 1894, ‘its explosive entry upon political affairs was due to the Olympic Games of 1896 and to the atmosphere to which these gave rise. Faith in the volunteer-hero, in the exceptional moral, national and physical figure, which, leaving aside the imperfections of the administration, would lead the Greeks on the path of their destinies, was assiduously cultivated during the Games and in the troubled times that followed. The state was elbowed out, while the volunteer guerrilla rose to the summit of the pantheon of national expectations’.⁷³ And with him also rose those who, as bearers of the virtues of the nation and agents of historical providence, won proud victories on the symbolic field of athletic competition, thus upholding metaphorically the soundness of the grounding of national claims.

Demetrios Vikelas (1835-1908) was the pioneer of the idea of the undertaking of the first Olympic Games by the Greek state, which was unprepared for such a thing and was assailed by its economic collapse, the crisis in the political world, and its unfulfilled territorial ambitions. However, on the Greek side, the international promotion of this idea – in spite of the fact that it met with the undivided support of the heir to the Greek throne⁷⁴ – does not seem to have been the result of collective

72. *Ibid.*, p. 114-15.

73. Giorgos Margaritis, ‘Οι πόλεμοι’ [The wars], in Christos Hatziosiph (ed.) *Ιστορία της Ελλάδας των 20ού αιώνα* [History of Greece in the twentieth century], vol. A2, *Oι απαρχές 1900-1922* [The beginnings 1900-1922], Athens 1999, pp. 153-4. On the role of the National Society generally see Yannis Yanoulopoulos, ‘Η ενγενής μας τύφλωσις...’. *Εξωτερική πολιτική και Εθνικά Θέματα* από την ήττα του 1897 έως τη Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή’ [Our noble blindness...’. Foreign policy and ‘National Issues’ from the defeat of 1897 to the Asia Minor Disaster], Athens 1999, pp. 3-80.

74. The laudatory comments by Vikelas about the Heir to the Greek Throne were in the nature of things effective weapons for the ideological and political consolidation of the Greek dynasty and the creation of popular support at the critical turning-point of the nineteenth into the twentieth century. In this instance, the following extract is indicative: ‘Fortunately, a pleasing turn of events was not slow to occur, thanks to common support, thanks particularly and above anything else to the attitude of the Crown Prince. He realised from the very first the importance of the matter, and, in spite of all the intervening discords, he did not change his mind. It is to his wisdom, his zeal, his fortitude that the saving of the affair is due. He took the idea to his bosom with

planning in which the National Society had been involved from the beginning, but rather of an obsessional individual initiative and voluntarism,⁷⁵ which, however, presupposed a more general contempt for the institutional organs of the state, the distance between the real and the ideal Greece, a nation autonomous of the state, and the expression of the national interests and rights by self-appointed individual or collective saviours such as the National Society and the ‘Hellenism’ Society.⁷⁶

boldness, convinced of the support of Hellenism. The success – and I hope success to the end – is owed to him, and him alone’. See Demetrios Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’ [The International Olympic Games] in Alkis Angelou (lit. ed.), *Δημήτριος Βικέλας. Άπαντα* [Demetrios Vikelas. The collected works], vol. 8, Athens 1997, p. 135. This emphasising of the contribution of the Crown Prince conceals disdain for the political option of the Prime Minister, Charilaos Trikoupis, who in June 1894 declared himself against the undertaking by Greece of the Olympic Games because of its perilous economic condition – an option that later became less vigorously upheld, but without any *volte-face*. Vikelas’s devotion to the Crown Prince, whom he described as ‘straightforward, sincere, honourable’ and without any responsibility whatsoever for defeat in the war of 1897 (‘Ο πόλεμος του 1897’ [The war of 1897], in *Άπαντα*, vol. I, p. 332), stressing ‘his outstanding merits, his zeal for any task that benefits the nation, his indefatigability in studying the details and the generalities of any issue, his straightforwardness, his fortitude, his decisiveness’ (‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, *Άπαντα*, vol. VIII, p. 139), was not, of course, due exclusively and only to his fruitful collaboration with him in undertaking and organising the Olympic Games – when Vikelas had been appointed president of the International Committee for the re-constitution of the Olympic Games, or when, later, he served as a member of the committee for collections which the Crown Prince set up –, but also to Vikelas’s political ideology. At this period, Vikelas hovered between anti-parliamentarianism, on the one hand, and paternalistic parliamentarianism and a quest for charismatic leadership, on the other. Vikelas believed that the historical necessity of the emergence of a charismatic leadership in Greece arose not only from the current circumstances, but from the anthropological axiom that ‘peoples are always unstable and fickle’ (‘Ο πόλεμος του 1897’, *op. cit.*, p. 302) so that only a strong charismatic leadership could forge and maintain political unity and cohesion. In this spirit, the Heir to the Greek Throne was presented as an agent of the charismatic leadership sought. Either as master of the political scene or as a counterbalancing force to the political parties, only he, according to Vikelas, was in a position to rid Greece of the pathological manifestations of parliamentarianism: the rule of deputies, the principle whereby the Prime Minister must have a stated number of votes to stay in office, the rule of the army, political dealings, the absence of a capable political leadership, particularly in times of international crises (Vikelas’s antipathy for the person of Diliyannis was openly stated, ‘Ο πόλεμος του 1897’, *op. cit.*, pp. 281 and 293; it was to him that he ascribed the main responsibility for the war), the undermining of the executive power, the absence of political accountability and a sense of morality, and the opportunism of governments, as demonstrated by the duality of their irredentist policy – respect for the *status quo* / the arming of guerrilla bands (*ibid.*, p. 283). On the above see Vikelas, ‘Ο πόλεμος του 1897’, *op. cit.*, pp. 254, 279, 291, 297, 346. Vikelas saw the outcome of the war of 1897 as an upheaval that saved Greece from a subversion of politics and political institutions (*ibid.*, pp. 343-4), as an opportunity for a transcendence, from above or from below, of the contradictions of Greek society and its political system. The latter would produce results ‘through the slow spread of enlightenment and wealth, and through a feeling of moral independence, which is brought about by the acquisition of material independence’ (*ibid.*, p. 330).

75. Vikelas writes in this connection (‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’ [5 April 1895], in *Άπαντα*, vol. VIII, p. 131): ‘Was it not incumbent upon me, I ask you, to propose Athens as the seat of the first Olympic Games? I had no such mandate or permission, but there was no time left to seek the opinion and consent of those responsible. And even if there had been time, I did not wish – it was not fitting – to inculpate any third parties by such a proposal. I was afraid of its rejection and thought it right that I alone should bear responsibility for any failure’.

76. On these issues see Giorgos Kokkinos, ‘Η αποσύνδεση του έθνους από το κράτος, ο πολιτικός

The voluntarism of Vikelas – which was, as I hope will become apparent below, pragmatic rather than idealistic – found support in the devotion to antiquity and the philhellenism of Baron de Coubertin and of the French men of letters Théodore Reinach and Michel Bréal.⁷⁷ The absence of any co-ordinated collective planning for the undertaking of the holding the Olympic Games is proved, *inter alia*, by the fact that, as Vikelas, usually reliable and strict with himself, testifies, he himself was initiated into the Society after 1896 and became, moreover, ‘an overt member’ of it as ‘a blind organ of an unseen and unknown Authority’,⁷⁸ on the prompting of his cousin Pavlos Melas when a year had already elapsed since the initial soundings and urgings of the environment of the Melas family, and particularly of his uncle, Mikhail, who ‘as president of its overt centre, also undertook the duties of treasurer of that centre’.⁷⁹ In any event, Vikelas’s brief spell of membership was voluntarily terminated following the refusal of the National Society to accept the solution of the autonomy of Crete and the involvement of Greece on this account in the war of 1897.⁸⁰ Armed with the hindsight of the disastrous nature of the National Society’s activities for Greece’s national interests, Vikelas regarded his membership of it as ‘the greatest mistake, the greatest foolishness’ of his life, although, in spite of this, he felt no qualms of conscience as ‘not having taken an active part in the affairs of its administration’.⁸¹

The undertaking of the first Olympic Games by Greece was, in the estimation of Vikelas, a first-rate opportunity both for the reconstruction and modernisation of the country after its economic collapse on 1 December 1893 and for the exertion of

ανορθολογισμός και η συγκρότηση των εθνικών οργανώσεων στα τέλη του 19ου αιώνα. Το παράδειγμα της Επαρχίας “Ο Ελληνισμός” [The dislocation of the nation from the state, political irrationalism and the formation of national organisations in the late nineteenth century. The example of the ‘Hellenism’ Society], in *Ο πόλεμος του 1897. Διήμερο με την ευκαιρία των 100 χρόνων (4 και 5 Δεκεμβρίου 1997)* [The war of 1897. Two-day conference on the occasion of the centenary (4 and 5 December 1997)], Athens 1999, pp. 231-50.

77. Vikelas acknowledged the contribution and support of the three distinguished Frenchmen in his speech of thanks. See ‘Assemblée Générale du 21 mai 1896. Discours prononcé par M. D. Bikelas Président’, in *Απαντά, op. cit.*, vol. VIII, p. 144. The argumentation of Vikelas on the voting of his proposal on 16 June 1894 by the members of the International Athletics Congress in Paris was based in the following thinking (‘Οι διεθνεῖς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, in *Απαντά, op. cit.*, vol. VIII, p. 132): ‘I have laid claim to the rights of Greece as to the re-constitution of a Greek institution. And while it is true that, as Victor Hugo puts it, all the civilised peoples have ancient Greece as their great-grandmother, we have it as our mother. We are, in a manner of speaking, the ‘uncles’ of the other nations. This is our only superiority, if superiority it is. This is the origin of our claim that the re-founded Olympic Games should be inaugurated on our Greek soil. We do not possess the means to celebrate festivals of magnificence, but the cordiality of the welcome will make up for our many deficiencies. We shall not provide our guests with entertainments worthy of the occasion, but we have the monuments and the ruins of antiquity to show; we shall take them where the ancients held their glorious games, at the Olympics, at the Isthmia, Delphi, Epidaurus...’. In the same text (*ibid.*, p. 128), he sums up the above argumentation ironically, but with a strong sense of historical and cultural self-knowledge, as follows: ‘Our national self-esteem has again found a reason for satisfying itself, thanks to the glory of our ancestors!’.

78. Vikelas, ‘Ο πόλεμος του 1897’, in *Απαντά, op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 273.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 287. 80. *Ibid.*, pp. 263 and 284. 81. *Ibid.*, p. 285.

persuasion on the international community so that, on the one hand, the eroded prestige of the Greek state – which, nevertheless, as he himself acknowledges, was not great even before the bankruptcy – should be restored, and, on the other, that Greece should win back ‘the true sympathy and former regard of the foreigners’.⁸² The achievement of these major aims would mean virtually a radical reversal of the attitude of the Great Powers towards Greece, which, even for the Western-orientated Vikelas, who himself fell into the trap of the ideological concept of an international conspiracy against Greek interests, ‘was always harsh and repugnant’, given that ‘they too bear a responsibility towards history’ for the inability of the Greek state to implement its modernisation programme in the political institutions and the economy, and to fulfil its irredentist ambitions, which would make it a factor to be reckoned with in the Balkan peninsula and the Eastern Mediterranean.⁸³ Reconstruction at home and the ability to exploit the competition between the Great Powers were, according to Vikelas, the necessary conditions for an upgrading of the country’s international position.⁸⁴ Apart, however, from the obvious political and economic expectations, the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens involved, according to Vikelas, another expediency: the hope for ‘moral benefit’ resulting from the opening up of the channels of cultural communication between underdeveloped Greece and advanced Europe, which served as an undisputed cultural model, and the gradual organic incorporation of Greek society into the ‘European plenum’.⁸⁵ The striking feature in Vikelas’s last argument is the unspoken, the indirect identification of the emerging international Olympic community with the Western world, and particularly with Europe, as if the Olympic cultural heritage did not have a universal character and the revival of the Olympic Games did not have as its purpose the creation of, at least a symbolic, universality.

In this perspective, the undertaking of the Olympic Games was transformed by Vikelas, particularly after the traumatic experience of the war of 1897, into a symbol of a new, reborn Greece, in which the radical rejection of the present determined the picture of the future. In this new Greece, the state’s will would not be eroded by the parallel or opposed policies of other, non-institutional, decision-making centres, the

82. *Ibid.*, p. 261. 83. *Ibid.*, p. 260.

84. *Ibid.*, pp. 321-2: ‘Is it permissible for us to confine ourselves to our domestic organisation alone, and not to ally ourselves with that Power from which we can hope for most in the future? It is true that our present wretchedness is such that any thought of a foreign policy seems ridiculous. It is true that only our internal remediation can allow this sort of thoughts. But our internal remediation is a long-term task, whereas the settlement of the East could occur more rapidly than seems likely today, with all the false lustre that its triumph over Greece gives to Turkey and with all the friendship of the German Emperor towards the Sultan. Perhaps, moreover, both these factors are hastening rather than distancing the hour of a settlement, if, as a result of the one, they urge Turkey into fresh atrocities, and, as a result of the other, arouse the mutual jealousy of the Powers’.

85. Vikelas, ‘Οι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’, in *Απαντά*, *op. cit.*, vol. VIII, p. 139: ‘Through more frequent contact with foreigners, our induction into the European plenum will take place more rapidly and more completely. I do not have my eye only on the purses of the travellers. I expect *moral* benefit from increasing close association with outside civilisation’.

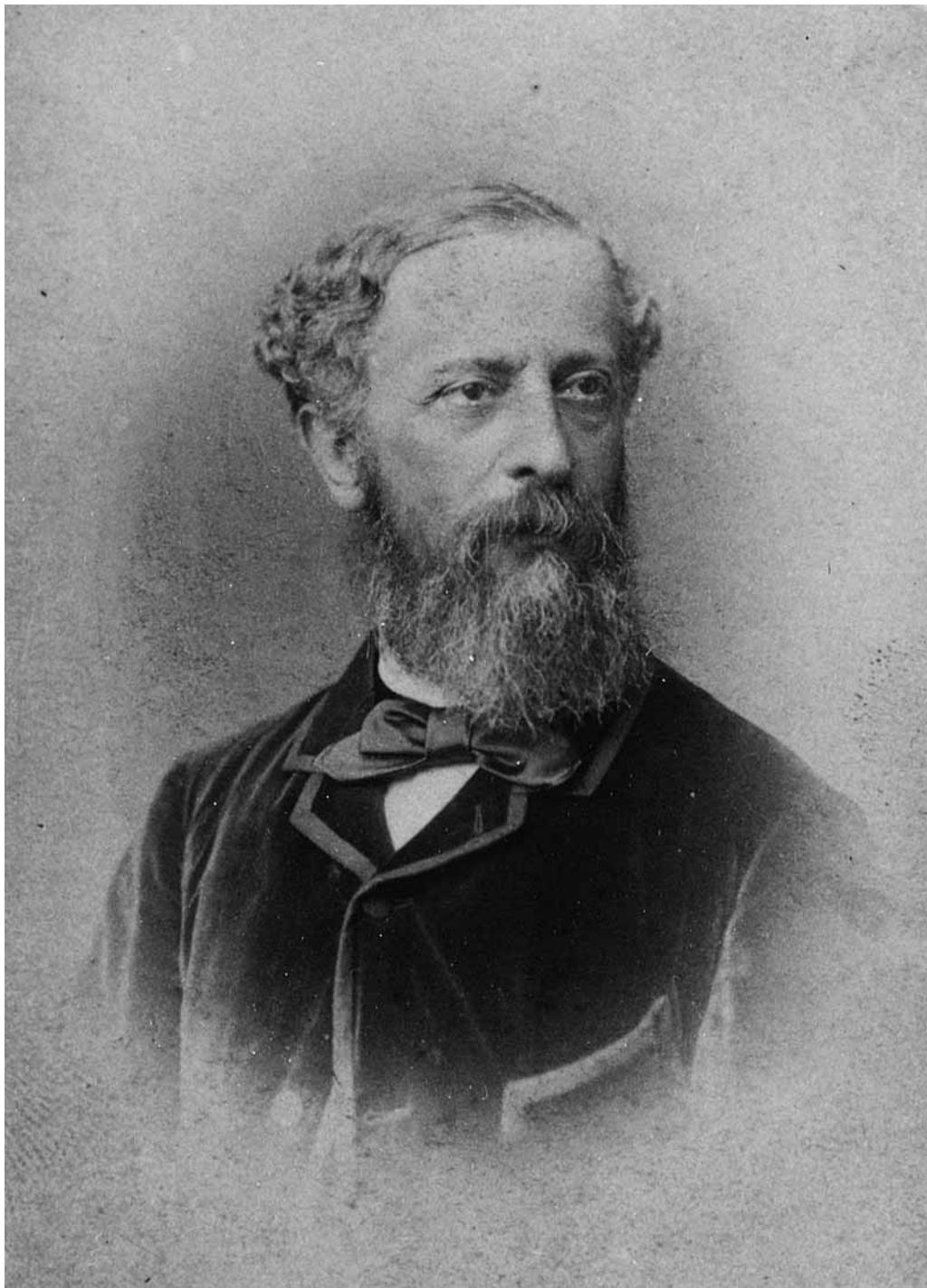
glorious past would not serve as a shield or a smokescreen. Finally, the pressure groups and individuals would not feel the need to substitute for the strong and consistent will of the state in the name of the nation or the needs of the times.

In conferring the accolade first and foremost on Baron de Coubertin and, secondarily, on ‘his friends’, the American William Sloane and the Englishman Charles Herbert, because ‘they laid the first foundations of the athletics congress’, which was a preliminary to the ‘refoundation of the Olympic Games’, Vikelas took the opportunity to note that the re-constituting of the Games would not have been possible without the knowledge and the ‘international relations’ of the French aristocrat, but, above all, without the internationalisation of interest in English sports and the inculcation into young people of a love for ‘bodily exercise’.⁸⁶ In these estimations, he attempted to blend together the hero-worshipping view of the genesis of the Olympic movement with the conception of gymnastics and, even more so, sports as multiply beneficial forms of bourgeois communality with a decisive effect on the internalisation of the dominant values, on the shaping of the national spirit, on the moulding of the morale of the citizen, and on the ensuring of social and political discipline, as well as of public health. The precedence given here to the contemporary British sports tradition in relation to the ancient Greek model is indicative of a spirit of necessary modernisation, of necessary compatibility with the West, without, however, either the genealogical reference to ancient Greece or the survival through time ‘of the traditions of bodily exercise [...] particularly among our people’ as the principal heir of ancient Greek civilisation being underestimated.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, enforced compatibility with the present and current cultural practices did not entail, in Vikelas’s view, the ‘structural’ – one might say – impairment of the ancient Greek model, a negative development which could result from the commercialisation of sport and the conversion of the international Olympic Games into a mass spectacle. On the contrary, the organic integration of the athletic ideal into modern cultural practices presupposed, in the view of this Greek intellectual, the shaping of a twin culture of athlete and spectator based on the values of simplicity, seriousness and austerity. Impoverished Greece was, from this point of view, the most suitable place for the holding of the Olympic Games, the place where both the natural and the anthropogenic environment suggested the idea of ‘decorum without luxury’.⁸⁸

The man of letters, journalist (publisher of the *Aeon* newspaper) and politician Timoleon Philimon (1833-1898), who had served as Mayor of Athens (1887-1891), secretary to King George I, chief librarian of the Library of Parliament, and first president of the Historical and Ethnological Society, was a key member of the team that organised and carried through the Athens Olympic Games, as he occupied the post of secretary of the Greek Olympic Committee.⁸⁹ However, the interest that his

86. *Ibid.*, p. 127. 87. *Ibid.*, pp. 137-8. 88. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

89. The historian Spyridon Lambros, in his obituary of Timoleon Philimon, states the following: ‘In the case of the Olympic Games, no one is entitled to forget that the acceptance of the responsibility for holding them and the honour of their success are due to four men [...]. These are the Heir to the Greek Throne,



Timoleon Philimon, General Secretary of the HOC, 1895. [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.5]

views have, in relation to the subject, does not stem only from his official capacity as an agent and codifier of the dominant discourse, but from the instructive divergences which map out the ideological co-ordinates of his thought.

Philimon approached the institution of the international Olympic Games as a field for the forging of the universal consciousness of man, of the ‘supremely philanthropic doctrine of brotherhood’; he regarded the capacity of a free citizen, on the model of the ancient Greeks, as a primary condition for taking part in them. It could be said that in his mind the new international Olympic Games ‘differed minimally’ from the Olympic Games of antiquity, given that they were founded upon the ‘same eternal principles [...] not only as a whole, but in their details too’.⁹⁰ The prominence given to the internationalist-cosmopolitan character of the modern Olympic Games did not cancel out their importance for contemporary Hellenism, given that their undertaking and successful organisation was the result of co-ordinated efforts both on the part of the ‘national centre’ and of Greeks abroad, who saw in them an opportunity for Greece to find itself at the centre of international interest and for the inherited ancestral athletic tradition to revive and be rendered universal. The result of these concerted efforts was, according to Philimon, impressive, because international public opinion was convinced of ‘the moral, intellectual, artistic and material progress’ achieved ‘in Greece, which gives the lie to the view of the country of Greece and Greek society that had previously prevailed in the civilised world’, while, at the same time, the foreign missions reached the point of ‘admitting’ that the distance which Greece had covered in the space of approximately half a century, condensing the stages of modernisation, particularly in the fields of ‘social and material life’, was comparatively greater than that covered by the ‘more advanced peoples who have lived under national governments for centuries’.⁹¹

There were two figures who, according to Philimon, played a crucial part in the successful completion of the bold enterprise: Georgios Averoff, by his donations of money, and King George, by the moral support that he gave. The former symbolised the renascence of the powers of Hellenism and love – to the point of self-sacrifice – for one’s country and service to it, while the latter symbolised the independence of the Greek state and the historical continuity and political unity of the Greek nation. Philimon wrote in this connection in August 1896: ‘Georgios Averoff has been justly hailed by the whole of the Greek world as the chief architect of the Olympic Games.

Georgios Averoff, Demetrios Vikelas, and Timoleon Philimon. [...] Philimon, as general secretary of the Olympic Games was the lever that moved all things, the spirit that illuminated all things, the heart that felt all things. In his office, all the threads of this complicated task were concentrated [...]. And after the unforgettable intoxication of those days in the Stadium, a new dream filled the soul of this imaginative man: the building of an Olympic megaron and the regular holding, every four years, of the Olympic Games in Athens, which would then be transformed into an international centre of festal gratifications’. See Spyridon P. Lambros, ‘Τιμολέων Φιλήμων. Σκιαγραφία’ [Timoleon Philimon. A sketch], *Εθνική Αγωγή* [National Training] 3 (1 April 1898), pp. 36–7.

90. Timoleon I. Philimon, ‘Πρόλογος’, in *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part I, *op. cit.*

91. Philimon, in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

Proving more fortunate than Herodes Atticus, he has renovated the Panathenaic Stadium, or, rather, he has called it back to life from the dust, not so that he should deliver it, as the other did, seventeen centuries ago, to the foreign and alien conqueror and lord of Greece, but to the Representative of the Nation, proclaimed by the free vote of the Greeks, to the King of free Greece, who was called upon to receive in it the expression of respect of the World's representatives, and to declare open the first international Olympic Games under the free sky of the Homeland'.⁹² In his commendation of the national benefactor Georgios Averoff, and in the knowledge that the collections and contributions of wealthy Greeks had provided the Greek state, languishing under bankruptcy, with a sum which was triple the amount which had, initially at least, been budgeted as necessary for the holding of the Games, Philimon did not let pass the opportunity to castigate those who had not risen to the occasion. 'Many of the wealthy', he wrote, 'turned a deaf ear to the appeals made to them, while others obstinately refused to make any, even the least, contribution, proclaiming and putting it about that the task was a comic one and was destined to be a failure, and that the money was going to be spent in vain'.⁹³

If, however, he was scathing about the wealthy Greeks, he was, on the other hand, laudatory about the Greek people, not only because they invested their trust in the Games, thus demonstrating the national virtues of unstinting enthusiasm, ingenuousness, 'ready and celebratory hospitality', which constituted a quasi-reflection of the natural features of the Greek landscape, or only because by their moral support they made up for the absence of infrastructures and 'material ostentation',⁹⁴ but first and foremost because they reacted as a unified and cohesive whole, an undifferentiated whole that transcended class differences and ideological and political disputes: 'In Athens, as in all of the rest of Greece, there is no "crowd" – what the Ancients called *Δῆμος*, or *Οχλος*, or *Θῆται*, the Romans *Plebs*, the English *Mob*, the French *Populace* [...]. All the Greeks take pride in one name only, that of the *Hellene*; they do not harbour social and intransigent passions towards each other, those which cause quarrels, and because of the equal distribution of properties, to a greater or lesser extent more complete than elsewhere, there is no class of the landless or homeless among them. All the Greeks feel that they each bear the entire responsibility for the national honour. Hence, whenever there is an appeal to the national sense of honour and its demonstration to foreigners, every Greek, even the very poorest, proves himself a policeman and guardian of himself'.⁹⁵ The ideological concept of the fear of the masses and the revolutionary dynamic of the nineteenth century make up the ideological framework for the investing of the Greek nation with meaning as an organic

92. Philimon, in *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part II, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-2.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 19. Philimon blames particularly the rich Greeks of Great Britain for their attitude in refusing to give financial support to the plan for the revival of the Olympic Games. This emerges from a letter from Philimon to Vikelas. See in this connection Christina Koulouri, 'Οι πρώτοι σύγχρονοι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες', in *Αρχεία και υπορία της Επιτροπής Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων*, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

94. Philimon, in *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part II, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

95. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-7.

community endowed with indissoluble bonds of cohesion and solidarity, a feature which, according to Philimon, is a diachronic distinctive characteristic of Hellenism. This characteristic, which, co-existing with the class fluidity and upward mobility that was typical of Greek society, was reinforced after the nation gained its independence by the redistribution of national land and the creation of a strong class of small proprietors, in line with the paternalistic political vision of Capodistrias, but also the ideological mandates of redistribution of the Revolution of 1821. National idealisation and populism are cobbled together in the obsessive argumentation of the Greek man of letters, thus banishing the historical possibility of the creation of class parties and their incorporation into the Greek political system.

In my opinion, Philimon's view that in the case of Greece, social discipline among the spectators at athletic contests is not established through a knowledge of the regulations, emotional identification with the athletes, and the symbolic competition created during the course of the Games, but pre-exists as an interiorised socio-cultural habituation by reason of the *sui generis* class character of Greek society, which continues to conceive of itself as an organic community, is of particular interest.

Spyridon Lambros (1851-1919), full professor of General Ancient History at the School of Philosophy during the period 1890-1917, swiftly grasped the modern features and the ideological function of directed bodily exercise and athleticism. His interest in physical training and athleticism had as the field in which it arose the undertaking and holding of the Athens Olympic Games, as can be seen from his acceptance of his appointment in 1895 by Crown Prince Constantine as a member of the Committee for the Preparation of Greek Athletes.⁹⁶ Moreover, Lambros's interest remained active, and subsequently may have intensified, to judge from the fact that he served as president of the Panhellenic Gymnastics Association, president of the Union of Greek Athletic and Gymnastics Associations for the period 1897-1906, and general secretary of the Olympic Games Committee for the period 1901-1917. It is certain that in serving the ideal of the development of athleticism and of the progress of physical training in Greece, Lambros believed that he was serving the ideal of the physical and mental preparation of the nation for the realisation of its national rights.

Taking as given the osmosis between academic discourse and the national ideal,⁹⁷

96. Ioannis Phokianos, Constantinos Lomardos and A. D. Kyriakos were also members of the same committee. Other distinguished members of the academic community, such as Georgios Streit, Nikolaos Politis, and Dimitrios Aighinitis, played an active role, correspondingly, as members of the Committee for Athletic Exercises and Gymnastics. See in this connection Philimon, *ibid.*, p. 17.

97. Spyridon Lambros, *Nέοι ορίζοντες εν τη ιστορική ερεύνη. Λόγος απαγγελθείς εν τω Εθνικώ Πανεπιστημίῳ την 15ην Ιανουαρίου 1905 υπό Σπ. Λάμπρου αναλαμβάνοντας επισήμως την Προτανείαν του ακαδημαϊκού έτους 1904-1905* [New horizons in historical research. A speech delivered at the National University on 15 January 1905 by Spyridon Lambros on his official undertaking of the Rectorship for the academic year 1904-1905], Athens 1905, p. 28: 'There is in reality no greater solidarity than that between the desk of the historiographer and the tent of the military camp. Over both floats one and the same flag, the flag of the homeland'.

this important Greek historian, though the principal exponent of historical positivism in the Greek historical world, concerned himself, on the one hand, with the academic structuring of the interest in athleticism and its genealogical origins in ancient Greece and, on the other, treated athletics tracks as a symbolic field for the demonstration of the historical continuity and the biological and cultural robustness and superiority of the Greek nation.

In spite of the fact that he accepted the paradigmatic and normative character of ancient Greek civilisation, Lambros did not content himself with a fetishistic admiration of ‘the superb products of the ancient discourse and ancient art’, as he considered it an obligation to take an overall view of the forms of the ancient Greek way of life, and the incorporation into the present, ‘into the century soon to begin’, of the diachronic and still living features of the civilisation of Greek antiquity, in the sense of deriving ‘lessons’ from and the imitation of ‘everything beautiful and great which antiquity can show’.⁹⁸ Given that bodily exercise and athleticism were included among the ‘best legacies of antiquity’ which meet enduring needs of mankind, Spyridon Lambros regarded the revival of the Olympic Games – an institution that imitated, but also broadened the meaning of competition and peaceful co-existence, lending it a universal content – as an obligation.⁹⁹ Although he acknowledged that ‘today’s advancing civilisation’ led to the devising of new ‘bodily exercises’, new contests, but at the same time to the alteration of those which could be traced back to Greek antiquity, he nevertheless hesitated to undermine the genealogical relation between ancient and modern civilisation – in reality, that is, the normative relation between Greek nationalism and the idealised ancient Greek past – something that could deconstruct the collective self-image of the Greeks. He thus upheld the view that in the last analysis the new contests ‘are, in a manner of speaking, a natural sequel of that harmonious development of the body in parallel with the soul, which was the characteristic beauty of the ancient games’.¹⁰⁰

In the argumentation of Lambros, the discourse of nobility is used as a self-justifying myth of modernity itself, which, however, in reality is marked by a fission of the wholeness of civilisation and the dissolution of the unity of the individual subject. Consequently, athleticism is not presented as a purely new social phenomenon, but as a signifying social practice which was derived from the selective and gradual re-familiarisation of Western with ancient Greek civilisation, as is proved, *par excellence*, by the refusal to include in the programme of the modern Olympic Games contests that were regarded as alien to the prevailing customs and values of the present, in spite of the fact that in antiquity they fulfilled specific religious or social purposes.¹⁰¹

98. Lambros, *Oi Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part I: *Oi αγώνες εν τη αρχαιότητι*, p. 1.

99. *Ibid.* 100. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

101. With the epistemological underpinning of the historicist, on the one hand, and the realistic style and documentary construct of the positivist, on the other, Lambros does not reject these events as barbarous or incompatible with Christian humanism and Western rationalism, but regards them as non assimilable to the present; at the same time however he attempts to understand their self-sufficiency and individualistic historicity as organic features and cultural practices of other historical periods. Indicative of his approach

As one of the main organisers of the dominant schema of the unbroken continuity of the Greek nation, it was probably inevitable that Lambros should have played down in each particular instance the universality of the institution of the modern Olympic Games, on the one hand, in order to project contemporary needs on to the past – by documenting the genetic relation between the ancient Olympic Games and the national ideal and, consequently, the organic relation between modern Hellenism and this cultural legacy, now re-endowed with meaning, from antiquity –, and, on the other, in order to trace the importance of the modern Olympic Games for the fulfilment of the country's irredentist and modernising programme, that of the 'historic destiny' of Greece as 'queen of the peoples of the Balkans'.

In the first instance, by speaking of the symbolic dimension of the athletic institutions in antiquity, Lambros went so far as to consider that 'in this way, at Olympia it was not only the apotheosis of strength and of beauty which was achieved; in a latent manner, the national ideal was forged, which was then proclaimed by the Greeks, who were in other respects divided among themselves, in their common struggles in the cause of Hellas'. Seen in this light, 'the great battles of Thermopylae, of Artemisium, of Salamis in the year 480 BC were, in a way of speaking, the continuation of the seventy-fifth Olympiad, and the renowned Persian-slayers were the victors and spectators of the games of Olympia, having transferred from the sacred Altis to the fields of these battles their sacred enthusiasm for a united, great Greek homeland'.¹⁰²

According to Spyridon Lambros, the Olympic Games functioned not only as a connecting link, as a symbol of the unbroken continuity of the Greek nation, but also as a milestone in its historical self-knowledge. 'Greece in AD 393', when the Olympic Games were abolished by the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius, 'was an old woman aged by sins and disasters, but preserving beneath the wrinkles of old age the indelible traces of her ancient beauty'. On the contrary, 'Greece of 1896' was 'a youthful and still immature girl, slipping in her first steps and hesitant and erring as a result of the vacillations of inexperience, but nonetheless advancing sturdily backward'.¹⁰³ The first Greece 'represented old age and decline', the Greece of the 'the ruins of the past, of grand and glorious memories, and of the struggle between idols and Christ and of unachieved national unity', while the second represented 'youth in bloom', the 'cradle and focus of the whole of Hellenism'.¹⁰⁴ Without being tied down to the glory and memories of antiquity, but safeguarding, 'unsleeping, the imposing claims of the

is the example of the ancient boxing contest. 'It is true', Lambros writes, 'that there were few boxers who competed or were victorious without inflicting or suffering any injury. For the most part, the opposite was true. Teeth were broken, ears were ruptured, faces were disfigured, fingers were crushed, sometimes death itself occurred under the onset of a violent pugilist. Numerous examples of such a savage way of conducting the contest of boxing have come down to us'. See Lambros, *ibid.*, p. 36.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

103. Lambros, '393-1896', in *Λόγοι και άρθρα* [Speeches and articles], Athens 1902, p. 430. This text was published for the first time in the *Εθνικόν Ημερολόγιον Κωνσταντίνου Φ. Σχόκου 1897* [The national almanac of Constantinos P. Skokos, 1897], pp. 85-8.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 432.



Spyridon Lambros, Professor of History at the University of Athens, and General Secretary of the HOC from 1901 to 1917.
[CNR-NHRF Portrait Archive]



Gerasimos Vokos, journalist, writer and painter (1915).
[CNR-NHRF Portrait Archive]

national ideal which entire centuries of disasters and of shared slavery and shared hopes and desires shared have forged’, the new Greece was, in Lambros’s view, ‘in every way more fortunate’ than that of AD 393 when ‘it was driven out [...] from the Olympic Altis by whip-wielders of Theodosius’.¹⁰⁵ It could ‘turn its eyes constantly [...] to the distant and more recent past’, ‘sometimes’ increasing ‘the instability of its steps’, but in essence it was inspired by its cultural heritage and its history, with a view to co-ordinated progress towards the achievement of its national aims.¹⁰⁶ There are two distinctive characteristics of this argumentation: the use of the rhetorical figure of metaphor, which serves as a vehicle for biologism in the approach to the national community, and the insistence on the interpretative figure of rebirth, which even in the late nineteenth century does not seem to have yet been fully replaced by the dominant figure of unbroken continuity.

In the second instance, taking as a historical starting-point the successful holding of the Olympic Games, Lambros engages in a comparison of the Greece of Otto with that of George I, to arrive at a comprehensive cataloguing of the successes of the latter. In this indicative listing, technocratic documentation and historical optimism are amalgamated with an aristocratic critique of Greek parliamentarianism, and royalist political sentiments. In this connection, Lambros writes: ‘All these good things, support for the throne and the restoration of internal peace, the advancing constitutional conduct of rulers and ruled, the spread of public transport, the territorial expansion of the kingdom by the union of the Ionian Islands [with Greece] and the annexation of Thessaly and Epirus, and the firm establishment of the national claims not only by an increasing awareness of the dangers surrounding us, but through any improvement to our military and naval forces, are forms of progress which no one can call into question. Moreover they are forms of progress that are indisputable because they can be supported by figures. [...] This progress [...] is extending into many other areas, in the population of the kingdom and the beautifying of the cities, administration and justice, education and the clergy, trade and industry. The Greece of 1896 differs greatly from the Greece of 1862. [...] We have advanced not by arithmetical, but by geometrical progression. This great progress is the product of constitutional freedoms, even if we are the first to recognise the deviations from these, which from time to time occur [that is, the absence of a Senate and a Council of State, the continuing in force of the principle of the Premier having a stated number of votes to be able to stay in office, and the personality-based character of the political parties], but also the faithful insistence upon these by the King. And the fruit of this double benefit is a colossal increase in private enterprise, which, to a large extent making up for the failings or the inadequacy of the state, has worked wonders and continues to work wonders. [...] An additional product of this progress of true freedom among us is the great development of the press in recent years, as it has enlightened and educated the Greek masses, with a firm grasp of our political and social affairs and

105. *Ibid.* 106. *Ibid.*, p. 430.

serving the national ideal¹⁰⁷ in spite of ‘excessive’ carping and ‘incontinence of language’.

Amid the reverberations of the Athens Olympic Games, Lambros showed particular interest, on the one hand, in the history of the ancient contests and, on the other, in bodily exercise and the initiation into athletics of those of school age. As he himself noted, the victory of Louis in the marathon led the Greek people, and above all the population of the capital, to an ‘upsurge of love for sport, intermingled with national spirit’. This psychological aspiration of the people was due to the ideological mobilisation of the intellectuals, who systematically attempted to relate the creation of an athletics culture with the strengthening of the national spirit. In this way, a strong sense of expectation was formed in that the Olympic Games and the ‘rebirth of a genius for gymnastics’ could become the springboard for the inculcation of the national spirit and the military preparation of youth – and, consequently, for the future realisation of the visions of the nation.¹⁰⁸ Lambros had, in any event, virtually demanded an impressive victory from the Greek marathon-runners on the day before the race was held, on the grounds that this would lead to a symbolic blending of the ancient and the modern Greek world, and to the ‘documentation’ of the genetic relation between modern and ancient Greeks.¹⁰⁹ In spite of this, Lambros himself knew that the marathon race was not an ancient contest, but an interweaving ‘of ancient and newly-wrought legends’, the product, in the last analysis, of the ‘fine inspiration’ of the French Academician Michel Bréal, who had combined ‘the *dolichodromia* of the Olympic Games [...] with the glorious name of Marathon and the tradition about the runner who after the battle announced the victory to the Athenians in the city’.¹¹⁰ In the present instance, academic ethics and historical truth gave way to the forging of a powerful historical myth that could play a crucial ideological role, given that it amalgamated the athletic ideal with patriotism, the cult of heroes with the ‘demonstration of the great stamina of successful runners’,¹¹¹ without, as

107. Spyridon Lambros, ‘Βασιλεία. Η Ελλάς επί της βασιλείας του Γεωργίου’ [Kingship. Greece in the reign of George], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896. Πανελλήνιον εικονογραφημένον λεύκωμα*, *op. cit.*, p. 8. The details of the ‘deviations’ of the Greek political system are given on p. 7.

108. Spyridon Lambros, ‘Τα αθλητικά και γυμναστικά αγωνίσματα εν τῷ Σταδίῳ’ [The athletics and gymnastics events in the Stadium], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 106. This is a lengthy text in which Lambros, in the role of a sports reporter, describes, analyses and assesses the Games.

109. Spyridon Lambros, ‘Μαραθώνιος δρόμος. Η’ [Marathon race. VIII], in *Λόγοι καὶ ἀρθρα*, *op. cit.*, pp. 452-3: ‘It is such wonderful models of speedy long-distance runners and swift legions in the best days of ancient Greek civilisation that the young Greek competitors should have in mind in the marathon race introduced by the philhellene Bréal, as *athlothes*, into the new Olympic Games. Opposing this to those who maintain that the contest is inhumane and barbarous, let them pursue victory, and entering the Stadium crowned, as is our hope, let them answer the congratulations of the spectators with the words of the ancient messenger: *Χαιρετε καὶ χαιρομεν*’.

110. Spyridon Lambros, ‘Μαραθώνιος δρόμος. Α’ [Marathon race. I], in *Λόγοι καὶ ἀρθρα*, *op. cit.*, p. 434. First publication of the article in serial form in *Estia* newspaper on 8, 9, 20, 21, 22 and 27 March 1896.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 434.

Lambros maintained, passing over his ‘two-faced’ academic ethics, ‘distorting a correct judgement as to the sequel to the battle’.¹¹²

As to the physical exercise of school students, we should note that Lambros was one of the most systematic propagandists of introducing this as a compulsory subject even in elementary education in a series of articles in *Neologos* of Constantinople after the painful experience for Greece of the war of 1897, which temporarily stemmed the historical optimism generated by the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens.¹¹³ Of particular interest, not only at the level of the history of ideas, but also at that of giving meaning to the nation within the context of Greek nationalist ideology, is the argumentation of Lambros, which, like that of his colleague at the School of Law Neoklis Kazazis, expressly invoked the German historical equivalent after the defeat of Prussia at the battle of Jena and the signing of the Treaty of Tilsit. It was a known fact that the political mobilisation of the German people and the inculcation of the national spirit into young people to throw off the French yoke and constitute a unified German state was based, *inter alia*, on the dissemination of gymnastics and on the social dynamics of the German gymnastics movement, which had as its historical starting-point the setting up of the first public gymnasium by Jahn at Hasenheide, Berlin.¹¹⁴ Lambros truly believed that the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens and, as a consequence, the creation of sports infrastructure, as well as the familiarisation of public opinion with the athletic ideal allowed the Greek state to plan the organic linking of physical training and mass military preparations, as had happened, in any event, during the centuries of Ottoman rule, when games at the level of the ordinary people had played the role of the ‘most important school for the preparation [of the enslaved] for the struggle for freedom’.¹¹⁵ However, the military preparation of the nation’s youth could not be achieved, in the view of Lambros, by adaptation to the democratic French model of the organisation of school battalions, which involved a reference to the dual role of citizen-soldier, as Greek experience had, anyway, shown after the dethronement of Otto. At that period, the ‘vacillation of the state between gymnastics and the military training of those studying in high school’ was obvious, given that military exercises ‘neither proved an adequate preliminary training for service in the army, nor contributed to the creation of the necessary military discipline’.¹¹⁶ On the contrary, Lambros was convinced that the indirect militarisation of Greek youth could be achieved by the adoption of the German autocratic gymnastic model, which, based as it was on free gymnastic exercise, on rhythmical movements

112. *Ibid.*, p. 437.

113. Spyridon Lambros, ‘Η γυμναστική εν τω Δημοτικώ Σχολείῳ’ [Gymnastics in the elementary school], (first published in *Neologos* of Constantinople on 1 September 1897), in *Λόγοι και ἀρθρα, op. cit.*, p. 639: ‘After the national sufferings of recent months, a confession of the truth and care to achieve improvement are both called for in every branch of national life. Among the first things to which attention must be turned is gymnastics. But if this is to be effective, it must be sought after in schools’.

114. Spyridon Lambros, ‘Σχολική γυμναστική’ [School gymnastics], (first published in *Neologos* of Constantinople on 30 November 1897), in *Λόγοι και ἀρθρα, op. cit.*, p. 635.

115. *Ibid.*, p. 635-6. 116. *Ibid.*, p. 637.

and on group song, aimed at habituating schoolchildren ‘from an early age to order, discipline and obedience to the orders of the instructor’, and, more generally, to the ‘training of young souls’ in parallel with the ‘desired strengthening of bodies’.¹¹⁷ Only such bodily exercise permitted the ‘implanting’ ‘in the tender souls of schoolboys’ of the seed ‘from which tomorrow the soldier will burgeon’. Otherwise, ‘poor teaching of gymnastics [...] creates deserters and cowards’.¹¹⁸

Dimosthenis Tsivanopoulos (1838–1921), prosecutor of the court of cassation of Areios Pagos, antiquarian and for fifteen years president of the Archaeological Society, was the author of the foreword to the album-panorama planned by Vlasis Gavriilidis on the occasion of the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens. Regarding athleticism as an expression of the cultural zenith of advanced nation states, Tsivanopoulos noted the relative ineptitude of the Greek state, but also of civil society, in the creative continuation of the ancient Greek athletic tradition and, at the same time, in the cultivation of the idea of the necessity of physical exercise, and the creation of the appropriate infrastructures and institutions. This ineptitude, which was interrupted by spasmodic modernising movements, was due, he maintained, first and foremost to the brief life of the independent Greek state, which had not yet succeeded in synchronising its pace with that of the advanced states of the Western world.¹¹⁹

The modern Olympic Games were treated by Tsivanopoulos as a continuation, an organic evolution and an internationalisation of their ancient predecessors. This viewpoint compelled him to overlook the constitutional differences – in effect, to cancel out historical time, and arrive at an idealisation of ancient Greece as the ‘cradle of modern civilisation and mother of athletic contests’. Seen from this point of view, the modern Olympic Games did not attempt to express new needs and capabilities but were ‘a tribute of gratitude to ancient Greece’, which was the absolute paradigm of the victory of intellectual superiority over barbarism, in spite of the historical vicissitudes of the Greek nation.¹²⁰ The ‘evergreen’ Greek spirit and the ‘unageing soul’ of Hellenism ‘dwell within’ the ‘sacred relics’ of antiquity, in Greek literature and in the monuments of Greek art, serving as a supra-historical and universal model, but also as an irrefutable witness to ‘the great achievement of Greek genius’.¹²¹ Historical idealisation co-exists in the discourse of Tsivanopoulos with the projection of the present on to the past in order to demonstrate the unbroken continuity of the Greek nation and the ontological and unchanging dimension of historical phenomena, such as the rivalry between Hellenism and its Asiatic opponents in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkan Peninsula. Within such a framework it seemed self-evident to recognise the national character of the ancient Olympic Games and to trace the beginnings of the Eastern Question in the conflict between Greeks and Persians.¹²² This is an *ab*

117. Lambros, ‘Η γυμναστική εν τω Δημοτικώ Σχολείω’, *op. cit.*, p. 640.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 642.

119. Tsivanopoulos, ‘Πρόλογος’, in *Η Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

120. *Ibid.*, p. 3. 121. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

122. *Ibid.*, p. 3: ‘It was a scene of the greatest grandeur when Gorgias the Sophist, attending the Olympic

initio ideologised schema for the interpretation of the evolution of history, based on the uninterrupted conflict between an ethnologically unaltered and chosen Greek nation and its successive enemies. In this interpretative perspective, the modern Olympic Games had for the Greek world a broader significance, since, on the one hand, they had to contribute to the forging of a strong national front for the defence of national rights, and, on the other, their success in the birthplace of the Olympic ideal had to convince the whole of the civilised world that Greece had the intellectual powers and the strength to render possible the realisation of her national ambitions. Perhaps the most striking feature in the approach of Tsivanopoulos is the idea of the Olympic Games as a political tool, as well as the articulation of political pragmatism (as that is apparent, for example, in the *sang froid* of the review of the Greek political system and the prerequisites for the achievement of the goals of Greek irredentism) with the stereotyped conception of the past and the diachronic superiority of the Greek nation.

For the journalist, writer and painter Gerasimos Vokos (1868-1927), the Olympic Games of 1896 played a catalytic role in the inculcation of the culture of physical exercise and the dissemination of the athletic ideal among Greek youth. This correct conclusion, which, of course, did not have to do with macroscopic observation, but with a pre-empting of the historical circumstances, nevertheless co-existed with a spirit of racialist-nationalist mysticism that led to exaggeration, as the dismissal of the present was cancelled out by the obsession of the organic continuity with the ancient Greek past: ‘The ancient tradition did not revive as a result of being sought after, but, one could say, automatically. It was not even necessary for us to invoke the visitation of the ancient spirit [...] it alone inspired and revitalised and remedied the country’s stagnation. The gymnasias, which formerly lay in ruins, were filled with athletes’.¹²³ The organic continuity which was, according to Vokos, to be observed between the ancient Greek athletic ideal and the ‘exercising in the mountains of the brave lads in the last Greek war’ was interrupted after the creation of an independent Greek state, since ‘the empty words and the anaesthetising of the coffee-shops, the savage and murderous braggadocio of the tavernas or the ridiculous triumphs of the so-called duellists’, in conjunction with the absence of physical training as an element of the school curriculum and the consolidation of popular models of manhood (*koutsavakismos*) – which were contrary to the athletic ideal and systematic exercise – undermined public health itself by striking chiefly at young people.¹²⁴ Vokos believed that the temporary interruption in the continuity of the athletic ideal in Greece had been cured finally and definitively by the holding of the first modern Olympic

Games, proclaimed before many tens of thousands of Hellenes on the eastern question of those years, that is, on the destruction of the Persian state, and first propounded the great idea that the Greeks should, setting aside their differences with one another, be of one mind and jointly combat the barbarians’.

123. Gerasimos Vokos, ‘Νεοελληνικός αθλητισμός’ [Modern Greek athleticism], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Games, which had not given rise to an uncertain social fashion, but had recalled modern Western civilisation to its ancient Greek origins, to the sources of the concept: ‘There was’, Vokos writes, ‘something over and above the imposition of a fashion of temporary duration. There was a final reconfiguration of soul, as there will be tomorrow a final reconfiguration of body. It came about at a time when a certain international tendency is observable for the intellectual inspirations of the whole world to return whence they originally sprang – where else but to the most noble and the most perfect creatures who once lived upon this glorious soil’.¹²⁵

For Panagiotis Kavvadias (1850-1928),¹²⁶ an archaeologist of importance, the Olympic Games of 1896, which had been, in any event, ‘an outstanding success’, since ‘nowhere in the world could international Olympic Games have been held with such splendour as in Athens’, served as a historic milestone for the Greek nation; not only because they functioned as a field for the forging of the national spirit and the reconstruction of the powers of the nation, but also because they demonstrated to the international community the inherent historic capabilities of Hellenism. This exaggerated – maximalist, one might say – approach led to a national appropriation of the universal Olympic ideal, on the argumentation that the permanent holding of the Olympic Games in their birthplace would mean the regeneration of the Greek race. The instrumentality and the short-sighted approach which characterise the obsessive positions of Kavvadias are striking; he himself did not realise that the nationalisation of the Olympic ideal constituted the cancellation of its universality, that is, its historical invalidation.¹²⁷

For the well-known philologist of Ancient Greek Georgios Mistriotis (1839-1916), who served as a university teacher from 1868 to his death, the Olympic Games proved that the athletic tradition of Hellenism was never interrupted, because ‘the bodily virtues of our ancestors were not only a product of these constant exercises, but a quality in accord with the race’.¹²⁸ In such an approach, the predominant features are the idea of the organicism of societies and biologism. More or less on the same wavelength, Constantinos Manos (1869-1913), man of letters, demoticist, politician and freedom-fighter in the Cretan uprising of 1895-97,¹²⁹ with the self-assurance and

125. *Ibid.*

126. Panagiotis Kavvadias organised the National Archaeological Museum and the Acropolis Museum in Athens. The law on the protection of antiquities (1899) was of his inspiration; he was full professor of Archaeology during the period 1904-1922, although he was temporarily dismissed in 1911. He was also an academician.

127. Views of Panagiotis Kavvadias, ‘Τνώμαι λογίων περὶ τῶν Ολυμπιακῶν Αγώνων’ [Opinions of men of letters on the Olympic Games], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

128. Views of Georgios Mistriotis, ‘Τνώμαι λογίων’, in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

129. Constantinos Manos studied Political Science in Leipzig and Heidelberg and Classics at Oxford. He was for a period of approximately six months tutor in the Greek language to Elisabeth, Empress of Austro-Hungary. In 1896, at the head of a military corps of volunteers, he went to his native Crete to take part in the

grandiloquence of a convert, admitted that the historic turning-point created by the Athens Olympic Games was expressed symbolically by the restoration and re-use of the Panathenaic Stadium, which ‘as the Parthenon is now, will also in the same way [...] become a place of pilgrimage for the civilised world’.¹³⁰

On a different wavelength, however, were the views of Christos Papadopoulos (1835-1906), full professor of Philosophy from 1881 to his death and director of the Teachers’ Training College. He attempted to amalgamate the dualistic anthropological distinction between ‘soul and body’, in which the body is understood exclusively and only as ‘a serving instrument, easy to use, and subservient’, with the approach to physical training as a basic parameter in the upbringing of the young ‘moreover among nations striving for the restoration and maintenance of autonomy’. The world-wide spread of the athletic ideal, which fired both a national and an individual sense of honour, as well as the internationalisation of the Olympic Games, nevertheless produced, according to Papadopoulos, through their exaggeration their own invalidation: on the one hand, by the one-sided exercise of the body, which overthrew the axiomatic presumption of the dominion of the soul, and, on the other hand, by the commercialisation of athleticism, which results from the ‘lavishing of such great honours and praise on the successes of the body’.¹³¹

At the other extreme from the approaches described above, which possess a theoretically elaborated and ideologically paradigmatic character, is the more sober assessment of Kyparissos Stephanou (1857-1917), full professor of advanced algebra and analytical geometry from 1890. He maintained that the Olympic Games of 1896 served simply as a ‘*deus ex machina*’, since they ‘brought us back to faith and hope’.¹³²

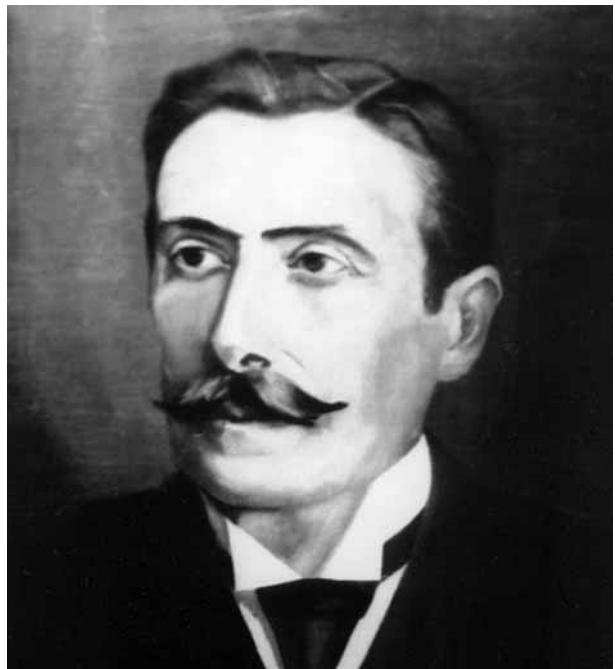
Of particular interest from the point of view of the history of ideas are the views of

revolutionary struggle, where he contributed to the capture of important fortified positions such as at Voukolies and at Malaxa (February-March 1897). Thereafter he was mayor of Chania (1901-1902), while together with Eleftherios Venizelos he created the opposition front against the High Commissioner Prince George. In 1904 he was sent to western Macedonia, where, until his arrest by the Turks and his expulsion, he undertook the leadership of the Macedonian Struggle in the region. In 1905, together with Venizelos and Constantinos Foumis, he organised the revolutionary movement of Therisos. Although elected as deputy for Chania, from 1907 onwards he was chairman of the Athens Macedonian Committee (Komitato). After the arrival of Venizelos in Athens, he was elected Member of Parliament in the elections for the first and the second Constitutional Revision Parliaments in 1910. While taking an active part in the Balkan Wars as leader of a volunteer corps of Cretans, he lost his life in an aeroplane accident, together with Emmanouil Argyropoulos, in the Langadas area in April 1913. He was a militant Demoticist and translated the *Antigone* of Sophocles into Demotic Greek (1905), as well as publishing a collection of poems entitled *Λόγια της χαρδιάς* [Words from the heart] (1890). His combative speech in Parliament on the need for the official establishment of the demotic form of the language during the debate on the revision of the constitution of 1864 became famous.

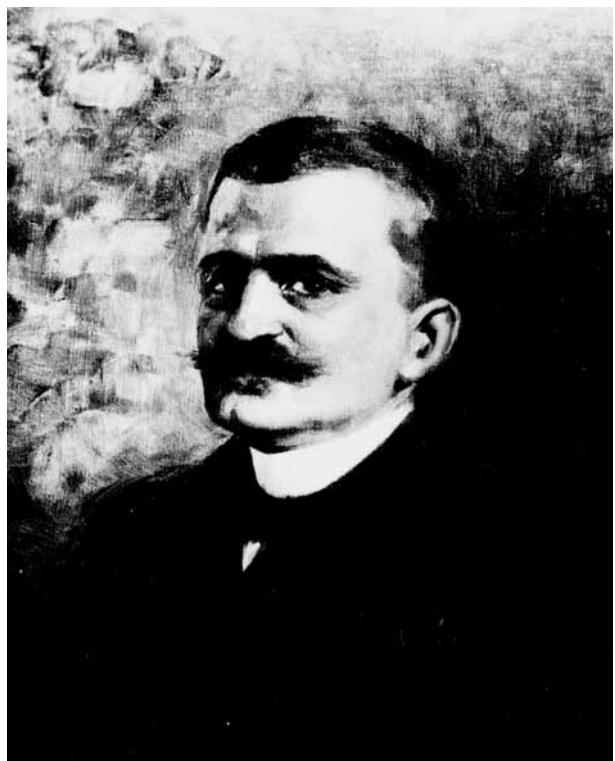
130. Constantinos Manos, ‘Μετά των Αγώνων’ [After the Games], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

131. Views of Christos Papadopoulos, ‘Τνώμαι λογίων’, in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

132. Views of Kyparissos Stephanou, ‘Τνώμαι λογίων’, in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 131.



*Panagiotis Kavvadias,
archaeologist, Professor at the University
of Athens.
[CNR-NHRF Portrait Archive]*



*Constantinos Mitsopoulos,
Professor of Geology and Mineralogy at
the University of Athens.
[CNR-NHRF Portrait Archive]*

the founder of Greek prehistoric archaeology, Christos Tsountas (1857-1934),¹³³ and of Constantinos Mitsopoulos (1846-1911), full professor of geology and mineralogy at the University from the year 1880,¹³⁴ the reason being that the positive acceptance of the athletic ideal on the occasion of the holding of the first modern Olympic Games was not based, as perhaps was to be expected, on the rule of the relevant reasoning, to which we have called attention in the course of this investigation, but on specialised, quasi-scientific – ideologised *ab initio* – systems of reference. In the case of Tsountas, it was the idea of the advanced degeneration of Western civilisation, which could only be stemmed, according to the Greek archaeologist, by the activation of the ideal of ancient Greek nobility (*kalokagathia*) and mass physical exercise and athletics.¹³⁵ Furthermore, in the case of Mitsopoulos, the socio-Darwinian view of gymnastics and athleticism as technologies for adaptation to the environment and the survival of the strongest at an individual and ethnocentric level is interwoven with belief in

133. Christos Tsountas carried out important excavations during the period 1886-98 at Salamis, Eretria, Mycenae, Tanagra, in Laconia and in the Cyclades. He was professor of Archaeology at the University of Athens from 1904 to 1924 and at the University of Thessaloniki the academic year 1926/27. He was also a founding member of the Academy of Athens (1926). Tsountas was a champion of Demotic and testified as a witness for the defence for Alexandros Delmouzos at the trial of the ‘Atheists’ at Nafplio in 1914, and at the investigations in the case of the Marasleiaka episodes in 1925/26.

134. Constantinos Mitsopoulos studied Physics in Athens and Mineralogy at Freiburg. He served as Rector of the University in 1901/2. He played a leading role in efforts to strengthen the position of the natural sciences in Greece, and in the founding of the relevant scientific associations, while he defended the autonomy of the School of Physics and Mathematics from the School of Philosophy, an end that was achieved on 3 June 1904. He was dismissed from the Physics Department in the ‘university purges’ of 1910, and subsequently became Director of the Polytechnic. See in this connection Theodoros Kritikos, *H πρόσληψη της επιστημονικής σκέψης στην Ελλάδα. Η Φυσική μέσα από πρόσωπα, θεσμούς και ιδέες (1900-1930)* [The apprehension of scientific thought in Greece. Physics through individuals, institutions and ideas (1900-1930)], Athens 1995, pp. 31, 32, 34, 35, 41, 42, 129, 170. He was founder of the Mineralogical Museum at the University of Athens, and joint-publisher of the important periodical *Prometheus*, on which A. Valvis, professor of Natural Science, and the physician C. Koryllos also worked. *Prometheus* ceased publication in 1891 after the concerted efforts of the ‘Anapasis’ Association directed against the ‘unbelieving’ and ‘Western-minded’ professors who staffed it. Also of importance was the two-volume *Εγκυλοπαιδικόν λεξικόν πρακτικών γνώσεων* [The encyclopaedic lexicon of practical knowledge], which was published by Mitsopoulos in 1896. He is regarded as one of the proponents of materialistic scientific theories and particularly of Darwinism – probably in Ernst Haeckel’s version – in the Greek academic community.

135. Views of Christos Tsountas, ‘Τνόμαι λογίων’, in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 93. Tsountas’s approach included two further features: his disapproval of professional sport as a distortion of the athletic spirit, and his disagreement with the omission of the ancient event of the pentathlon from the programme of the modern Olympic Games, given that it was ‘a test in the most important contests and precludes one-sided exercises; it develops all the powers and all the limbs of the body, making it in every respect symmetrical and harmonious; consequently, it achieves more fully the purpose of gymnastics’ (p. 94). Constantine Manos shared this opinion of the pentathlon event (‘Μετά τους Αγώνας’ [After the Games], in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 125); at the same time, he states that he was in no way moved by the ‘acrobatics of the exercises on the horizontal bars and parallel bars and rings and the ugliness of cycling!’. Nevertheless, he acknowledges ‘the usefulness of gymnastics for the necessary preparation of the body’ and appreciates ‘the bicycle as a first-class means of transport’.

eugenics and the idealised picture of classical antiquity.¹³⁶ Also reminiscent of Ernst Haeckel's theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics is Constantine Manos's view that the cultivation of athleticism 'over a long period now' in England and the United States of America, countries which served, in an unspoken way, as a model, had brought about the racial refinement of the population, as 'bodies [have] taken on an inherited talent'.¹³⁷

Perhaps one of the most heretical estimates of the Athens Olympic Games to come from the pen of a Greek intellectual was that of the historian Pavlos Karolidis (1849–1930), a specialist in the history of the nineteenth century and from 1893 full professor in the chair of Constantinos Paparrigopoulos. The views of Karolidis, heretical to some degree by the standards of the commonplaces and dominant ideological concepts of the time, though not totally opposed to these, were included in a special feature in the *Acropolis* newspaper, which, as has already been pointed out, was inspired and planned by Vlasis Gavriilidis.

There are three features that are basically and strikingly different in Karolidis's approach: (a) the *sui generis* pragmatism, which evaluates everything on the criterion of its affinity with the fulfilment of the country's irredentist aims; (b) the denunciation of 'the excessively international character' of the Olympic Games, which, by projecting the ideal of universality, undermined, in his opinion, the national expediency of physical exercise and training – contrary to the positive German experience 'at the beginning and in the middle of this century', in which gymnasia had been converted into 'establishments for national training'; (c) his refusal to accept the symbolic dimension of the Games as a historic milestone for the reconstruction of the Greek state and the realisation of the *Megali Idea*, in spite of the fact that he was himself one of the most insistent ideologues of the 'chosen nation' and propagandists of Greek irredentism, as well as of the national and institutional necessity of the dominance of the royal factor in the Greek political system. Moreover, drawing attention to the over-compensatory ideological function of athleticism in relation to traumatic reality, Karolidis went so far as to describe as 'a symptom of a diseased state of affairs' the Greek people's excessive enthusiasm for the Olympic Games, though he hastened to explain this by reference to the national ideal latent within them, 'which', he observed, 'as it does not find, as things are with us at present, a

136. Views of Constantinos Mitsopoulos, 'Τνόμαι λογίων', in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 131: 'Although during the gradual *evolution* over a very long period of time of organic beings, not only *natural selection* but also *deliberate upbringing* by man have contributed to the production of races of beings more perfect and more noble, the *Olympic Games* justly belong among those external conditions of the *Darwinian Theory* that ennable the human race and lend it stamina so that it can carry on the *struggle for existence* with greater strength. Physical and intellectual contests in moderation, whose beneficial effect on man was known to our great ancestors, shape bodies which are more artistic, models for Phidiases and Praxiteles, and form the minds of a Plato or an Aristotle' (emphasis with the use of italics by C. Mitsopoulos himself).

137. Manos, 'Μετά τους Αγώνας', in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

broader and more lofty stadium for action, burst forth in the narrow stadium of the new Olympic Games'.

Although he recognises as an undisputed fact that 'the custom of the present-day so-called Olympic Games [...] will be a cause of great material and moral benefits for the nation', nevertheless, Karolidis criticises the idea of the organic continuity and revival of the Games. The argument he puts forward is that, since history does not repeat itself and each period of history has its own particularity and self-sufficiency (in accordance, in any event, with the axiomatic assumptions of the then dominant epistemological paradigm of historicism), it is not correct to see a complete coincidence of the ancient and the modern Olympic Games, given that the historical frame of reference has altered radically – that is, the 'terms and conditions', as well as the organisational principle of modern civilisation, since 'today, progress and civilisation are the result of the natural and intellectual sciences, and science is in every way the lever that sets in motion the history of humanity'. The scientification and technical rationalisation of modern civilisation, on the one hand, devalue the dominant position of the athletic ritual, since 'the present-day so-called Olympic Games cannot in any way attain to the moral, poetic and in every way historic heights of the ancient Greek games', and, on the other, they call for the elevation of science to the organisational centre of almost every aspect of intellectual, political and social activity. Consequently, in accordance with the premisses of Karolidis's syllogism, the Greek state should adapt itself to the new conditions, following in the wake of historical necessities and the spirit of the age (*Zeitgeist*), by transposing the centre of gravity of its policy to the creation of intellectual infrastructures and institutions (publication of books, the setting up of libraries, the foundation of academies) with a view to the education of the citizen. Education, according to the epistemological pronouncements of neo-Kantian historicism, in which Karolidis's thought is grounded, is defined, on the one hand, as the adjustment of society to the logic and data of the natural sciences 'for the material power of the nation', and, on the other, as the cultivation of the mental sciences, a contingency which in the case of Greece would be marked not only by the revitalisation of 'distinctive national life', but, above all, the 'prevalence' of the *Megali Idea*, that is, the intellectual preparation for its realisation. In this deontological schema, the role of gymnastics and athleticism is seen, naturally enough, as 'secondary'. It could in all likelihood be argued that it has an exclusively instrumental character. It goes no further than the 'military preparation of the nation' for the future fulfilment of its irredentist visions, and, indirectly, the 'development of bodily strength and beauty to the point of the physical ideal' – an objective, however, which, Karolidis argues, is not entirely appropriate to nations who are fighting for independence and their ethnological and historical rights, but *par excellence* to those nations who 'do not have any great national ideal that demands great national strivings'. It is clear that, contrary to the dominant meaning given to physical exercise as a crucial and organic feature of bourgeois modernity, multifariously essential for public health, social discipline, and the emotional discharge of the masses, Karolidis approaches gymnastics and athleticism either in the light of the militarisation of the

young or as social practices of conspicuous consumption of the spare time of the bourgeois strata.¹³⁸

A short time after the Olympic Games had concluded in Athens, Mikhail Galanos (1862-1948), a jurist and the editor of the periodical that bore the same name as the ‘Anapasis’ religious association, which up to a point continued the tradition of the school of Makrakis in Greece, in denouncing, *inter alia*, westernisation and its degenerative pathogenesis – that is, socialism, freemasonry, feminism, and Darwinism¹³⁹ – in a leading article wondered about the significance of the event, and chose an intermediate stance of twofold criticism both of the ‘Bacchic rhapsodists’ and of the ‘extreme and uncompromising critics’.¹⁴⁰ With Christian teaching as his starting-point, he denies that ‘bodily contests are contrary to the spirit of the Gospel and the Christian Church’, putting forward the argument that the Christian requirement of the ‘mortification of the flesh’ refers exclusively and only to the struggle to combat ‘bestial desires and appetites’.¹⁴¹ Indeed, Galanos argues, it is necessary for the Christian soul to be clothed in the armour of a healthy, resilient and strong body, following the example of Jesus Christ himself, without, of course, this meaning that the model of the good Christian is expressed in a single dimension by the symmetrical cultivation of body and spirit.¹⁴² Christianity, according to Galanos, ‘seeks after the harmony of the bodily and mental powers in a spirit of continence and health, virtue and purity’.¹⁴³ Apart, however, for the primary theological grounding for its necessity, Galanos regards bodily exercise as mandatory by having recourse to the nationalist ideology and to the idea of universality. In the first case, physical exercise and athleticism assist the citizen decisively in the correct performance of ‘his duties towards the homeland’,¹⁴⁴ while, in the second, they function as a field ‘for most noble competition between the nations’.¹⁴⁵

However, for the representative of this *sui generis* religious-political movement, the Olympic Games, and athleticism more generally, were not directly evidence of a flourishing state of civilisation and of superiority, given that ‘nowhere [...] have stadiums and athletic contests determined the fates of nations. Our ancestors were still holding Olympic Games when they were slaughtering one another in civil wars,

138. For the views of Pavlos Karolidis see ‘Τνώμαι λογίων’, in *H Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

139. Apostolos Makrakis (1831-1905), an upholder of an extreme version of Orthodoxy, came into conflict with the ecclesiastical administration, and was excommunicated and persecuted for his religious opinions, the most typical of which was the ‘threefold character of human nature’ (soul, spirit, body), which called into question the doctrine of the two natures. Makrakis tried to lend political significance to these religious ideas by setting up associations and propagandist publications. See in this connection Thanasis Kalafatis, ‘Θρησκευτικότητα και κοινωνική διάμαστυσία: Οι οπαδοί του Απόστολου Μακράχη στη βορειοδυτική Πελοπόννησο (1890-1900)’ [Religiosity and social protest: the supporters of Apostolos Makrakis in the north-western Peloponnese (1890-1900)], *Ta Ιστορικά* [Historical Studies] 18/19 (June-Dec. 1993), pp. 113-42. The founder of the ‘Anapasis’ Association, in 1886, was Constantinos Dialimas, a close associate of Makrakis. See in greater detail Kalafatis, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-8. As to the extreme hostility of the ‘Anapasis’ Association towards the periodical *Prometheus*, see above, footnote 133.

140. Mikhail Galanos, ‘Περὶ τῶν Αγώνων’ [Concerning the Games], *Anapasis* 11 (10 April 1896), p. 113.

141. *Ibid.* 142. *Ibid.* 143. *Ibid.* 144. *Ibid.* 145. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

and the Isthmian Games served to acclaim Nero' – at least, as Galanos remarks.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, the abolition of the Olympic Games by Theodosius was not, in his opinion, a sign of barbarism, nor did it have a decisive influence on the historical processes of the inherent dissolution of the ancient Greek world 'whose fall in antiquity came about when the moral virtues collapsed'.¹⁴⁷ Consequently, the creation of athletics infrastructures, the introduction of contests and the cultivation of the spirit of competition could not in themselves lead to 'national regeneration' without the prerequisite of the co-ordination of the executive, legislative, and judicial powers, of the institutions of education, of the family, and, more generally, of 'social life' within the framework determined by the principles of the Orthodox faith,¹⁴⁸ which alone were capable of reforming sick modern societies in an overall manner. Further: as the example of the exceptional performances of the American and European athletes who played a leading part in the Athens Olympic Games showed, athletic achievements are to be understood as the result of the competition, the rule of good laws, the 'firm establishment of morals', and the more general progress which characterised Western societies and were due 'to the effect of the principles and spirit of the Gospel [...].'¹⁴⁹ In contrast with the sociological view dominant since then, which apprehends secularisation as a distinctive feature of Western societies, Galanos believed that modern societies continued to be determined by religion and the morality stemming from it. In these societies, the impetus and dynamics of modernisation did not cancel out the normative function of the principles, the values and the practices called for by religious faith. He notes that in these societies, the work of the gymnastics instructor was 'complemented' and 'crowned' by the work of the teacher and the priest,¹⁵⁰ while, more generally, the processes of education were marked by organic cohesion and were a composite whole that exercised not only the body, but also the soul and the intellect. Otherwise, Galanos argues, exclusive concern with the body, 'the one-sided honour paid to physical exercise' would advance the spirit of materialism and of the socio-Darwinian rule of the stronger.¹⁵¹

Also along the same but more theoretical lines was the approach of the jurist, banker and chief editor of the periodical *Anaplasis* Ioannis Skaltsounis (1824-1905), which also attempted to rationalise and evaluate the immediate reverberations of the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens. In combating the Darwinian – in reality the socio-Darwinian – view of athleticism,¹⁵² Skaltsounis reverted to the idea of ancient Greek nobility and to the Christian conception of the body as the temple of the soul.¹⁵³ Considering the United States of America, as he also did, to be a model of a socially flourishing and advancing country, and following the interpretative schema of Alexis de Tocqueville, Skaltsounis concluded that at the foundations of the American state and society was the Christian faith, which gave meaning to all the aspects of public and private life and, in this particular instance, supported the experiential

146. *Ibid.*, p. 114. 147. *Ibid.* 148. *Ibid.* 149. *Ibid.* 150. *Ibid.*, p. 115. 151. *Ibid.*

152. Ioannis Skaltsounis, 'Χριστολογία' [Christology], *Anaplasis* 13 (1 May 1896), p. 131.

153. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

model of the harmonious development of body and spirit.¹⁵⁴ Seen in this light, the leading role played by the American athletes in the recent Olympic Games was none other, in Skaltsounis's view, than a consequence, a symbolic embodiment of the moral concepts that governed American society, thus constituting its distinctive characteristic. Skaltsounis was convinced that only in such a society, in which 'the increase in bodily strength and power' is dependent upon the 'moral formation' of the people, could athleticism fulfil its role in moral and more general education. In any other case it was a sign of social pathology, sickness, and 'dissoluteness'.¹⁵⁵ Resorting to the inevitable comparison, Skaltsounis maintained that in glaring contrast with American society, in Greece the decline in religion among the population was accelerating. The divine had been 'expurgated' from the official programme of the Olympic Games, while, at the same time, 'the world of the authorities, the men of letters, and the heads of families [...] poured oil on the already ignited fire of indifference to religion, of materialism, and of atheism'.¹⁵⁶ Only the 'undefiled' agricultural class still kept alive the flame of religious faith, as was proved, in any event, by the example of the marathon-runner Spyros Louis, from Marousi, who ascribed his victory to his faith in God.¹⁵⁷ The radical version of Orthodoxy is here blended with the romantic and messianic adulation of the agricultural class of the Tolstoyan life theory.

The incorporation of the interest in physical training and exercise into the world of theological speculation, the Church, and the Orthodox collectivity more generally, as evidenced, beyond any doubt, by the articles in the periodical *Anapasis*, was due chiefly to the Olympic Games of 1896. However, the ground had already been prepared by suspicious prelates, as the case of Nektarios Kephalas testifies. In his 'Homily on gymnastics', Nektarios brings out the desirability of the functional, though not intensive, exercise of the body, deviation from which could disturb the harmonious relation between body and spirit. In this homily, he also undertakes the defence of the necessity of physical training through the linkage of bodily exercise - irredentism - the militarisation of youth within the context of the doctrinal concept that the mind directs while the disciplined body 'tirelessly executes orders', thus serving as a symbol of the soul trained by exercise and of the spirit of striving of the Orthodox believer.¹⁵⁸

The after-affects of the Olympic Games on Greek society and, more particularly, on the education community were powerful and fruitful. This can be seen, *inter alia*, from the increasing trend to set up sports associations,¹⁵⁹ the statutory introduction of

154. *Ibid.* 155. *Ibid.*, p. 131. 156. *Ibid.*, p. 132. 157. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

158. Giorgos Kokkinos, 'Υγεία, αλκή, καλοκαγαθία: Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία και σωματική αγωγή. Οι αντιστάσεις και η βαθυαία προσαρμογή' [Health, vitality, nobility: The Orthodox Church and physical training. Forms of resistance and gradual adaptation], reprint from the *Πρακτικά των Διεθνούς Συμποσίου 'Οι χρόνοι της Ιστορίας. Για μια Ιστορία της παιδικής ηλικίας και της νεότητας'* [Proceedings of the International Symposium 'The times of History. Towards a History of childhood and youth'], Athens 1998, particularly pp. 343-5.

159. Ch. Koulouri analyses the social, political and ideological parameters of the so-called 'club mania' and 'athleticitis' of the period 1870-1922 in *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-206.

the subject of gymnastics into elementary education (1899), a cognitive interest in the history of athleticism and its linkage with other fields of human activity, as well as from the introduction of the Panhellenic School Games in 1900. In reality, of course, if we are to believe the articles on the subject in the *Δελτίον του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου* [Bulletin of the Education Society], the assigning of a more prominent role to gymnastics in schools in Greece and the creation of the appropriate infrastructures had not in fact been achieved even in the early 1910s.¹⁶⁰ The distance between expectations and reality remained considerable in this instance.

In the periodical *Εθνική Αγωγή* [National Training] (1898-1904) – which was founded to serve the inculcation of the national spirit into young people in school, the modernisation of the educational task, and the academic and ideological formation of the world of education, thus articulating a first nucleus of the tendency which later became the movement for educational Demoticism – a number of texts can be traced which deal with the issue of the annual Panhellenic School Games and place them within the context of the social dynamics that was created by the Olympic Games of 1896, but also within the spirit of revanchism brought about by the defeat in the Greek-Turkish war of 1897. Nevertheless, in these articles, the pre-empting of the modern Olympic Games does not stifle every dissident voice which, out of a devotion to the normative function of the ancient Greek model, insisted on the superiority of the Greek games of antiquity on the argument that, unlike the games ‘in the modern sense’, the games in Greek antiquity were capable of ‘giving shape to that physical perfection, that moral strength, that lofty aesthetic, those essential qualities of the national Greek spirit which have moulded the greatness, the power and the character of the Greek people. Because the Greeks have linked the purpose of gymnastics much more with ethics than with the outward form’.¹⁶¹ As was to be expected, in the articles which dealt with the establishment of the obligatory character of the gymnastics lesson and with the first Panhellenic School Games, the predominating angle of vision for comment and evaluation was that of the contribution of school games to the shaping of the national educative process and the formation of the national spirit – their function, that is, as ‘means for the renewal of the nation’, and their elevation into instruments for the forging of the ‘armed nation’.¹⁶² The

160. By way of indication, it has been established that in 1912 no school unit in the Municipality of Athens possessed a gymnasium, while, at the same time, the schoolyards were not adequate for this purpose. See K.K.K., ‘Εντυπώσεις από τα σχολεία του Δήμου Αθηναίων. Διάλεξις στον Εκπαιδευτικό Όμιλο, 1 Απριλίου 1912’ [Impressions of the schools in the Municipality of Athens. Lecture to the Education Society, 1 April 1912], *Δελτίον του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου* II (1912), pp. 177, 183, 191.

161. Vasileios D. Skourboutakos, ‘Τυμναστική και τέχνη’ [Gymnastics and art], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 17 (1 Sept. 1899), p. 263. The author of the article, a headteacher from Gytheio, sets out his views in reviewing M. Jerace’s book *Η γυμναστική εν τας σχέσεοιν αντίς προς την ελληνικήν τέχνην* [Gymnastics in its relations with Greek art], in which the position is propounded that ancient Greek art was the embodiment of the physical model that the Greeks produced by physical training and athleticism within the framework of the ethical rule of *kalokagathia*. In this sense, ancient Greek art functioned as a reproduction of the real and at the same time as an aesthetic expression of the ideal.

162. The typical expression of this is contained in an article reviewing the past year in the periodical

organic linkage of the ‘law on Gymnastics’ and the Panhellenic School Games is obvious in an article reviewing the state of elementary education in Greece. The article’s author writes: ‘The display of the work done on gymnastics in schools given at the end of March 1900, when 165,000 Greek children went through their exercises publicly throughout the state, proclaiming the conscientious work of those teaching them and the manifest results of Gymnastics, were fine fruits of this law. The culmination of the display of achievement in Gymnastics was the school games held in the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday of the week after Easter, which were concluded with an impressive parade through the major streets of the capital. At these, a picture of ancient life and movement was reproduced and a bond was woven between the old renown and glory of our homeland and its future, so full of hope’.¹⁶³ The model of the physically trained and healthy citizen-soldier in correlation with the appropriation of the ancient heritage, which is defined by the ideal of nobility, form the basis of the argumentation in this context. Individual slight deviations as to the prominence given to the arguments, and chiefly as to the priority given to the health of the pupils over the forging of the national spirit, which are to be encountered in other articles on the subject, cannot invalidate the predominance of the norm in which the inculcation of the national spirit, social disciplining, and the militarisation of youth are associated.¹⁶⁴ Of particular interest

Εθνική Αγωγή, written by a contributor under the pen name Philodemus: ‘Το λιγσαν έτος’ [The past year], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 1 (1 Jan. 1899), p. 3. The author of the article, in proposing as models the ‘self-centredness of the Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial of the old Greek’, and at the same time referring back, though indirectly, to the precedent of the successful national mobilisation of German society after the defeat by Napoleon’s troops, which led to domestic reconstruction and the creation of a unified German state, speaks of the crucial nature of ‘educative training of the nation’ to make possible ‘a national resurrection’ by the creation of ‘a generation strong in body and soul, [...] baptised as steel is plunged into water, and as firm as it is in spirit, in self-confidence, in the religion of God, in the worship of the homeland’. On the other hand, a direct reference to the German precedent after the defeat at Jena in 1807 is made by another contributor of an article, Neoklis Kazazis, professor at the School of Law and leader of the ‘Hellenism’ Society, in his article ‘Η εθνική εξέγερσις της Γερμανίας’ [The national uprising in Germany], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 21 (15 Dec. 1898), pp. 330-1.

163. X., ‘Η δημοτική εκπαίδευσις σεν Ελλάδι κατά το 1900’ [Elementary education in Greece in 1900], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 1 (1 Jan. 1901), p. 4. Similar argumentation can be observed in the article by Philodemus, ‘Οι σχολικοί αγώνες’ [School games], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 9 (1 May 1900), p. 129, in which, after the hope / observation that ‘we have at last, after so many vicissitudes and the loss of so long a period of time, entered upon the path of the proper training of the youth of the nation, in whom we repose so many just hopes’, the writer proposes certain supplementary measures, such as the teaching of the lesson of gymnastics in all the country’s schools in a consolidated programme and methods of inspection, that is, the systematisation and regularisation of the subject, the introduction of ‘national games’ into the school curriculum, and, finally, the creation of mass athleticism institutions – an admittedly pioneering proposal for a country that had only just introduced the teaching of gymnastics in schools.

164. Although in his article ‘Η ανόθωσις της Ελλάδος. Β’ [The recovery of Greece. II], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 22 (15 Nov. 1901), p. 347, the Greek professor of International Law at the University of Bern, Mikhail Kepetzis, gave prominence to the ideal of the health of school students, he nevertheless does not abandon the logic of militarisation. He writes in this connection: ‘A tentative step has already been taken for the better. From the celebration of the International Olympic Games in the year 1896, athletic exercises and

are the articles contributed by Emmanouil Lykoudis (1849-1925), prose-writer, senior judicial functionary, and member of the National Society, who observes that in spite of the favourable circumstances created by the holding of the Olympic Games in Athens, the athletic spirit, in the sense of the ‘supreme, in a manner of speaking, academic moulding of the body’ had not succeeded in being grafted on to the ‘habits of the Greek people’ in the way it should have been.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, he maintains, the law of 10 July 1899, which introduced compulsory teaching of physical training, ‘achieved its aim in the fullest possible manner’, in spite of the fact that ‘certain slight improvements in details only, the need for which has been demonstrated by its implementation, are called for in the interests of its more desirable functioning’.¹⁶⁶ Among the necessary improvements and adjustments, Lykoudis included chiefly the ‘systematisation of the indigenous games’ and ‘their systematic introduction into physical exercises’, which would ‘render gymnastics more pleasing and probably more acceptable to young boys and adolescents, and would serve as the surest means of popularising physical exercises and contests’.¹⁶⁷ He also included the creation of an extensive horizontal and vertical network of organisation of collective competition between students in school units, by town/commune, municipality, geographical region, prefecture, etc., and a re-familiarisation with the athletic sites of antiquity, or the selection of sites which ‘the history of more modern heroic contests has rendered glorious’, so that school contests could be held on them and in this way faith in the unbroken national continuity could be firmly established and the national spirit strengthened.¹⁶⁸

In the argumentation of Lykoudis also, the reference to the ancient Greek normative ideal is palpable; but, unlike others, Lykoudis was aware of the new needs which had to be met in modern disciplinary communities by the institutionalisation of physical exercise and the creation of related forms of bourgeois communalism (health, national mobilisation, social discipline, controlled emotional discharge of the masses). It is for this reason, in any event, that he aptly expresses the view that school gymnastics do not exhaust their desirability within the context of the institution of the school, but should function in parallel as ‘a channel for the extension and dissemination of gymnastics to the working classes, not, of course, within the sphere of athleticism – that would be utopia – but as a healthy and strengthening popular recreation’¹⁶⁹ with a view to ‘reducing a nostalgia for the tavernas and coffee-shops’, so that the people ‘on

gymnastics have acquired regard with the Greeks, taking precedence over the old stereotyped system whereby, if need was, health was sacrificed to study. Marks in gymnastics are an important factor in the calculation of the whole required for advancement, and the results are truly worthy of applause. We felt boundless pleasure in attending, at Easter, the exercises of six thousand school students in the precincts of the Panathenaic Stadium. [...] patriotic songs were sung in the intermissions between the exercises. Those present had difficulty in containing their emotion at this heartening spectacle of sturdy youth, so full of future’.

165. Emmanouil S. Lykoudis, ‘Οι σχολικοί αγώνες’ [School games], *Εθνική Αγωγή* 8 (15 April 1901), p. 113.

166. *Ibid.* 167. *Ibid.*, p. 114. 168. *Ibid.*, p. 115. 169. *Ibid.*, p. 113.



*Ioannis Skaltsounis, jurist, economist
and politician (1899).*
[CNR-NHRF Portrait Archive]



*Emmanouil Lykoudis, prose-writer,
senior judge and member of the National
Society (1910).*
[CNR-NHRF Portrait Archive]

holidays, would turn towards the countryside, towards the wide-open spaces, towards the green carpets of the fields, under the blue ceiling of the Greek sky'. The idealisation of the Greek landscape co-exists in the reasoning of Lykoudis with ambivalence towards industrial civilisation and a contempt for urban space, without, however, his faith in the bourgeois values of individuality, competition, meritocracy, hierarchy, self-control, discipline, solidarity, and, of course, order being eliminated. He finds occasion to give expression to this faith in criticising those who have questioned the usefulness of the Panhellenic School Games on the grounds that their conversion into a mass spectacle, and the 'ostentatious parades through the streets of the school battalions' corrupt their character by compromising 'in the minds of young pupils the healthy awareness of the true, the real purpose of gymnastics'.¹⁷⁰ Against these he ranges a panoply of arguments, in which individuality and collectivity are understood as the two related sides of the coin of bourgeois communalism, while, at the same time, the private nature of training is 'melted down' in the publicity of contests and parades. The functionality of the fit, healthy, strong and disciplined body is aestheticised, is converted into a symbol of the uniqueness, the ethnological and historical continuity, the biological quality, and cultural superiority of the nation. Within this framework, the idea of collectivity refers us to the forging of the national spirit and the militarisation of youth as the vanguard of the 'armed nation', while the idea of individuality refers us to the disciplined individual who develops his skills in the knowledge that the collective is superior to the individual good. In spite of his advocacy of the multifarious desirability of physical training, the intellectualist and bipolar view of the body as a machine for carrying out the will of the spirit remains, in the case of Lykoudis also, dominant: 'Because it is only competition which ennobles, which idealises bodily exercises. Only the expectation of regard and of praise from the ruling authorities and from society, only the reasonable, the just desire for applause inspire a love for these and transform the trouble and toil into a feeling of elation. [...] And then, how is it possible to overlook or to underestimate the incalculable advantages of common games, of exercises performed by large teams? The spirit of discipline, order, a sense of solidarity, and, above all, the cultivation and elevation of the spirit [...].'¹⁷¹

Historical and archaeological interest in the Olympic Games in the circumstances of the holding of the Intermediate Olympics

The book by Antonios D. Keramopoulos, *Oι γυμναστικοί αγώνες των αρχαίων Ελλήνων* [The gymnastic games of the ancient Greeks], which was published in Athens in April 1906, is instructive for the following reasons: first, it refers directly to the circumstances of the holding of the Intermediate Olympics of 1906. Second, it subordinates the archaeological and traveller's interest to the historical interest in the birth, evolution

170. *Ibid.*, p. 115. 171. *Ibid.*

and description of events and games, and to the pedagogic interest, which concerns the shaping of an athletic ethos among Greek youth and the population of Greece more generally. Third, it comes from the pen of a well-informed and authoritative archaeologist and historian, who later served – specifically from 1928 to 1938 – as full professor in the chair of the ‘public and private life of the ancient Greeks’ at the University of Athens; he was also, from 1926 to his death, an academician. And finally, fourth, Keramopoulos’s book was published by the Association for the Dissemination of Useful Books, the founder of which, in 1899, was, as is known, Demetrios Vikelas; in this way, from the very beginning, there was important ideological and socio-political support for the book, within the framework of the official ideology. This support was broadened later in Keramopoulos’s academic career when he lent a programmatically politico-ideological character to his work as a scholar from the inter-war years by linking the archaeological finds in Macedonia with the ethnological composition of the population in order to rebut the theory that there was a racial difference between the Hellenes and the Macedonians.¹⁷²

Keramopoulos’s book combines a knowledge of history, archaeology, anthropology and folklore, but he does not embark upon a specific comparison of past and present, since what has precedence in the mind of the author is to highlight the paradigmatic and normative model of the ancient Greek past in such a way that the firm establishment of the athletic ideal in Greek society should be rendered easier, since it would have been invested with the halo of the ancient Greek tradition, in the context of which ‘the victors in the sacred games (*hieronikai*) were greatly honoured and adored, but it was always the Olympic victors who took precedence over the others, because, as Pindar says, [...] there was no contest superior to the Olympic Games’.¹⁷³ This was

172. Antonios Keramopoulos was born at Vlasti in the Prefecture of Kozani in 1870 and died in Athens in 1960. He studied archaeology at the University of Athens, in Vienna, in Berlin, and in Munich. He worked successively in secondary education, at the National Archaeological Museum, and as inspector of antiquities in Phokida, in Boeotia (where he discovered, *inter alia*, the acropolis of Cadmus), in the Cyclades, at Delphi, at the Athens Epigraphy Museum, at the Acropolis of Athens, in Attica and Argolida; he was then elected professor at the University of Athens. He was regarded as an expert *par excellence* on the Thebes, Delphi, Athens, and western Macedonia regions. His oeuvre includes 131 works of scholarship. Among his more important works are the following: *Οδηγός των Δελφών* [Guide to Delphi] (Athens 1908, and in a revised and augmented French edition, 1909), *Θηβαϊκά* [Theban matters] (Athens 1917), *Οι Αχαιοί και οι Δωρείς εν Μαχεδονίᾳ* [The Achaeans and Dorians in Macedonia] (1920), *Μαχεδονία και Μαχεδόνες* [Macedonia and Macedonians] (Athens 1930), *Επίτομος ιστορία Φιλίππου του Β' της Μαχεδονίας* [A brief history of Philip II of Macedonia] (Athens 1935), *Οι βόρειοι Έλληνες κατά το Εικοσιένα* [The northern Greeks in '21] (Athens 1938), *Περί της φυλετικής καταγωγής των αρχαίων Μαχεδόνων* [Concerning the racial origin of the ancient Macedonians] (Athens 1945), *Τι είναι οι Κουτσόβλαχοι* [Who are the Koutsovvlachs?] (Athens 1939), *Οι Έλληνες και οι βόρειοι γείτονες* [The Greeks and their northern neighbours] (Athens 1942-1945), *Η σημερινή γερμανική επιστήμη περί της φυλετικής καταγωγής των αρχαίων Μαχεδόνων* [German scholarship at present on the racial origin of the ancient Macedonians] (Athens 1945), *Βλάχοι* [Vlachs] (Thessaloniki 1953). Details of the career and oeuvre of Keramopoulos have been taken from the volume in his honour *Γέρας Αντωνίου Κεραμοπούλου* [Trophy for Antonios Keramopoulos], Athens 1953.

173. Antonios D. Keramopoulos, *Οι γυμναστικοί αγώνες των αρχαίων Ελλήνων* [The gymnastic games of the ancient Greeks], Athens 1906, p. 140.

a tradition which, Keramopoulos maintains, survived through the age-long history of the Greek nation under the cloak of ritual practices observed during the course of religious festivals and fairs, or of the symbolic representation of the saints of the Orthodox Church as ‘athletes’,¹⁷⁴ features which more generally, in the author’s view, bear witness to the organic cultural continuity of Hellenism.¹⁷⁵ It is only indirectly that he applies a critique to the pathology of modernity as regards the inability of modern society to shape the ethos of young people and to rationalise the use of spare time, which, when related to the new forms of bourgeois communalism (for example, coffee-shops), is seen as a source of dangers and not as a framework for the multifaceted cultivation of the personality.¹⁷⁶

Keramopoulos believed that a prerequisite for the acceptance of the athletic culture in Greece, not only in the sense of passive recreation in the role of spectator at athletic contests, but above all in the sense of a way of life, of active and systematic – individual or collective – exercise, was the mobilisation of public opinion, which would become a reality by means of the undertaking of co-ordinated initiatives on the part of the state. Again using the ancient Greek example, and overlooking the fact that in Western societies the encouragement of interest in health and physical exercise, and in the establishment among the masses of the athletic ideal, was a result not only of state will or the initiative of international organisations, but also of the activation of the rising civil society, he argued the view that ‘As in ancient times the systematisation of the games came first, and then came education in gymnastics, in like manner in modern Greece, first the world Olympic Games of 1896 were held in Athens, and then universal education in gymnastics was brought about by Law BXKA’ of 1899, which prescribed gymnastics as a compulsory lesson in all schools’.¹⁷⁷ But such a view undermines the social necessity of physical exercise for the sake of its ideological-political function as a mechanism for social disciplining, militarisation, and the demonstration of the nation’s symbolic superiority.

174. *Ibid.*, p. 7: ‘and this modern Hellenism, thinking in a Hellenic way, of all the saints and “athletes” of the Church, embraces with most love the two handsome, youthful, brave horsemen in their prime St Demetrius and St George’.

175. *Ibid.*, p. 9: ‘Usually, however, games were held at religious festivals and celebrations, which in those days were numerous, since the ancient Greeks did not have a day of rest equivalent to the Sunday of the Christians or the Sabbath of the Jews. This custom has been maintained down to our own time, because at the present day, in Greek villages, the contests in *aiming, putting the stone, jumping, wrestling*, etc., take place chiefly at festivals and fairs. On those days, people did less or no work, and used to eat and drink more richly either at home or from the sacrifices offered by the ancient Greeks to the gods, and so had the opportunity and greater inclination to take part in and watch such contests’.

176. *Ibid.*, p. 33: ‘But even after the end of military service, when the ephebes became men, as lovers of athletics, they still frequented the place of the exercises of the ephebes, which thus became at one and the same time a place of exercises and of meetings. For this reason, many sages, who wished to teach their theories and opinions, would go there and, at their ease, teach those present, and particularly the young, as they walked in the shade of the trees or seated on the ground or on platforms or benches in shady or roofed or enclosed places. In this way, at that time, the youth – the springtime of the homeland, as they were called – spent their free time, which the young people of today spend doing nothing in the coffee-shops’.

177. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

The argumentation of Keramopoulos on the desirability of athletic contests and the interiorisation of the culture of bodily exercise was articulated at four levels:

(a) At the *anthropological level*, within the framework of which movement was understood as ‘an expression of life and of health, and a means for preserving and promoting it’, that is, as a natural necessity.¹⁷⁸ The echoes of vitalistic and eugenic ideas – commonplaces, anyway, at the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century – are clearly discernible in this argumentation. Co-existing with them, reasonably enough, is another commonplace of the period: biologism, by means of a resort to which an attempt was made to inscribe within nature – and consequently render ontological – not only the historically determined ranking of the genders, but even the very will to be involved in athleticism, and the quest for achievements and individual recognition on sports tracks. In the view of Keramopoulos, as recorded in his writings: ‘there is, however, a certain innate love of honour, distinctive chiefly of the male sex, which wishes and is ready to be superior to others and to conquer’.¹⁷⁹ According to this Greek archaeologist, the seed of the athletic ideal is inherent in the process of the civilisation of mankind. The devising of the first games served a multiplicity of expediencies, among which prominence was given to habituation to the ‘works of war’, the forging of military virtue, and the recognition of the good warrior within the male community.¹⁸⁰

(b) At the level of looking upon gymnastics and athleticism as a *paradigmatic and universal life model*, which owes its realisation to the biological and cultural particularity of the Greek nation and its superiority and diachronicity to the capability afforded to the state to mould the character of the young and to protect its frontiers and public health and that afforded to individuals to realise the aesthetic and moral ideal of nobility,¹⁸¹ which is of greater importance than the pursuit of victory and the desire for individual recognition.¹⁸² In spite of its universality, such a model continues to be seen as *par excellence* a *national inheritance*.

(c) At the ideological-political and at the symbolic level, at which individual victory is regarded as an indication of the biological and cultural superiority of the nation or a preliminary for the securing of its historic entitlements, but, in parallel, as a mechanism permitting the optimisation of the health, strength and resilience of the whole of

178. *Ibid.*, p. 3. 179. *Ibid.*, p. 5. 180. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

181. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-5: Gymnastics and athleticism were ‘brought forth in Greece, because the seed was from the beginning in the high-spirited and play-loving and masculine life of the Greeks and their games. It was cultivated and progressed thereafter, first because it was considered to be a necessary qualification of rulers, and then because it was conceived as a condition of good (free) upbringing and education, which shaped perfect free men. But the Hellenes were not slow to discern other virtues in engagement in gymnastics. Such were the preparation of robust citizens and soldiers, the strengthening of health, and the shaping of a fine body’.

182. *Ibid.*, p. 141: ‘the purpose of gymnastics was the shaping of fine, healthy and harmoniously strong bodies by the symmetrical exercise of all the limbs. Of course, each gymnast or young man could set his ambitions on the victor’s crown or olive branch in some contest, but this was not the main purpose of gymnastics [...].’

the collective body.¹⁸³ It is obvious that such a way of looking at the Olympic Games and athletic competition more generally undermines an individual-centred view of athleticism, but without cancelling out its modern character, within the framework of which individual and collective values co-exist.

(d) At the level of shaping the character and national spirit of young people, the level, that is, of political socialisation, disciplining, self-control and the interiorisation of the ruling values, the role of gymnastics and athleticism has an obviously communalistic character, since, as Keramopoulos argues, the freedom of the individual is not to be understood as a right, but as a function, only in the sense of an awareness of his organic membership of the group as a discrete part of the whole, as a unit charged with a particular role. The communalistic character of these ideas of Keramopoulos is reinforced by the importance he attributes to those contests that aim first and foremost at the establishment of military skills and virtues, such as boldness, endurance, ‘acuity’, decisiveness, speed, self-sacrifice, comradeship, and solidarity. As Keramopoulos writes: ‘When the exercises are combined with movements of the body, that is, when they are gymnastic, as we say today, they not only benefit and promote health and life, but also serve as the first school in which the character of the young is formed. Because there they are taught to be cheerful and bold, sharp-witted and decisive, persevering and swift, to have patience and attention and a spirit of self-sacrifice, to love their comrades and fellow-players, and not to think only of themselves but of the whole, that of which they feel members. Furthermore, in these games they learn to submit themselves gladly and to feel that they are truly free while they are doing not what they want, but that which is fitting and necessary’.¹⁸⁴

INSTEAD OF AN EPILOGUE

In 1897, a year after the first modern Olympic Games in Athens – a success which was to be wiped out violently by the vital blow struck at the national honour and by the structural upheavals caused in the country’s political system by defeat in the Greek-

183. *Ibid.*, p. 143: ‘When all a nation exercises symmetrically and thus improves the bodies of the citizens, when all the young men, as wrestlers and gymnasts, are expert and *hypakroi* [=at the supreme point, the highest, among the first] victors in all the contests, there will be certain skilled natures with more aptitude for this or that event, there will be *akroi* victors, so that the ambition of those who consider a great and happy national event the chance appearance of a superb athlete in the midst of an untrained people is more properly served. And only when victorious athletes come forth from such a nation, is the institution of the games fulfilled, for these do not take place for the purposes of the discovery and exaltation of some rare physical excellence among men, but are staging-points in the gymnastic education of the people in which it receives new teachings and a new impetus towards further gymnastic education’.

184. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

Turkish war –, Neoklis Kazazis, professor at the School of Law and president of the nationalist, irredentist and anti-parliamentarian ‘Hellenism’ Society, speaking to a student audience, stressed that the Olympic Games of 1896 were an important event, but not of an isolated and one-dimensional character. On the contrary, this multi-dimensional event was to be seen in reference to new practices, new international institutions for co-operation, and new forms of collectivity at a world-wide level; at the same time, nevertheless, it was, according to Kazazis, one of the innumerable links in the centuries-long chain of the achievements of Hellenism, ‘simple evidence [...] of the great struggle that has been carried on for centuries by the Greek race’ for national regeneration and the demonstration of its entitlements within the framework of the international community, and for the documentation of its ethnological continuity, its biological robustness, and its cultural dynamism.¹⁸⁵ This dominant approach, which, as the analysis which has gone before has demonstrated, was shared to a considerable extent – in spite of ideological and world theory differentiations, and heterogeneous spheres of professional involvement – by virtually the whole of the Greek intellectual world, indicates the inherent and intense politicisation of the first Olympic Games on the part of the Greek side. It is manifest, to say the least, that the ‘revival’ of the Olympic Games was treated by the leaderships of Greek society as a vehicle for the enhancement of the role of Greece in the Balkan Peninsula and, more generally, for the improvement of the country’s position and influence on the international diplomatic scene. This attitude was, however, also shared by the Greek spectators at the first modern Olympic Games, since ‘it can be seen from contemporaneous descriptions that the motive of “watching” was not associated with athleticism as such but with national feeling’.¹⁸⁶ The coincidence of the attitudes of the leaderships and the people, and without the former having, in effect, the necessary time at their disposal to shape the terms for the positive social apprehension of the event, does not prove so much the mental preparation of public opinion to accept the athletic ideal as the dominance of the nationalistic ideology, which, functioning as a unified, inter-class and universal angle of vision on reality, evaluated the events with their capacity for serving the irredentist visions and the programme of domestic reconstruction of the country as virtually the sole criterion. In this sense, love for athleticism was no more than one aspect of love for the homeland. Interest in athleticism was not primary and autonomous, but secondary and, rather, symbolic.

The holding of the Intermediate Olympics in 1906 did not essentially alter the ideological and intellectual context of the apprehension of the Olympic Games and, more generally, of athleticism in Greece. The axiomatic presumption of the genealogical relation between the ancient and the modern Olympic Games remained strong, since it served, in any event, the idea of the unbroken continuity and the organic evolution of the Greek nation, while, in spite of their inherently internation-

185. Neoklis Kazazis, *Δέκα λόγοι προς την ελληνικήν νεότητα* [Ten addresses to Greek youth], Athens 1900, pp. 10-11.

186. Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αυτικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

ally and – programmatically, at least – universal character, the Olympic Games continued to be understood by Greek intellectuals, through the indicative example of Keramopoulos's book, as a purely Greek cultural heritage. Naturally enough, devotion to the past rendered inevitable the recourse to archaeological and historical research. The very social usefulness of physical training and athleticism extended no further than their moralising dimension and their ideological-political function. They did not concern the autonomous individual, but the role of the individual in the group. The conservative and absolutist associations of such an approach are obvious.

Travelling to Athens

VASSILIKI TZACHRISTA

OLYMPIC GAMES 1896

The rediscovery of ancient Greece

The modern Olympic Games, a fascinating product of the internationalised capitalist society of the nineteenth century, were the outset of organised international events where athletic competition was the particular motive. It has been argued that an important influence was exerted upon their revival by international exhibitions – another invention of the nineteenth century –,¹ which brought together people from different parts of the world. The first international exhibition, which was held in London in 1851, attracted 17,000 exhibitors and 6,000,000 visitors and brought in high profits for the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, which organised it.² By 1896, some twenty international exhibitions had been held all over the world and world markets had opened up.

In the mid nineteenth century, an ever denser network of economic transactions,

1. Lamartine DaCosta, ‘Οράματα για την Αθήνα το 2004’ [Visions for Athens in 2004], paper read at the Fifth Joint International Congress for Teachers and Staff of Higher Physical Education Institutes (International Olympic Academy, Ancient Olympia, 20-27 July 2001). See also Pierre de Coubertin, ‘Διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες εν Αθήναις 1896’ [International Olympic Games in Athens 1896], in *Oι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896. Μέρος Β': Οι Ολυμπιακοί αγώνες 1896, υπό Δ. Κουμπερτέν, Τιμ. Φιλήμονος, Ν. Πολίτον και Χαρ. Αννίνον (μετά γαλλικής μεταφράσεως του όλου υπό Léon Olivier)* [The Olympic Games 776 BC - 1896, Part II: The Olympic Games 1896, by D. Coubertin, T. Philimon and C. Anninos (with a translation into French of the whole by Léon Olivier)], Athens 1896: ‘Universal exhibitions brought together to one locality of the globe the products of the most distant lands; literary or scientific congresses have brought together, into contact, the various intellectual forces. How then should the athletes not seek to meet, since rivalry is the very basis of athletics, and in reality the very reason of its existence?’.

2. In imitation of this, in 1855 the French held a similar exhibition in the Champs Elysées, in the Hall of Industry, which had a host of visitors and exhibitors. See *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυροπαίδεια* [Great Greek Encyclopaedia], vol. 9, Athens 1929, p. 780.

communications and transport of goods, money and people was created; this linked the developed countries with one another and with the world that was not yet developed.³ The internationalisation of sport in conjunction with cosmopolitanism and tourism were ‘symptoms’ of capitalism and of the desire for exchange and communication at an international level.⁴

Since they presupposed international participation, the Olympic Games were connected with the dynamic development of tourism; by their rebirth, in 1896, Pierre de Coubertin provided a new motive for travelling.⁵ The fact that they were held in Athens was the ‘first lesson’⁶ for the future development of tourism in Greece, since it raised for the first time the question of the reception and hosting of the foreign guests on an organised basis.

The factor that differentiated the journey to Athens in 1896, and later, in 1906, from trips taken up to then for professional, educational or recreational purposes was the mass movement of people with a common destination: the Olympic Games. The athletic competition constituted an important aspect of the trip, but it co-existed with cultural motives: a new model of travel was, therefore, beginning to take shape.⁷

Greece, of course, was not a place unknown to the visitors who arrived in Athens in 1896. Familiar from the narratives of foreign travellers, for its ancient past and its recent struggle for independence, it constituted a lofty ideal and exerted a special attraction upon the West. It had become ‘a kind of locus in the Western imagination’.⁸ From the closing decades of the eighteenth century, it was for the Europeans a rich ‘native soil’ to which they could resort systematically to seek out the roots of their heritage and determine the worth of their national traditions.

In previous centuries, the presence of travellers in Greece had been due to the fact that the country was on their route to Constantinople, Egypt, or the Holy Land, to which they were travelling in search of their authentic origins, prompted by a revival of the spirit of ancient Greece in their own homeland.⁹ The journey to Greece, with

3. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Η εποχή των αυτοκρατοριών 1875-1914* [The Age of Empire, 1875-1914], trans. Costoula Slavenitis, Athens 2000, pp. 103-4.

4. DaCosta, ‘Οράματα για την Αθήνα το 2004’, *op. cit.*

5. Cf. the testimony of Burton Holmes in *The Olympian Games in Athens, 1896: The First Modern Olympics*, Grove Press INC, New York 1984, p. 1: ‘The Olympian Games were the excuse for my intrusion into the land of the scholar and the archaeologist. I knew too well that I would bring to Greece only a love of travel, an eye not wholly blind to beauty, and a deep respect for the history, the letters, and the art of Greece’.

6. HOC Archive: K1-Φ7-E11.

7. Arianne Carvalhedo, ‘Travel and tourism as cultural legacies of ancient and modern Olympic Games’, paper read at the postgraduate seminar of the International Olympic Academy on the central subject of ‘The Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games – Present, past, future. An analysis from a philosophical and social viewpoint’, Ancient Olympia, 10 May - 20 June 2002.

8. Artemis Leonti, *Τοπογραφίες ελληνισμού. Χαρτογραφώντας την πατρίδα* [Topographies of Hellenism: Mapping the Homeland], trans. Panagiotis Stoyannos, Athens 1998, p. 26.

9. On the influence of the vision of classical antiquity on the image of modern Greece, see Olga Avgoustinou, *Ιδανικά ταξίδια. Η Ελλάδα στη γαλλική ταξιδιωτική λογοτεχνία 1550-1821* [Ideal journeys. Greece in French travel literature 1550-1821], Athens 2003.

the exotic East as a background, was a pilgrimage to the Greek classical land and exerted a strong fascination. ‘A common destination, the East, retains the attractions of a land of promise for which there is no substitute. It is at the same time the ark of knowledge, the bastion of faith, the crossroads of individual or collective interests of every description. It arouses curiosity, greed, reverence, ambition, or a dream in equal measure.’¹⁰

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the inclusion of Greece in the route of the Grand Tour, in conjunction with the philhellenism of men of letters and Romantics, resulted in a torrent of travellers bursting upon the land of Greece, the majority of them British.¹¹ Greece with the ruins of its ancient greatness drew their attention.¹²

The journey was for British men of the world ‘an honourable feat and a passport that opened the doors to good society’.¹³ It lent them authority and intellectual prestige: ‘it was said that no one nowadays was reckoned a traveller if he had not bathed in the waters of the Eurotas and had not tasted the olives of Attica. On the other hand, to be a member of the Athenian Club and to have carved your name on a fragment of the Parthenon was an introduction to the best company and a passport to literary fame’.¹⁴ The Romantics increasingly stressed the importance of experiencing the spirit of the place at close quarters and that one could not study Greek civilisation ‘from a chair in Oxford’. A visit to Greece was essential.¹⁵

In other words, we are already in Greece’s tourist era. In time, this fashion was reinforced by the strong philhellenic movement in the countries of Europe and was suspended only temporarily by the upheavals of the Revolution. Thus, in 1833 the first

10. Panagiotis Moullas, ‘Πρόλογος’ [Foreword] in *Τρεις γάλλοι φοινατικοί στην Ελλάδα. Λαμαρτίν, Νεφράλ, Γκωτιέ* [Three French Romantics in Greece: Lamartine, Nerval, Gautier] trans. V. Mentzou, Athens 1990, p. 11.

11. Rania Polykandrioti, ‘19ος αιώνας’ [19th century] in *Περιηγητές στη Μάνη, 15ος-19ος αιώνας* [Travellers in Mani, 15th-19th century], Athens s.a., p. 55. The large number of British travellers is to be explained by the fact that the Napoleonic Wars had deprived them of access to continental Europe, which was, in any event, the main object of interest of the curious. Kyriakos Simopoulos (in *Ξένοι ταξιδιώτες στην Ελλάδα 1800-1810. Δημόσιος και ιδιωτικός βίος, λαϊκός πολιτισμός, Εκκλησία και οικονομική ζωή*. Από τα περιηγητικά χρονικά

[Foreign travellers in Greece 1800-1810. Public and private life, folk culture, the Church and economic life. From travellers’ chronicles], Athens 1975, pp. 8-11) notes that there were twice as many British travellers in Greece in pre-Revolution times as there were French, Germans, Italians, and Americans.

12. G. P. Savidis, ‘Ο μιλόδος-ποιητής και ο συνταγματάρχης-τοπογράφος (Τζωρτζ Γκόρντον Μπάουντ και Ουίλλιαμ Μάρτιν Λάκ)’ [The poet ‘milord’ and the topographer-colonel (George Gordon Byron and William Martin Leake)] in *Περιηγήσεις στον ελληνικό χώρο* [Travels in Greece], Selected by K. Th. Dimaras, Athens 1968, p. 92; Daniël Koster, *To Hellen's Noble Land..., Dutch accounts of travellers, geographers and historians on Greece (1488-1854)*, Dutch Institute in Athens, Athens 1995, pp. 17-18.

13. Simopoulos, *Ξένοι ταξιδιώτες στην Ελλάδα 1800-1810*, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

14. Book review of the work by Colonel William Martin Leake *Researches in Greece*, published in 1814 in the *Quarterly Review*. See G. P. Savidis, ‘Ο μιλόδος-ποιητής’, op. cit., p. 92.

15. Koster, *To Hellen's Noble Land*, op. cit., p. 18.

organised ‘cruise’ occurred, and the first tourist ‘guide’ of the Peloponnese, in German, was lithographed at Nafplio.¹⁶

At the same time, there were economic considerations, which made it possible for the British to invest their spare time in major travel enterprises; the prosperity of colonial Britain raised the economic level of the middle classes. Thus the conditions were created for transatlantic voyages – moreover, *en famille* – in contrast with earlier times, when travel was the privilege of the few. Naturally, the spirit of adventure of travel also seized upon British ladies: aristocrats, wives of diplomats, and rich heiresses were attracted by the fascination of travel.

The British who visited Greece in the first two decades of the nineteenth century brought with them to the country not only the ‘political philhellenism of their classical education, but also the cognitive empiricism of the intellectual tradition of their own country’. Equipped with the liberal political thought that stemmed from the great tradition of British empiricism, they added a living dimension to the conventional intellectual interest in antiquity by turning their attention to the actuality of modern Greece. Their classical education made it possible for them to approach the reality of modern Greece in its true dimensions and to note the cultural and political changes which took place at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century among a people who lived on the site and spoke the language of classical civilisation.¹⁷

The Grand Tour was in effect a first systematic development of tourist trips of the rising middle class of the time, in the form of the cultural tour. This popular and widespread practice of taking such trips made a positive contribution to the development infrastructure of the broader world of tourism (e.g., hotels, roads, means of transport, publication of travel guides, advertising, travel agencies) and, in the course of time, was instrumental in its better organisation.¹⁸

With the ever-increasing dissemination of information about modern Greece brought back by travellers, scholars had difficulty in reconciling the apparently wretched condition of the modern Greek people with the idealised conception that they had of the ancient Greeks.¹⁹ The Western traveller set out on his journey filled with high-flown ideas, with the result that the reality encountered when he reached his destination hardly corresponded to his expectations. The ideal overshadowed the

16. *Ibid.*

17. Paschalis Kitromilidis, *Γνωσιολογικός εμπειρισμός και πολιτικός φιλελληνισμός* [Cognitive empiricism and political liberalism], reprint from the 23rd volume of the *Δελτίο της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ελλάδος* [Bulletin of the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece], Athens 1980, pp. 4-7.

18. Paris Tsartas, *Τουρίστες, ταξίδια, τόποι. Κοινωνιολογικές προσεγγίσεις στον τουρισμό* [Tourists, travel, locations. Sociological approaches to tourism], Athens 1996, pp. 15-16.

19. The Austrian philologist and philhellene Karl Krumbacher, who made an eight-month exploratory tour in the country ‘of my longings and youthful dreams’ (from October 1884 to May 1885), expresses his views on the unfair way in which conditions in Greece were judged: Karl Krumbacher, *Ελληνικό ταξίδι. Φύλλα από το ημερολόγιο ενός ταξιδιού στην Ελλάδα και στην Τονκίν* [Griechische Reise, *Blätter aus dem Tagebuche einer Reise in Griechenland und in der Türkei*] (translation-introduction-commentary: G. Thanopoulos), Athens 1994, pp. 73-142.

contemporary and intensified the sense of loss. Since, moreover, poverty and slavery were automatically associated with moral degradation, many were induced to present a particularly unfavourable picture of the modern Greeks.²⁰ Having naively hoped to encounter in modern Greece Socrates and Pericles and artists like Phidias, they were unable to forgive the modern Greeks for appearing to be mere mortals.²¹ In the slaves of yesterday they failed to recognise the Greeks of their dreams – and were disillusioned.²²

Defenders, on the other hand, considered that Turkish rule was responsible for the deplorable state of affairs. The debate usually took place *in absentia* of Greece itself, and was, rather, ‘of an artificial and imaginary character’, with arbitrary assertions made on both sides. The result was that until the beginning of the Revolution, the Greeks were the object either of contempt or adoration – equally blind in both cases.²³

The image of antiquity never ceased to enchant the modern Europeans, even though at times it was for them the distorting mirror through which they looked at modern Greece. However, from the moment that official archaeological excavations were inaugurated in Greece, first by the German School of Archaeology and then by the French, new bounds were set to the approach to the antiquities; the second important result of the digs was that they made ancient civilisation known at an international level, with all that that means, and, above all, they opened up the way for the tourist exploitation of the country.²⁴

According to Gaston Deschamps, the renascence of free Greece began with ‘archaeological rehabilitation’. The Greek people wished to shed all its bad memories and ‘to wipe out the layer of Turkish rule and Slav barbarism, which for so long had deluged its country [...]. Antiquity was its purest asset. It took its stand on that, and rightly so. It does not happen to all peoples to have inherited the plain of

20. Koster, *To Hellen's Noble Land*, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

21. Nasia Yakovaki, ‘Μεσαιωνική και νεώτερη Ιστορία: μια νέα συνείδηση για την πόλη της Αθήνας στα τέλη του 19ου αιώνα’ [Medieval and modern history, a new awareness of the city of Athens in the late 19th century] in *Αρχαιολογία της πόλης των Αθηνών. Επιστημονικές-επιμορφωτικές διαλέξεις* [Archaeology of the city of Athens. Academic - further education lectures], Athens 1996, p. 220.

22. Démétrius Georgiades, *Les Jeux Olympiques à Athènes*, Paris 1896, p. 4.

23. See in this connection the travel description of Edgar Quinet and Barthélémy Bacheville, in G. D. Zioutos, *Οδοιπορικό στην Ελλάδα. Πριν και μετά την επανάσταση του '21. Εντυπώσεις δύο Γάλλων περιηγητών* [Itinerary in Greece. Before and after the Revolution of '21. Impressions of two French travellers], Athens 1994; see also Henri Belle, *Ταξίδι στην Ελλάδα 1861-1874. Τρία χρόνια παραμονής και περιπλανήσεων* [Voyage en Grèce Par M. Henri Belle (1861-1868-1874)], Part I, trans. Lina Stamatidi, introduction-commentary Yannis Gryntakis, Athens 1993.

24. See in this connection École Française d'Athènes/Inspectorate of Antiquities of Delphi, *Δελφοί, Αναζητώντας το χαμένο Ιερό* [Delphi, looking for the lost sanctuary], Athens s.a.; Nikolaos Yalouris, ‘Οι τεροί χώροι της Ολυμπίας και των Δελφών, ο αντίκτυπος των ανασκαφών στην αναβίωση των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων’ [The sacred sites of Olympia and Delphi, the effect of the excavations on the revival of the Olympic Games], in *Λεύκωμα της 36ης Συνόδου της ΔΟΑ* [Album of the 36th Meeting of the International Olympic Academy], Athens 1997, pp. 47-53.

Marathon, the sacred grove of the Muses, the spring of Hippocrene, and the Phae-driades Rocks [...].²⁵

The means and the ‘bibles’ of travel

Apart from the ideological and cultural stimuli which favoured travel to Greece and to the East more generally, the nineteenth century also provided more ‘user-friendly’ and efficient means of transport, thanks to the introduction of the steam engine. The development of steamships strengthened intercontinental relations, while the railway was the great innovation, which in the next century met with a more ‘flexible and individualised practice’, the private car.²⁶ The new means of transport attracted clientele and travel increased.²⁷

In 1883, the first great international railway route was created: that of the Orient Express. It covered a distance of 3,186 kilometres between Paris and Constantinople and was famous for its exceptional luxury and the comforts with which it provided its passengers, among whom were members of royal families and aristocrats. In 1840, a regular steamship service between Europe and America began; in 1872, the first world tour was organised by Cook’s travel agency, and in 1890, a section of the Trans-Siberian Railway, which linked European Russia with the Pacific coast by crossing Siberia, came into operation.²⁸ What had previously been a whole ‘expedition’ now became a simple journey. Speed gave rise to the illusion of the conquest of distances.

The triumph of the steam engine also boosted sea transport in the Mediterranean, which was also favoured by the ending of hostilities between Greeks and Turks in the East. According to the data given by André Rauch, from 1840 the French company Messageries and the Austrian Lloyd company, which also had an agency in Trieste, ran the regular Marseilles/Trieste-Smyrna-Constantinople services, and the Alexandria-Piraeus line, which three times a month was via Syros.

Connections multiplied – as, for example, between Constantinople and Beirut via

25. Deschamps, a philhellene of the traditional type and a humanist, was a graduate of the École Normale. He was appointed to the French School in Athens in 1885 and stayed in Greece for three years. See Gaston Deschamps, *H Ελλάδα σήμερα. Οδοιπορικό 1890. Ο κόσμος των Χαριλάου Τοτικούπη [La Grèce d’aujourd’hui]* trans. A. Daouti, foreword-commentary A. Nikolopoulou, Athens 1992, pp. 372-3.

26. Yannis Schizas, *Ο άλλος τουρισμός. Η οικολογική διέξοδος στα αδιέξοδα των συμβατικού τουρισμού* [The other tourism. The ecological way-out of the impasses of conventional tourism], Athens 1998, p. 31.

27. See Edmond Bonnaffé, *Voyages et voyageurs de la Renaissance*, Ernest Leroux, Paris 1895, p. 1: ‘Since it discovered railways, our century has easily been persuaded that it discovered travel itself, or it has come close to being convinced of this. But this is not the case. There was much travel in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Renaissance was the daughter of the eventful, nomadic and always lively Middle Ages’.

28. Encyclopaedia *Πάπυρος-Λαρούσ-Μπριταννικά* [Papyrus-Larousse-Britannica], Athens 1996, vol. 47, p. 143, and vol. 59, p. 45. See also Schizas, *Ο άλλος τουρισμός*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

Smyrna, Rhodes, and Cyprus. The steamships also covered short distances around Constantinople or along the length of the Nile. In 1867, the bateaux-poste covered the distance between Marseilles and Alexandria in six days, and from there, again by sea, the traveller reached Constantinople. The new railway companies promoted long journeys, and in their advertisements gave emphasis to the fascination exerted by the East.²⁹

Between the years 1840 and 1860, the famous Baedeker,³⁰ Murray, and Joanne³¹ guides were published. The tourist who consulted them discovered routes that would lead him to the ‘sights’ of each country.³² The Baedeker guides were known to travellers as ‘red bibles’.³³ These were the leaders in their field; they provided an abundance of information, were constantly revised, and were exceptionally easy to use because of their small format, but they were also particularly tasteful, with high-precision plans and maps. These were the ancestors of today’s ‘Blue Guides’.³⁴

It was roughly at the same period that Thomas Cook set up the first international travel agency. When, in 1841, he decided to convey 500 members of the Temperance League³⁵ from Leicester to Loughborough, for one shilling per person return, his success was enormous. In 1851, he took 165,000 English working men to London for the Great Exhibition. This was the first organised form of travel in the modern history of transport. In an age when tourism seemed like a joke in poor taste, Cook managed to make it widely accepted, and so he is justly called the ‘Caesar’ of modern tourism. In 1865, his son John went into the business, and turned a family enterprise into a world-wide travel agency under the name of ‘Thomas Cook & Son’.

John Cook showed himself to be particularly vigorous, and saw tourism as a purely profit-making undertaking, unlike his father, who had perceived it as a ‘mission’ for the benefit of mankind. The agency’s organised travel was addressed to a prosperous British clientele who wished to discover new places. And it was so successful that

29. André Rauch, *Vacances en France de 1830 à nos jours*, Hachette, Paris 2001, pp. 49-51. See also Valéry Patin, *Tourisme et patrimoine en France et en Europe*, La documentation Française, Paris 1997, pp. 18-21.

30. Karl Baedeker (1801-1859): German bookseller who became widely famed when he began to publish travel guides. The first Baedeker guide to Greece was issued in 1883, and from then on additions and improvements were made. See *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυροπαίδεια*, vol. 17, Athens 1931, p. 465.

31. Adolf-Laurent Joanne: French philologist and geographer. In 1852-1866 he published the *Guides Joanne*, which were marked by the accuracy of the information they supplied. In 1866, he began to publish a new series under the title *Guides diamants*. See *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυροπαίδεια*, vol. 12, Athens 1930, p. 61.

32. Each re-publication of Baedeker contained revised texts. The publisher, who maintained that he had altered the tourist market by detaching the traveller from the guardianship of the usual commercial guides, defined a new relation between the guide and the traveller. See Rauch, *Vacances en France*, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-60.

33. HOC Archive: K10-Φ13-E17.

34. See as an example Karl Baedeker, *Greece. Hand book for travellers*, Leipzig 1889, and the guide of 1904.

35. Such organisations began to spring up in Europe in the 1820s and 1830s, and were particularly strong in Britain.

other travellers, to distinguish themselves from these British tourists, mockingly termed them ‘Cookies’ or ‘Cookesses’.³⁶

Descamps, although describing the arrival of British tourists in Athens in 1892 with gentle irony, nevertheless admits that the Cook’s agency was one of the most important institutions of the century and acknowledged its method and organisation. He mentions, moreover, that Cook himself visited Greece, ‘like a general who leaves nothing to chance’, to inspect ‘his forward posts’ and check on the scope for setting up hotels in the future.³⁷ This was an early manifestation of the future consequences of mass tourism.

Public transport and hotel infrastructure in Greece

In the nineteenth century, Greece, in spite of its full integration into the world market system, still remained a pre-capitalist economic and social formation. With its entry upon the European stage, it began with ‘persistent and hesitant steps’ the organisation of its public transport, to ensure the facilitation of its interior communications and commercial transactions.³⁸ The modern approach to communications, which was now hatching, collided, however, with the inertia of the structures of a socially and economically traditional space with a strong ‘own-consumption’ character. In the period 1830-1880, in which Greece strove to rectify its economy, the modernisation of transport was ‘a laborious marathon’.³⁹

The railway was mythologised as a necessary and sufficient condition for the country’s economic development, the political unification of the state, and spatial planning organisation. Furthermore, the idea prevailed that with the construction of the railway network, the country – a natural bridge between East and West – would pass from the domination of the local market to the domination of the international market by playing a part in the movement of the main bulk of trade on the ‘road to the Indies’.⁴⁰

The dominant political figure of the period 1875-1895, associated with the begin-

36. Haris Yakoumis/Isabelle Roy, *H Ελλάδα. Το ταξίδι των ελληνιστών, 1896-1912 [La Grèce, la croisière des savants 1896-1912]*, trans. Katerina Kollet, Athens 1998, p. 11.

37. Deschamps, *H Ελλάδα σήμερα*, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-12. See also two of the programmes for tours organised by Cook to the East, with Athens as a stopping-place. The first (1888) was timed to coincide with the birthday of King George and the celebrations, events and games held in Athens within the framework of the Zappas Olympiads.

38. Maria Synarelli, *Δρόμοι και λιμάνια στην Ελλάδα 1830-1880 [Roads and harbours in Greece 1830-1880]*, Athens 1989, pp. 26-32.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14, 103-5.

40. Lefteris Papayannakis, *Οι ελληνικοί σιδηρόδρομοι (1882-1910). Γεωπολιτικές, οικονομικές και ποινινικές διαστάσεις [The Greek railways (1882-1910). Geopolitical, economic and social dimensions]*, Athens 1990, pp. 60-1, 70-1.

ning of the country's major public works, was Charilaos Trikoupis. His aim was to shape a profile for the country that would permit it to harmonise itself with Western European developments. The modernisation of Greece would make it presentable to foreigners who visited it and a suitable place for travellers who wished to combine comfort with picturesqueness.⁴¹ Furthermore, the question of the 'European identity' of the Greeks after Liberation, as Elli Skopetea points out, took on a significance all of its own, of at least equal standing with that of their national identity – and would remain a current issue after the end of the nineteenth century.⁴²

The construction of roads, to begin with, ran aground on the reef of technical inadequacy, limited financing, lack of co-ordination, and problems of a structural nature. An exception to the rule was Athens. From the moment that it became the capital of the state, in December 1834, 'it imposed its law' on the enterprise of constructing a road network. The roads that served it were built in record time, while the quality of the work permitted these to be described as 'carriage roads'.⁴³

From 1834 to 1860, Athens and Piraeus remained two small urban centres whose communications were conducted by carriages, beasts of burden, and on foot. The British 'Athens to Piraeus Joint-Stock Railway Company', which collaborated with the financier Alexandros Skouzes, undertook the task of linking the two cities by rail in December 1867 and delivered the work in early February 1869, under the Zaimis government.⁴⁴

The Athens-Piraeus railway was the one exception marking progress in the field of inter-city land public transport. The company supplemented its service between the two cities with horse-drawn buses via Piraeos St, and it was with similar transport, which departed every night from Athinas St, that Georgios Katsimbalis served the routes to Thiva and Megara.⁴⁵

The Athens railway network was supplemented in 1885 by the line that linked the capital with Lavrio and Kifisia. A little earlier, in 1880, the tram – a light urban means of transport on rails, drawn by small, nervy horses of an Asia Minor breed – had made its appearance. In 1887, the steam-tram was put into operation; it was known as the 'the bum-dragger', a name given to it by the Athenians both because

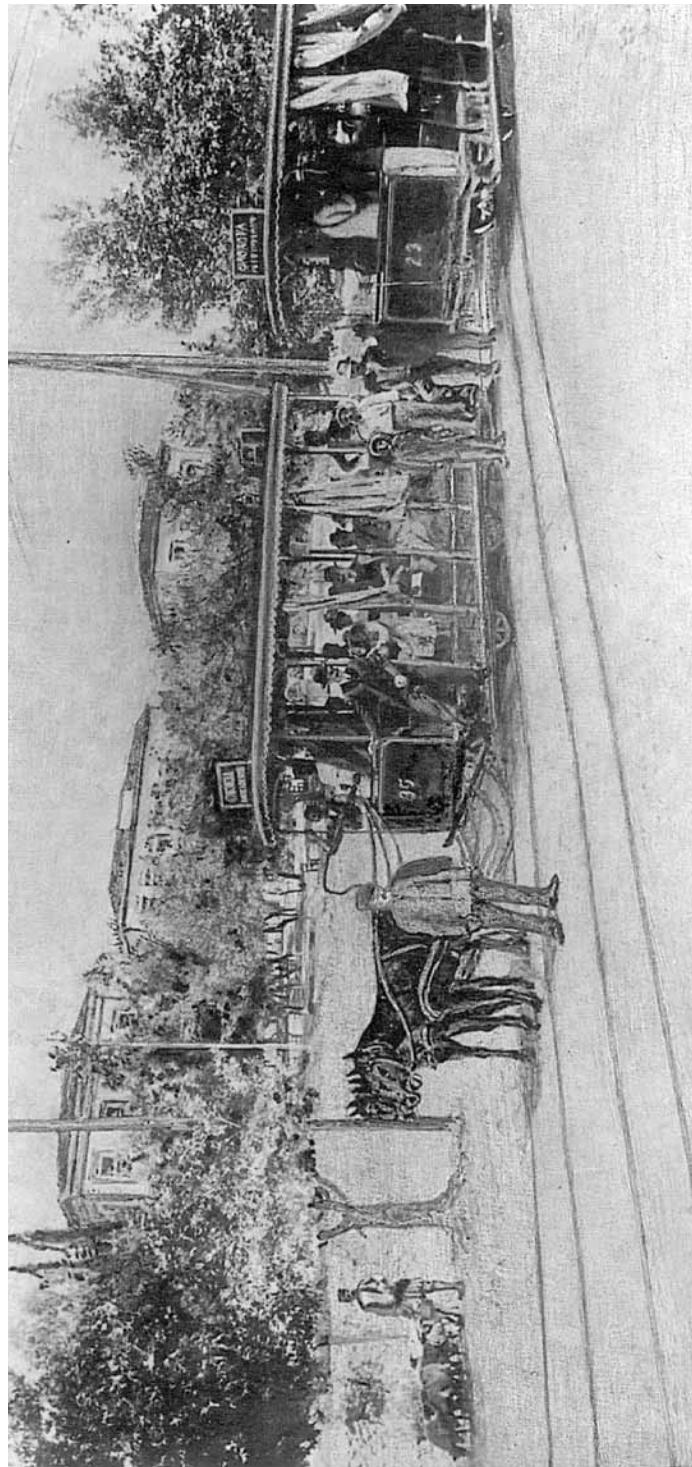
41. Deschamps, *H Ελλάδα σήμερα*, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-101.

42. Elli Skopetea, *Το 'Πρότυπο Βασίλειο' και η Μεγάλη Ιδέα. Όψεις του εθνικού προβλήματος στην Ελλάδα 1830-1880* [The 'Model Kingdom' and the Megali Idea. Aspects of the national problem in Greece 1830-1880], Athens 1988, p. 161.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-42.

44. Costas Biris, *Αι Αθήναι από τον 19ον εις τον 20όν αιώνα* [Athens from the 19th to the 20th century], Athens 1996, pp. 170-1. The first booklet that accompanied the birth of the network is of considerable interest. It is entitled *Νέαι οδηγίαι προς τους ταξιδεύοντας διά τον οιδηροδρόμου. Ήτοι υποχρεώσεις των επιβατών, δρομολόγιον και τιμολόγιον του σιδηροδρόμου και υπηρεσία και τιμολόγιον των αμαξών* [New instructions to those travelling by railway. Viz: obligations of passengers, timetable and price-list of the railway and service and price-list of carriages], Athens 1869. It contains all the timetables, fares, etc., together with the regulations and provisions of the Railway Company.

45. Biris, *Αι Αθήναι*, *op. cit.*, p. 241.



The horse-drawn tram on the Ambelokipi route at the 'Evangelismos' stop.
[C. Biris, *Al Athína cató tov 19ou eis tov 20ov aúnto*, Athens 1996, p. 251]

it was slow and because the small diameter of the wheels caused it to touch the ground at sloping points of the route. It ceased to operate in 1909.⁴⁶

Apart from the Athens-Piraeus railway, the rest of the railway networks of Greece presented the following picture:⁴⁷ the Thessaly railways, whose lines set out from Volos and reached to Velestino, divided into two major branches, one going to Larisa and the other to Pharsala. Their construction started in 1882 and finished in 1886. The Pyrgos-Katakolo line, which began to operate in 1883, linked Pyrgos with its port. The line in northwestern Greece was constructed around 1890 and extended as far as Agrinio. The Greek Railways' international line, whose route was from Piraeus to the then Greek-Turkish border, was, at 400 kilometres, the longest in the country. Work on it began in 1900 and finished in 1909.

Work on the construction of the Piraeus-Athens-Peloponnese railway line began in 1882 and was completed in 1902. The first section to be opened linked the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf, by means of the Corinth-Kalamaki (Corinthia) line. Thus passengers were not forced to round the Peloponnese by steamboat: they disembarked at Corinth and from there were taken by rail to Kalamaki, where another steamboat took them to Piraeus. The Corinth canal was opened a few years later, in 1893.⁴⁸

Significant changes took place in sea transport. Until around the mid nineteenth century, Greek shipping, under sail, occupied a dominant role in transport in the Mediterranean, but from the moment that European merchandise began to be conveyed in bulk by British, French, and Austrian steamships, that role dwindled.⁴⁹ This

46. On the Athens-Piraeus tram network, see the publication by the Friends of the Railway Association *Οι ελληνικοί σιδηρόδρομοι. Η διαδρομή τους από το 1869 έως σήμερα* [The Greek railways. Their history from 1869 to the present], Athens s.a., pp. 18-21.

47. See in this connection V. I. Kandis, *Οδοιπορικόν των σιδηροδρόμων της Ελλάδος* [Itinerary of the railways of Greece], Athens 1892. It includes information on the railway networks of Greece existing at that time, and, over and above the fares, times of departure, etc., gives a brief description of the places where the railway called. It thus is in the nature of a small guide whose exclusive purpose was to inform and entertain the reader. See also V. I. K[andis], *Οδοιπορικόν των σιδηροδρόμων της Ελλάδος. Μετά περιγραφής των καθ' όλας τας σιδηροδρομικάς γραμμάς κεντρώων πόλεων και χωρών* [Itinerary of the railways of Greece. With a description of all the cities and villages situated on the railway lines], Athens 1898. We quote here some fares for 'classic' routes, indicative of the cost of transport at that period: Athens-Olympia: 1st Class 39.40 Drs, 2nd Class 30.20 Drs. Patras-Mesolonghi: 1st Class 5.15 Drs, 2nd Class 4.20 Drs, 3rd Class 2.75 Drs. Patras-Agrinio: 1st Class 10.80 Drs, 2nd Class 8.95 Drs, 3rd Class 5.60 Drs (*Ibid.*, pp. 77-8). See also *Εταιρία Ελληνικών Σιδηροδρόμων. Société des Chemins de Fer Helléniques*, Athens 1906.

48. Costas Androulidakis, 'Η ιστορία των σιδηροδρόμων. Από τη δημιουργία του πρώτου δικτύου έως τον ΟΣΕ' [The history of the railways. From the creation of the first network to the Railways Organisation of Greece] in Eleftheria Traïou (ed.), *Ελληνικοί Σιδηρόδρομοι* [Greek Railways], *Kathimerini* newspaper, *Epta Meres* supplement, 15 October 1995, pp. 2-6. See also Vasias Tsokopoulos, *Μεγάλα τεχνικά έργα στην Ελλάδα. Τέλη 19ου - αρχές 20ού αιώνα* [Major construction works in Greece. Late 19th - early 20th century], Athens 1999, pp. 69-71.

49. M. Synarelli, 'Δρόμοι και λιμάνια στην Ελλάδα' [Roads and harbours in Greece] in G. V. Dertilis / K. Costis (intro.-ed.), *Θέματα νεοελληνικής ιστορίας. 18ος-20ός αιώνας* [Themes in modern Greek history. 18th-20th century], Athens 1991, p. 378.

fact, in combination with the crisis in traditional shipping in the middle of the century, undoubtedly contributed to the foundation of the Hellenic Steamship Company, the first Greek steamship company at Hermoupolis, Syros (1857).⁵⁰ In the early 1880s, two new steamship companies were set up, with their headquarters in Piraeus: the Panhellenic Steamship Company (with capital from the Bank of Constantinople and of Greeks abroad) and the Goudis company, which belonged to Dimitrios Goudis of Spetses.⁵¹

Between 1870 and 1900, Athens was transformed; it grew, increased in terms both of space and population, was modernised, and it dynamically represented the development of a modern nation-state.⁵² It acquired an organised port, a railway, electric lighting, a water supply network, and ekistic infrastructure.

The state of the hotel infrastructure was comparable with the state of public transport. In the pre-Revolution Athens of the early nineteenth century there were only a very few guesthouses and inns or *hans* to serve Greek merchants, travellers and foreign visitors.⁵³ There were no independent restaurants; almost all of them were incorporated into the functions of this type of ‘hotel’.⁵⁴ After the Revolution, the conditions for a developed hotel infrastructure in the city began to form.

The majority of the first hotels in the newly constituted capital of the Greek state were set up by foreigners, and thus came close to the European standards of the period. Their guests were officials, architects and technicians who accompanied the newly-introduced monarch,⁵⁵ new residents from the provinces who had arrived in the capital in search of an improved lot, the foreign employees of embassies, employees of

50. See the history of its foundation in Constantinos Papathanasopoulos, *Εταιρεία Ελληνικής Ατμοπλοΐας (1855-1872)* [The Hellenic Steamship Company (1855-1872)], Athens 1988, pp. 21-62.

51. V. Kardasis, ‘Η ελληνική εμπορική ναυτιλία 1832-1914’, in G. V. Dertilis/K. Costis (intro.-ed.), *Θέματα νεοελληνικής ιστορίας. 18ος-20ός αιώνας, op. cit.*, pp. 343-6. See also Vasilis Ch. Hombas, *Ατμόπλοια εναντίον ιστιοφόρων (1830-1914). Μια στατιστική ανάλυση* [Steamships versus sailing-ships (1830-1914). A statistical analysis], Athens 1998.

52. Alexis Politis, *Ρομαντικά χρόνια. Ιδεολογίες και νοοτροπίες στην Ελλάδα του 1830-1880* [Romantic years. Ideologies and mentalities in the Greece of 1830-1880], Athens 1998, pp. 76-7.

53. According to Maro Kardamitsi-Adami, the term *xenodocheio* (hotel) in its modern sense was used in modern Greece from the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the years of Turkish rule two forms of hotels are encountered: the guesthouse and the inn or *han*. *Hans* were mainly on trade routes. The first hotel to function in the newly-constituted Greek state was the London Hotel in its first capital, Nafplio, in 1834. See M. Kardamitsi-Adami, ‘Μονοδικές κτιριολογικές περιγραφές’ [Unique descriptions of buildings], in Peggy Kounenaki (ed.), *Παλαιά ξενοδοχεία της Αθήνας* [Old hotels of Athens], *Kathimerini* newspaper, *Epta Meres* supplement, 8 October 2000, p. 8.

54. Matoula Skaltsa, ‘Από τα πανδοχεία στα πρώτα ξενοδοχεία’ [From inns to the first hotels], in Kounenaki (ed.), *Παλαιά ξενοδοχεία της Αθήνας, op. cit.*, p. 4.

55. Nine thousand Bavarians made up the personnel of the army and political administration that staffed the foreign court in Greece during the first decade (1833-43). See the chapter ‘Περιηγητισμός και αρχαία μνημειακή κληρονομιά στη νεότερη Αθήνα’ [Learned travel and the heritage of ancient monuments in modern Athens], in Alexandros Papageorgiou-Venetas, *Αθήνα, δοκιμές και θεωρήσεις* [Athens, essays and reviews], Athens 1996, p. 252.

every category who staffed the state mechanism, philhellenes, travellers, and the members of various missions who could now visit the country freely and admire the antiquities.⁵⁶

These hotels were situated mainly in the centre of Athens and later extended to the side streets. Their clientele was made up almost exclusively of foreigners, and all the names were necessarily written in French and very frequently in English. In the city's outlying districts there were no hotels supplying accommodation and catering, or even inns for the lower social classes.⁵⁷

From the mid nineteenth century onwards, the number of hotels increased. In the period 1869-80 there were 24 hotels,⁵⁸ and from 1880 onwards, 86. The increase in the number of the hotels was a function of the expansion of the city.⁵⁹

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there were many middle-class hotels in the city's commercial centre, more in number than in other neighbourhoods of Athens. On a small or medium scale, with plain architecture, they attracted, for temporary or permanent residence, provincials, students, and families of the lower- or middle-income brackets. The concentration of the working population in the area of the commercial triangle also contributed to an increase in the number of rented rooms, so that many of these functioned as tourist or popular hotels for groups of the population who had migrated in special historical circumstances at that period.⁶⁰

Coubertin's visit

The first official visitor to come to Greece before the Olympic Games on the occasion of this event was their inspirer himself. Coubertin, a citizen of the world with a classical

56. Peggy Kounenaki, 'Η αίγλη των παλαιών ξενοδοχείων' [The lustre of the old hotels], in Kounenaki (ed.), *Παλαιά ξενοδοχεία της Αθήνας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3.

57. Skaltsa, 'Από τα πανδοχεία στα πρώτα ξενοδοχεία', *op. cit.*, pp. 4-7.

58. In the oldest guide to Greece, 25 hotels in Athens are mentioned. The prices for accommodation ranged from 1.5 to 4 Drs, with or without food (usually with food from 2 to 4 Drs). See Miltiadis Boukas, *Οδηγός εμπορικός, γεωγραφικός και ιστορικός των πλείστων κυρωτέρων πόλεων της Ελλάδος του έτους 1875* [Commercial, geographical and historical guide to most of the main cities of Greece of the year 1875], Athens 1875, pp. 89-91. Baedeker in his guide of 1889, in speaking of Athens, notes the city's good hotels ('Grande Bretagne', 'Athinon', 'London', 'Xenon', 'Attica'), with accommodation prices of 5 to 6 francs: Karl Baedeker, *Greece*, *op. cit.*, p. 33. Charles Cheston, lawyer of the Lake Copais Company Ltd, records, in 1887, favourable impressions of the hotels of Athens, which, however, were inadequate for the ever increasing number of visitors to the capital. The principal Athenian hotels were in Palace Square; 'they are clean and provide every comfort [...]. These hotels are managed on the American system; for one room with food they take about 16 gold francs for each day': Charles Cheston, *H Ελλάς των 1887* [Greece in 1887], Athens 1887 (reprinted: Athens 1990, intro.-index: Christos P. Baloglu, p. 106).

59. Kardamitsi-Adami, 'Μοναδικές κτιριολογικές περιγραφές', *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

60. Eleni Papandreou-Vlachou, 'Τα ξενοδοχεία της οδού Αθηνάς' [The hotels in Athinas Street] in Peggy Kounenaki (ed.), *Οδός Αθηνάς* [Athinas Street] in *Kathimerini* newspaper, *Epta Meres* supplement, 17 June 2001, pp. 22-4.

education and a Hellenist by conviction, experienced, in 1894, in a special way his voyage ‘on a vessel, the *Ortégal*, which’, as says, ‘brought me to the land of the imagination and of legend, to the land of the Olympian gods, Greece...’. In the course of his journey, as he was crossing the English Channel, he dreamt: ‘Already my mind, undistracted, is turning towards Greece. A fellow-countryman, a singer, has said that he would like to die there. I, a simple and ordinary mortal, with no ambition to cull the laurels of poetry, say that it is there that I would like my heart to live for ever’.⁶¹

Nature in Greece enchanted him, as it woke within him memories from history and mythology. ‘I have read a great deal about Greece, but now I can feel this ecstasy, like a pilgrim who comes with reverence to fulfil his vow, to make his votive offering to perfection, to the god of beauty, to the temple itself in which he is worshipped, to the temple of Greece’s nature and Art.’ When he reached Athens, he gave expression to his admiration: ‘I am in Athens! The sweet dream with which the days of my life have been woven will soon become reality. I am in Athens! In the holy city of the spirit, in the capital of Hellenism and of humanity, on the eternal luminous peak of antiquity’.⁶²

He was able during his stay in Athens to combine his obligations with his personal quests. The political contacts with Trikoupis, the daily discussions with Demetrius Vikelas, the succession of audiences with Crown Prince Constantine, social occasions with prominent figures in Athens society were combined with daily walks and visits to the ancient monuments. He filled his soul with images of the city, and when he had to answer the question ‘Dear Baron, why do you wish to revive the Olympic Games?’⁶³ he made his dream a point of reference for a new pedagogic way of looking at the world.

In spite of the changes that had taken place, the monuments of Athens suggested to him the semantic magnitude they express. His visits to the Acropolis filled him with sacred emotion and perhaps he did not feel much different from his fellow-Frenchman, the publicist and politician Joseph Reinach, who, when he was on the Sacred Rock, confessed his adoration for Greek antiquity in the words: ‘I have spent entire years in dreaming about Greece, just as a monk of the twelfth century dreamt about Paradise’.⁶⁴

The romantic Hellenist now experienced through his own eyes what he had seen before the eyes of his imagination. In the enthusiasm of his tour in the city, the ruined ancient Stadium was one of the points that stimulated his thought and aroused his

61. Nikolaos K. Vasileiadis, *Pierre de Coubertin, ‘Ταξίδι στην Ελλάδα’* [Pierre de Coubertin’s ‘Journey to Greece’], Athens s.a., pp. 14-15. The extracts from Coubertin’s writings, which we quote here, have this book as their source.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-1.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

64. Yorgos Tolias, ‘Introduction’ to *Ανταπογρίσεις από την Ελλάδα 1879-1897. Εθνικές διεκδικήσεις, Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες, Καταστροφή του '97. Κείμενα Ζοζέφ Ρενάκ, Σαρλ Μωράς, Ζαν Μορέας* [Reports from Greece 1879-1897. National claims, Olympic Games, Disaster of '97. Texts by Joseph Reinach, Charles Maurras, Jean Moréas], trans. Yorgos Tolias/Eirini Louvrou, Athens 1993, p. 16.

interest. In this place the emotional quests of his youth, inspired by passion, were revealed. He moulded the surroundings by the power of memory and rebuilt the Stadium with his spirit, ‘as it was in the time of Pericles’.⁶⁵

But over and above the magic and fascination with which Athens provided him, he did not for one moment forget his official mission, as he realistically and humorously formulated it: ‘It is never very easy or very pleasant to go to somebody and say to them “You have some very fine salons. Allow us to organise, at your expense, a party that will be superb”. This is the mission I had undertaken when I disembarked at Piraeus’.⁶⁶

There is nothing strange about the fact that Trikoupis did not seem to be thrilled by this idea, and at the meeting which he had with him he is said to have remarked to Coubertin in the words of the Greek proverb: ‘Those who have beards have combs for them. Those who want games pay for them! We are ceding you the location. Is that not enough for you? But to spend out of the state funds for the games would seem difficult. Greece today is not rich enough to pay for her own glory [...].’⁶⁷

Coubertin, fully aware of the importance of his visit to Greece, avoided showing signs of concession or compromise. On 4 November, he gave a magnificent speech at the ‘Parnassos’ Literary Association, causing a considerable stir among the audience who attended it.⁶⁸ When it was printed in the press, it had an even wider influence on Greek public opinion. Interviewed by *Asty* newspaper the day before, he had dwelt upon the significance of the revival and holding of the Games in Athens: ‘I am a man of my times, and in the reconstitution of the Olympic Games I am pursuing a peaceful and humane purpose [...]. Athens is a blazing focus of life and activity. After just 60 years of life it is one of the most attractive of new capitals’.⁶⁹

When he had completed his mission, he departed for Olympia⁷⁰ and from there to Paris, carrying with him the feel of the Greek capital.⁷¹ ‘Athens thrilled me: it is overflowing with life and rhythm’, he wrote on his return in a letter to Demetrios Vikelas; ‘the Greeks have worked wonders; they are a great people and have not belied the good opinion I had of them – at a distance’.⁷²

65. Pierre de Coubertin, ‘La préface des Jeux Olympiques’, *Cosmopolis* (April 1896), p. 158.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

67. *Asty* newspaper, 4 November 1894.

68. See ‘Η διάλεξις του κ. Κουμπερτέν’ [The lecture of Mr Coubertin], *Asty* newspaper, 6 November 1894; *Ephimeris ton Syzitiseon* [Gazette of Debates], 11 November 1894.

69. *Asty* newspaper, 4 November 1894.

70. See Vasileiadis, *Pierre de Coubertin, op. cit.*, p. 43: ‘I would like to have the opportunity to arrive at Olympia in the manner of Iphitus, to refound, in my turn, the sacred games, on another basis, different this time [...]’.

71. We note here that the baron’s visit to Athens, in spite of its positive flavour, was commented on in a negative way by Georgios Melas in a letter to Vikelas: ‘When Coubertin arrived in Athens, I went immediately to meet him, filled with enthusiasm by him and I offered him some small assistance. But [...] I confess that I have very much changed my mind about him, having seen that he is not as serious-minded as I had thought; this was because I saw him asking the opinion of and being led by mere children at the various stages of his progress’ (HOC Archive: K1-Φ6-E1).

72. Vikelas Archive, National Library of Greece (NLG), doc. 936, in K. Georgiadis, *Die ideengeschicht-*

The preparation for the reception of the foreign guests

The holding of the Olympic Games of 1896 presented itself as a good opportunity for the country to ‘draw upon it the gaze and the interest of the outside world’,⁷³ while at the same time it would contribute to a strengthening of the collective self-confidence. Nevertheless, the city of Athens did not inspire confidence in its provision of services to foreigners, since it had no previous experience or the appropriate infrastructure.⁷⁴ Thus, one of the most important issues that the Organising Committee for the Games was called upon to deal with was that of the travel and hosting of the visitors and the athletes. For the better management of those arriving in Athens, they decided to set up a special committee ‘for the reception of the competitors and visitors who will be coming to Athens’.

The Special Reception Committee was to be responsible for the important matter of finding accommodation and for all the related issues which had to do with ensuring that the visitors had a pleasant stay.⁷⁵ Concern lest the reception of the foreigners in the end proved ‘a big fiasco’ was a major preoccupation for the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC),⁷⁶ particularly as it became apparent that the whole burden of organisation fell on the Greek side, and there was talk of the inertia of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), ‘which, it seems, is resting’.⁷⁷ Demetrius Vikelas, who had referred to this question in 1894, when he proposed the Greek capital as the most appropriate city for the holding of the first Games, was particularly optimistic. He believed that the combination of the image of modern Athens with that of the ancient city would operate as a magnet for foreign visitors.⁷⁸

liche Grundlage der Erneuerung der Olympischen Spiele im 19. Jahrhundert in Griechenland und ihre Umsetzung 1896 in Athen, Agon Sport Verlag, 2000, pp. 455-6, and doc. 936, *ibid.*, pp. 462-3.

73. Vikelas Archive, NLG, doc. 930, *op. cit.*, pp. 444-5. See also Vikelas Archive, NLG, doc. 926, *ibid.*, p. 447; Dragoumis Archive, doc. 235.1, pp. 452-3.

74. On the hotel and more general infrastructure of Athens, see also the statements of Stathis Lampsas, owner of the Grande Bretagne Hotel, in the *Acropolis* newspaper (30 December 1895). Lampsas sternly noted the deficiencies that were observable in the capital and showed that he had his reservations on the ‘question of hospitality’ for the visitors during the course of the Games, since the city did not meet the necessary prerequisites. ‘We don’t have bread to eat and we want radishes to whet our appetite’, he said, referring to the expenditure on the Games.

75. Timoleon Philimon, ‘Προτασσόμενά των Αγώνων’ [Preparations for the Games], in *Oι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 776 π.Χ. - 1896*, Part II, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

76. HOC Archive: K1-Φ6-E23.

77. ‘Also the demand is very excessive that we should act as correspondents from here for the European newspapers. This is the task of those who conceived and formulated the idea of the Olympic Games, not ours. We have one mandate, and this is to prepare the ground, to receive those who attend in a fitting manner, to work to the end that they carry off pleasant memories and we make them true philhellenes. This we shall achieve, and more than this’: Philimon to Vikelas, Vikelas Archive, NLG, doc. 890, *op. cit.*, pp. 576-7.

78. ‘In Greece there are not only memories, and visitors do not run the risk of being accommodated in the middle of ancient ruins and only those. Athens has grown considerably bigger and more beautiful in recent years. There are plenty of hotels, as well as coffee-shops, restaurants, theatres. The Zappeion, the Academy, the University and the Parnassos will open up their fine and spacious halls to celebrate the re-

Travel from abroad to Greece was undertaken by Cook's, 'who have entered into a contract to that end with the International Committee in Paris'.⁷⁹ The agency's involvement in the organisation of the Olympic Games was decisive, since Greece did not yet have the infrastructure to receive so many tourists. 'Nobody can do as good a job as Cook's', the mother of the German Emperor informed her daughter Princess Sophia in Greece.⁸⁰ The matter of the travel arrangements and arrival of the foreign athletes and visitors in Athens, 'which is of the highest possible importance', was planned by the competent committee, while Cook's 'will undertake the accommodation of the foreigners, because we have no experience'.⁸¹

The head office of the Cook's agency in London, in a circular to all its sub-agencies throughout the world, made known the number of rooms available in hotels as well as in private houses in Athens, the facilities that the foreign travellers would have in Athens during the course of the Games, and all the relevant information. As the press reported, in order to attract the general attention of its clientele in Europe, the agency published 'small ads', schedules and advertising material for the Olympic Games, thus complementing the HOC, which showed itself backward in the matter of advertising. It printed large colour lithographic programmes in shades of blue, which it posted in all the railway stations of Europe. In these programmes, the Olympic Games and the natural beauties of Greece were extolled. This was followed by a huge programme with lithographs of the most important sites in Thessaly, Meteora, and Tempe. In addition, it published a special excursion guide, especially for Greece, which included the islands close to Athens, the country's archaeological sites, and other locations of related interest.

On the other hand, the German Stangen agency,⁸² which undertook the transporting of athletes and visitors from Germany and launched powerful propaganda for the Games, competed successfully with Cook's. It placed advertisements in the German newspapers and published a de luxe guide to Greece, which was available in all the major cities of Germany.

It announced three services starting from Berlin and Munich for Greece: the first, via Vienna, Belgrade, Thessaloniki or Constantinople terminated in Piraeus; the second went via Vienna, Nabresina, and Trieste; the third, via Vienna, Padua and Mestre, took travellers to Brindisi. The fare from Berlin to Athens via Constantinople was 296.20 marks; via Brindisi, 282.10.⁸³

constituting of the Olympic Games, and the athletics associations will make it a point of honour to offer cordial hospitality to the foreign competitors': quoted in Ioannis Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες* [The modern international Olympic Games], vol. I, Athens 1930, p. 198.

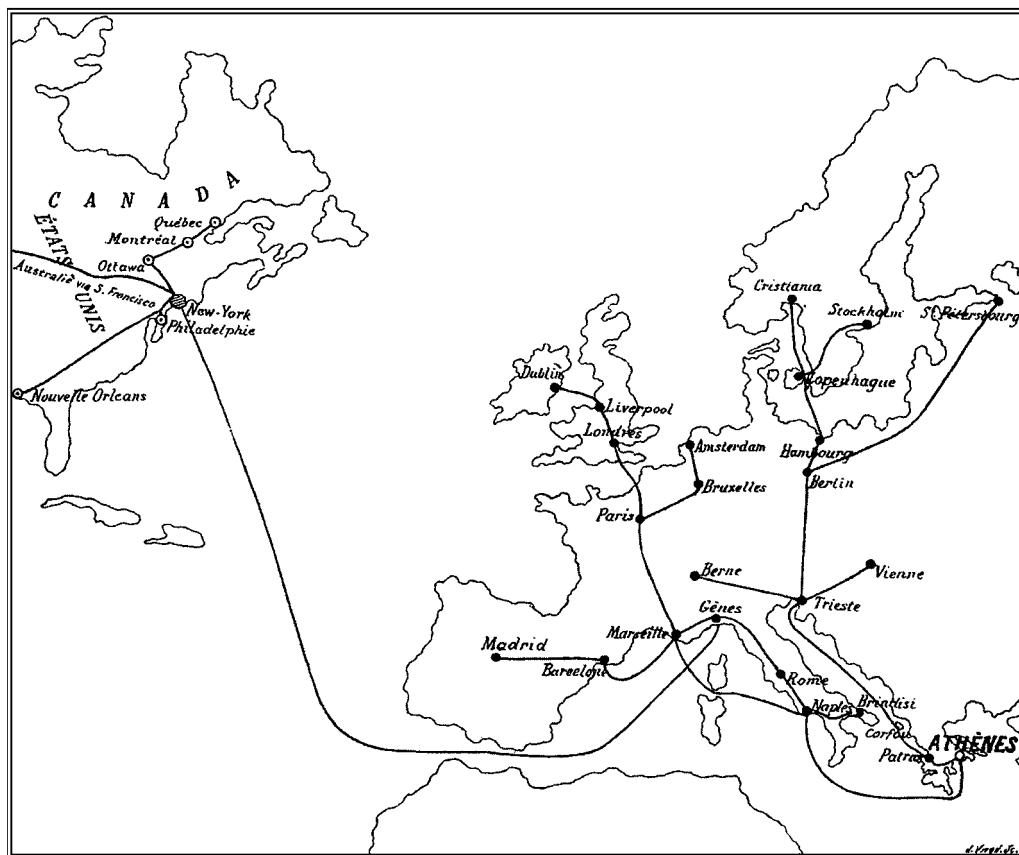
79. HOC Archive: Copie de Lettres, B1, p. 113.

80. Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 Years of Popular Tourism*, Secker & Warburg, London 1991, p. 238.

81. Vikelas Archive, NLG, doc. 931, *op. cit.*, pp. 640-1.

82. Carl Stangen, formerly an inspector of posts in Germany, set up in Breslau in 1863 a travel agency on the model of Cook's, and in 1873 organised a pilgrimage to Palestine via Egypt and the pilgrimage centres of the Holy Land. See Rauch, *Vacances en France*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

83. *Estia* newspaper, 25 January 1896, 26 January 1896.



The route-map of the Thomas Cook & Son company for the 1896 Olympic Games.
[*Bulletin du Comité International des Jeux Olympiques* 4 (April 1895), p. 4]

Because of the competition between the two agencies, the prices of the tickets showed only a small difference – Cook's were slightly cheaper. The return ticket from London with a stay of 30 days cost 15 pounds for First Class and 10 for Second.⁸⁴ This agency kept well ahead in the advertising of the Games, thanks to its organisation. It published its own travel newspaper in many languages and in this all the descriptions appeared, while at the same time its 300 branches throughout the world were supplied with the appropriate publicity material on the Games. The advertising propaganda and the fascination of the journey to Greece boosted the numbers of foreigners ordering tickets.⁸⁵

Thus the transport problems of the foreigners were satisfactorily solved, thanks to the vested interests of the two agencies.⁸⁶ While these agencies dominated the transport of the visitors to Athens, there was, nevertheless, an exception: the trip of the French organised by the periodical *Le Tour du Monde*. This was the first organised visit of an educational nature to Greece and signalled a new era, which would then be marked by cruises organised by the science journal *Revue générale des Sciences pures et appliquées*, founded by Louis Olivier. The basic motive of most travellers was cultural, a fact which the increase in the number of people working as tourist guides underlines. The cultivated bourgeois class, keen on learning, predominated in the world of travel, thus altering the profile of the traveller.⁸⁷

Although the foreign travel agencies undertook to bring people to Greece from abroad, for Greeks at home there was ‘their own Cook’: the merchant and industrialist Dimitrios Baveas,⁸⁸ who undertook to provide, for the Greeks of the provinces, for the lack of a Greek Cook.

The Reception Committee also based the success of its undertaking on the sense of hospitality and aesthetics of the residents of the capital. For this reason it published a fervent appeal, in the expectation of arousing the Greek sense of honour, that the city should be a ‘focus of beautification and good cheer’ for the new customers and the

84. *Estia* newspaper, 4 February 1896. The press reprinted the prices from the published schedules of the agencies.

85. *Acropolis* newspaper, 5 March 1896 and 6 March 1896; *Estia* newspaper, 26 January 1896.

86. Vikelas Archive, NLG, doc. 931, *op. cit.*, pp. 612-13. In spite of the fact that the sum needed to go on an organised cruise was much smaller than if one travelled alone, the social and professional level of the travellers remained of decisive importance. If, for example, the cost of a trip to Greece in 1897 was 815 francs, a sum that represented two-thirds of the annual income of a Western European industrial worker, and the annual income of a elementary school teacher in 1900 was 1,000 or 2,000 francs (depending upon seniority), it will be realised that these categories could not afford the luxury of such a trip.

87. The information on the visits of French Hellenists to Greece cited here is taken from the work of Yakoumis/Roy, *To ταξίδι των ελληνιστών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-43.

88. Baveas is referred to in the press as a coffee-seller (*Acropolis* newspaper, 6 March 1896). In a document in the HOC Archive he is described as a merchant and industrialist (HOC Archive: K9-Φ12-E3). In 1906, he submitted his proposals afresh to the HOC, after the experience gained in 1896, but an official reply from the Committee commissioning transport of visitors to the Intermediate Olympiad has not been located.

'assessors of Greece as a nation'.⁸⁹ At the same time, an announcement was made in the press about the letting of rooms to foreigners.⁹⁰ 1,200 detached houses were offered for rent 'for families, with all the furnishings and other essentials'. The prices of the rooms began from '2,5 to 3 drachmas per day', 'for those expected from the provinces and the enslaved parts', and reached 10 Drs, depending upon the location of the house, the state of the room, and its distance from the centre of the city. More than 5,000 rooms were registered to let with the Cook's office.⁹¹

As to hotels, the holding of the Games marked the 'golden age'. The prices at the Minerva⁹² and Bangeion hotels were, according to the prices appearing in the Cook's bulletin, 20-21 Drs per person for accommodation, food and all the services provided. At the Grande Bretagne, the prices reached 20-25 francs a day with midday and evening meal. The price for a double furnished room was 10 francs, for a single room, 5. A table d'hôte meal cost 3 francs at lunchtime and 4 in the evening. At hotels in the 'A' category, accommodation with two meals cost 10-12 Drs, while at popular hotels the cost was 3-4 Drs a night.⁹³

The increase in traffic did not apply only to the hotels of Athens, but also to those of Patras and Corfu, the first ports of call for the foreign visitors. The large Saint Georges and Bella Venezia hotels in Corfu, and the Asty, Anglia, and Mega in Patras were full of customers.⁹⁴ According to a press article, the daily takings of these hotels were 1,000-1,500 Drs.⁹⁵

Of the more important hotels of Athens, the one that was the city's trademark was the Grande Bretagne. Its very name was reminiscent of 'a cosmopolitan version of the

89. *Estia* newspaper, 10 February 1896.

90. *Asty* newspaper, 17 November 1895. The information office was finally set up by the Reception Committee in the large Melas residence. The office was directed by the well-known General Secretary of the HOC, Spyridon Lambros, and Angelos Metaxas and Constantinos Koutsalexis, members of the Committee. See *Estia* newspaper, 21 February 1896.

91. *Acropolis* newspaper, 6 March 1896, 13 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 22 February 1896. See also the *Ladies' Journal (Ephimeris ton Kyrión)*, 28 January 1896 and 4 February 1896, in the article 'Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας' [Greek women during the Olympic Games] on the role that women could play in providing good hospitality and a presentable image for the foreigners.

92. 'Cook secured us rooms at the Minerva Hotel, Rue du Stade, and we have excellent rooms on the first floor, full pension wine included for 20 francs a day. Very moderate in my opinion, considering the influx of strangers. I intend taking some lessons in modern Greek while here. I fortunately found that the guide attached to the hotel is willing to give me the necessary coaching': memoirs from the manuscript journal of the athlete Jack Boland, IOC Archive, p. 93.

93. *Estia* newspaper, 19 January 1896, 4 February 1896, 10 February 1896. On the prices at the Grande Bretagne Hotel, see also Nikos Politis, *Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες του 1896. Όπως τους έξησαν τότε οι Έλληνες και οι ξένοι* [The Olympic Games of 1896. How the Greeks and foreigners experienced them then], Patras 1996, p. 40; see also Angelos Vlachos, *Μεγάλη Βρεταννία. Ένα ξενοδοχείο σύμβολο* [The Grande Bretagne. A hotel-symbol], Athens 2003, p. 36.

94. The 'Mega Hotel of Patras', comparable to hotels in Europe, 'elevates Patras into a truly European city'. It provided high-quality services, its prices were 'responsible and economical', while 'the very willing and sincere care and respect for the guests' was of a superior nature: *Asty* newspaper, 5 March 1896.

95. *Acropolis* newspaper, 7 April 1896.

European dream' and revealed the desire for differentiation from the East.⁹⁶ It was built to the designs of the Austrian architect Theophil von Hansen⁹⁷ and was the epicentre of Athenian life for more than half a century; it was also the bridge between Athens and Europe, as in the closing years of the nineteenth century it provided hospitality for figures from the European business world. The occasion of the Games contributed to the establishment of its reputation at an international level.⁹⁸ The architectural decoration, the varied comforts, the high quality of the services which it provided, and the prestige of the figures who were accommodated there made the Grande Bretagne the best known building in Athens after the Parthenon. For some of those who visited it, it was the only memory of the city of Athens that they carried off with them after the Temple of Athena.⁹⁹ It was there that the Athenian aristocracy, the foreign diplomat missions to Greece, and the representatives of the government and political hierarchy gathered. In 1896, it hosted, apart from members of the IOC and M. and Mme de Coubertin, all the official guests invited to the Games, princes, counts, office-holders, wealthy Greeks from abroad, members of the French fencing team, French journalists, Demetrios Vikelas, members of Athens high society, the captains of the docked steamships *Senegal*, *Lusitania*, and *Nicholas I*, and many others.¹⁰⁰

Apart from the hotel policy pursued by the professionals, it is worth drawing attention to the confusion that was created among ordinary people, who also, in their turn, looked for some profit from this event, in connection with the renting of rooms.¹⁰¹ The rumours that circulated about the high rents compelled the Hoteliers' Association to make a reassuring announcement in the press.¹⁰² The *Estia* newspaper

96. See Nikos Vatopoulos, 'Ονομασίες ξενοδοχείων' [Hotel names], in Kounenaki, *Παλαιά ξενοδοχεία της Αθήνας*, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

97. Biris, *Αι Αθήναι*, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-30.

98. Vlachos, *Μεγάλη Βρεταννία*, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-6.

99. René Puaux, *Ελλάδα, γη αγαπημένη των θεών* [Grèce, terre aimée des Dieux], trans. Yorgos Spanos, intro.-notes-commentary Ch. A. Baltas, Athens 1995, pp. 44-8.

100. Rena Tobler/Aphrodite Papastefanou (ed.), *Μνήμες Αθήνας 1896. Η αναβίωση των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων και η ιστορική παρονοία των ξενοδοχείου Μεγάλη Βρεταννία* [Memories of Athens 1896. The revival of the Olympic Games and the historical presence of the Grande Bretagne Hotel], Athens 1995, pp. 31-3.

101. In an article in the *Acropolis* newspaper (22 December 1895) entitled 'Χρήματα διά τους Αγώνας' [Money for the Games], there is a hypothetical analysis of the money that citizens would derive from this event. According to the journalist, Athens was capable of accommodating 60,000: 15,000 from Europe and America, as many again from the East and enslaved Greece, and 30,000 from within the country. Calculating the expenditure per person 'of those from the interior' at an average of 200 Drs, for 'those from the East' at 400 Drs and for 'those from the West' at 1,000 Drs, the profit would be 27,000,000 Drs for the city. According to the calculations of the *Asty* newspaper (24 March 1896), the foreign visitors numbered 25,000 in total. The athlete J. G. Robertson, relying on information from the British and Greek press, speaks of 20,000 guests, without making it clear whether Greeks from abroad and provincials were included in that figure: see J. G. Robertson, 'The Olympic Games', *The Fortnightly Review* 354 (June 1896), p. 955. The *Estia* newspaper (6 May 1896) cites 10,000 visitors, chiefly Greeks from abroad and provincials, and a very few foreigners.

102. *Asty* newspaper, 14 March 1896.

captures precisely the atmosphere that prevailed before the Games: ‘something that has not been sufficiently stressed so far [...] is the hopes that have been pinned upon these Games by the various working classes – grocers, greengrocers, hoteliers, house-holders, cabmen, even shoeblocks, and... and... All are waiting for the Games to make money; some are waiting for the cash that be forthcoming from the foreigners to pay their debts; others to repair, to furnish their houses’.¹⁰³

The rumours about the high rents in Athens served as a disincentive for the Greeks chiefly of Alexandria, but also from Smyrna and Constantinople, to attend, since they were afraid that they would not find ‘anywhere to go or anywhere to sleep’.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, for the same reason, many potential foreign visitors postponed their visit because they believed the sums for their accommodation would be excessive; they gathered in Italy waiting for the Games to end and then to travel to Athens.¹⁰⁵

There was, of course, no shortage of satire of the whole issue:

*There'll be plenty of cash flowing with the games now
And everyone will rent out his house at top price
And there's a great rush of landlords to Cook's
To get there first.*

*They register rooms as houses; they register as fine salons
Upper rooms and basements, and yards and kitchens,
And in so much frenzy,
Even stables have been registered, and a few barns.*

*Cook won't leave a single room unrented
Down there in Plaka, in Psyrri, and at Vatrachonisi
And that renowned hani of Deliyannis
Will play the figure of Bretagne at the celebrations...¹⁰⁶*

However, those who travelled with the large steamships encountered no accommodation problem. The steamships that were chartered by Greeks from abroad so that they could come to Athens specially for the Games, such as that of the Kourtzis company which was chartered by 100 Greeks from Constantinople and Smyrna, served as floating hotels. Accommodation on these cost 50 gold francs a day.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the large cruise liners, such as the *Senegal*, which brought the French delegation, or others like it, provided their passengers with food and board on the vessel at a price determined in advance, since Athens was one of the ports of call of their cruise.¹⁰⁸

103. *Estia* newspaper, 21 March 1896.

104. *Ibid.*; *Metarrhythmis* newspaper, 1 April 1896.

105. Robertson, ‘The Olympic Games’, *op. cit.*, pp. 954-5; *Asty* newspaper, 21 March 1896.

106. *Acropolis* newspaper, 17 March 1896.

107. *Asty* newspaper, 8 March 1896; *Acropolis* newspaper, 15 March 1896.

108. The Daout company of Alexandria offered 15 days’ accommodation on their steamship, without food, at 18 pounds for 1st Class and 14 for 2nd: *Asty* newspaper, 4 March 1896.

After the question of securing accommodation, there was also that of the transport of the visitors within the country to be dealt with. The Reception Committee, in collaboration with the railway companies and the Municipality of Athens, took measures in connection with public road transport to provide a better service for the athletes and visitors to Athens in the field of travel, and to improve the appearance of the sites.¹⁰⁹

Within the framework of these endeavours, and for the benefit of people from the provinces, from 21 March to 10 April, the Peloponnesian Railways Company laid on extra services from Tripoli, Corinth, and Patras, offering a 30% reduction in the fares. Furthermore, for the foreigners who would arrive at Patras with Athens as their final destination, it decided, in consultation with the foreign travel agencies, to provide extra trains (from 18 to 24 March), which would continue to the Omonia station.¹¹⁰ Following a joint decision of the Peloponnesian and Attica railway companies, on the days of the festivities, the line from Patras would also use the railway lines of Attica in bringing passengers to the Lavrio station, near Omonia, while suitable space for the passengers' baggage was rented.¹¹¹ At the same time, measures were taken with a view to the aesthetic enhancement of the old Athens-Piraeus railway station and of Peloponnisou St, which led to the Piraeus-Athens-Peloponnesian Railways station.¹¹²

Since it was expected that many Greeks from abroad would visit the Aghia Lavra Monastery at Kalavryta (in the national consciousness of the Greeks this was regarded as the place where the Revolution of 1821 started), the Diakofto-Kalavryta section was placed in common use by the Piraeus, Athens and Peloponnesian railway company, with connecting trains from Athens and Patras.

The same company offered tickets at a reduced rate for those who would take part in excursions of an archaeological interest. Thus, from 1 to 10 April it supplied tickets 'valid for a return for five days from their issue and with a right of interrupting the journey at intermediate stations'. For Nafplio, First Class cost 20 Drs and Second 15, while for Olympia the fare was 45 Drs and 35 Drs, respectively.¹¹³

109. Mayor of Athens in 1896 was Lambros Kalliphronas, who 'was elected in the municipal elections of 10 September 1895 by 7,551 votes, while Timoleon Philimon received only 5,711'. See G. P. Paraskevopoulos, *Oι δήμαρχοι των Αθηνών (1835-1907). Μετά προεισαγωγής περί δημογεροντίας* [The Mayors of Athens (1835-1907). With a preliminary introduction on the *demogerontia*], Athens 1907 [photo-reprint: Athens 2001 (intro-ed. Matoula Tomara-Sideri), p. 382]. To the questions of the cleanliness and embellishment of the city there are numerous references in the press, since the problem was a crucial one. The lack of a drainage network and the 'filthy spectacle' of the slaughterhouses were a daily trial for the citizens and undoubtedly contributed to a negative image of the city. See, for example: *Acropolis* newspaper, 12 December 1895, 23 December 1895; see also in the same newspaper (23 September 1895) the article by the British economist E. Law entitled 'Διατί δεν έρχονται ξένοι εις την Ελλάδα' [Why foreigners do not come to Greece].

110. *Acropolis* newspaper, 1 March 1896, 6 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 12 March 1896.

111. *Estia* newspaper, 25 January 1896, 7 February 1896.

112. *Acropolis* newspaper, 4 March 1896; *Estia* newspaper, 21 February 1896, 1 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 27 February 1896.

113. *Asty* newspaper, 12 March 1896, 29 March 1896.

During the days of the Games, the use of carriages for transport increased, since most foreigners used this means to travel from Piraeus to Athens.¹¹⁴ The coachmen asked for – and received – a surcharge of half a drachma for the fare (from one drachma to one and a half) and of one drachma for the carriage rental (from three drachmas an hour to four). By order of the Chief of Police, the tariff was posted in the carriages in three languages. (It should be noted here that coachmen did not enjoy the best of reputations; they were regarded as short-tempered and ‘Machiavellian’ in their agreements, and for that reason care was taken to set limits to their claims.) This is how a visitor to the Games described the means of transport in Athens: ‘Coquettish little tram-cars are drawn like playthings across this square by tiny horses, big enough for toys. [...] Bicycles flit through the streets, cabs and landaus are stationed at the hotel doors. The public vehicles are called even to-day “amaxa”, the very word, you will remember, Homer used in speaking of Achilles’ chariot. The Greek, before he hires one of these, makes with charioteer what is called a “symphony”. Do not mistake my meaning. The making of a symphony requires no musical talent; it demands much firmness of character and a genius for diplomacy. Unless you make a symphony before you start, there will be a discord when you come to pay your fare’.¹¹⁵

Apart from ensuring safe and economical transport for the visitors, another area that required particular attention and called for organisation was the country’s chief ports. Piraeus, Corfu, and Patras¹¹⁶ would determine the foreigners’ first impressions of Greece, and for this reason a number of interventions took place. The Ministry of Shipping appointed able harbourmasters, ‘not fresh-water ones, all bows, concessions, and hesitations’. With a view to combating ‘the shameful phenomenon of boatmen climbing up like pirates from the Middle Ages on to the steamships that put in’, it issued a tariff in Greek and French which had to be posted on the tiller of every boat.¹¹⁷

At the Piraeus customs house, drastic measures were taken for the management of the thousands who would pass through. The corrupt atmosphere that prevailed at the Greek customs houses, recorded by Deschamps, defamed Greece.¹¹⁸ For these reasons, a new regulation on the customs clearance of baggage was sent to the customs houses of Piraeus, Patras, Zakynthos and Corfu, and was indeed more effective. Measures were also taken for an improvement in steamship services.

114. *Estia* newspaper, 2 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 3 March 1896, 27 January 1896.

115. Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

116. On the importance of these ports and that of the little harbour of Katakolon at Pyrgos, see Synarelli, *Δρόμοι και λιμάνια*, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-97. See also, more generally, Christina Agriantoni, *Oι απαρχές της επιβιομηχάνισης στην Ελλάδα των 19ο αιώνων* [The beginnings of industrialisation in Greece in the 19th century], Athens 1986, pp. 77-8, 98-100, 118-20.

117. *Asty* newspaper, 27 January 1896, 13 March 1896.

118. Deschamps, *H Ελλάδα σήμερα*, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-4.

The travel arrangements of the foreign athletes

The Olympic Games Committee was concerned not only about the way that the host of visitors arriving in Athens would be handled, but above all about ensuring the participation of the foreign athletes in the Games – by no means an easy matter. Although it had sent out the invitations immediately after it was set up, there were not as many applications for participation as it had originally estimated. At that time, states did not have organised Olympic Committees, and thus in 1896, most athletes came to Athens in a private capacity.

The Organising Committee for the Games sent out 2,500 invitations. The fears of the Reception Committee that the number of athletes and visitors would be in excess of 12,000, when Athens could provide accommodation only for 4,000, did not prove to be well founded. A little before the beginning of the Games, participation declarations from foreign athletes were still few in number, and the Committee left open the registration lists till the very last moment. For the registration of an athlete, the certification of the amateur association to which he belonged was required, together with the lodging of an application to take part with the General Secretariat of the Games. Because there were no central athletics agencies in many countries, and because of the shortage of time, the differing athletics systems, and the travelling expenses, the number of athletes who registered to take part was small.¹¹⁹

In the end, athletes from 13 countries came to Athens.¹²⁰ Six athletes came from Britain,¹²¹ two of them at their own expense. A total of 20 athletes travelled from France, on board the *Senegal*. The fare was 450 francs for First Class and 380 for Second. If we add to that the cost of accommodation, it will be understandable why Coubertin complained to Vikelas.¹²²

The Stangen agency undertook the travel arrangements of the 21 German athletes, who were headed by Willibald Gebhardt. Most of them travelled by train via Vienna, and from the port of Trieste went on to Piraeus with the Austrian steamship company. The rest went to Brindisi by rail and from there by boat to Patras.

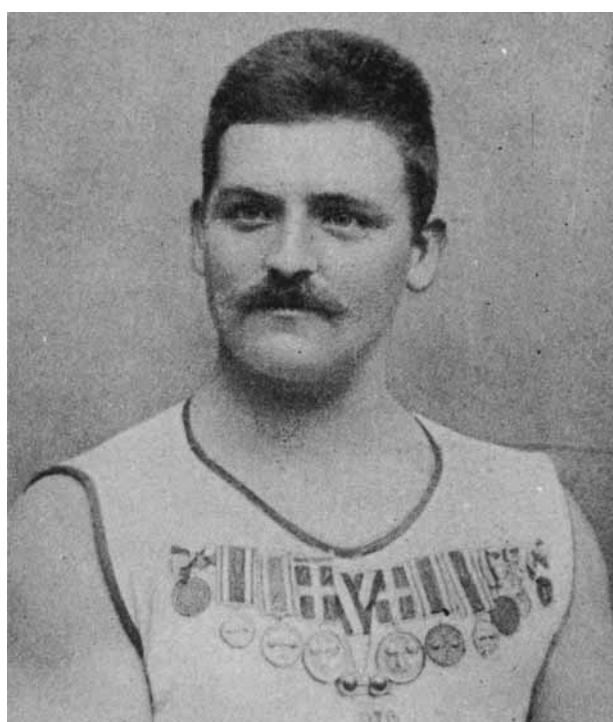
In Sweden there was no special committee to undertake the preparation of the athletes. The committee of the country's gymnastics associations was responsible for advertising the event, but in spite of the fact that the heirs to the thrones of Sweden

119. Problems with foreign participation were also created by the displeasure of the Germans with the 'French' character of the event and by the unwillingness of the British to take part. See in this connection Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-3.

120. K. Georgiadis, 'Η γέννηση της ιδέας της αναβίωσης των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων στην Ελλάδα έως τα μέσα του 19ου αιώνα' [The genesis of the idea of the revival of the Olympic Games in Greece down to the mid 19th century], doctoral thesis (forthcoming), and particularly the chapter 'Η μεταφορά και η συμμετοχή των ξένων αθλητών στους Αγώνες' [The transport and participation of foreign athletes in the Games], pp. 253-67, from which we have taken the particulars of the athletes' travel arrangements.

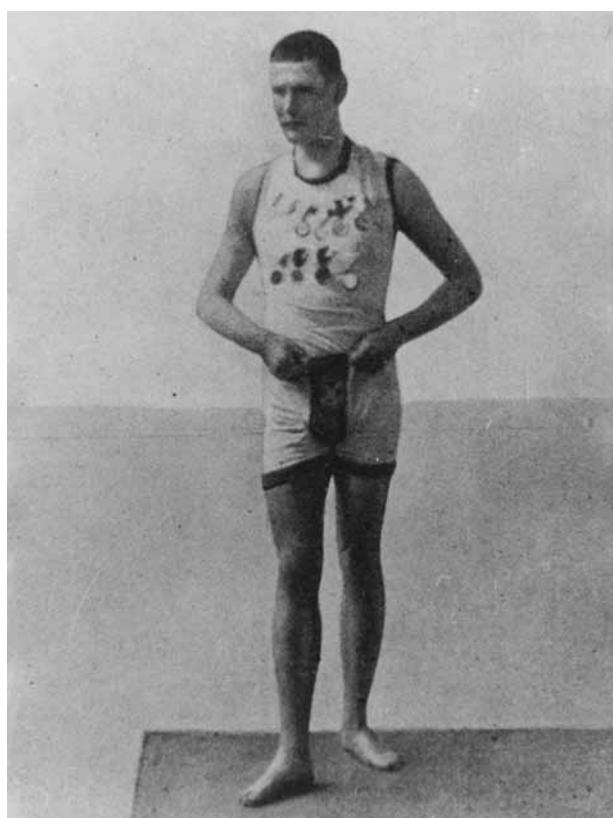
121. One of these was the Australian Edwin Flack, as a member of the 'London Athletic Club'. However, he took part in the colours of Australia. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

122. Vikelas Archive, NLG, doc. 865, *op. cit.*, pp. 671-3.



*W. Jensen, first in the weightlifting
'with both hands' and second in the
weightlifting 'with one hand'
(26 March 1896).*

[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.51]



*Alfred Hajos Guttmann
(Hungary), first Olympic victor
in the 100 and 1,200 m. swimming
contests (1896).*

[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.77]

and Norway took a lively interest, the circumstances were not favourable. At the same period, the Swedes were holding their own national gymnastics festival; moreover, it was difficult to find athletes who could afford the time and money for such an excursion. In the end, the only ones to come to Athens were Viktor Balck (member of the IOC), and the athlete Henrik Sjøberg, who paid half the expenses of the journey himself (the rest came from contributions). They travelled by train to Trieste and from there by a vessel of the Austrian Lloyd company to Patras.

In Hungary, Ferenc Kemény, a member of the IOC, had set in train as of 1895 the creation of a national Olympic committee to which those who wished to take part could address themselves. He himself obtained the official consent of the state and the athletics associations to pay a share of the expenses. The Hungarian delegation consisted of seven athletes, five officials, and Kemény himself. They arrived by rail in Thessaloniki, and from there travelled by boat to Piraeus.

From America, four athletes from the University of Princeton and nine from the Boston Athletic Association, with their trainer, travelled to Greece. The delegation was formed on the initiative of William Sloane, a member of the IOC. The American athletes, the offspring of aristocratic families, ‘very wealthy, the “high life” of American youth’,¹²³ travelled First Class in the steamship *Fulda*. Some of the cabins had been re-arranged to be used for training. They sailed from Gibraltar to Naples, by rail from there to Brindisi, and then by boat to Patras; the journey took them 15 days. They arrived in Athens a little before the Games started, and were accorded a warm welcome.¹²⁴

In spite of the fact that at that time Bulgaria’s relations with Greece were not of the best, it was represented by a small team of four athletes and Todor Jonchen, a founding member of the Gymnastics Union.¹²⁵ However, only one athlete, Charles Champaud, entered for the Games, and he was of Swiss origin.¹²⁶ There was no very great response from Switzerland. It was represented by two athletes, of whom one was probably living in Athens before the Games and entered at the last moment. Denmark, because of the origins of King George, could hardly remain uninvolved; it took part with three athletes. Austria also sent three athletes, and these were supported financially by the country’s Olympic Games Committee.

123. *Acropolis* newspaper, 15 April 1896.

124. ‘The reception which Athens accorded us, in spite of its amiable hospitality, was far from helpful. We were received by an escort with military music. They then forced us to join in a parade, covering a distance that seemed to me endless, as far as the Town Hall. There followed many speeches, doubtless full of encomiums of ourselves, but, because of the fact that they were in Greek, they were unintelligible to us [...] At the end of the ceremony, we had to walk to our hotel. I reflected that so much walking with so much wine-drinking would certainly affect our performance the next day’: memoirs of the athlete Thomas P. Curtis, in Otto Mayer, *Rétrospectives olympiques, Athènes 1896 - Paris 1900*, Cailler, Geneva 1961, p. 58.

125. The *Acropolis* newspaper (29 March 1896) claims that the special dispatch of this newspaper to the Balkan states, as a kind of diplomatic propaganda, contributed to this.

126. Champaud entered as Champoff. ‘He was hastily Bulgarised’ and sent to Athens to represent Bulgaria, where he had been working as a gymnastics instructor in Sofia. See I. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνεῖς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

The 25-year-old engineer Carlo Airoldi, ‘small in stature, but well-formed and most athletic and with a most lively physiognomy’, a formidable walker and member of the ‘Società pro Italia’ athletics association, came from Italy on foot to take part in the marathon. He left his native Milan on 15 February, and, having crossed Italy, arrived at Ragusa in Dalmatia 19 days later, thus covering 1,300 kilometres. From there he went by steamship to Corfu and, again by sea, reached Patras on 16 March. Then he continued on foot and arrived in Athens on 19 March. Airoldi was finally excluded from the Games, having originally been accepted. The reasons for this exclusion are not entirely clear; hints had been dropped in the press about the athlete’s professional status.¹²⁷

The Greek provincials

The celebration of Easter and of the 75th anniversary of the Liberation coincided with the Games. Although to begin with it had been thought unlikely that the Greeks from the provinces would leave their homes at such a time, nevertheless there was a great flood of people into Athens.

Apart from those who were in a financial position to travel whenever they wanted, for others to travel to and stay in the capital was by no means a slight undertaking.¹²⁸ If they were to visit Athens to enjoy the unique spectacle of the Games, and to get to know the capital, they would have to have first saved up the necessary money. According to the *Acropolis* newspaper, these people, ‘of the middle working class’, were accommodated in the homes of friends or relatives in Athens or stayed in ‘B’ and ‘C’ category hotels.¹²⁹

A typical example recorded in the press is that of the ‘Philolympics’ Club of Trikala, which had been able to travel at low cost. This was arranged by a special committee of the Club, ‘set up for this purpose’. The elected three-member committee, in consultation with Thessaly railways, the relevant steamship company, and the

127. *Acropolis* newspaper, 20 March 1896, 22 March 1896.

128. See the salaries and wages c. 1890 as quoted in this volume by Christos Loukos, ‘The Greek Capital, 1890-1912’, p. 77. See also Petros Pizanias, *Μισθοί και εισοδήματα στην Ελλάδα (1842-1923). Το παράδειγμα των υπαλλήλων της Εθνικής Τράπεζας* [Salaries and incomes in Greece (1842-1923). The example of the employees of the National Bank], Athens 1985, p. 234. By way of indication, we give some examples of the remuneration of those working in the Bank in 1896: the 3rd messenger at the Bank’s head office in Athens received 60 Drs, the head messenger 140, the Governor 1,500, the Deputy Governor 1,000, a manager (first class) 600, an accountant 285.49, etc. These figures allow us to form an idea of which social and occupational categories were in a position to travel to Athens on the occasion of the Games.

129. *Acropolis* newspaper, 6 March 1896, 13 March 1896, 20 March 1896. ‘Little by little, the first provincial features began to become apparent the day before yesterday [...] Yesterday, the first *foustanelles* and *kontogounia* of the provinces were seen in front of the Stadium, simple souls, full of naivety, distinguishable at first glance by the looks on their faces, as in their amazement they gazed with curiosity on the restored building and all that feverish work which is going on down there [...].’

manager of a hotel in Athens, arranged a 15-day trip, which included travel, overnight accommodation and return for a price of 16 Drs. Four thousand Thessalians in all are reported by the press to have come to Athens.

Apart from well-to-do villagers from the plains, many Vlachs from Aspropotamos came to stay in the homes of relatives.¹³⁰ There was also a major exodus from Patras and Nafplio to the capital:¹³¹ ‘One thing is certain: that the whole of Greece has been possessed by a real obsession with the Olympic Games [...] Gone is discussion of the currant crisis and misery and hunger, and the idea of festivals, of celebrations, [...] of a variety of spectacles, of feasting looms large like a cool oasis. And the incredible thing is that in the provinces [...] they are more preoccupied with the festivities of the Games than we are here in Athens. The press is to blame [...] it’s blown things up out of all proportion [...].’¹³²

The arrival of so many people in the city gave it a special colour. The scenes that unfolded at the harbour and the stations were unprecedented: ‘The images succeed one another, varied, original. Outside, the hotel employees buzz like wasps around a piece of meat. – St Petersburg Hotel! – Pensions here – The *Oraia Hellas* – Your things, gentlemen. And they grab things, and bundles and suitcases are dragged off [...] and the trams fill up and those left behind are indignant, and the ladies are distressed, and the Greeks from abroad complain because preference is given to the Europeans, and the boats whistle and the steam-launches bustle and the porters shout [...].’¹³³

The foreigners at the Games

The Olympic Games of 1896 was also the occasion for the arrival in Athens of figures of importance. The visit of King Alexander of Serbia was highlighted and was regarded as adding prestige to the event; it undoubtedly made an impression on public opinion. Alexander, ‘of medium height, wheaten in colour, with a small moustache and myopia glasses’, was accompanied by Franasovitch, his Minister of War, high-ranking military officers, and his personal physician. He arrived incognito in Thessaloniki on 24 March, at nine in the evening, in an ordinary railway carriage. Next day, with the yacht *Izzedin*, which was sent from Constantinople, he went to Mount Athos, where he visited the Serbian monastery of Chilandari. On his return to Thessaloniki, he was taken on board

130. *Acropolis* newspaper, 23 March 1896. The Games were of commercial interest to them: ‘Those from the plains will take with them whatever chickens, geese, ducks, turkeys they have for sale, while the Vlachs will take various textiles, capes, heavy blankets, woollen sheets, cheeses, butter’.

131. *Acropolis* newspaper, 4 March 1896: ‘The Nafplioti. When they are coming and how many’; 20 March 1896: ‘The whole of Nafplio in Athens. Even their sheep’. According to the newspapers, there were between 2,000 and 3,000 citizens of Patras in the Stadium. See N. E. Politis, *Ο πατρούχος αθλητισμός* [Sport in Patras], vol. I: *Η πρώτη δεκαετία 1891-1900* [The first decade 1891-1900], Patras 1994, p. 131.

132. *Asty* newspaper, 19 March 1896.

133. *Acropolis* newspaper, 22 March 1896.

the Royal Family's yacht *Sphakteria*.¹³⁴ At Piraeus, he was given a warm welcome. But in spite of the fact that the press gave considerable publicity to this visit and linked it with the Games, as well as with the political developments in the Balkans, it seems that the basic motive for the King's visit to Athens was to negotiate his marriage with Princess Maria. However, on the eve of his visit, Maria was officially engaged to George Mikhailovich, Grand Duke of Russia, 'a tall and elegant figure', who arrived in Athens from Brindisi.¹³⁵

Souris commented in satirical vein on the arrival of the Serbian King, 'which Fasoulis hymns as follows':

Games, at which we have received delegations from every country,
Games, at which even Serbia's King attended
Amid the sumptuous festivities of the new Easter
To carry off Maria,
 but he was jilted
And got his marching orders.
Games, at the sight of which everyone was moved
And all shouted, 'Long live our ally' to the Serb.
Games, at which vigorous youth is honoured,
And we with the young king Obrenović
 Will share, a portion each, the land of the Macedonians,
 And planting both feet firmly there,
 With the Stadium of the international Games alone,
 We'll devour the choicest lion's share.
Games, at which all the Macedonians wreathed
 the two crowned heads.
Games, at which one day we'll take back Constantinople
 *Running and jumping [...]*¹³⁶

Amongst the distinguished guests were Ludwig, Archduke of Austria, the Egyptian Prince Mehmet Ali (who 'entertains a great passion for exercise and particularly maritime contests'), the brother of the Khedive of Egypt, Prince Abbas Pasha, the Austrian Prince Imsky ('peculiar and eccentric, travelling strictly incognito'), and Prince Petros Mavrocordatos, a senior officer in the Russian Army, as representative of the Russian Government.¹³⁷ Rumours that the King of Sweden, the Emperor of

134. *Tachydromos Alexandrias* newspaper, 11 April 1896; *Acropolis*, 4 March 1896, 6 March 1896, 13 March 1896, 21 March 1896; *Estia*, 27 March 1896.

135. See, in this volume, Lina Louvi, 'The royal family and the first Olympic Games', pp. 117-9; see also the *Acropolis* newspaper, 16 March 1896, 8 April 1896.

136. *Romios* newspaper, 30 March 1896.

137. *Estia* newspaper, 12 March 1896, 2 April 1896; *Acropolis* newspaper, 5 March 1896, 7 March 1896, 12 March 1896, 20 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 5 March 1896, 16 March 1896, 17 March 1896, 22 March 1896, 27 March 1896.

Germany, and the Prince of Bulgaria would also attend proved to be unfounded.¹³⁸

Cook also came to Athens, accompanied by his friend the General Manager of England's railways. On their arrival in Athens, as reported in the press, the following episode occurred: when Cook emerged from the train and headed towards the station, the cabmen and the interpreters called out to him the names of the hotels that they represented. 'I will go to... (and he gave the name of one of the city's hotels). The interpreter standing near him, not recognising the traveller, said to him: You'll go where that Jew Cook!!! has made it 50 drachmas a room?'.¹³⁹

Emissary of the German committee was the court photographer of Saxony-Meiningen, Albert Meyer, who arrived in Athens with his wife; he also was 'a first-class marksman and cyclist'.¹⁴⁰ After his return to Germany, his photographs made the front page in issues of the *Sport im Bild* newspaper.¹⁴¹

A lively interest in the Games was also shown by the world of journalism. The newspaper correspondents perhaps travelled more for the fun of the occasion than for their newspapers, as Raoul Fabens, secretary of the French Committee, suggests.¹⁴² Among those arriving in Athens were correspondents of Belgian, French, German, Dutch and British newspapers, Andreas Alexakis, special correspondent of the *Proödos* newspaper of Cairo and the *Tileraphos* of Alexandria, Jacques de Gachons, correspondent of *Le Journal* newspaper and *La Plume* magazine, Charles Maurras as correspondent of *La Gazette de France*, and the American journalist and writer Miss Maynard Butler ('a model of elegance, with a very sweet face, a jolly character').¹⁴³

The list of Greeks from abroad that travelled to Athens is long. One hundred and twenty families came from Smyrna, Rhodes and Cyprus, a hundred Greeks from Constantinople, and from Thessaloniki two steamships full of Macedonians.¹⁴⁴

Many European travellers arrived at the port of Piraeus from Egypt, Constantinople and Marseilles. Many of these would tour Greece, others would continue their journey to Jerusalem, but most of them would stay for the Games.

From the various ports of the East, 230 foreign visitors arrived in Piraeus. High-ranking civil servants, the heads of higher institutions of learning, banks and educational foundations, and university professors travelled from Russia.¹⁴⁵ The distin-

138. *Acropolis* newspaper, 5 March 1896, 9 March 1896, 14 March 1896, 16 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 21 January 1896.

139. *Asty* newspaper, 20 March 1896, 21 March 1896; *Acropolis*, 8 March 1896.

140. *Acropolis* newspaper, 22 March 1896.

141. More information on Albert Meyer is given in Valentini Tselika, *Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 1896. Το φωτογραφικό λεύκωμα των Αλυπερτ Μάγερ* [Olympic Games 1896. The photograph album of Albert Meyer], Athens, pp. 23-9.

142. See Raoul Fabens, 'Les Jeux Olympiques à Athènes', *La Nouvelle Revue* (1 June 1896), p. 587.

143. *Asty* newspaper, 17 January 1896, 17 March 1896, 23 March 1896; *Acropolis* newspaper, 12 March 1896, 14 March 1896, 15 March 1896, 22 March 1896, 25 March 1896; *Estia* newspaper, 8 March 1896, 13 March 1896, 19 March 1896, 6 April 1896.

144. *Asty* newspaper, 17 March 1896, 18 March 1896, 21 March 1896, 24 March 1896; *Estia* newspaper, 13 March 1896, 21 March 1896, 23 March 1896; *Acropolis* newspaper, 13 March 1896.

145. *Asty* newspaper, 16 February 1896, 4 March 1896, 23 March 1896; *Estia* newspaper, 2 March 1896;

guished British explorer of Arabia and the Sudan Theodore Bent, accompanied by his wife, arrived from Egypt, and the famous British architect and archaeologist Francis-Cranmer Penrose, the ‘divider of the isthmus’ István Türr, professors of distinction from the universities of America, and students from those of Switzerland came specially for the Games.¹⁴⁶ The press even mentions Chinese visitors; ‘Tzin-Tzon’ had undertaken to act as their guide and ‘each day takes them to the sights of our city’.¹⁴⁷

The visitors from France included important personalities from the world of letters: Gustave Larroumet, Gaston Jourdanne, Théophile Calas, Salomon Reinach, Père Dion, and others. Their interest focused chiefly on the antiquities, which they visited all over Greece.¹⁴⁸ Their brief stay in Athens gave them a taste of the Games, but, as can be seen from Larroumet’s account, this was not for them the crowning event: ‘Although the Games are somewhat monotonous, they provoke lively interest. As for myself, I have a seat very high up. At this distance, the athletes look like nervous insects. [I’m] like a curious person who, from the tower of Notre Dame in Paris, looks down on a show on the steps of the entrance. From the tiers that are nearer to the track, the spectators have a better view. The Games will last fifteen days and we shall stay only three days longer in Athens. One visit to the Stadium is enough for me, and I am devoting the rest of my time to the monuments and the museums. Most of my companions are doing the same. It suffices for us to discover in the evening, when we meet up again with the fanatics of the Stadium, the episodes and the results of the Games’.¹⁴⁹ Marie-Anne de Bovet is thinking along the same lines when she declares quite openly: ‘We wanted more to familiarise ourselves with the daily life of Greece than to see the country with the festive decorations of the Games’.¹⁵⁰

Acropolis newspaper, 1 March 1896, 13 March 1896, 14 March 1896, 15 March 1896, 16 March 1896, 18 March 1896.

146. *Acropolis* newspaper, 14 March 1896, 16 March 1896, 17 March 1896, 23 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 6 March 1896, 18 March 1896.

147. *Acropolis* newspaper, 4 March 1896; *Estia* newspaper, 27 March 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 29 February 1896. The well-known Tzin-Tzon, the itinerant Chinaman who sold various Chinese knick-knacks, was a picturesque figure in Athens. One evening, a short while before the Games, he fell victim to the brutality of an ‘eccentric cart driver’.

148. There are numerous references in the press to the travels of the French. See in this connection: *Asty*, 22 March 1896, 23 March 1896; *Acropolis* newspaper, 18 March 1896, 23 March 1896. Also of interest are the ‘Κείμενα ταξιδιωτών και ανταποκριτών του γαλλικού Τύπου κατά την Ολυμπιάδα του 1896’ [Texts by travellers and French press correspondents during the Olympiad of 1896], which Ioanna Tambaki analyses in the *Anάτυπο της Επιστημονικής Επετηρίδας του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών* [Reprint of the Academic Year Book of the University of Athens], vol. ΛΑ’ (1996-97), Athens 1997.

149. Gustave Larroumet, *Vers Athènes et Jérusalem. Journal de voyage en Grèce et en Syrie*, quoted in Yakoumis/Roy, *To ταξίδι των ελληνοτόνων*, op. cit., p. 142.

150. Marie-Anne de Bovet, *La jeune Grèce*, Société française d’éditions d’Art, Paris 1897, p. 186. Bovet travelled on her own on the *Senegal* in 1896 and made a record of her experiences and the places that she visited.

Athens during the Games

With the arrival of the foreigners, Athens took on the appearance of a cosmopolitan city. But the same was also true of Corfu and Patras. Mass arrivals in those cities led to almost universal overpricing of foodstuffs (meat, vegetables, fish), since most, and the best, of these were taken to Athens, while at the same time local demand was greater because of the visitors.¹⁵¹

In view of the overpricing, the Athens police were forced to take measures; for example, telegrams were sent to the various provinces that were centres of stock-breeding, telling them to bring ‘plenty of lambs to Athens on the days of the Games, so that there is no shortage of such and so that profiteering does not take advantage of the opportunity’. In order to meet the increased needs for foodstuffs, the suppliers swept the provinces of Argos, Corinth, and Tripoli, buying up eggs, meat, fish and other comestibles. According to a butcher’s advertisement, the retail price of beef was 2.40 Drs and of lamb 2.60 – rather high prices when beef was normally 1.50 Drs and lamb 1.45 Drs per *oka*.¹⁵²

In Athens, the restaurants and cafés ‘doubled their place-settings’, but it was still difficult to find a table. One of the favourite ‘foods’ of the visitors, after Greek coffee and mastic, was nuts, and particularly hazelnuts – a luxury commodity that they bought from the itinerant traders in the Athens streets.¹⁵³ In economic transactions, however, there was a certain slight difficulty because of the foreign exchange.¹⁵⁴

In the coffee shops of Hafteia, the habitués indulged in a varied commentary on the passers-by. Every group of foreigners, carriage or tram was assessed appropriately. ‘This one is European. Those people are from Cairo. Those are certainly from the Peloponnese.’ The noise made by spectators, travellers, shoeblocks, coffee-sellers and street vendors, was diabolical: ‘Soap for oil-stains! Here you are gentlemen, wallets for your 500 Drs notes! Woollen stockings! *Kokoretsi!* Shoeblock! An extra sweet coffee! Cham! Choum! choum! - the Band! Tarata taratamat ta - the barrel organs, addio del passato - Marinos. Santa Lucia - the mandolins. Vrrrrr! - the trams. [...] Vaï, vaï, vaï, says a Turk from Larisa, my ears are bursting’.¹⁵⁵

Because of the great concentration of so many people, the Games were of special commercial interest; they raised the turnover of the traders, shopkeepers, and street vendors.¹⁵⁶ One particular category of ‘professionals’ who made a ‘killing’ during the Games was that of the shoeblocks. Their presence was etched in the consciousness of

151. *Acropolis* newspaper, 17 March 1896, 20 March 1896.

152. Pizanias, *Μισθοί και εισοδήματα*, *op. cit.*, p. 69. One *oka* was equal to 1,280 grams.

153. Holmes, *The Olympian Games*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

154. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

155. *Acropolis* newspaper, 23 March 1896.

156. The brewery of Karolos Fix produced 2,000 *okas* of beer per 24 hours to meet the consumption of drink on the days of the Games. The makers of the traditional shoes *tsarouchi* sold their exotic red wares to the foreigners and the athletes who crossed the city, while others sold tobacco-pouches and various other odds and ends.

all visitors to the city, and not only during the Games, since their existence had a staunch ally in the dust of Athens, a scourge for locals and visitors alike. In Athens, Krumbacher tells us, the shoeblacks formed a real social group and it would be no exaggeration to say that in this city there were more of them than in all the cities of Germany.¹⁵⁷

Over and above the fascination and the surprises that the city held for the foreigners,¹⁵⁸ what focused the attention of all was the Stadium, a venue of particular historical significance and natural beauty.¹⁵⁹ ‘The Stadium was the reason for the success of the Athens Olympic Games. The velodrome and the shooting-gallery were, of course, necessary adjuncts to the Games, but everything was concentrated in the Stadium’.¹⁶⁰

It was in the Stadium that the heart of Greece beat throughout the Games, the supreme moment being when Spyros Louis, victor in the marathon, entered it. Nor did the foreigners remain indifferent to this spectacle of a paroxysm of patriotic enthusiasm, which was enacted on Louis’s victory; they forgot about their own athletes, Fabens tells us. They were all witnesses to the national feeling of the Greeks, and formed a favourable opinion of them and their future.¹⁶¹

The marathon was etched in the memory of the athletes and the spectators as, together with the final day, the most impressive event of the Games.¹⁶² In the packed Stadium, these were two moments that were coloured by the great concourse of people and the extremes of enthusiasm.

A favourable impression was also created among the athletes by the simple hospitality and affection of the people inside and outside the Stadium, and to a lesser extent by the gatherings with the officials. It has been a not infrequent phenomenon for Athenians to display their liking for the athletes in a completely familiar manner, even when the latter were competing. A special place in the hearts of the spectators was won by the American runner James Connolly and the German gymnast and wrestler Carl Schuhmann. The popularity of the latter reached its climax after the popularisation and Hellenisation of his name. “*Yéia sou, re Souman*” or “*Soumadakia*” were to be heard inside and outside the Stadium.¹⁶³

The American athlete Thomas Curtis refers to the climate that prevailed on the

157. Krumbacher, *Ελληνικό ταξίδι*, *op. cit.*, p. 113. See also Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

158. ‘[...] we arrive in Athens. And as we drive through its modern streets, we are at the same time surprised and disappointed; surprised to find the handsome shops, clean pavements, fresh facades; disappointed to observe that no reminders of the past are visible [...]’: Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

159. It should be noted that the works that were carried out on the Stadium provided a living for more than a thousand families. *Asty* newspaper, 25 November 1895.

160. R. Richardson, ‘Το ανοικοδομηθέν Παναθηναϊκόν Στάδιον’ [The rebuilt Panathenaic Stadium], in *Η Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896* [Greece during the Olympic Games of 1896], Athens 1896, pp. 131-3.

161. Fabens, ‘Les Jeux Olympiques’, *op. cit.*, p. 601.

162. *Ibid.*, p. 589; see also Robertson, ‘The Olympic Games’, *op. cit.*, p. 956.

163. *Acropolis* newspaper, 28 March 1896.

days of the Games, and a short while afterwards: ‘The Greek population, from the highest strata to the most humble, showed us special courtesy. Their excessive kindness often embarrassed us. [...] We stayed on in Athens for ten days after the Games, living happy days with receptions and varied and pleasant entertainment. I remember particularly a big reception at the home of Madame Schliemann and a meal on the grass in the Daphni valley in the company of the Crown Prince, who later became King Constantine, and his brother, Prince George’.¹⁶⁴

Athens was regarded, and rightly, as the most appropriate meeting-place for international athleticism, just as Olympia once had been.¹⁶⁵ Although for some of the less optimistic the revival of the Olympic Games was, to begin with, like ‘the tale of the Arabian Nights’,¹⁶⁶ for those who travelled to Athens, it was the occasion for a ‘new Odyssey’. If we accept that travel satisfies the curiosity of man, the travellers who headed to the first modern Olympic city certainly had an original experience – and one perhaps that was enlightening as to the new social reality which began to take shape with the revival of the Games. But over and above the experience of the athletics spectacle, they experienced the image of the city no longer as a symbol of a past age but as a place of current importance. When the Games ended and their return journey began, memory started to embellish the experience.

For the visitors, the Games proved a marvellous travel adventure, unprecedented and enchanting. For the city, it was a good starting-point for the shaping and emphasising of the urban space and the strengthening of markets. This satirical rhyme expressed it happily:

*So all the commotion is over,
The celebrations and the cheer
But – damn it – the cleanliness
Is over as well.*¹⁶⁷

As did this:

*Who knows when in Athens
We'll have a second Olympiad again
And the foreigners will then
Leave gold by the bagful here.
Would that each year
Regular games were held here,
Because our capital would then be
A bit neat and clean.*¹⁶⁸

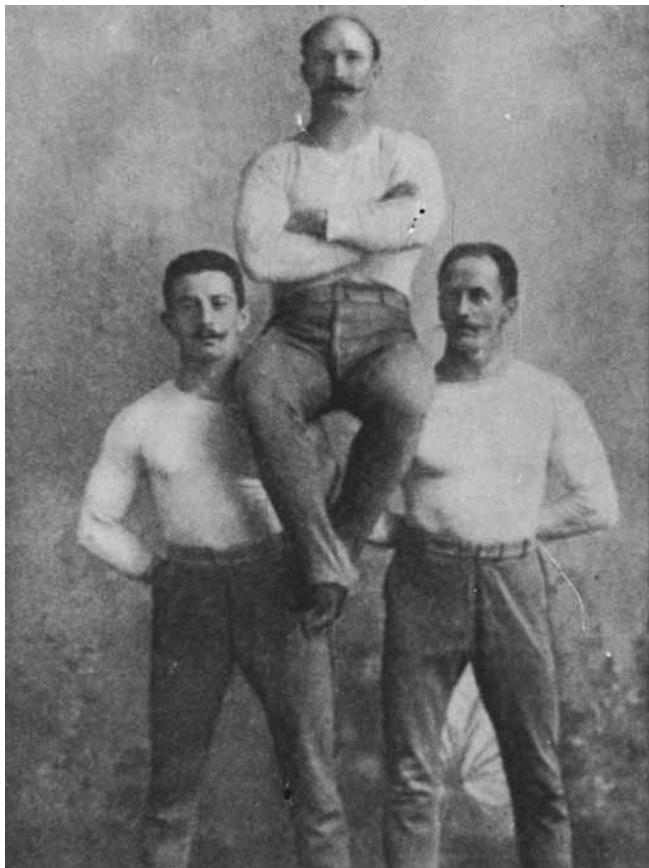
164. Meyer, *Rétrospectives olympiques*, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

165. Georgiadés, *Les Jeux Olympiques*, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

166. See the article by the German sociologist Max Nordau, ‘Η σημασία των Αγώνων. Άσ ζήσωμεν ως Έλληνες’ [The significance of the Games. Let’s live like Greeks], in *Asty* newspaper, 19 March 1896.

167. *Acropolis* newspaper, 5 April 1896.

168. *Acropolis* newspaper, 6 April 1896.



The Germans A. Flatow, K. Schumann, H. Weingaertner, first in the gymnastics (28 March 1896).

[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.62]



The right side of the Panathenaic Stadium (25 March 1896). The entrance to the changing-rooms can be seen in the centre. [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.45]

INTERMEDIATE OLYMPIC GAMES 1906

The preparations for the Games

The Athens which hosted the Games of 1906¹⁶⁹ presented a picture of an improved and modernised capital. The street network had been remodelled: the streets themselves had been widened and new ones had been opened, while at the same time asphalting of the central streets was under way, in an attempt to rid the city of the scourge of dust. The water-supply network had been extended, while the cleanliness and rubbish-removal services had been perceptibly improved. There was more greenery in the squares and walks, a large part of the city now had electric street-lighting, and de luxe shops had sprung up in the main streets, appealing chiefly to the upper income brackets. It was also at this period that the first motor cars made their appearance. In 1906, when Georgios Theotokis was prime minister and the extremely vigorous Spyros Merkouris mayor, Athens was literally transformed; it was now a city of the Belle Époque. Moreover, apart from the great care that the Municipality took that the city should be presentable to foreign visitors, a prize was instituted for the winner of the marathon.¹⁷⁰

The Hellenic Olympic Committee, by systematic and methodical organisation and with the consuls and ambassadors abroad as intermediaries, succeeded in advertising the Games and attracting international interest. The Committee's strategy had as its ultimate purpose the creation of committees abroad to ensure the manning of the national teams and their dispatch to Greece. The international network of communications included countries from Russia to America, from Europe and the Balkans to South Africa. (We note, of course, that the setting up of such a committee was not an easy matter in all the countries that had been invited to take part. The political situation, economic difficulties, the absence of athletics associations, as well as the great distance did not favour the participation of some countries.¹⁷¹) In order to assist

169. As to the decision on the holding of the Intermediate Olympics and the broader significance of the institution, see Yannis Yannitsiotis, 'Η Μεσολυμπιάδα του 1906' [The Intermediate Olympics of 1906], in Christina Koulouri (ed.), *Αρχεία και ιστορία της Επιτροπής Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων* [Archives and history of the Hellenic Olympic Committee], Athens 2002, pp. 69-77.

170. Paraskevopoulos, *Οι δήμαρχοι των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, p. 397. On the changes in Athens, see also Vasilis Kardasis, *Οι Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες στην Αθήνα 1896-1906* [The Olympic Games in Athens 1896-1906], Athens s.a., pp. 194-200; *Embros* newspaper, 1 March 1906.

171. For example: *The Colombia Committee*: The Greek Consul in Bogota believed that it would be difficult to form a committee, because Greeks resident in the country were scattered in cities at a great distance from the capital. Furthermore, because of the recent revolution, the political conditions prevented the Colombian Government from concerning itself with the Intermediate Olympics (HOC Archive: K6-Φ10-E1, E2). *The Russia Committee*: The Ambassador in St Petersburg reported that the setting up of a committee would be exceptionally difficult because of political disorders and social unrest, even though the Emperor had undertaken an initiative in this connection (HOC Archive: K8-Φ8-E7, E8). *South Africa Committee*: The Consul in Cape Town considered that it would be very difficult for South African athletes to take part because of the great distance and the excessive travelling expenses (HOC Archive: K8-Φ14-E7).

these committees, the HOC financed them with various sums,¹⁷² depending upon the geographical distance of the countries from Greece, while at the same time it provided hospitality for 20 athletes from each national team. For the rest it arranged board and lodging at a daily cost of 7 Drs.¹⁷³

Furthermore, thanks to its activation, the HOC managed to reduce the cost of travel for athletes and visitors by obtaining reduced fares from Greek and foreign companies. The Greek steamship companies responded to its request for reduced fares for the athletes, their escorts, and the holders of Contributors' Cards,¹⁷⁴ which the Committee had issued at the price of 75 francs abroad and 75 drachmas in Greece.¹⁷⁵ For the athletes, the gymnasts and their escorts, the discount on the tickets was up to 50% of the original price, while for holders of the Contributors' Cards it was 20-25%.¹⁷⁶ In spite of the fact that the percentages of the discounts are recorded, the final fares are not.¹⁷⁷

Abroad, on the other hand, the steamship and railway companies did not always respond readily to the appeals of the HOC for the provision of reduced fares; those

Algeria Committee: The Greek community consisted of only a few people, of moderate economic and social standing. The great distance was also identified as a problem (HOC Archive: K7-Φ12-E1, E8). *Uruguay Committee:* The French Consul in Montevideo distributed copies of the programme for the Intermediate Olympics to the city's associations. However, the distance between Montevideo and Athens was great and the expense considerable. Furthermore, the political disturbances of the previous year had made things difficult (HOC Archive: K17-Φ20-E12). *Serbia Committee:* It was impossible to set up a committee because of the absence of gymnastics associations. Only one, for cycling, had been set up, and that recently (HOC Archive: K8-Φ9-E1, E2).

172. The HOC seems to have been partial towards certain committees. It covertly funded the Belgium Committee with an extra 1,500 francs (above the initial sum of 4,500), while the large sum of 10,000 francs that it gave to the Sweden Committee provoked reactions from the Germany Committee. HOC Archive: K18-Φ1-E20; K6-Φ8-E5; K15-Φ1-E12.a; K15-Φ2-E17, E21, E26.

173. HOC Archive: K17-Φ21-E1, E2.

174. The Games Contributors' Cards (*Bons Collectifs*) were issued in order to obtain for their holders a discount from the various transport companies in Greece and abroad, but also to supply them in good time with tickets for the Stadium. Moreover, only holders of these cards (which were printed in Greek and French) were entitled to attend the receptions and festivities. See *Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις* [Bulletin of the Olympic Games Committee in Athens], No. 1, 25 January 1906, pp. 32-4.

175. HOC Archive: K21-Φ7-E4.

176. Only the management of the P. Pantoleon Eastern Steamship Company in Smyrna granted those taking part in the Games and the card-holders the same discount of 50%. The steamship companies N. M. Athanasoulis, John MacDowall & Barbour Hellenic Steamship Company, New Hellenic Steamship Company, and Panhellenic Steamship Company gave a discount of 50% for the athletes, gymnasts and their escorts, and 25% for the holders of the Games Contributors' Cards. The Diakakis Hellenic Steamship Company offered fares reduced by 50% for the athletes and 20% for cardholders. Comparable was the policy of the Greek railway companies: the Piraeus-Attica-Peloponnese Railways, the Northwestern Greece Railways, the Thessaly Railways, and the Hellenic Railways. The discounts that they gave were similar to those of the steamship companies, with small deviations. See *Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις*, No. 1, *op. cit.*, pp. 30, 32.

177. Only the prices of the French Sea Ferries Company for the Smyrna-Athens service are given. They range from 12 to 40 francs, with or without food and depending upon the class (the prices for return tickets range from 20 to 70 francs). See *Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις*, No. 2, 15 February 1906, p. 52.

discounts that were made were achieved through the persistence of the Committee and the unswerving support of the Greek consulates.¹⁷⁸ The British railway companies, the management of the state railways of the Grand Duchy of Baden in Karlsruhe, the Western and Eastern railway companies of France, the management of the Spanish railways, the Hungarian railway company,¹⁷⁹ and the Danish Ministry of Commerce gave discounts, while some of them stipulated special terms in connection with the number of athletes who would be travelling.¹⁸⁰

Apart from the action taken by the HOC abroad to ensure the presence of athletes and visitors, relying upon the experience gained in 1896 it also set up nine sub-committees to share the burden of organisation at home. Three of these were to concern themselves with matters to do with visitors: the Archaeological Committee, the Events Committee, and the Reception and Accommodation Committee.¹⁸¹

The setting up of the Archaeological Committee indicated the importance that was attached to the highlighting of the sites and monuments, in an attempt to link the Games with their classical past and to draw attention to culture as a source of national wealth within the framework of the development of tourism.¹⁸² For this reason, members of foreign schools of archaeology, professors of archaeology from the National University and inspectors of antiquities were recruited to be official guides for the distinguished guests at the archaeological sites and museums. For the foreign athletes, the foreign representatives, and the relatives of the athletes, the Reception and Accommodation Committee announced the engagement of 100-150 polyglot guides, stating a preference for university students.¹⁸³ At the same time, in collaboration with the travel agencies, it made possible organised academic and cultural visits to the main archaeological and historical parts of Greece. The two travel agencies that undertook the organisation of these trips were the International Travel Agency of George Livert,¹⁸⁴

178. HOC Archive: K6-Φ6-E2, E2.1, E8; K18-Φ7-E1; K10-Φ7-E1; K10-Φ10-E15, E18, E23, E25, E28; K10-Φ13-E1, E2.

179. Fares of Hungarian Railways from Budapest to Thessaloniki: First Class cost 215 francs and Second 153. HOC Archive: K14-Φ9-E5.

180. See HOC, *Οδηγός των Αθηνών* [Guide to Athens], Athens 1906, p. 33.

181. P. S. Savvidis, *Λεύκωμα των εν Αθήναις Β' διεθνών Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων 1906* [Album of the 2nd international Olympic Games in Athens 1906], Athens 1907, p. 12.

182. The president of the Archaeological Committee was Spyridon Lambros, and its members were Iakovos Dragatsis, P. Kavvadias, N. G. Politis, I. Svoronos, L. Skias, V. Staïs, G. Sotiriadis, C. Tsountas, D. Philios. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

183. HOC Archive: K9-Φ17-E11, E12. See also *Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις*, No. 2, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-5; *Acropolis* newspaper, 13 March 1906.

184. The Livert agency organised two archaeological ‘expeditions’ after the end of the Games, on 20-22 and 23-25 April, to Eleusis, Corinth, Olympia, and Patras; the cost was 90 francs for First Class, and 75 for Second. Cardholders had a discount of 20%. On reaching Patras, participants were able to embark on the Italian companies’ steamships with Brindisi as their destination (*Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις*, No. 3, *op. cit.*, 15 March 1906, pp. 65-8). Apart from these excursions, this agency chartered the steamship *Mykali* for the boating events. After the Games, a historical excursion ‘to visit the straits of Salamis and the glorious masterpiece of the Temple of Aphaea on the island of Aegina’ took place. The total cost was 10 Drs (*Chronos* newspaper, 10 April 1906; HOC Archive: K9-Φ11-E6).

and that of the Gholman Brothers.¹⁸⁵ Similar trips were organised by the Excursions Club.¹⁸⁶

The Events Committee, in collaboration with the municipal authorities, undertook, as in 1896, the task of highlighting the modern city through cultural happenings, events, torchlight processions, festivals, receptions, etc. The Reception and Accommodation Committee undertook the reception of the foreign athletes and visitors and the organisation of their accommodation.¹⁸⁷ At the same time, the HOC also set up reception committees for the athletes at Patras and Corfu.¹⁸⁸

Measures were also taken to see that the foreigners were well served by public transport and communications. The Piraeus-Athens-Peloponnese Railways offered reduced fares, to be in force from 4 to 16 April.¹⁸⁹ Fares for carriages varied according to the route, inside and outside the city: they started out from 1.25 Drs and reached 20 Drs (the price of a full day's hire).¹⁹⁰ The carriages were carefully groomed and bedecked with little flags. The lists of routes and cab fares, in French, were distributed to all the hotels, for the avoidance of any 'misunderstandings'.¹⁹¹ The fares of the horse-drawn trams ranged from 0.10 to 0.35 Drs, and those of the trams from 0.20 to 0.55, depending upon the journey.¹⁹² In addition, reductions were made in postage and telegraph charges.¹⁹³ Finally, particular attention was paid to the Piraeus customs house; here there were interventions in the premises and its operations were re-

185. The Gholman agency included in its programme Salamis, Aegina, Epidaurus, Tiryns, Mycenae, Corinth and Acrocorinth, Delphi, Olympia, and Patras (20-26 April). The participants, whose guides were distinguished archaeologists, were accommodated mainly on the steamship that brought them, because of the shortage of adequate hotel infrastructure in the various areas. The excursion cost 375 francs per person, while cardholders had a discount of 12% (*Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις*, No. 3, *op. cit.*, p. 66-8).

186. The first outing, of a single day, included Thebes and Chaeronea and used a special train on the Piraeus-Larisa railway, hired for the Club. The two-hour stop at Thebes was accompanied by a lecture by the inspector of antiquities G. Sotiriadis. The second outing had Delos and Knossos as its destinations and lasted from 21 to 24 April. On Delos, the inspector of antiquities Stavropoulos was present, together with members of the French School of Archaeology, while at Iraklion and Knossos the guide was Iosiph Hatzidakis, director of the Iraklion Museum (*Δελτίον της Επιτροπής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων εν Αθήναις*, No. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 35). The cost of joining the expedition ranged from 25 to 60 Drs, with a 25% reduction for cardholders.

187. In order to deal with the very great demand for accommodation in Athens, a list of empty houses and rooms that would be available for renting was drawn up. See P. S. Savvidis, *Αείχαμα*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

188. *Embros* newspaper, 15 March 1906.

189. HOC, *Οδηγός των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, p. 67; *Chronos* newspaper, 6 April 1906.

190. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-23. See also *Embros* newspaper, 9 April 1906; *Asty* newspaper, 19 April 1906; *Skrip* newspaper, 8 April 1896.

191. *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 19 March 1906.

192. HOC, *Οδηγός των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

193. For further details as to these charges, see HOC, *Οδηγός των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9. See also *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 2 April 1906, and *Embros* newspaper, 26 March 1906. On the development of the state postal and telegraph services, see Constantinos P. Skokos, *Εθνικόν Ημερολόγιον. Χρονογραφικόν, φιλολογικόν και γελοιογραφικόν του έτους 1906* [National Almanac. Chronicles, literature, cartoons for the year 1906], Athens 1906, pp. 177-80.

organised following a circular from the Ministry of Finance, which called for every assistance to be given to the foreign athletes and visitors.¹⁹⁴

To assist and inform visitors, the HOC issued its bilingual (Greek and French) *Oδηγός των Αθηνών* [Guide to Athens], which provided information on the transport stations and companies, hotels, museums, educational institutions, travel agencies, pharmacies, embassies, coffee-shops, etc. Furthermore, it included a summary history of Athens and the Olympic Games, together with general information about Greece (climatic conditions, agriculture, commerce, stockbreeding, industry, spas, etc.).¹⁹⁵

The publication of the HOC's guide was complemented by the issuing of the *Oδηγός των ξένων* [Guide for foreigners] (by the Athens Publishing Society, only in Greek), which contained detailed information on the archaeological monuments of Athens and Attica, accompanied by black-and-white illustrations, on the museums, the educational and artistic institutions, and the public services establishments; it also dealt with the countryside round about. In the second part, information was supplied on the antiquities of the provinces, while the third dealt with the Olympic Games (programme of events and celebrations, 24-hour guide, tables of world records, information on carriages and boats).¹⁹⁶

The accommodation of the visitors was taken care of by the existing hotels, but also by 5,000 rented rooms – a tactic that had also been followed in 1896.¹⁹⁷ In the *Oδηγός των Αθηνών*, 34 hotels are listed; clearly not all the city's hotels are included, only the better known and more important, and chiefly those in the city centre.¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the hotels of the city's environs (Kiphisia, Neo and Palaio Phaliro, with their handsome villas) are also presented as being particularly attractive. Regular public transport by tram and railway made staying at these feasible.¹⁹⁹ The price of a room with board at hotels in the top category (such as the Grande Bretagne and the Anglia) was 30 francs a day; at other good hotels, it was 20.²⁰⁰

194. The passengers' waiting room was extended, while, by transferring the harbour authorities and the health authorities to the rear of the customs house, a room for postal cheques was created. The checkpoints were smartened up and the interiors and warehouses were extended. *Asty* newspaper, 21 February 1906. See also *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 2 April 1906, and *Skrip* newspaper, 7 March 1906. On the cost of transfer and transport at the harbour, see HOC, *Oδηγός των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, p. 66. See also *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 20 March 1906; *Embros* newspaper, 22 March 1906; *Skrip* newspaper, 22 March 1906.

195. HOC Archive: K21-Φ8-E1; K22-Φ15-E7.

196. *Oδηγός των ξένων. Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες 1906* [Guide for foreigners. Olympic Games 1906], Athens 1906. 'Those travelling in Europe know very well how valuable an *indicateur*, a *guide*, an *itinéraire* – booklets with which stations, bookshops, tobacconists and other centres are full – are. One such guide – elegant, easy to use, and complete – will be provided in a little while, for the first time for the Greek public, by the "Athens Publishing Society": *Eikonographimeni* magazine, No. 17, March 1906, p. 80.'

197. *Acropolis* newspaper, 13 March 1906.

198. HOC, *Oδηγός των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

199. *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 20 March 1906.

200. HOC Archive: K17-Φ11-E8. The restaurants in Stadiou St and Omonia Square had announced that they would keep their prices stable, and so the stay of the foreigners would be anything but expensive (see *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 18 March 1906). According to the press, however, in the end the reality was different: a

A considerable number of advertisements appeared in the press offering houses for rent. Of these, some came from estate agents' offices, within the more general framework of the services that they offered, and others from private individuals.²⁰¹ We quote here one in which a house in the city is described: 'Very rare opportunity: For Greeks coming to Athens from abroad for the Olympic Games, house in a very central position, most richly furnished with gas, bathroom, with five beds, with abundant kitchen utensils, with salon and sitting-room, with piano, dining-room with side-board, etc. To let from 1 April of the current year to 10 May of the current year, as the householder is departing for the West. Information from us'.²⁰² Another such advertisement gives electric lighting as an added convenience.²⁰³ In arriving at a rent, various factors, such as knowledge of foreign languages on the part of the landlords, public transport services, the existence of furniture and a bathroom, and the provision of breakfast, converged. The figure ranged from 2 to 20 Drs per day.²⁰⁴

The prices at the hotels, in spite of the re-assuring announcements and asseverations of the owners, were arrived at by the logic of profit which such a major event in a city permits: 'There can be no doubt that the Athenians lost their heads in the face of the great flood of visitors pouring into their city. Every comfortable room in Athens and the vicinity was booked for months in advance, and the most exorbitant prices were demanded for the most miserable of quarters. [...] The restaurants in many cases doubled their prices, and even then their facilities proved quite inadequate to feed the hungry multitude. As a matter of fact, Athens was quite unprepared to receive so great a number of visitors, and obtained, in consequence, an object lesson [...].'²⁰⁵

According to the press of the day, the capital was regarded as particularly expensive when compared with Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania. Meat cost 0.50 Drs per *oka*, bread 0.20-0.25 Drs, cheese one drachma, an egg 0.05 Drs, butter 2.5-3 Drs, a chicken one drachma. In those countries, as in Turkey, it was possible to buy with 5 Drs two *okas* of meat, twenty eggs, four loaves of bread, two *okas* of beans, and a chicken. To buy those products in Athens would have cost 13 Drs! In Vienna, an *oka* of potatoes cost 0.10 Drs; in Athens the price was 0.40 Drs. A comparative analysis of the prices of meat, potatoes, corn, butter, and poultry in Paris and Athens, for the month of March, showed Athens again to be more expensive, as did a comparison of the prices of cheese with those of the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Therefore, despite measures taken to control the pricing of foodstuffs and accom-

good Athenian hotel asked 130 Drs a day for a bed and food; the customer in question managed to find accommodation elsewhere at 50 Drs a day. Overpricing was even observed in the case of tickets for the Games: 15 Drs were asked for a ticket worth 4 Drs!

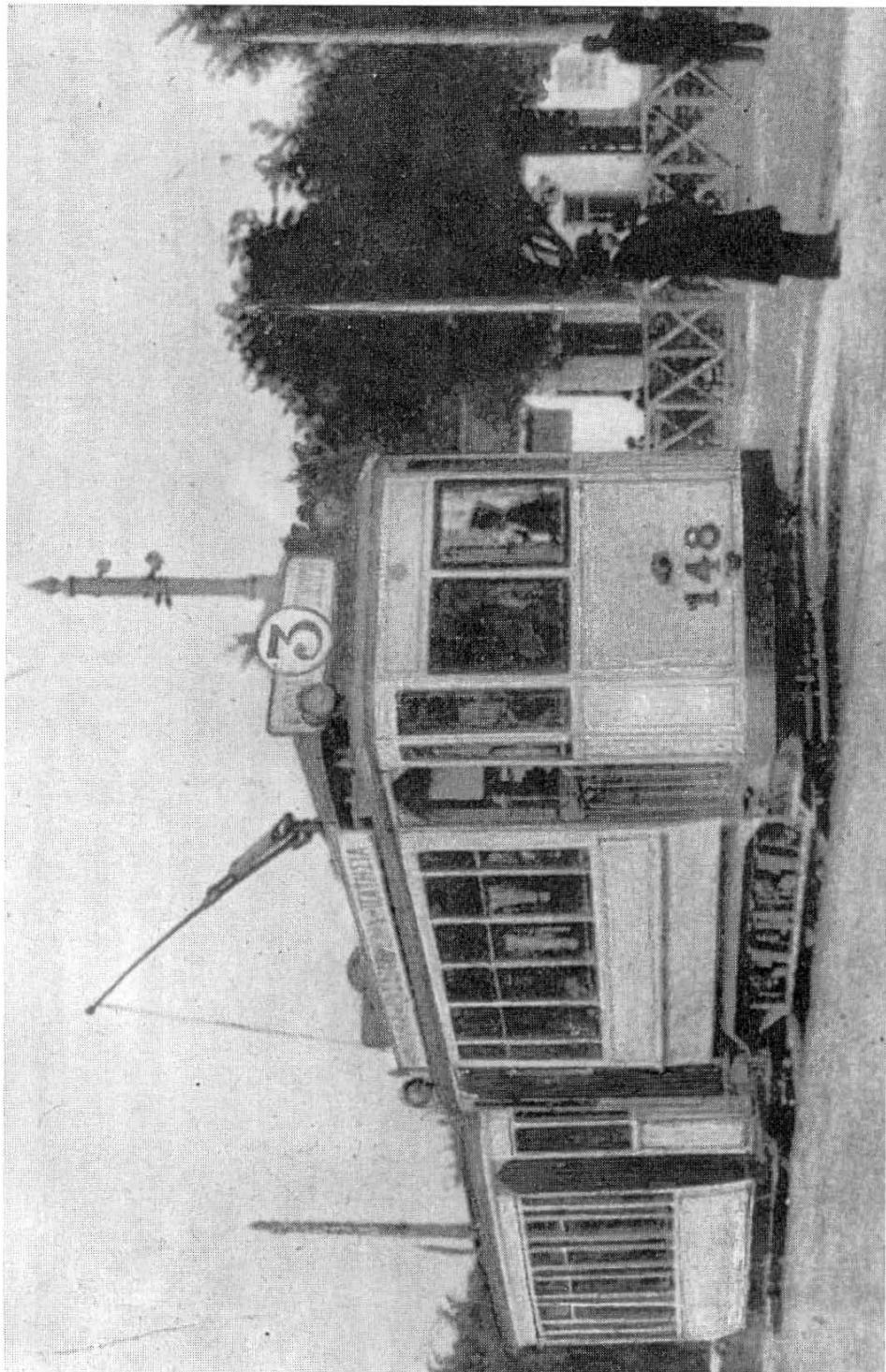
201. *Chronos* newspaper, 6 April 1906, 7 April 1906; *Embros* newspaper, 2 April 1906; *Asty* newspaper, 12 April 1906. HOC Archive: K22-Φ1-E19; K22-Φ14-E6.

202. *Embros* newspaper, 2 March 1906.

203. *Acropolis* newspaper, 10 April 1906.

204. *Acropolis* newspaper, 2 April 1906.

205. E. Alexander Powell, 'The Olympian Games of 1906', *The Badminton Magazine* 131/22 (June 1906), p. 674.



The electric tram on the Patissia - Neo Phalirou route in 1910.
[C. Biris, *Al Aθήναι από τον 19ον εις τον 20όν αιώνα*, Athens 1996, p. 253]

modation in order to curb arbitrariness,²⁰⁶ these did not prove effective – just as had been the case with the Olympics of 1896.

Athletes and visitors

Of the total of 903 athletes who took part in the Mid-Olympiad, 564 were foreigners, drawn from 18 countries.²⁰⁷ For purposes of comparison, the figures for the three previous Olympiads are as follows: in 1896, 241 athletes took part,²⁰⁸ of whom 81 were foreigners, from 13 countries; in 1900, there were 1,319 athletes from 22 countries, of whom 880 were French; in 1904, 605 athletes from 11 countries took part, of whom 525 were American.²⁰⁹

The HOC decided that a large number of the athletes would be accommodated in the Zappeion Palace, in order to avoid the heavy cost of their staying in hotels.²¹⁰ It signed a contract with the management of the Palace Hotel for the laying out of 200 small rooms in the large halls of the Zappeion – on the British system of cubicles, which, in similar cases, is used for the re-arrangement of public buildings. The task of constructing this accommodation was undertaken by two contractors for 20,000 Drs, following an agreement with the Committee.²¹¹ Apart from the cubicles, the Zappeion was also altered to provide the athletes with premises for a restaurant, common room, and post office (which functioned throughout the Games and had a special frank with the words ‘Zappeion-Athens’).²¹² The total number of athletes who stayed at the Zappeion did not exceed 400. The rest stayed at the city’s hotels, with which the Special Reception Committee signed contracts that included board.²¹³

206. Arbitrariness always gives rise to problems, as in this instance, which was observed as a result of it: ‘We saw on the last arrival of the British fleet a British officer quarrelling with a coffee-shop employee over the very idea that the waiter had taken ten cents too much from him! This is the point which the distrust of the foreigners has reached, wherever they go’ (*Asty* newspaper, 10 January 1906).

207. Numbers of those taking part by nationality: America: 37, Australia: 4, Austria: 31, Belgium: 15, Bohemia: 13, Britain: 47, Canada: 3, Denmark: 65, Egypt: 1, Finland: 4, France: 58, Germany: 47, Greece: 338, Hungary: 35, Italy: 82, Netherlands: 16, Norway: 32, Smyrna: 1, Sweden: 66, Switzerland: 8 (from the *Δελτίον της Επιτοστής των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων*, No. 3, *op. cit.*, p. 177).

208. According to K. Georgiadis, the total number of Greek athletes taking part remains unsettled, since we do not know the exact number of those who took part in the shooting. See Georgiadis, ‘Η αναβίωση των σύγχρονων Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων’, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

209. The numbers of athletes taking part are given by Otto Szymczek, in Nikolaos Yalouris (general supervision), *H ιστορία των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων* [The history of the Olympic Games], Athens 1976, pp. 310, 316.

210. HOC Archive: K5-Φ3-E25.

211. *Asty* newspaper, 4 April 1906; *Embos* newspaper, 9 March 1906, 25 March 1906; *Skrip* newspaper, 9 March 1906.

212. *Embos* newspaper, 16 March 1906.

213. HOC Archive: K21-Φ5-E3.

Over and above the large numbers of athletes taking part, the attendance of foreign visitors, Greeks from abroad, and people from the provinces was also satisfactory:²¹⁴ ‘the streets are full of new figures. The provinces, the East, Europe, America, Egypt, Australia send us batches’.²¹⁵

Certainly, for the city of Athens and its citizens, the feeling was not unprecedented, since they had already had the experience of 1896. They knew what to expect from the host of visitors, they knew what they would experience in the Stadium on the days of the Games, and, naturally, they hoped to re-encounter acquaintances from 1896. This did not prevent certain amusing confusions, such as that cited by a columnist of the time: ‘The day before yesterday, in a restaurant in Stadiou St, I heard someone say to the person sitting next to him, a gentleman with no moustache, eating at a nearby table: “That’s Connolly. Connolly!” From table to table word was spread that the close-shaved gentleman was the Olympic victor Connolly, and all eyes turned upon him – which seemed to surprise him [...].’²¹⁶

What, however, was of vital importance for the city was the expectation of profit from so major an event. Because of the Games, the press bristled with advertisements that aimed at increasing sales of consumer goods. These numerous notices could be divided into two categories: in the first, the Games are used as a means of promoting products that are unrelated to them;²¹⁷ in the second, the advertisements are addressed to foreigners.²¹⁸

The inflow of foreign visitors was an economic factor of great importance, and this is a fact that cannot be overlooked. According to the *Ermis* newspaper, if the stay of

214. According to Manitakis, 5,000 foreigners and 15,000 Greeks from abroad and from the Greek provinces visited Athens. See Pavlos Manitakis, *100 χρόνια νεοελληνικού αθλητισμού 1830-1930* [A hundred years of modern Greek sport 1830-1930], Athens 1962, p. 169. The *Acropolis* newspaper (8 April 1906) gives 2,500-3,000 foreigners and around 10,000 Greeks from abroad. The *Embros* newspaper (7 April 1906) states that there were more than 10,000 foreigners. When the Games ended, *Acropolis* (26 April 1906) reverted to the topic, and, in spite of what had been said about 45,000 or 65,000 visitors, gives approximately 25,000, a figure arrived at as follows: ‘Those coming from Europe do not exceed 4,000, those from the Greek East, together with the doctors on the occasion of the Panhellenic Conference [...] cannot be more than 10,000. It is very difficult to calculate those coming from the provinces, because most of these stayed at the homes of relatives. But taking into account the numbers that the Peloponnese railway and the steamship companies can convey, we can raise this number to above 10,000’.

215. *Asty* newspaper, 4 April 1906.

216. *Embros* newspaper, 26 March 1906.

217. ‘Olympic Games – Take advantage of the occasion: The Athens Therapeutic Institute [...] undertakes the cure of enterocoele by a new method and without surgery. On the occasion of the Olympic Games, it hereby makes it known that it receives visits and gives advice free each day from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.’. See *Acropolis* newspaper, 7 April 1906. ‘The foreigners will certainly flee during the Olympic Games, pursued by armies of bugs, cockroaches and fleas if hoteliers and other householders do not hasten to supply themselves with the unique bug-killer that is sold at the “Panas” pharmacy, 82 Aeolou St, for 1.20 per bottle. For large quantities, appropriate discount’. See *Acropolis* newspaper, 20 March 1906.

218. ‘For foreigners: Do not buy Greek silks before visiting the Malafos and Moschos establishment, No. 87 Ermou St [...] For the benefit of foreigners we have fixed prices 50% less than other weaving mills [...] Benefit from the opportunity. Telephone number: 473’. *Chronos* newspaper, 16 April 1906.

the visitors was estimated at 20 days and their accommodation expenses at 500 Drs, the sum of the inflow of money would have been by no means negligible.²¹⁹

The expectation of the arrival of the foreign guests, moreover, coincided with the need for a positive picture of Greece to be promoted after the defeatism and pessimism that had prevailed as a result of the defeat of 1897. The *Asty* newspaper comments: ‘All of us without exception are smartening ourselves up for the foreigners to see us [...]. We imagine that all of us are going to stand in military formation while the foreigners inspect us, searching us to see whether we have a button missing. And so we are polishing feverishly, like a company soldier on a Saturday. If we discover a white hair in our beard, we dye it so that the foreigners will not see it. But I have a white hair, which I have left white. Because I believe that the foreigners do not see at all, or they see very little [...]’.²²⁰

On the occasion of the holding of the Games, but also because of the relations between their houses, the royal couple of Great Britain, Edward and Alexandra, were in Athens in 1906. They arrived in Corfu on 29 March, in the yacht *Albert Victoria* (escorted by two cruisers and a destroyer), and on 4 April moved on to Athens.²²¹ The municipalities of Athens and Piraeus prepared feverishly for their reception. The decoration of the cities was impressive, while policing measures were taken and there was a military detail at the Omonia station.²²² The royal couple was accompanied by the Prince and Princess of Wales.²²³ Their presence in the Stadium on the day of the opening of the Games lent prestige to the whole event and drew a positive response from public opinion. The royal guests left Greece on 12 April, having first visited ancient Olympia.²²⁴

Among the other ‘VIPs’ were the representatives of the states taking part in the Games, ministers, office-holders, the master of ceremonies of the Emperor Wilhelm, etc. The rumours that the German Emperor, whose presence would have lent special splendour to the event, would attend proved unfounded. Likewise without foundation was information to the effect that the Duke and Duchess of Aosta would attend as representatives of the King of Italy. The visit of the Japanese General Kuroki with his

219. *Ermis* newspaper, 9 April 1906. The newspaper, testifying to the ‘aspect of self-interest’ in connection with the Games, calculated an inflow of 25 million gold francs, on the basis of the estimate that there would be 50,000 visitors to Athens. However, this reasoning is based on a sense of expectation rather than on reality, since ‘according to the most generous of estimates, the upper limit of arrivals cannot be in excess of 25,000’. See *Acropolis* newspaper, 26 April 1906.

220. *Asty* newspaper, 19 March 1906.

221. *Asty* newspaper, 30 March 1906.

222. *Asty* newspaper, 4 April 1906; see also *Embros* newspaper, 22 March 1906.

223. *Embros* newspaper, 26 March 1906; *Asty*, 13 April 1906.

224. For further information on the stay of the royal guests in Greece, see *Chronos* newspaper, 6 April 1906, 7 April 1906, 10 April 1906, 12 April 1906, 13 April 1906; *Asty* newspaper, 12 April 1906. On the political flavour given to the visit of the English King, see *Chronos* newspaper, 5 April 1906; *Embros* newspaper, 12 March 1906; *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 4 April 1906; *O Stratos* newspaper, 29 April 1906.

officers was considered significant by the press. Prince George, High Commissioner of Crete, was also among those attending.²²⁵

Furthermore the newspapers mentioned that among the visitors were foreign press correspondents, the Italian writer Alessandro Lalia-Paterno, and various travellers coming from Asia Minor, where they had been touring.

From Egypt, 2,500 members of the Greek community arrived on board the steamships *Ismailia* (which remained at Piraeus for the duration of the Games), *Prince Abbas*, and *Stephanos Streit*. More than 1,000 Greeks of Constantinople and Smyrna with their athletes arrived with the Khedive's steamship *El-Kaïra*, the Russian *Queen Olga*, the Greek *Melpomene*, and the Italian *Serbia*.²²⁶

The steamship *Eirini* (belonging to the Dimokas company) brought from Cyprus 180 Greek Cypriots and four athletes of the 'Zenon' Gymnastics Association, and the *Daphne* 80 Cretans. The *Hera* (of the John McDowal company) and the *Mykali* brought some 400 Greeks, athletes, and members of the Musical Association of Monastiri; they received a warm welcome at Piraeus, and in the evening of the same day a reception was given in their honour on the premises of the Archaeological Society.²²⁷

The good-quality hotels of Athens accommodated the guests 'of distinction' and well-to-do travellers. From the list of names of guests, provided chiefly by the *Ai Athinai* newspaper, it emerges that most of them were travelling *en famille*. Nevertheless, the list of visitors also includes married and single ladies on their own. Staying at the Grande Bretagne Hotel were the families of princes, generals, rich Greeks from Egypt and Trieste, duchesses, holders of high office, the members of the IOC,²²⁸ and wealthy travellers from America and various parts of Europe. The Anglia Hotel accommodated considerable numbers of Greeks from abroad, the Sullivan family, and visitors chiefly from America and Germany. The family of Baron de Casleiger of Austria, Charlemagne Tower, the United States Ambassador in Berlin, and Greeks from abroad were among those staying at the Palace Hotel, while foreign athletes and visitors, together with Greeks from abroad, stayed at the Anglia, the Splendid, the Minerva, the Vasilikon, the Aftokratorikon, the New York, the Tourist Palace, the St George, the Victoria, the Athens, and the Bangeion.

225. *Ai Athinai* newspaper, 1 April 1906; *Embros* newspaper, 13 March 1906, 27 March 1906; *Acropolis* newspaper, 4 April 1906, 20 April 1906.

226. *Chronos* newspaper, 6 April 1906, 7 April 1906; *Acropolis* newspaper, 8 April 1906.

227. *Chronos* newspaper, 7 April 1906; *Asty* newspaper, 7 April 1906.

228. In spite of the objections of Coubertin to the holding of the 'Second International Olympic Games in Athens' (as they were officially termed), eight members of the IOC attended: Count Eugenio Brunetta d'Usseaux (Italy), Count von Assebourg and W. Gebhardt (Germany), Viktor Balck and Count Carl Clarence von Rosen (Sweden), Baron Frederik Willem van Tuyll van Serooskerken (Netherlands), J. Guth (Bohemia), and, of course, Count A. Merkatis (Greece).

Athletics contests and celebrations

The Games began on 9 April with a spectacular inauguration ceremony.²²⁹ The Greek capital was like a little world of its own, and the Stadium like a vast magnet, which attracted some 75,000 spectators.²³⁰ The magic of the spectacle was recorded in the memory of the foreign visitors as a unique ingredient of a modern event, which, however, they did not regard as being reminiscent of the Games of antiquity.²³¹ An interesting feature of the Games was for them the ‘national spectators’, who concentrated greatly on the victory of their athletes; this feeling, in conjunction with the beauty of the Stadium’s surroundings virtually enthralled them.²³²

Of all the athletics contests, that which attracted the greatest interest – as it had in 1896 – was the marathon. On that day, a host of people went to the Stadium, in expectation of the great victory.²³³ The athlete in whom the Greeks had reposed their hopes for a victory comparable with that of Louis was A. Koutoulakis from Gortynia, ‘the model of a true runner’, aged 22, a soldier in the Engineers and a former newspaper-vendor. The victor, however, was, in fact, the Canadian William J. Sherring, ‘a result contrary to Greek wishes’.²³⁴

The Canadians celebrated their victory in the evening by carrying their athlete about in Stadiou St. A celebration was also organised by the Swedes for their own athlete, who came second in the marathon.²³⁵ The feeling of expectation of a Greek victory was vindicated by Dimitrios Tofalos, when, in the packed Stadium, he beat the Austrian Joseph Steinbach in the weightlifting ‘with both hands’. Tofalos became a national hero, as Louis had in 1896, because he symbolised Greek superiority over other nations.²³⁶ A comment on the weightlifting was provided in satirical verse:

229. At the opening ceremony, the Olympic anthem of 1896 was heard, since it was the wish of the HOC to stress that the Intermediate Olympics was the continuation of the Olympic Games. HOC Archive: K7-Φ10-E17.

230. Powell, ‘The Olympian Games of 1906’, *op. cit.*, p. 667.

231. ‘To talk of the new Olympian Games as a “revival” of the old is a mockery; but as a modern *show* they were stupendous and unique’. See A. E. Johnson, ‘The Olympian Games’, *Fry’s Magazine* 5 (1906), p. 318.

232. R. B. Haland, ‘Official Sanction’, *Fry’s Magazine* 5 (1906), p. 102.

233. Typical of the great importance attached to this event is the title of an article in the *Asty* newspaper (12 April 1906): ‘The whole of Europe waits in suspense for the marathon’. Balck analysed the military significance of the race, linking it with the resilience of infantrymen.

234. *Asty* newspaper, 19 April 1906. The Greek lack of success was attributed to the athlete’s ‘overeating’ a little before the race. The victory of the Canadian marathon-runner inspired Zacharias Papantoniou, who dedicated an ode to him: ‘Your victory tells that from the sweet triumph of harmonious bodies and of adroit strength, more glorious is the bitter triumph, the fatal, the terrible. The laurel on your head blooms with asphodel. The light on your brow throws out a flame of subterranean fire. Hail! You have reminded us that the supreme of beautiful things is Tragic Beauty’: K. Skokos, *Εθνικόν ημερολόγιον ... του έτους 1907*, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-4.

235. *Chronos* newspaper, 19 April 1906.

236. Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, p. 115. Particular importance was also attached to the competition between Georgantas and M. J. Sheridan. Georgantas lost to the other athlete in the discus, but defeated him in

*At that time
There was a weightlifting event,
And in the midst of the fuss,
Someone came from Austria
To impress us...*

*He was fiercely wound up
And fearfully forceful
But lacked facility
And wanted with his belly
To play the heavyweight for us...*

*In the end he was put off,
And seeing the weights of Tofalos
With a single glance,
Fled from the Stadium
Slapping his head.²³⁷*

The days rolled by in Athens not only with athletic contests, but also with receptions, festivals, torchlight processions, theatrical performances, visits to the archaeological museums and the sights of the city, as well as with celebrations in the evenings among athletes and ordinary people alike. As recorded in one of the many accounts appearing in the press, the spectacle was not only confined to the Stadium: ‘The Belgians wished to appear yesterday particularly attentive to the daughters of Athens and especially *galants*’. At about ten in the evening, gathering in Syntagma Square, ‘they bought whole baskets of flowers and began to offer them to all the Athenian ladies whom they found in their path. Thus they distributed flowers to the ladies sitting in the Zacharatos coffee-house, in the other coffee-shops of Syntagma, in the confectioners, etc. [...] Hundreds of Athens’ daughters returned [...] to their homes laden with flowers given by the young Belgian athletes. The party was led by a very merry young Belgian, who hung bread-rings on his walking-stick and pretended to be a *koulouri*-seller, crying out in Greek “*Kouloughia... poghtokalia*” [...]. And the crowd applauded’.²³⁸

The curtain fell on 20 April. The closing ceremony ended with the awarding of prizes to the victors and was accompanied by a farewell reception for the athletes in the Zappeion. The next day, the city gradually started to empty. In the places from which the athletes took their leave, there was a strong emotional charge as people gave expression to their enthusiasm and sentiments – and their good wishes for the next meeting in 1910.²³⁹

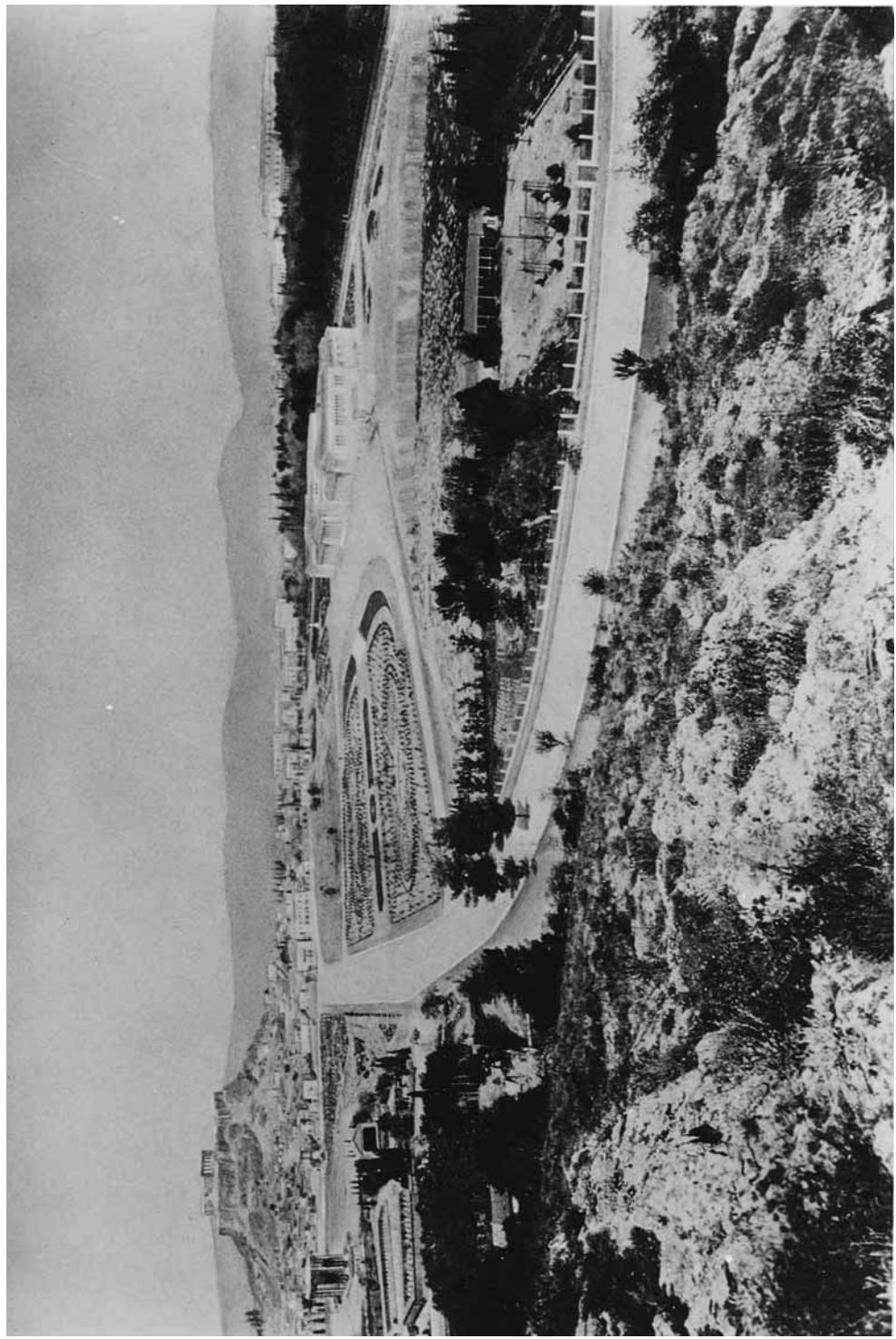
The efforts of the leadership of the Greek athletics world in order to ensure that the Games were permanently held in Athens gradually slackened. The Olympic Games continued on their appointed course at the time and in the way determined by the IOC, leaving little Greece – which was preoccupied with military operations for its national survival – out of the game of lodging a permanent claim.

the shot putting. ‘The Greek *palikari*, striving with somebody like Sheridan, was victorious in the shot putting. A contest, that is, *par excellence* ancient. But also *par excellence* modern Greek, because agricultural Hellas has no more popular contest than putting the shot.’ See *Asty* newspaper, 15 April 1906.

237. *Asty* newspaper, 14 April 1906.

238. *Asty* newspaper, 15 April 1906.

239. Powell, ‘The Olympian Games of 1906’, *op. cit.*, p. 680.



The Zappeion Building, from the Areopagus hill (1896). [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.23]

Urban space and national self-presentation

YANNIS YANNITSIOTIS

The cities holding the Olympic Games, apart from being places for the hosting of athletics gatherings, are at the same time fields in which economic interests, political planning and national ideological strategies interweave. The post-war period and particularly the last twenty years have been marked by co-ordinated political practices of intervention in the cities hosting the Olympiads with obvious objectives of improving their infrastructures at sports centres, hotels and traffic arteries. The 'big event' is now organised and regulated by massive multinational companies in collaboration or in parallel with national and local leaderships, particularly since the Olympiad of 1984 in Los Angeles, when, for the first time, the Games brought in high profits on the companies' investments. Governments and the local authorities 'discovered' in their turn that undertaking the holding of the Games can be a means – productive from every point of view – of strengthening the economic life of their countries and the cities, and of boosting their prestige. The upsurge of the phenomenon of tourism in the post-war world inscribed, from a certain point on, the Olympic Games in its sphere of influence and became a substantive incentive for the mobilisation of the cities themselves in order to obtain the greatest possible benefit through the systematic organisation of the Games and the provision of services to visitors.¹ The highlighting of the national and local past as a tourist good, the pondering of the image being exported in connection with the role and the formative bounds of national tradition in the devising of the collective self, the ambition to invest athletic activities with a special meaning interwoven with the place in which they are held – and, consequently, to distinguish them from previous Olympiads –, and, finally, the tensions and ideological conflicts between the different agencies involved in this process of accomplishment of meaning are often transformed into major fields in the imparting of meaning to the Games themselves.²

1. On the economic dimension of the Games and their correlation with the development of tourism in the cities, and for the related policies of the cities that have held Olympiads, see Christopher M. Law, *Urban Tourism. Attracting Visitors to Large Cities*, Mansell, London 1993, pp. 88-107.

2. On this specific issue see Arne Martin Klausen (ed.), *Olympic Games as Performance and Public Event. The Case of the XVII Winter Olympic Games in Norway*, Berghahn Books, New York/London, and particularly *idem*, 'Norwegian culture and olympism: Confrontations and adaptation', pp. 27-48; *ibid.*, Roel Puijk,

The host cities have always attracted thousands of foreign visitors on the occasion of the Games, while the Olympiads have been seen by the governments as the ideal moment for them to negotiate the image of the country abroad through careful contrivance of their historical past. The Nazi Olympiad, by turning Berlin into a place of innumerable forms of symbolism of German-ness and by holding imposing ceremonies, not only dispelled the misgivings and reservations of many leading figures in the world of athleticism about the repellent face of the regime, but, in addition, impressed the thousands of visitors.³ The Barcelona Olympiad was marked by the ‘battle of the flag’. The attempt to ‘catalanise’ the Olympic Games of 1992 at the expense of the Spanish central administration was carried out, *inter alia*, through the Catalan flag being dominant throughout the whole of the city of Barcelona. Its ubiquitous presence at various parts of the city – from the most central and much-frequented to the most remote districts – either on its own or together with other flags, such as that of the city of Barcelona, that of the Olympic Games, and sometimes that of Spain, imprinted the various expressions of the local political identity, from the extreme right-wing nationalism to the moderate socialist version of autonomy. At the same time, however, the practice of hanging the flags structured the various versions of the Catalan identity and included the dimension of competition between its differing meanings.⁴

The purpose of this study is to investigate, with the first modern Olympic Games of 1896 as a point of reference, the conversion of Athens from an urban space receiving the athletic events into a place of contrivance and representation of the national collective self, on the occasion of the arrival of the foreign visitors to attend the Games. The revival of the Olympic Games and the assignment of their organisation to Greece were perceived by the Greeks as an opportunity for the confirmation of the close relation between the classical past and their national present, thus reinforcing the irredentist visions of Greek nationalism. The holding of the Olympiad gave an important boost to the evolution of athleticism both at the level of associations and at that of the teaching of physical training within the educational system. The web of symbolism with which the Games were invested, from the names of the events to the place where they were held – the renovated Panathenaic Stadium and its external adornment – demonstrated the intention of stressing this relation.⁵ At the same time, Greek nation-

‘Producing Norwegian culture for domestic and foreign gazes: The Lillehammer Olympic opening ceremony’, pp. 97-136.

3. On the Olympiad of 1936 see the classic study by Richard Mandell, *The Nazi Olympics*, Urbana/Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1987, and particularly the chapter ‘Festivals, symbols’, pp. 122-56; also, Josef Schmidt, ‘Événement fasciste et spectacle mondial: Les Jeux Olympiques de Berlin en 1936’, in Régine Robin (ed.), *Masses et culture de masse dans les années 30*, Les Éditions Ouvrières, Paris 1991, pp. 163-79.

4. John Hargreaves, *Freedom for Catalonia? Catalan Nationalism, Spanish Identity and the Barcelona Olympic Games*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000, and particularly the chapter ‘The war of the flags and the *paz olímpica*’, pp. 58-95.

5. On the symbolic weight of antiquity on the genesis and development of Greek athleticism, the

alism of the nineteenth century, structured ideologically on the axis of the narrative of Hellenic continuity, which had antiquity as its starting-point, 'discovered' in the event of the Games the turning-point for its renascence. The liberation of 'enslaved Hellenism' and the realisation of the *Megali Idea* acquired a new potential in the framework of the particularly troubled Balkans of that time and the international situation, as the conviction was strengthened that the high ideals, the will, and men's courage were sufficient to enable a small state like Greece to conflict with and triumph over an empire such as that of the Ottomans.⁶

In spite of all this, the connotations of antiquity within the context of the nationalist ideology do not exhaust the modern horizon of the undertaking of the Games. Our working hypothesis for this particular study lies in the observation that entrusting to Greece the organisation of the Olympic Games, an international event with a host of visitors, re-poses the question of its relations with European modernity, centring on the meanings ascribed to urban space, the space hosting the event. The relation between the Greeks and Europe played a decisive role in the apprehension and content of their national identity in the nineteenth century. Europe did not cease to serve as a model for political and economic development in Greece, in spite of the fluctuations in their relationship at a cultural and ideological level.⁷ A role of decisive

interweaving of athleticism and the nationalist ideology, and the multiple dimensions of the first Olympic Games in Greek society, see Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997. We note only the pages that deal with the event of the first Olympiad: pp. 109-14; also, Christina Koulouri, 'Athleticism and antiquity: Symbols and revivals in nineteenth-century Greece', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 15 (Dec. 1998), pp. 142-9.

6. George Margaritis, 'The nation and the individual: Social aspects of life and death in Greece (1896-1911)', in Philip Carabott (ed.), *Greek Society in the Making 1863-1913. Realities, Symbols and Visions*, Ashgate/Variorum, Hampshire/Vermont 1997, pp. 87-98, and, more specifically, pp. 88-9.

7. One of the most significant constituents of the Enlightenment priority was the idealisation of ancient Greece and its proclamation as the womb of European civilisation. Within the context of Romanticism, the ideal of antiquity contributed to the formation of the European narrative of the development of civilisations, and Greece was regarded as the childhood of Europe. Philhellenism and the lively interest in the case of Greece were based on the conviction that the Greeks enslaved to the Ottomans were in a position, once liberated, to regenerate the ancient Greek world as well. The period after the foundation of the Greek state (1830) coincided with a decline of European interest in ancient Greece. The discovery of the 'real' Greece by foreigners was accompanied by questionings and disillusionment over the shattering of a dream, when it emerged that the modern Greeks were far removed, in terms of intellect and character, and even genetically, from their glorious ancestors. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Europeans often discerned, at all the levels of the life of the modern Greeks, the strong signs of their Levantine past, and stressed their inability to adapt to the European paradigm.

The Greeks appropriated antiquity and its significance from the West. They discovered in their turn that the ancient Greek world, expunged for centuries by the ecclesiastical texts and Christian tradition, which had been transformed into a guide for action for the Enlightenment plan, could be their world, and, at the same time, serve as a prerequisite for ensuring their European present. The structuring of the Greek national identity, then, was based initially on bringing out the close affinity between the ancient and the modern Greek world, as the latter had emerged through the acceptance of the Enlightenment in the late eighteenth century and the Greek Revolution of 1821. From the mid nineteenth century, Greek intellectuals realised

importance in the further definition of the contents of this relationship from time to time has been played – and to a significant degree continues to be played even today – by antiquity as a mirror of self-definition both of the Greek and the European collective self. It was then only natural that the holding of the first modern Olympic Games put at the centre of interest Athens, or, more precisely, the ruins of the glorious classical past, a fantasy location of the origins of European civilisation and at the same time a prerequisite for the Greek state, then taking its first steps.

Under the given circumstances, the Athenians perceived the arrival of the foreign-

that indifference and hostility towards the centuries-long Christian Byzantine period caused substantive problems for the credibility of the national myth. On the one hand, the great distance in time between the ancient and the modern Greek world dulled the image of the latter as a credible continuation of the former. On the other, the citizens of the newly-constituted state carried in their baggage, as former subjects of the Ottoman Empire, the Christian cosmology and had difficult in thinking of the ancient past as their own. The rehabilitation of Byzantium within the framework of the national mythology as a period of the survival of Greek civilisation articulated the narrative of Greek continuity down the ages. An important stimulus in the excitation of ‘Helleno-Christian civilisation’, the convergence and harmonious co-existence, that is, of two worlds that had until recently been regarded as opposed, was provided by the work of the German historian Jacob Fallmerayer, who spoke of a final break in Greek continuity over the centuries by reason of the systematic interbreeding of the Greek population with the Slavs, and later the Albanians who had conquered large areas of the territory of Greece as early as the fifth century. The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by the systematic and largely effective mobilisation of Greek historiography, folklore and linguistics in order to confirm the disputed Greek continuity through the interpretation of the past, the manners and customs of the people, and the survival of the language, respectively. The establishment of the organic position of the Byzantine period in the national narrative was greatly helped by the fact that Byzantine studies were invested with special prestige at European universities from the mid nineteenth century onwards, because of the turn of the interest of the European intelligentsia towards the European Middle Ages.

Throughout this period, Greece did not lose sight of the civilised West. In spite of its vacillations as to the role that it should choose – whether, that is, it should be the civilising Europeanising force of the East or an organic piece of the latter – and despite the quest for an individual identity, Greekness, as that crystallised in the early twentieth century, the Greek national ideology and Greek society were structured through a process of constant osmosis with the European paradigm.

There is a rich bibliography on the cultural content of the relation between Greece and Europe. We would note by way of indication: Harald Heppner / Olga Katsiadri-Hering (eds), *Die Griechen und Europa. Aussen- und Innensichten im Wandel der Zeit*, Bohlau Verlag, Vienna / Cologne / Weimar 1998, and particularly on the period of interest to us here: Effie Gazi, “Europe”: Writing an ambivalent concept in 19th century Greek historical culture’, *ibid.*, pp. 103-24; also, Philip Carabott (ed.), *Greece and Europe in the Modern period: Aspects of a Troubled Relationship*, Centre for Hellenic Studies, King’s College, London 1995. Also, Anthony Liakos, ‘The canon of European identity: Transmission and decomposition’, *Modern Greek Studies* 3 (1995), pp. 129-38; Dimitris Kyrtatas, ‘Η κατάκτηση της αρχαίας ελληνικής ιστορίας από το νέο ελληνισμό κατά το 18ο και 19ο αιώνα με τη διαμεσολάβηση της Δύσης’ [The conquest of ancient Greek history by modern Hellenism in the 18th and 19th century by the mediation of the West] at the Academic Symposium *Oι χρήσεις της Αρχαίτητας από το Νέο Ελληνισμό* [The uses made of antiquity by modern Hellenism], Society for Modern Greek Culture and General Education Studies, Athens 2002, pp. 251-66; finally, the works by Michael Herzfeld: *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece*, University of Texas Press, Austin 1982; *Anthropology through the Looking-glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1987; and *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*, Routledge, New York / London 1997.

ers as an opportunity that made it possible for them to negotiate the image of Greek society with the steps taken in the direction of progress and its modernisation as points of reference. They felt that the wager of the approaching meeting was to convince the Europeans that Greece belonged to the West and not to the East, in other words, to manage the code of a ranking from without of cultures in the terms of which they were criticised for their defective European identity. The starting-point for this line of thought was that the Europeans, lacking a knowledge of modern Greece, had based and continued to base their criticisms on the impressions of Lord Byron and Edmond About, when they had visited the country many decades earlier. Thus their acquaintance with the 'real' Greece had, on the one hand, to focus upon the image of the progress of recent decades, and, on the other, to underline the organic link between the modern Greeks and the ancient Greek world. Within this context, the capital, a privileged place as it encompassed the most illustrious remnants of antiquity and, at the same time, contained the most modernising features that modern Greek society had to show, was transformed into a symbolic place for the linkage of modernity with antiquity and its divorce from tradition, which in the present instance was identified with the past of the Ottoman conquest and its survivals. The structuring of the collective self was further determined by the cultural dualisms of East-West, Greece-Europe, ancient Greece - modern Greece and was marked by ambivalent features as it attempted to balance between self-knowledge and the need to present itself to the culturally superior other. In the view of Michael Herzfeld, the concept of ambivalence as a source of the production of a permanent semantic instability permits us to deal with a code, however well-established that is, not as a mechanism for generating antitheses with a fixed content, but as a field for constant negotiation of its semantic further definition within the framework of the interaction of its agents and in the historical context of the time. Instability of meaning is a fundamental defence of every society or social group against its subjection to a dominant model. Thus cultural dualisms, seen from the viewpoint of social poetics, that is, as complexes of relations that develop within the framework of dynamic interaction and practices, and not as closed semantic entities of permanent antitheses, take on an analytical range and are transformed into fields of observation of a multilevel and constant negotiation of their content by their agents.⁸

In this case, when the Greeks accepted the challenge of being entrusted with holding the first modern Olympic Games, they apprehended their readiness for such an undertaking through the viewpoint of the visitors, since this serves as a mirror through which the host society discovers the reflection of itself. However, the restruc-

8. On the terms 'cultural dualisms' and 'ambivalence' see Herzfeld, *Anthropology*, *op. cit.*, as well as the introduction by Efthymios Papataxiarchis to this work, pp. xi-xxviii. On 'social poetics', meant as use and management of semiotic systems in interaction and as a means of negotiating the meaning of a code within the framework of national self-knowledge and self-presentation, Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy*, *op. cit.*, and *idem*, 'Η κοινωνική ποιητική: Όψεις από την ελληνική εθνογραφία' [Social poetics: Aspects of Greek ethnography], in Dimitra Gefou-Madianou, *Ανθρωπολογική θεωρία και εθνογραφία. Σύγχρονες τάσεις* [Anthropological theory and ethnography: modern trends], Athens 1998, pp. 478-518.

turing of the collective self with the image of the Greek capital as a pivot was not effected by a passive collectivity the stance of which was delineated by the structures of the cognitive schema ‘underdeveloped Greece versus civilised West’ and the imprinting of this on the body of the city. The Greeks reacted to the challenge of the award of the Games as active subjects, with strategies of self-presentation which, on the one hand, were part of the predominant discourses on Greek backwardness in the face of modernity, European ideas about urban space and its enhancement, the significance of the ancient heritage, and its powerful influence on the way in which the city was seen by foreigners, which was to the detriment of the modern city. On the other hand, however, they followed the policy of a multilevel negotiation of Athenian alterity in an effort to control or eliminate those urban features that were reminiscent of the Levantine past or were not in keeping with the European cultural code, to highlight appropriately the ancient Greek presence in the look of the city, to ‘involve’ the public ceremonies for the 75th anniversary of the Greek Revolution and its symbolism in the matter of the celebratory events of the Olympiad, and to adopt practices and symbols of a modern character in an attempt to embellish the city, the ultimate aim being to invest with a new meaning the tourist destination and to rehabilitate Greece in the eyes of the Europeans. The ‘distinguished guests’ were thenceforth to concentrate their attention on a living modern national capital, which was organically linked with ancient, classical Athens, but did not live in its shadow. The result of the whole process, the projection of the image of a neo-classical Athens marked by cleanliness and orderliness, was first and foremost the product of constant competitive strife. The official Greek discourse of national self-presentation attempted to gain legitimisation, on the one hand, in terms of the foreign model and, on the other, in terms of alternative perceptions and unsystematised attitudes and behaviours in the everyday life of Athens, which were evaluated as inadequate, culturally backward, even as dangerous for the desired result.

During the course of the preparations for the Games, Athens changed its appearance. The various interventions in the urban space embellished the capital on the criterion, according to those responsible, of the expectations and wishes of the foreigners. The initial pessimism and disillusionment over ‘underdeveloped’ Athens was succeeded by the hope that the city would be presentable to its high-ranking guests. A little before the Games ended, when national enthusiasm was at a particularly high point because of their successful outcome, there was talk of a cosmopolitan Athens, which would have no reason to envy the European megalopolises. The progressive change in and differentiation of the manner of perceiving the city were accompanied by a steady belittling of the state and the Municipality, which were denounced for indecisiveness, inactivity, and meanness with money. On the other hand, the extolling of the contribution of private initiative to the change in the face of the city constantly increased. Greeks abroad and the Athenian bourgeois jointly managed to play the role of the ‘honest householder’ and to highlight the modern face of the Greek capital for the benefit of the foreigners. ‘What the foreigners should see’ of Athens and what they should not, how, in other words, the national self-presentation (with the urban

space as its constituent) should be organised for the benefit of a superior ‘other’ was the result of a totality of practices inscribed in the historical context of the period and of the circumstances, which attempted to blend antiquity with the present, the Europeanising with the ‘backward and Levantine’ sides of the city. The specific practices for organising national self-presentation were not addressed only to the foreigners. They directly affected social relations between the local people, and specifically the residents of the city, legitimating, or, rather, restructuring the social hierarchies.

The whole of the practices of self-presentation moved in the direction of the control of the senses of the visitors in connection with the urban space,⁹ with their ‘constructed visibility’¹⁰ to the forefront. In other words, an attempt was made to provide the visitors with alluring ‘loci’ for visits and everyday touring, entertainment and accommodation, invested with meaning from the outset in such a way that they would make up a universe of signs, circumscribed with clarity, safeguarded by multiple readings and compatible with the horizon of expectations of the visitors. This process, consequently, involved the ‘correction’ or concealment of places and scenes of everyday life that were deemed to be unsuitable for display. A central category, in our view, for an understanding of the constructed visibility of the visitors to Athens is the concept of hospitality. The concern of the residents for the image of their city in the eyes of the foreigners was enunciated through a discourse of welcome with the term *philoxenia* (hospitality) as a dominant verbal constituent. Our review of hospitality does not follow a structuralist approach, but a wish to discover the semiology of the relation between ‘hosts’ and ‘guests’ in relation to its historical context.¹¹

9. On the close connection between tourist practices and the senses see, indicatively, Chris Rojek / John Urry (eds), *Touring Cultures. Transformations of Travel and Theory*, Routledge, London 1997, and particularly the chapters: Chris Rojek / John Urry, ‘Transformations of travel and theory’, pp. 1-19; Carol Crawshaw / John Urry, ‘Tourism and the photographic eye’, pp. 176-95.

10. We borrow the term ‘constructed visibility’ from Derek Gregory in his study ‘Colonial nostalgia and cultures of travel: Spaces of constructed visibility in Egypt’, in Nezar Alsayyad (ed.), *Consuming Tradition, Manufacturing Heritage. Global Norms and Urban Forms in the Age of Tourism*, Routledge, London 2001, pp. 111-51, and more specifically, p. 112. The author focuses his interest on the relation between devised traditions and tourist texts as is expressed in European and North American tourist culture from 1820 to 1920, turning upon the shaping of the orientalist narrative and its survival until the present. Choosing the example of Egypt, he attempts to demonstrate the fact that Western tourist texts created a hardy continuity through the years, so that ‘Egypt became capable of assimilation by Western travellers not as an “environment”, but as a “field of constructed visibility” within the framework of which “tradition” is treated in a special, fragmentary, and dynamic way: sometimes certain traditions are projected and favoured, while at other times they are marginalised and eliminated’. Nevertheless, the way in which we use the term ‘constructed visibility’ in our own case is closer to the study by J. Philip Gruen, ‘Everyday attractions: Tourism and the generation of instant heritage in nineteenth-century San Francisco’, *ibid.*, pp. 152-90, and more specifically, pp. 161-4. This author bases his analysis on the representations of the city of San Francisco on the part of tourist guides, but also less official tourist texts, such as journals and autobiographies of travellers.

11. On the decisively important change that took place within the framework of anthropological thinking on the recognition of the dynamic character of the relation between host and guest – that this is a field in which the performance of the meaning is open on both sides, while at the same time the attempt at the temporal and spatial delimitation of the two poles of the relation often proves impossible –, see Vasiliki

According to Pitt-Rivers, the two-way character of the relation of hospitality resides in the fact that it is delimited by the place and time in which it manifests itself. In spite of the fact that honour as a structure of feelings is two-way between host and guest, the reciprocity of the exchange is only apparent, as it is not possible for both sides to be equivalent at the same period of time because of the different nature of the roles they fulfil. The host seems to set the terms and the guest to comply with them.¹² The asymmetry of the relations of exchange, one of which is hospitality, is based, as Bourdieu notes, on the imposition of the domination of the one party on the other by means of symbolic violence in which the generosity of the one side in terms of money, time, care, and manners gives rise to a series of commitments and dependencies in the other. The strategies (practices) of domination are directly dependent upon the choice of the time and the ways in which they are exercised.¹³ In our case, the progressive alteration of the rhetoric about the city from that of an insignificant township to that of a megalopolis reflected in the eyes of the residents the successful outcome of the practices of self-presentation to the foreigners, and, consequently, the symbolic reversal of the relationship of the dominant and the dominated during the course of the Games.

Our approach is based chiefly on texts of two kinds. We have chosen to rely to a large extent on the Athenian press, which, in our opinion, constitutes the most efficient index of the fever of preparations for the Games. It goes without saying that we do not treat the press only as a source that records news and events, but also as a cultural product, which constructs the news that it is supposed to be conveying. Consequently, news ‘forms a certain kind of text that shares codes and conventions with other texts within the framework of a comprehensive semantic field, while the specific meanings that it produces and circulates are multiple, changing and dependent upon the individual context of its production and use’.¹⁴ Apart from the major Athenian newspapers such as *Acropolis*, *Asty*, and *Estia*, we have used extracts from the *Ladies’ Journal (Ephimeris ton Kyrion)*.

Tourist guides form the second category of texts in our study. These are texts of a kind different from Athenian daily news reports, since they are addressed to foreign visitors and have an official character, particularly when they resulted from an initiative of the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC) itself. For this reason, their publication could be regarded as a move of exceptional importance, belonging within the

Galani-Moutafi, *Έρευνες για τον τουρισμό στην Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο. Μια ανθρωπολογική προσέγγιση* [Research into tourism in Greece and Cyprus. An anthropological approach], Athens 2003, particularly pp. 28-38.

12. Julian Pitt-Rivers, *The Fate of Shechem or the Politics of Sex. Essays in the Anthropology of the Mediterranean*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/London/New York/Melbourne 1977, pp. 102 and 107-8.

13. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1977, pp. 3-15 and 183-97.

14. Efi Avdela, *Διά λόγονς τιμής. Βία, συννασθήματα και αξίες στη μετεμφυλιακή Ελλάδα* [For reasons of honour. Violence, feelings and values in post civil war Greece], Athens 2002, p. 23.

official practices of ‘constructed visibility’. Tourist guides can be divided into two categories. The first includes those that were compiled by Greeks, one by the HOC and the other by Démétrius Georgiadès, a Greek capitalist of the diaspora of Constantinople who lived in Paris.¹⁵ The HOC’s guide concerns the Intermediate Olympics of 1906 and not the first modern Olympic Games.¹⁶ This is because we have not succeeded in locating a similar guide for 1896. We believe that the arbitrariness of including this particular guide in a study of the first modern Olympic Games becomes minor since we treat it as an official text compiled within the logic of presenting the Greek capital to foreigners, on the occasion of their mass visit to the country because of an important event of international character, and as a product of the same individuals who directed and represented Greek athleticism from the mid 1890s until the first decade of the twentieth century. The second category includes the Baedeker guide, published in 1889.¹⁷ Our choice of including in our approach at least one foreign tourist guide has been dictated on the criterion of the possibility of comparing an already formulated Western example of tourist guides about Greece with the Greek guides, which were texts written for the occasion.

Our study is made up of four sections. The first focuses on the three parameters of the identity of Athens within the circumstances of the Games: the national capital, in other words, as the city holding the Games is set within the tourist horizon of the foreign visitors and is converted into a tourist sight. The aim in this section is the incorporation of Athens into two times, the national time and the time of the event, because we believe that the attempt to understand the collective self-presentation, which follows in the next sections, is thus made easier. In the second section, attention is focused initially on the rhetoric of the Athenian press and the ways in which meaning is ascribed to the ‘guests’ and ‘hosts’ and to the relationship between them. During the course of the preparations, as this relationship put off its inequality and became increasingly symmetrical, so the angle from which the city was seen by its residents altered. On a second level, we attempt to examine the official practices of arranging self-presentation through the construction of the visibility of the visitors and the emergence, effectively, of a new city, that of the Olympic Games, in the Athens of

15. Démétrius Georgiadès, *De Paris à Athènes. La Grèce à travers les siècles*, Paris 1896. Georgiadès was a partner in the joint-stock company ‘Hellenic Railways Company’, which undertook in 1900 the construction and operation of the Piraeus-Demerlis-Frontiers railway line. He contributed articles to the Greek press of matters of public finance and of more general economic interest. He had also written similar studies in French. On the above see K. & S. Vovolinis, *Mέγα Ελληνικόν Βιογραφικόν Λεξικόν* [Great Greek Biographical Dictionary], vol. II, pp. 503-4, and vol. III, p. 149β, and the introduction to his guide written by the French professor of political economy Paul Beauregard.

16. This specific guide is in Greek and French. *Guide d’Athènes. Comité des Jeux Olympiques / Οδηγός των Αθηνών. Η επί των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων Επιτροπή*, 1906.

17. We have located only one guide, written in French. This is that of Léon A. Olivier, *Guide pratique d’Athènes et de ses environs. D’après les manuels des voyageurs de Baedeker, Joanne, etc.*, Athens 1896. We have reached the conclusion that for our purposes, the comparative approach to the manner of presenting modern Athens in contradiction to or correlation with the ancient city by the various guides, the use of the ‘original’, that is, Baedeker’s guide, would be more serviceable.

everyday life. The third section deals with an incident: the guided tour by night given by Kallirrhoe Parren to a group of French journalists in Athens. In other words, an attempt is made to demonstrate the stage-setting of the Athenian landscape in the eyes of foreigners by their friend and hostess. The fourth section is devoted to the various versions of the Greek capital as these are brought out through the texts of the tourist guides. By comparing guides compiled by Greeks, products of the circumstances, and for that reason belonging within the logic of national self-presentation, and foreign tourist guides to Greece and the capital, we can identify the gulf between the shaping of tourist expectations of Greece and Athens and the concern of the Greeks to stress the modern aspect of their country and its capital.

NATIONAL CAPITAL, OLYMPIC CITY AND TOURIST DESTINATION

In this section we shall examine three characteristics of the Athenian identity as it was formulated in the circumstances of the Olympiad. In other words, these are fields in which the capital of the small Greek kingdom checked its reflexes either towards its nation-building role, which it had gained but was called upon to confirm, or towards the challenge of organising a world event with thousands of visitors, ready to include it in their tourist horizon.

Capital cities have played a definitive role in the centralising and national-building orientation of the nation-state itself, since they are positioned *ab initio* at the head of a network of political, economic, social, cultural, town planning, and educational policies that radiate out to the rest of the national space. In spite of the variety of types of European capitals in terms of their emergence as cultural or symbolic national centres and of the consolidation of their leading role because of difference in traditions and the historical past, from the early nineteenth century they were elevated into theatres *par excellence* of political and ideological competition with the semantic connotations of the urban space and the political rituals as a point of reference.¹⁸

The arrival of the Bavarian Otto, the first monarch of the newly constituted Greek kingdom, in Greece in 1833, after the Struggle for Independence against the Ottoman Empire, was accompanied by the selection of Athens to be the capital. The decision of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, father of the new monarch, who was still a minor, was not a matter of chance. In spite of the fact that Athens was a provincial town with the Turkish garrison still on the Acropolis, almost completely in ruins because of the military operations, its connotations in the European – and particularly the German – mythology of antiquity were very powerful. Athens was acknowledged as the cradle of

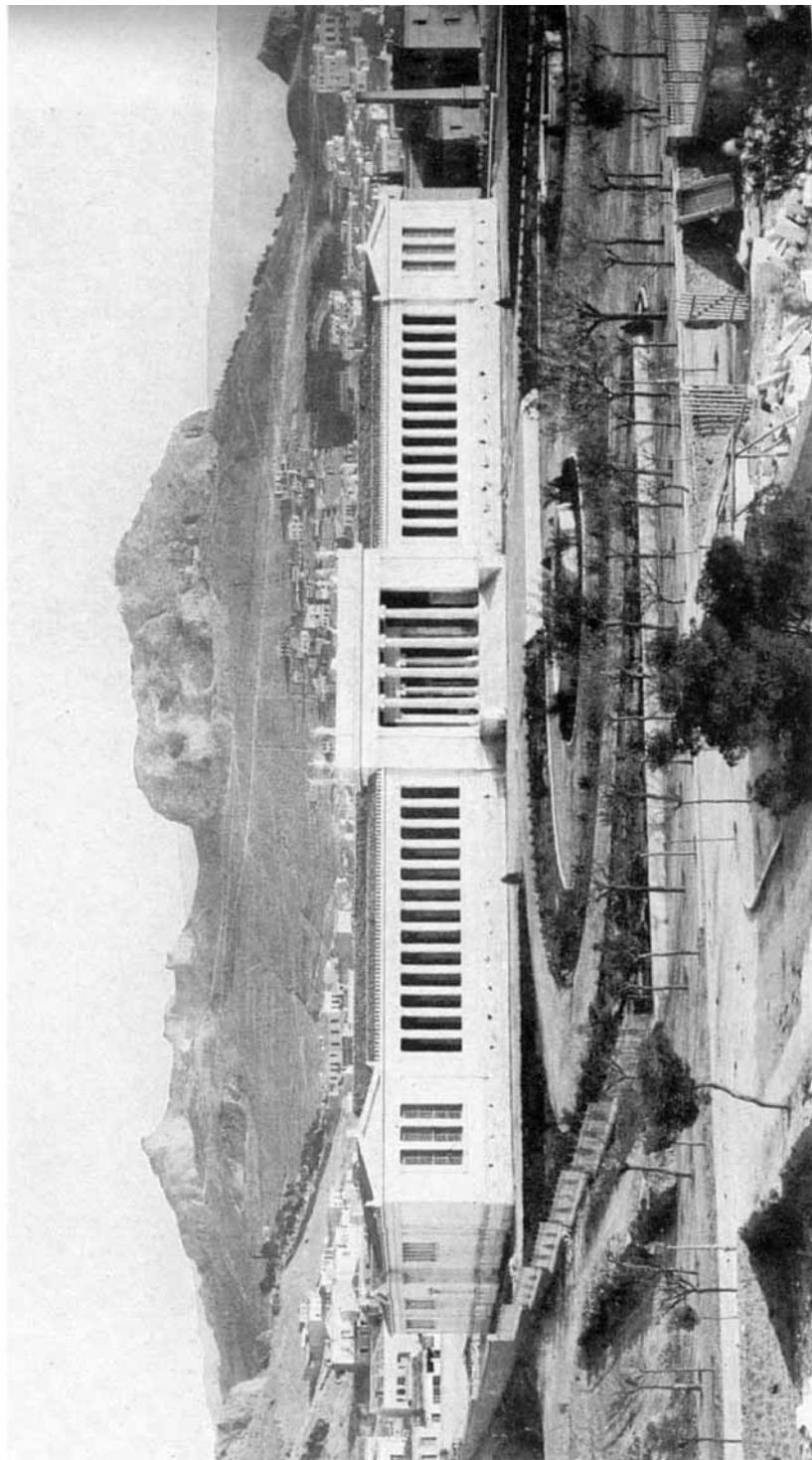
18. See Christophe Charle/Daniel Roche (eds), *Capitales culturelles, capitales symboliques. Paris et les expériences européennes XVIII^e-XX^e siècles*, Publication de la Sorbonne, Paris 2002.

European civilisation, to which the developed West gave expression at the time. Thus, other cities, with a prominent position in the administrative and economic fabric of the Ottoman period, had to take secondary role so that the new Athens could symbolise the rebirth of the Greek nation and serve as its political, administrative and economic centre.

The city planning of the Greek capital was undertaken on the basis of a blending of two worlds, or, to express it differently, of the transition from the state of the monarchy to the bourgeois state.¹⁹ The designs that were drawn up and approved – both the final plan of Cleanthes and Schaubert in June 1833 and that of Leo von Klenze in September 1834 – reflected, on the one hand, the centralising concept of development of the city with the palace and the presence of the monarch at its centre, and, on the other, the significant position of the capital city as an economic and cultural centre of the nation. The palace occupied a central position in the planning fabric, and the street network radiated out from the squares or ran parallel and vertical to the basic axes. There was also provision for the building of large avenues in the general area of the palace and the locations of the buildings for the administrative, economic and cultural functions of the city were precisely determined. The plan of Cleanthes and Schaubert also provided for the siting of two buildings for parliament and many ministries – at a period when Greece still lacked a parliamentary system of government. The symmetry and functionality of neo-classicism were enhanced with various features from earlier stages of European city planning. The significant characteristics of the city planning were the decision to separate modern Athens from the old Ottoman city and the care taken to conserve the antiquities by means of legislative regulation, which included an exact delimitation of the surrounding area for future excavations.

The city planning of Athens had a distinct political orientation, since it served as a

19. Eleni Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens. Planning the Myth*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000, p. 83. This study is the most comprehensive modern approach to the town planning development and evolution of Athens in the nineteenth century. Apart from its interdisciplinary features and its treatment of the case of Greece in a comparative framework, its importance lies, in our opinion, in the fact that its author raises the issue of the political importance of city planning for the formation of a nation-state on an axis of the forms of the cultural resistance of the city's residents to the introduction of an unfamiliar system of approaches to the development and arrangement of the various functions of urban space, thus drawing attention to the systematic interweaving of politics with society at the level of the genesis of the bourgeois phenomenon in Greece in the nineteenth century. See also Dimitris Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική* [Modern Greek architecture], Athens 1984; Leonidas Kallivretakis, 'Η Αθήνα του 19ου αιώνα. Από επαρχιακή πόλη της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας, πρωτεύουσα του Ελληνικού Βασιλείου' [The Athens of the 19th century. From provincial city of the Ottoman Empire to capital of the Greek Kingdom], in *Αρχαιολογία της πόλης των Αθηνών. Επιστημονικές - επιμορφωτικές διαλέξεις* [Archaeology of the city of Athens. Academic - further education lectures], Athens 1996, pp. 173-96; Yannis Tsomis, 'Αθήνα, ευρωπαϊκή υπόθεση' [Athens, a European affair], in *Πρακτικά των Διεθνούς Συμποσίου Ιστορίας 'Νεοελληνική πόλη. Οθωμανικές κληρονομίες και ελληνικό κράτος'* [Proceedings of the international history symposium 'The modern Greek city. Ottoman inheritances and the Greek state'], Athens 1985, vol. I, pp. 97-101. Finally, we would draw attention to the classic work of Costas Biris, *Αι Αθήναι από τον 19ου εις τον 20όν αιώνα* [Athens from the 19th to the 20th century], Athens 1966 (reprint: Athens 1996).



The Archaeological Museum on its completion in 1866. [C. Biris, *At Athíne autó ton 19ov eis ton 20όν αυγόνα, Athens 1996, p. 210]*

substantive means for the structuring and representation of the nation. It symbolised the national identity, based on the glorious past – cleansed of any trace of the ‘barbarous Levantine’ past – and the European present. In practice, however, the implementation of the plan proved particularly difficult. Some of the original proposals were never implemented at all, while others were adapted, and new ones made their appearance throughout the century. In the context of a particularly unstable political and economic environment, the mapping out of streets, the planning of the city squares, the construction of buildings in areas where this was not allowed, the direction of ekistic development, and the level of compulsory purchases from owners of sites proved to be prominent points of friction between the administration, on the one hand, and various citizens and social groups, on the other. The acceptance of modern town planning was not a given fact for a social environment with other perceptions of the organisation of the functions of urban space. Increasingly as the years went by, the impossibility of its implementation by the agencies responsible, the dragging of feet and the constant adjustments of the plans strengthened suspicion, scepticism and criticism.

In contrast with pre-Napoleonic Europe, where cities were used by monarchies as models for the imposition of their domination and at the same time as mirrors of their glory, in Greece the specific motif was rather the reverse: the development and the image of the capital presupposed to a large degree the prestige, the acceptance and the effectiveness of the monarchy in relation to the citizens.²⁰ The tergiversations in the execution of the city planning of Athens called into question the implementation of similar plans in other cities in Greece and, most important, brought to light the inability of the government to play its centralising – nation-building role, a fact that strengthened local authorities, which, reinforced as they were after the Struggle for Independence, contested the central authority.

During Otto’s period, Athens was a ‘conditional’ national centre. Apart from the hostility of the citizens of the kingdom, it had to face the contempt of Greeks abroad. As Elli Skopetea points out, the two worlds had Constantinople as their common capital and shared a pre-Hellenic code of mutual understanding. In spite of the chasm that divided them, they managed in different ways and by different routes each to erode systematically the authority of the national centre and to give expression to an anti-state mentality.²¹ To this unclear picture a decisive contribution was made by the formulation of the *Megali Idea*, which nurtured the visions of Greek irredentism. Its adoption by Otto involved the country in various military incidents with the Turks, rendered more harsh the supervision exercised by the Great Powers over it, and constituted a constant of questioning of the national centre.

The Crimean War led to a progressive alteration in Greek approaches and placed

20. Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens* op. cit., p. 106.

21. Elli Skopetea, *To ‘Πρότυπο Βασίλειο’ και η Μεγάλη Ιδέα. Οψεις των εθνικού προβλήματος (1830-1880)* [The ‘Model Kingdom’ and the *Megali Idea*. Aspects of the national problem (1830-1880)], Athens 1988, pp. 252-4.

restraints upon the uncontrolled nature of the *Megali Idea*. Hereafter, the creation of a nation state seemed to serve the national cause more effectively. The reign of George I, after the deposing of Otto, marked the beginning of a new period the motto of which was that Greece should be turned into a model kingdom of the East, that is, it should take on a civilising role.²² The 1870s and 1880s made their own contribution to the progressive reinforcement of Athens to the detriment of Constantinople, since the undertaking by the Trikoupis governments of the economic, political and military modernisation of the state presupposed stable frontiers, which was in accord with the international state of affairs produced by the Congress of Berlin and the averting of military conflicts with the Ottoman Empire. The symbolic conflict between the two cities/national centres warmed up with the ideological confrontation between the ethnocentricity of Greece and the ethnarchic and ecumenical approach of the Patriarchate. The Greek state was dynamically seeking the role of the national centre of the Greeks from abroad through the control of education and of the metropolitan bishoprics, and met with the equally dynamic reaction of the Patriarchate, which was traditionally held to fulfil that capacity. The tension grew when, within the framework of the competition between Balkan nationalisms, the Greek state promoted anti-Slav action in Macedonia and Thrace while the Patriarchate invoked the unity of the Orthodox world. In a changing environment, both sides fought to legitimate their role: the Greek state, on the one hand, to incorporate the Orthodox Greek populations of the Empire into a national Greek body centring upon Athens, and, on the other, the Patriarchate to retain control of the *Genos* of the Romii.²³ The attitude of the Patriarchate was also widely accepted by society, to judge by the response with which it met among the economically and socially dominant sections of the Greek Orthodox community of Constantinople when it determined, in 1880, upon the foundation of the ‘Love One Another’ fraternity, with the obvious aim to control the education of the Greek Orthodox of the Empire and, in this field, to dispute the dominant position of the Hellenic Literary Association of Constantinople, which headed a network of educational associations with a nationalist orientation in many cities of the Empire. This stance on the part of a significant section of the prosperous groups in the community, who had developed their business activities and had acquired their vast fortunes within the context of the Ottoman Empire, could also be interpreted as a political assessment that the Empire and Constantinople, and not Greece and Athens, could serve as a field for political activity by ensuring the political and cultural influence of the Greek Orthodox community.²⁴ Of course, the systematic

22. Skopetea, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-2.

23. Sia Anagnostopoulou, ‘Η σύγκρουση Χ. Τρικούπη - Ιωακείμ Γ’. Όφεις της πολύπλοκης και αντιφατικής διαδικασίας για την επιβολή της Αθήνας ως πολιτικο-εθνικού κέντρου’ [The conflict between C. Trikoupis and Ioakeim III. Aspects of the complex and contradictory process of the imposition of Athens as political-national centre], in Katy Aroni-Tsichli/Lydia Tricha (eds), *O Χαρίλαος Τρικούπης και η εποχή του. Πολιτικές επιδιώξεις και κοινωνικές συνθήκες* [Charilaos Trikoupis and his era. Political ambitions and social conditions], Athens 2000, pp. 99-106.

24. Haris Exertzoglou, ‘Κοινωνική ιεραρχία, ιδεολογία και εθνική ταυτότητα: το νόημα της ίδρυσης

arrival and establishment of Greeks from abroad in Athens in the final decades of the century had lent prestige to the Greek capital both at home and abroad. Its image changed decisively when they built their private mansions and when, by means of their benefactions, the city acquired important public buildings in its main thoroughfares. In the late nineteenth century, the population of the capital exceeded a hundred thousand and the city exerted a constant attraction on internal migrants and Greeks from abroad to establish themselves. However, the Greek Orthodox communities in the Empire and the Greek quarters of major cities, chiefly in Egypt, still flourished economically, and there was no comparison between the cosmopolitan environment in which they moved and Athens. The greater part of the visitors who came to Athens for the Games were Greeks from abroad. The city was called upon to confirm its position as a nucleus of the national centre and, at the same time, its European identity.

The commencement of holding international exhibitions in the mid nineteenth century elevated national capitals and urban centres of industrialised and colonialist countries into leading fields of modern mythology as these were converted for a period of time into centres of the world, demonstrating the scientific and technological achievements of the human mind, shaping the conditions for the internationalisation of trade and mass production, and confirming the ‘civilising role’ of the white European race in Asia and Africa.²⁵ It should be remembered that the Olympic Games of 1900 in Paris and of 1904 in St Louis were held within the framework of international exhibitions.²⁶ Inter-

της Φιλεκπαιδευτικής Αδελφότητας “Αγαπάτε αλλήλους” [Social hierarchy, ideology and national identity: the meaning of the setting up of the ‘Love One Another’ Educational Fraternity], *Ta Istorika* 12 (June 1995), pp. 85-118, and more specifically p. 116.

25. On the exhibitions of the nineteenth century, the historical and cultural context to which they belonged, and their legitimating function in the establishment of a new way of life, see the extensive account of Anna Vrychea in her study *Κατοίκηση και πατούχια. Διερευνώντας τα όρια της αρχιτεκτονικής* [Dwelling and dwelling-house. Exploring the bounds of architecture], Athens 2003, pp. 43-84. On international exhibitions as a new system of practices for representation of the world, and particularly the non-western world, beginning from the Paris Exhibition of 1889, see Timothy Mitchell, ‘Orientalism and the exhibitionary order’, in Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.), *The Visual Culture Reader*, Routledge, London/New York 1990, pp. 293-303.

26. In spite of the sharp criticism of the degrading of the lofty ideals of the newly constructed athletic ideology because of its association with the technological and economic profile of European imperialism, in the eyes of the organisers athleticism did not seem so incompatible with the concepts of development and progress. We should note at this point that the contemptuous criticism of the Olympic Games was not general, did not start out from the same line of thought between different countries, and was largely based on the impression that those who had taken part in the Athens Olympiad took away with them of the length of time occupied by the athletic activities and their symbolic dimension. Thus, it seems, grave doubts were expressed chiefly by small countries, such as Denmark, which drew attention, *inter alia*, to the excessive cost of their team’s accommodation in Paris. Those responsible in Greece considered that the ‘failure’ of the second Olympiad could offer support to the fervent desire for the permanent holding of the Games in Athens, an idea that at that period was fading more and more from the horizon, though it would return with the holding of the Intermediate Olympics in 1906. On this question see Yannis Yannitsiotis, ‘Η Μεσολυ-

national exhibitions brought together crowds of people from all over the world.²⁷ Different social classes and nationalities flocked to the specially designed sites in the cities involved, which were sometimes marked by the monumentality of the buildings and sometimes by the use of new techniques and materials in their construction. In these popular festivities, the spectacle was the dominant theme. The visitors, because of the heterogeneous nature of the exhibits, marvelled, were impressed, and ‘travelled’ to distant worlds when faced with an elephant or a pair of Chinese shoes. At the same time, however, the visitors were educated in new means of representation of the very world in which they lived through the logic of the classifications of the exhibits and the various similes. They looked upon ‘other’ cultures, were informed of the new products in everyday use, saw the life of the rich unfold before them through luxury goods, and learnt of the processes of production that generated mass consumption products.²⁸ But at the very centre was the city itself. The mosaic of cultures that flooded its streets, the broad involvement of the citizens regardless of gender or class, and the phantasmagoria of the spectacle produced by the use of electricity, which permitted the exhibition to function even at night, turned the city hosting the exhibition into a spectacle itself.

The small Greek capital, of course, had no experience of organising events with an international resonance or even of athletic events on a Panhellenic scale.²⁹ The four ‘Olympia’ craft industry exhibitions held from 1859 to 1889 and the holding within their framework of athletic contests – the Zappas Olympiads³⁰ – could be regarded as special local events, but without a particular dynamic. It is instructive that the first Panhellenic Games, by means of which the selection of the athletes to take part in the Olympiad was carried out, were held a little before the Olympic Games with a view to their serving as a rehearsal for the latter. Political celebrations centring on the city, such as the observance of 25 March and events to mark the anniversary of 3 September, did take place, but were short-lived. Often these particular events were not attended by large crowds, while the arrangements in the city for the occasion were confined to the area of the Cathedral and Ermou Street. Exceptions were the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Greek Revolution in 1871, with the translation of the bones of Patriarch Gregorios V from Odessa to Athens, and the marriage of

μπιάδα του 1906’ [The Intermediate Olympics in 1906], in Christina Koulouri (ed.), *Αρχεία και ιστορία της Επιτροπής Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων* [Archives and history of the Hellenic Olympic Committee], Athens 2002, pp. 69-77.

27. More than six million people visited the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, while visitors to the Exhibition of 1900 numbered close on fifty million, Vrychea, *Κατοίκηση και κατοικία, op. cit.*, p. 60.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-84.

29. In Germany, for example, the country’s union of gymnastics associations held at intervals from 1860 onwards major gymnastics festivals in various cities; see Ioannis Chrysaphis, *Οι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες (Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της νεωτέρας αγωνιστικής)* [The modern international Olympic Games (A contribution to the history of modern competitive sport)], Athens 1930, vol. I, pp. 290-1. In addition, industrial exhibitions at a national level were held in various European cities, both before and after the first one, the Great Exhibition in London; see Vrychea, *Κατοίκηση και κατοικία, op. cit.*, p. 71.

30. On the Zappas Olympiads, their ancient Greek context, and the first ‘osmosis’ between ancient and modern athletic events, see Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αρχαίης κοινωνικότητας, op. cit.*, pp. 87-93.

the Crown Prince a few years before the Olympic Games.³¹ The mobilisation of the state mechanism and the Municipality on the occasions of the 50th anniversary celebrations and the Prince's marriage led to the embellishment of the city and the illumination of public buildings; the citizens flooded into the streets from an early hour, rendering them impassable, and celebrated in the central squares until nightfall.

The total lack of any experience on the part of the Greek side in the organisation of such events resulted in the organising committee commissioning the promotion of the Games abroad and the organisation of the travel and accommodation of the foreign athletes and visitors to Athens exclusively from the Cook & Son agency. The host cities for the international exhibitions acted, on the one hand, as a familiar field for incorporation of the event, but, on the other, the European and American megalopolises and their infrastructure gave rise only to pessimism in the citizens of the peripheral capital as to the success of the undertaking.³² Nevertheless, the 'language' of the exhibitions in the matter of the transformation of the urban landscape was familiar. Thus there was talk of 'festivals', which all the residents awaited with keen interest and curiosity, while, as we shall see below, the city's presence at night with the aid of gas and electricity preoccupied those responsible and the press. The shared characteristic of Athens and a megalopolis that had hosted the holding of an international exhibition, *mutatis mutandis*, was the international character of the two events and the numbers of the visitors. It would be no exaggeration to say that the first modern Olympic Games put to the test the resilience of the city at every level, since it was the first time that Athens and Greece had hosted so large a number of foreign visitors for a specific and short period of time.

The holding of the first modern Olympiad in 1896 and the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906 marked the culmination of the arrival of visitors – Greeks from abroad, Greeks from Greece, and foreigners – in the Greek capital. According to the enthusiastic estimates of Panagiotis Savvidis, within the context of a favourable assessment of the Intermediate Olympiad, Athens was visited in 1896 by 90 athletes and 30,000 foreigners, whereas in 1906 it was visited by 900 athletes and more than 100,000 foreigners.³³ The fact that the content of the term 'foreigner' is undefined obscures rather than illuminates the picture of the attendance of foreigners for both dates. The athlete J. G. Robertson estimated that the foreign visitors in 1896 numbered no more than 1,000 at most. Clearly meaning the non-Greek visitors, he maintained that the organising committee for the Games had followed a mistaken policy of promotion of the Games abroad by commissioning the arrangement of the advent of foreigners from the Cook's agency. The outrageous prices of the rooms advertised led to many

31. On the political rites in Greece centring on the Greek Revolution, see Haris Exertzoglou, 'Πολιτικές τελετουργίες στη Νεότερη Ελλάδα. Η μετακομιδή των οστών του Γρηγορίου Ε' και η Πεντηρονταετηρίδα της Ελληνικής Επανάστασης' [Political rites in modern Greece. The translation of the bones of Gregorios V and the 50th anniversary of the Greek Revolution], *Mnemon* 23 (2001), pp. 153-82.

32. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 December 1895.

33. Panagiotis S. Savvidis, *Λεύκωμα των εν Αθήναις B' Διεθνών Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων 1906* [Album of the second International Olympic Games in Athens 1906], Athens 1907, p. 141.

potential visitors choosing Italy and postponing their journey to Greece until after the end of the Olympics. Consequently, he questioned the frequent references in the articles in the Greek and British press, which spoke of 20,000 visitors.³⁴ The *Asty* newspaper, however, calculated that by 20 March, 6,000 European visitors had disembarked at Piraeus.³⁵ Whether or not Greeks from abroad were included in the category of foreign visitors must have been the reason for the major divergences in the estimates. Regardless of this, it was, according to the press, the first time that Athens had welcomed so large a host of visitors. Europeans and Greeks from the provinces, from the communities abroad, and from the Ottoman Empire flooded the streets, providing a unique spectacle with their heterogeneous costumes. The planning of transport at the one end was intertwined with similar practices of reception at the other. Athens at that period was converted into one vast hotel, given that, apart from the professional hoteliers, a large number of owners of private houses, with a view to the direct economic benefits, made their rooms and houses available for rent to both the foreign and the Greeks visitors.

Until the early decades of the twentieth century, Greece was not included on the tourist horizon of the European bourgeois classes. The absence of a public transport network, the Ottoman presence in the Balkans and the dominating position of Italy in the Grand Tour as a focus of the ancient world left it no scope to lay claim to a part of the tourist traffic. In the late nineteenth century, the situation – competition between the up-and-coming spas and the traditional cities, and the beginnings of mass tourism – permitted Greece to be associated peripherally with the tourist destinations of the Europeans. The British occupation of Egypt from 1882 resulted in the discovery of a new tourist destination where the enjoyment of exoticism was combined with the security of a stable political system.³⁶ A significant section of the European haute bourgeoisie who lived in the land of the Nile visited Athens on the occasion of the Games, in 1896, within the framework of the travel organised by the Cook & Son travel agency. The activities of the latter in Greece date from as early as 1881, following the conclusion of a special agreement with the 'Panellinio' steamship company on the transport of their clients and the beginning of collaboration with the most important Greek hotel enterprise, the 'Grande Bretagne' in 1883.³⁷ The Olympic Games of 1896 marked the first mass arrival of European citizens in Greece – chiefly in Athens – at the level of organised tourism.

34. J. G. Robertson, 'The Olympic Games', *The Fortnightly Review* (June 1896), pp. 944-57.

35. *Asty* newspaper, 20 March 1896.

36. On the character and development of European and American tourism from the sixteenth to the twentieth century see John Towner, *An Historical Geography of Recreation and Tourism in the Western World 1540-1940*, John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex 1996, and especially p. 250 in connection with the popularity and the marginal position, by way of contrast, of Greece and Spain. Also, on the 'discovery' of the Mediterranean by the British in the nineteenth century, see John Pemble, *The Mediterranean Passion. Victorians and Edwardians in the South*, Oxford University Press, New York 1988.

37. Angelos Vlachos, *Μεγάλη Βρεταννία. Ένα ξενοδοχείο-σύμβολο* [The Grande Bretagne. A hotel-symbol], Athens 2003, pp. 122-3.

‘WE SHALL TAKE THE FOREIGNERS BY THE HAND
AND TAKE THEM TO OUR BOSOM’

‘Guests’ and ‘Hosts’

The decision of the Olympic Congress that Greece should undertake the holding of the first modern Olympic Games spread enthusiasm among a small group of people who were concerned with athleticism and the sports, which were then making their first appearance; this was succeeded by intense scepticism, culminating in the refusal of the Trikoupis government to commit itself to even the slightest cost of holding the event, because of the bankruptcy of 1893, which had imposed a redetermination of public finance policy under the stranglehold control of the International Fund. Whether or not the country was able to undertake the organisation of the Games developed into a point of friction in the relations between the Trikoupis government and the Crown Prince after the latter’s decision to involve himself in the matter. The visits of Pierre de Coubertin to Athens and his assessment that, in spite of the views of the prime minister, Athens was in a position to undertake the organisation had intervened. The elections of 1895 and the defeat of Trikoupis made the situation easier, since the Crown Prince assumed, with the consent of the Diliyannis government, all the powers of control over the matter, while, at the same time, altering the correlations of power on the committees that had been set up in the meantime by the appointment to them of persons who enjoyed his trust.³⁸

The two months before the Games, apart from the purely athletic preparations, was a period of feverish preparation both at the level of completion of the venues and that of the embellishment of the city. Athens acquired its new modern athletics monument, the renovated Panathenaic Stadium, the central major streets were paved with concrete, the principal streets and squares were cleaned up, public buildings and a considerable number of private ones were decorated, and the illumination of the Acropolis and the busy streets created a phantasmagorical spectacle: an air of Europe seemed to breathe in the city.

A month before the Games were held, the *Asty* newspaper, in a front-page article, having established that the rates at which the public works were being readied should ‘not be crab-like, but with electrical speed’, attempted to answer the question posed by the title ‘What do the foreigners want?’³⁹

The author of the article voiced sharp criticism both of the organising committee for the Olympics and of the municipal authority, charging the former with delay in completing the Stadium and the latter with the wretched picture of the streets of Athens. He nevertheless acknowledged some extenuating circumstances in the case of the committee, in view of the fact that the financial resources it had at its disposal

38. Chrysaphis, *Oι σύγχρονοι διεθνείς Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες*, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-12.

39. *Asty* newspaper, 21 February 1896.

were limited and that work by day and by night would finally lead to the makeshift completion of the Stadium. On the other hand, he wondered at the total indifference of the Municipality to voting extra credits for the improvement of the capital's appearance.

The concern of the press over the state of readiness of the Greek capital to host the Games was a constant throughout the period of preparation and holding of the Games. Criticisms of the delay in carrying out the projects, the necessity of embellishing the city, the measures indicated for the decoration of public spaces, constant self-examination as to possible impressions that these considerations might create in the foreign visitors monopolised the interest of contemporaries and, at the same time, emerged as privileged fields for the examination of the ways in which they perceived the urban space as a mirror of the national self under the scrutinising gaze of the foreign visitors.

Nevertheless, the relation between the 'locals' and the foreigners cannot be regarded as having been endowed with meaning from the very start. From late 1895, we encounter a systematic effort to delineate the motives that would bring the foreigners to Athens and through these to deduce their expectations from the specific visit. Predominant was the idea that the visitors had as their destination, apart from the Games, a visit to the ancient monuments. From this point on, the scenarios of their expectations began: if the remains of the ancient city constituted a field of exhibition bounded spatially and chronologically, the same conditions did not apply to the new city. To the extent, then, that the foreigners would come to pay tribute to the sacred marbles, their brief stay in the city would require certain elementary action on the part of the residents, such as making it possible for the foreigners to find accommodation, to be fed, and to stroll about a tolerably clean city. This scenario was rapidly marginalised, as soon as it was realised that the city was approached as a multifunctional entity, directed by institutions and inhabited by citizens, themselves responsible in some way for the state of Athens.

But who were these 'foreigners' who had monopolised the concerns of the Greek authorities? A month and a half or so before the Games there were many unanswered questions about their place of origin and their numbers. The world of journalism attempted to define them in relation to the nationality of the athletes that were coming to take part, information from the Thomas Cook travel agency, and the estimates of those involved in Greek athleticism.⁴⁰ The first calculations were discouraging. It was estimated that attendance would be poor. This estimate operated at the same time as a reassurance, since the certainty that the hotel accommodation would not be sufficient was widespread. By degrees, the pooling of the sources of information began at least to clear the landscape as to the national origins of the visitors. Interest in whether or not the Europeans would attend became perceptible in relation to the capability of the capital to turn itself into a magnet for them, the time available to potential visitors, and, above all, their way of life, their expectations from

40. *Ibid.*

their experience of travel – in other words from a structured tourism culture, determined on a class basis. In the case of Greeks from abroad and those from the provinces, there was no question about their visit. But their expectations to see Athens, after several years, celebrating so important an event were likely to be succeeded by disillusionment over the pitiable spectacle of their national capital. Athens was located at the epicentre of merciless competition with other cities and its weaknesses were laid bare. It was not, however, only with the ideal type of the orderly, safe, clean city of the European north that it had to deal. It was also called upon to comply with specific examples of Mediterranean and Balkan cities, or, even worse, to take a glance at what was next to it: ‘demoniac Piraeus’.

First of all, Cairo seemed to pose the main threat for the cancellation of the visit of Europeans to Athens, given that it provided the possibility of winter holidays in climatic conditions resembling spring and summer. At the same time, it also provided a number of activities and spectacles, such as the archaeological treasures of the period of the Pharaohs, the trip, lasting a month, up the Nile, a climate excellent for the health, and, above all, accommodation in ‘fifteen of the richest and most aristocratic hotels – in the “New Hotel”, the “Bristol” [...] in the enormous “Gezirah”, the former palace of the munificent Ishmael Pasha, with mythically luxurious furnishings, with its pavilions and its gardens and more than a thousand rooms, and with the waters of the turbid river washing its foundations of marble’.⁴¹ In the case of the thousands of Europeans who – according to the newspaper – lived a life of luxury in these hotels, there was no question of their coming to Greece to spend 15 to 20 days in the three or four first-class Athenian hotels, while all the others would seem like hovels to the ‘foreigners with their aristocratic habits’.⁴² Egypt, during the beginning of the second colonial period had been integrated into the European tourist horizon, particularly the British, of the middle bourgeois strata. Consequently, the image of Cairo and other Egyptian cities in terms of the services offered could hardly be compared with the image of the Greek capital, which up to then had represented very little as a modern location for the packaging of the ancient past on the established European tourist horizon. The choice of Cairo as a rival to Athens was the result of the fact that the presence of thousands of tourists there coincided with the holding of the Games.

In the second place, Athens could not stand comparison with the European profile of the cities from which the Greeks from abroad came: ‘so that it appears at least, even if we do not have the stone-paved streets of Odessa and of Bucharest or the asphalted streets of Jassy [...].’⁴³ Finally, if it seemed impossible to bridge the gap between Athens and the foreign cities, the instructive example for the action that was required if it was to be made presentable came from another Greek city, Piraeus, because ‘do not forget that from our neighbouring demoniac city, which its former Mayor, Mr Retsinas, has made a perfectly European megalopolis, we could derive many lessons and teachings as to how streets are laid and maintained and met-

41. *Asty* newspaper, 18 February 1896. 42. *Ibid.* 43. *Asty* newspaper, 21 February 1896.

alled'.⁴⁴ Piraeus, the only Greek city that was used to compare with the capital, could be identified with the third category of 'foreigners', the Greek provincials. Thus the Greek capital with its antiquities was robbed of its magic by exotic Cairo, was shattered as a national centre in the eyes of the emigrant and the provincial, who would exclaim in their disillusionment: 'Oh dear, brother, mud in the winter, dust in the summer – that's your Athens',⁴⁵ and was losing the battle to its industrial neighbour. Given, moreover, that 'We are not going to convince anyone that we have the wealth of Paris, the elegance of Pest or of Florence or of Milan [...] We are not going to make anyone imagine that our city has the qualities even of the last of the last English township',⁴⁶ Athens seemed like an 'unknown' city, which did not belong to any geographical and cultural environment and, by extension, was incapable of classification and recognition by the visitor to it.

The above geographical and anthropological panorama of the visitors, in spite of its heterogeneous character in respect to the motives and expectations of the visit, social origins, nationality and language, helps us to deduce the profile of the visiting foreigner as sketched by the residents. He was, then, one who resided in or took his holidays in a contemporary modern city or, at least, a Greek city with similar characteristics, who would expect of the city organising the Olympic Games to resemble the representations of the experiences of his own urban time-space. The foreign guests were not, therefore, 'unknown'. They had a specific identity: they were residents of modern cities, which were characterised by the modern spirit. The construction of the image of the foreign quasi-guest was often based on irony: the unsuspecting visitor to neoclassical Athens – capital of the Greek state – was in danger at any moment of coming face to face with a city that was 'unknown' in terms of his expectations, one immersed in dust, filth, and wretchedness.

By degrees, the foreigner lost any determinant of his national identity and of the motives for his journey. He was transformed from a devotee of antiquity and visitor to the monuments or an 'emigrant or provincial' Greek into a culturally superior visitor who would, apart from the antiquities and the city, visit and mingle with the residents and form a view of modern Greek society itself. The change in the image of the foreigner-guest was a function of the change in the self-image of the resident-host, and the regulator of the relation between them was the image of the city.

The meeting of the two sides, delimited in time, presupposed the discovery of a common 'language' if any misunderstandings and misapprehensions that would render the hospitality itself open to question were to be avoided – the discovery, that is, of a cultural code common to both sides by which, on the one hand, it would be possible for the foreigners to address and to respond to the hosts in accordance with the rules, the values, and the meanings that resided in the language of the indigenous society,⁴⁷

44. *Ibid.* 45. *Ibid.* 46. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 January 1896.

47. On the importance of 'language' understood not only as a verbal activity but also as a usage in the conceptualisation of both the guest and hospitality, Jacques Derrida / Anne Dufourmantelle, *Of Hospitality*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, pp. 131, 133 (transl. Rachel Bowlby).

and, on the other, the hosts would be in a position to ‘translate’ the Athenian urban landscape so that this would be intelligible to their guests.

At the beginning of the preparations for the hosting of the Games, a journalist on the *Acropolis* newspaper, having lambasted the indifference of the state and the municipal authority to the desperate – as he termed it – state of public health conditions prevailing in the city, noted that ‘we, you see, are of the principle that when you invite someone to your home, you should take a mop to your house and you should polish the doorknobs and dust the stuffed birds, put fresh water in the gold-fish-bowl, tidy the antimacassars of the settees [...]’, and he went on in an ironic tone: ‘I propose that we should set up a large warehouse in which we would keep with the greatest care, under the direct supervision of our Mayor and our police, all the dead cats in the streets and all the sardine barrels and all the old shoes, and all the potholes and all the dust and all the misery, and as soon as the foreigners put out to sea, we should get them all out of there and put them in place’.⁴⁸ The use of the metaphor of the clean and neat household to explain how those responsible should act to create a presentable city was accompanied by the description of the person charged with the duties of receiving a foreigner: ‘exactly as a housewife prepares her humble home, lays a few coloured shaggy carpets, whitewashes her place, cleans and beautifies her courtyard when she is to receive a guest who is a stranger, who, to a greater or lesser extent, will have his requirements, when he has given notice that he accepts the invitation to honour her home’.⁴⁹ The choice of the feminine version of the host and the identification of the attitude of the state and the Municipality with the duties of the housewife should be correlated to the more general idea that time was tightly pressing, and so it would be impossible to implement what had been planned. ‘We should, in welcoming 30,000 foreign guests, as a minimum, provide them not with the comforts, not with the prosperity, not with the easy and human life that they find at home, but at least such conditions of public health [...].⁵⁰ The recognition of the cultural and economic superiority of the ‘other’ lent a sexist character to the relation between host and guest. The Greek last-minute response to the foreign ‘challenge’ was bounded and limited in proportion to the performance of the womanly duty of cleaning inscribed within the framework of privacy in the face of the ‘cosmopolitan’, ‘rich’, ‘noble’ ‘other’ – clearly a man – who moved with ease in public space, such as the city. The cleanliness of the house/city, achieved by the woman/state was not capable, of course, of saving the honour of the nation, but at least the creation of hygienic conditions, brought about ‘in the circle of humanity’, would save the honour of its people.⁵¹

The question of honour, both of the nation and of the city, was raised with clarity when the masculine version of the host, hitherto absent, made its appearance in the discourse of the press. Contempt for the state and the Municipality was not only the

48. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 December 1895.

49. *Asty* newspaper, 21 February 1896.

50. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 January 1896. 51. *Ibid.*

natural consequence of a political authority that was indifferent, but, most important, of a political authority that by means of evasions refused to garner even the minimal sums of money required to carry out certain rudimentary public works, ‘the expenses of a self-respecting householder’.⁵² If the host in the female version had a duty to act within the confines of the home to the extent of her limited capabilities and to function with good order and cleanliness as the pivots, in this case, the male host had to take action with the symbols of public space – money. Only by spending money would he be in a position to achieve hospitality and to follow the code of mutual obligations that was binding on both sides. Consequently, the ‘inferior’ host was called upon not to insult his guest, given, moreover, that he was to derive significant prestige from his presence, from the moment that he had invited him, by taking into account his needs and by showing an interest in his wishes. To the extent of his own capabilities, he had a duty to do everything that he could in order to gain the recognition and gratitude of his host, otherwise there was a danger that he would defame him. By insulting him he was cancelling the exchange of honour prescribed by the laws of hospitality, and at the same time he was losing his own honour. A state, therefore, that was unable to behave in this way and be a ‘self-respecting householder’ was held to be unfit to perform the role of host.

As the state and municipal mechanisms were unable to grasp the critical nature of the situation, the citizens themselves were called upon to show for their city the same sensitivity that they showed for their own private space and to head the efforts by undertaking the role of host. The *Acropolis*, in an article entitled ‘Your obol, Athenians’, called upon rich and poor, merchants, industrialists, financiers, and professional men to forego for one day their non-essential expenditure, and the unions and associations to contribute to the decoration and embellishment of the city.⁵³ The appropriation of public space through the logic of private responsibility may, in our opinion, constitute the point of extension of our reasoning as to the contrivance of the host and the structuring of the relation, to all appearance of equality, of hospitality.

The ‘blissful ignorance’ of the working-class strata and the exhaustion of their reflections on the fate of the Games in the expectation of Greek victories were indicative of the limited horizon that was characteristic of them in any understanding of the more profound reasons for disquiet in connection with the acceptable presentation of the city and its citizens to the foreigners.⁵⁴ But even when they were not concerned with the fate of the Greek athletes, their attention was captivated by a longing for profit, the financial benefits accruing from the attendance of so many visitors. Apart from the working classes of grocers, greengrocers, hoteliers, householders, coachmen and shoeblocks, the show was stolen by the housewives with two or three rooms, who drove out the occupants willy-nilly, sought police intervention to get rid of their honest tenants, obtained a few bedsteads and a few sheets for the new furnishing or, worst of

52. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 December 1895.

53. *Acropolis* newspaper, 17 January 1896 and 17 February 1896.

54. *Acropolis* newspaper, 15 February 1896.

all, borrowed money at high interest in order to smarten up some of their rooms.⁵⁵ The reaction of the working classes, who wanted to exploit in any way they could the presence of the visitors for their own benefit, in no way resembled the generosity of a host to his guests. The author of the newspaper article contrasted the concern of the ‘immediately superior class’, using the example of a lawyer who, angered by the indifference of the authorities, had pointed out to him an open-air urinal at a central point in the city. In his person the journalist saw the concerned and conscientious citizens who expected that holding the Games would solve the chronic problems of the Athenian streets, and those who knew what hospitality meant, and what it meant to be judged and found wanting by a disillusioned foreigner.⁵⁶

The newspapers appealed to the citizens of Athens to contribute their obol. According to their reasoning, the finding of money would save the honour of the city and, consequently, that of Greece. The rhetoric of raising private responsibility to the level of care for the urban space in the face of public irresponsibility and inertia was particularly reinforced by the elevation of Georgios Averoff, because of his gift of 920,000 drachmas for the refacing of the Stadium with marble, into an emblematic figure in the sphere of the Games. In the course of the preparation of the public works and the sharp criticism, pessimism about the attitude of the state and the Municipality was succeeded by the hope that other Greeks of the diaspora would offer to shoulder the various expenses and so the problem would be solved. The negative picture of the state mechanism and the Municipality was not reversed even when, albeit belatedly, the projects that were concerned with the organisational side of the Games were in train, together with the planting of trees in the squares, the painting of buildings, the cleaning up of the city, and street lighting. We should also bear in mind the mandatory levy on the country’s other municipalities in proportion to the financial standing of each.⁵⁷

Other Greeks from abroad may not have given sums comparable with the donation of Georgios Averoff, but there was no shortage of contributions from that source. The HOC succeeded in realising the sum of 200,000 drachmas from the state as a prepayment from the sale of commemorative postage stamps, the issuing of which it had undertaken with a view to the money being spent on the street-cleaning and lighting of the city. At the same time, it set up committees of ‘respectable’ citizens in order to hold collections for the decoration of the city, and, according to the press, the response of the citizens, particularly of the merchants, was exceptionally satisfactory.⁵⁸ Initiatives on the part of politicians in donating money, such as the decision of the Minister of the Interior, Kyriakoulis Mavromichalis, to undertake, at his own expense, the renovation of the ministry’s building at a cost of 10,000 drachmas, were welcomed with enthusiasm.⁵⁹ Little by little, the Reception Committee gathered to itself an

55. *Estia* newspaper, 21 March 1896. 56. *Ibid.*

57. *Acropolis* newspaper, 10 February 1896.

58. *Acropolis* newspaper, 12 February 1896, 13 February 1896, 14 February 1896, and 27 February 1896.

59. *Estia* newspaper, 12 March 1896. It was also said that Skouzes would undertake the cost of renovating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

increasing number of powers in connection with the embellishment and the cleanliness of the city, marginalising the Municipality, whose role was limited to carrying out the decisions.⁶⁰ Some forty days before the beginning of the Games, the *Acropolis* undertook to inform its readers of the progress on the projects, noting that the various committees were working quietly, but with excellent results.⁶¹ A limited circle of individuals belonging to the upper stratum of Athenian society possessed the qualifications to undertake the role of host and to preserve the honour of the ‘home’.⁶² They shared their images of modern urban spaces with their distinguished guests (since they often travelled to the European capitals), and so had found themselves in the place of the guest; they spoke the languages of their guests, and they followed the same lifestyle. The perception of the space of the city in terms of a household, in any event, corresponded to their own value system. The bourgeois family ideal and its natural space, the home, was one of the constituents of the bourgeois identity in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Its sexist character appointed private space to be the kingdom of female action and responsibility, while public space was the privileged field of the male presence. The man, of course, had the last word on the subject of the hearth and home since his authority was undisputed, but new ideas about the position of women in Greek society brought them to the forefront and from being unseen figures in the family routine appointed them trustees of society and the nation, charging them with the lofty mission of bringing up children, tomorrow’s citizens, and of turning the home into a peaceful and pleasant environment for the other members of the family.

The new duties of women, orientated towards the achievement of family harmony, merged with the ‘principles of domestic economy’. Their teaching was considered necessary both for young schoolgirls and for mature women. This new normative discourse set good order and precision, the avoidance of waste and of luxury, cleanliness and the application of the rules of hygiene as bases for the well-being of the household.⁶³ Over and above family life, however, the home possessed a special symbolic weight within the context of the rising bourgeois communalism. The bourgeois home and its rituals, such as soirées, tea parties, receptions, and gatherings of

60. *Asty* newspaper, 27 February 1896.

61. *Acropolis* newspaper, 14 February 1896.

62. In January, on the initiative of the President of the Organising Committee, T. Philimon, by order of the Crown Prince, a hundred or so members of the Athenian aristocracy gathered on the premises of the ‘Parnassos’ Society with a view to conferring on the presentability of the city. *Acropolis* newspaper, 20 January 1896.

63. On the above see Eleni Varika, *H εξέγερση των γυναικών. Η γένεση μιας φεμινιστικής συνείδησης στην Ελλάδα 1833-1907* [The uprising of the ladies. The genesis of a feminist consciousness in Greece 1833-1907], Athens 1987; Alexandra Bakalaki/Eleni Elegmitou, *Η εκπαίδευση ‘εις τα τον οίκου’ και τα γυναικεία καθήκοντα. Από την ίδρυση των ελληνικού κράτους έως την εκπαίδευτική μεταρρύθμιση του 1929* [Education in ‘domestic matters’ and women’s duties. From the foundation of the Greek state to the educational reform of 1929], Athens 1987; and Eleni Fournaraki, *Εκπαίδευση και αγωγή των κοριτσιών. Ελληνικοί προβληματισμοί* [Education and training of girls. Forms of Greek thinking], Athens 1987.

friends came to serve as a mirror of domestic harmony and prosperity and at the same time as a means of negotiating and acquiring social kudos.

The idea that ‘women’s nature’ was synonymous with sensitivity, delicacy, and artistic feeling, which legitimated its confinement to private space, opened the way for the contribution of the women of Athens to a change in the appearance of the city. They were called upon, then, to show their capabilities in tasteful decoration by transforming public space into a pleasant private environment. The undertaking involved the use of flags of every country, coats of arms, and fabrics to adorn facades, in consultation with the owners of the houses and shops as to the nature and methods of decoration that were desirable. The cost was estimated at 50 to 60 francs and interest focused on central streets, with Ermou, the most commercial street of the capital, at the top of the list.⁶⁴

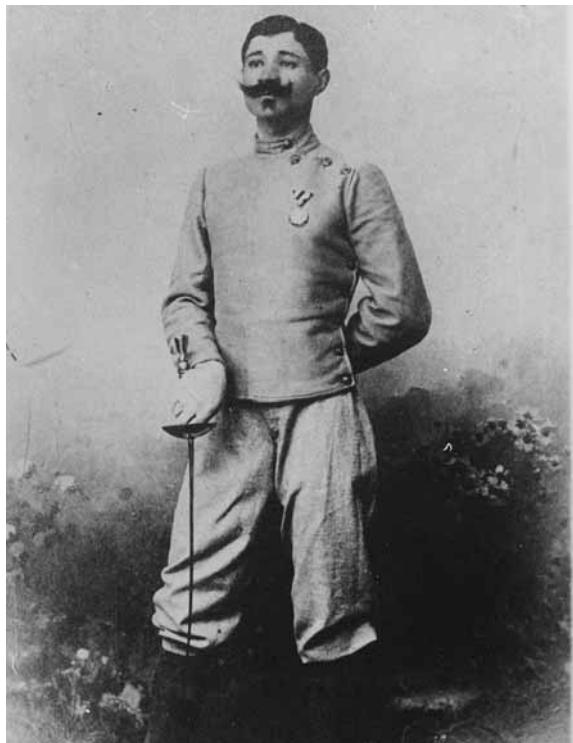
The closer we come to the period of the Games, the further we depart from the representation of the city as a place of barbarism. The progress of the projects increased hopes of a successful outcome from the Games and the acquisition of a clean and tidy city. The desideratum, in any event, was no longer only cleanliness. Embellishment, the planting of trees, floodlighting, whatever, in other words, had been condemned as superfluous and a subject for ridicule in the approach to the foreigners monopolised attention. The collective self-image, always through the conviction that private citizens and not the state were working for the great cause, was no longer negotiated in its relation to the ‘culturally superior other’ on terms of necessity and the preservation of the national honour, albeit at the last minute. The disjunctive perception of the gender roles in the identity of the host gave place to their contrapuntal functioning with a view to the creation of a clean, beautiful, and modern capital. The man, protagonist in the public space, would undertake to support a national cause financially. The woman, familiarised with care for the public image of the family and of her spouse, which was attentively constructed on a daily basis around the domestic environment and communalities, would undertake the decoration and embellishment of the ‘national household’.

Private initiative had, of course, contributed decisively to the image of the city, particularly in the last three decades of the century. The majority of public buildings had been put up thanks to the donations of Greeks from abroad.⁶⁵ We should add to these their mansions, glistening with white marble, to complete the ‘private’ picture of the Athenian public space. As Eleni Bastéa notes, the wealthy Greeks of the diaspora and the Ottoman Empire, apart from being the *par excellence* creditors of the Greek state, were at the same time the greatest patrons of its architecture.⁶⁶ Typical of the

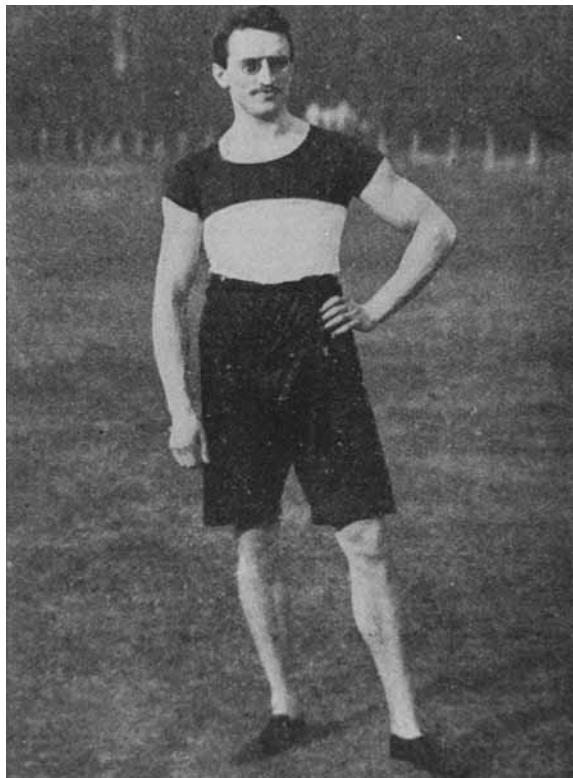
64. *Asty* newspaper, 24 February 1896.

65. For a detailed listing of the public buildings and their donors, see S. Kousolinos, *Οδηγός της Ελλάδος* [Guide to Greece], Athens 1900, pp. 163-76.

66. Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, *op. cit.*, p. 150. On the orientation of the capital of the Greeks of the diaspora towards commercial, stock exchange, and banking activities and not towards industrial investments see, for example, Yorgos Dertilis, *Ελληνική οικονομία (1830-1910) και Βιομηχανική Επανάσταση* [Greek economy (1830-1910) and Industrial Revolution], Athens 1984, pp. 60-6. On the image of



*Tilemachos Karakalos, second Olympic victor
in the fencing (1896).*
[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.59]



*Fritz Hofmann, captain of the German
gymnastics team (1896).*
[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.60]

town planning structuring of Athens, but also of that of other Greek cities of the period, was the fact that although the design of the public space, on the model of the neo-classical city, placed emphasis on highlighting the public space and the relevant buildings, the statutory framework and the state budget proved inadequate for its realisation. Thus the ‘modern Greek city that was shaped by the nineteenth century was produced “nationally” and realised “privately”, with the presence of the public element in its space understated’.⁶⁷ At the end of the century, the intervention of the Greeks of the diaspora in the Athenian urban space was recognised as a turning point in the transformation of the capital into a city with European characteristics.⁶⁸ Publications of the period of the Games spoke of its epithet of the ‘white city’, because of the marble of the mansions of these Greeks.⁶⁹ During the course of the preparations for the Olympics, comparisons in the press between the private initiative, which it invoked, with that of the Greek capitalists from abroad are not encountered. However, as we shall see below, the results of the public benefactions of these Greeks of the diaspora on the body of the city formed the high point both in the guides to the city and of Kallirhoe Parren’s discourse in their attempts to draw attention in the eyes of the foreign visitors to the modern aspect of the capital.

*From ‘the city of faint-hearted lighting and foulness’
to ‘some megalopolis’*

The period of preparation for the Games emerged as a laborious process of determining the Athenian identity. It was truly ironic that the foreigners (who visited it for the

these Greeks from abroad that took shape within Greek society during the nineteenth century, in relation, on the one hand, with their role as public benefactors and, on the other, with their profit-making practices, see Skopetea, *To ‘Πρότυπο Βασίλειο’ και η Μεγάλη Ιδέα*, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-84. And on the practice of public benefactions in Greece in relation to the conditions of the integration of the benefactors into the various districts, their family status, the cultural environments of their origins, their economic and occupational profile, and the time at which their fortunes were made, see Vaso Theodorou, ‘Ευεργετισμός και όψεις της κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης στις παροικίες (1870-1920)’ [Public benefaction and aspects of social integration into the districts (1870-1920)], *Ta Istorika* 7 (December 1987), pp. 119-54.

67. K. Kakoula/N. Papamichos/Vilma Hastaoglu, *Σχέδια πόλεων στην Ελλάδα του 19ον αιώνα* [City plans in nineteenth-century Greece], Thessaloniki 1990, pp. 117-18. Also, on the ‘private’ nature of the Athenian public space see Alexis Politis, *Ρομαντικά χρόνια. Ιδεολογίες και νοοτροπίες στην Ελλάδα του 1830-1880* [Romantic years. Ideologies and mentalities in Greece, 1830-1880], Athens 1993, pp. 80-2; Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-51.

68. See, for example, Theodoros Vellianitis, ‘Αι Αθήναι του 1888’ [Athens of 1888], in the *Αθηναϊκόν ημερολόγιον του 1888* [Athenian almanac, 1888], of the joint authorship of ‘literary lovers of the Muses’ under P. Printezis and G. Mavroghenis, Athens 1887.

69. Georgios K. Pop, ‘Νέαι Αθήναι’ [New Athens], in *Η Ελλάς κατά των Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896. Πανελλήνιον εικονογραφημένον λεύκωμα* [Greece during the Olympic Games of 1896. Panhellenic illustrated album], Athens 1896.

first time) seemed to know the Greek capital better than its residents. The former were entrenched behind its powerful symbolic connotations in the discourse on European civilisation and the post-Revolutionary tradition of travellers' texts. The latter attempted to integrate modern Athens into the visual field of the visitors, in parallel and not marginally in relation to the ancient city, stressing their harmonious co-existence as a result of Hellenic continuity. At the same time they wanted to convince the culturally 'superior' visitor that reflected in the Greek capital was the progress being achieved by Greek society and not cultural backwardness, an inheritance from the Levantine past. This particular account presupposed the settled arrangement in the interior of the city of all those cultural formations that could possibly confirm Greek alterity.

The structuring of a rhetoric for the persuasion of the foreigners initially put the people of the city themselves and their manners and customs under the microscope of observation; it then turned to the examination of the image that was presented by the streets, the squares, and the buildings of the capital, and it concluded with the decoration of the city and the organising of festive events.

The semantic codes of communication, such as gestures and language, the Athenian domestic environment, the ways in which economic transactions were carried out were thought to involve the danger of questioning the official meaning and reversing it, with the result that an underdeveloped capital would be projected, whose chief characteristics were the domination of the Levantine past and slavish imitation – that is, dependence on foreign customs. The result of the struggle between official strategies, which were marked by system, absence of ambiguity, and homogeneity, on the one hand, and unsystematised, non-homogeneous, and semantically ambiguous behaviours, on the other, was finally to determine the content of the collective self-presentation.

A journalist on *Asty*, on the occasion of the appearance of the foreigners in the streets of Athens, gave expression to his scepticism as to how far the Greeks were in a position to control their behaviour towards them, so that they would conduct themselves 'with finesse and taste', avoiding excessive attentions, which would be likely to annoy them and lead to the characterisation of the locals as uncivilised.⁷⁰ The quest for self-control in everyday communication, through the avoidance of gesticulations, as Herzfeld notes, was a constituent of the upper social class of Victorian England and at the same time an indicator of the cultural level of a people.⁷¹ Consequently, 'cultural lack of self-control', according to the newspaper, jeopardised the European identity of the Athenians.

The need for self-control was not, however, confined to instances of contact between residents and foreigners; even the suspension of the codes of familiarity that organised everyday communication between the locals themselves was judged necessary. Thus the customary exchanges of insults and the quarrelling between the boat-

70. *Asty* newspaper, 19 March 1896.

71. Herzfeld, *Anthropology*, *op. cit.* [Greek edition: *Η ανθρωπολογία μέσα από τον καθρέφτη. Κριτική εθνογραφία της Ελλάδας και της Ευρώπης*, trans. Rania Astrinaki, Athens 1998, pp. 175-9].

men of Piraeus constituted proof of Greek barbarism when these occurred during the disembarkation of foreign travellers.⁷² Apart from the customs of the working-class strata, the civilisation of the bourgeois went under the microscope. The *Asty* journalist noted the gradual transformation of the day-to-day external image of the citizens of Athens, drawing attention, *inter alia*, to the lisping of French words and expressions in their daily encounters.⁷³ The *Ladies' Journal* urged Athenian women, in severe tones, not to speak in English or French during the course of their gatherings in public places, because that would make a painful impression on Greeks from abroad, and on foreigners more generally, as being evidence of an ignorant and degenerate people, which had no knowledge of its noble Hellenic ancestry.⁷⁴ In this case, the danger of 'cultural lack of self-control' appeared in an inverted form: it did not derive from the use of codes of communication unfamiliar to the visitors, but, on the contrary, from the establishment of the familiarity of the Greeks with their own culture. Apparently the students of the University were also seeking to prove their noble Greek origins, 'of which the palpable and most tangible evidence is the language itself', when they cheered the foreign athletes and made speeches in the language of Demosthenes, something which caused de Coubertin to comment with caustic finesse that during the Games there had perhaps been an abuse of that specific language...⁷⁵

We frequently encounter the quest for self-control in the press's references when the subject is the economic benefits accruing to traders from the attendance of the foreigners is the subject. Spyridon Lambros, during the meeting of the 'hundred elite citizens' of Athenian society who were seeking to map out a plan of action for the presentability of the city, asked that 'we should appear to people from abroad not as grasping in our dealings, but hospitable and *evlaveis* [discreet]'.⁷⁶ The etymology of the word *evlaveia*, a term invested with meaning *par excellence* by religious discourse, is defined as reverence for the divine, but also, more generally, as respect, reserve, caution. A person who is *evlavis* avoids offending. We could at this point look at the analogy between the divine element and the foreigners on the axis of the recognition of their sanctity. Anthropological studies have demonstrated the sanctity of the stranger as a function of the risk he involves for the community, a result of his coming from 'an unknown, mysterious and unfamiliar world', a fact that turns him into a bearer of a special knowledge and a vehicle of a revelation of the divine. The avoidance of his dangerousness means exorcism and a refusal to receive him. On the other hand, receiving him means, as with the divine element, his secularisation, his integration into the society of the community. His being turned into a guest replaces the hostile and insulting attitude of the members of the community towards him with his un-

72. *Asty* newspaper, 4 March 1896.

73. *Asty* newspaper, 13 March 1896.

74. *Ladies' Journal* 9/432 (25 February 1896).

75. Pierre de Coubertin, 'The Olympic Games of 1896', *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* LIII (November 1896), pp. 39-53.

76. *Acropolis* newspaper, 20 January 1896.

conditional incorporation. The converse consists in the turning of the stranger who is hostile to the community, whose intentions are given, into someone whose manifestation of hostility remains suspended.⁷⁷

In the present instance, the necessity of self-control is displaced from the prohibition of familiarity to the field of transactions and the danger of the foreigners falling victim to Greek profiteering. The references in the press to the question of whether and to what extent the prices of products were controlled so as to avoid phenomena of exploitation of the visitors are frequent. In the firing line were shopkeepers of every description and the opportunism of the working-class strata because of their efforts to let even abandoned premises - hovels. Of course, the lust for economic benefit may have been castigated as evidence of the non-European character of the Greeks and at the same time as an insult to the guest, but it was no more than one side of the same coin; the other was the constant promotion through the press of the importance that the attendance of so many foreigners would have for the Greek and the Athenian economy.

Control, however, was not to be confined to the public space alone. Dangers also lurked in the private space, and, moreover, more significant dangers. The *Ladies' Journal* noted that the mingling of the residents with the foreigners would not be confined to the Stadium and public gatherings, but that the latter would inevitably enter Athenian homes, getting to know, and studying, their owners. It therefore drew the attention of the housewives with the 5,000 rooms that had finally been judged fit to be let by the competent committee to the need to take particular care that they should be clean. It pointed out that every effort should be made for the domestic environment to correspond to the luxury and the good taste of similar environments in Europe. Since, however, in contrast with the prosperity of European households, Greek houses were marked by a more general austerity, meticulous cleanliness and hygiene would suffice to balance matters.⁷⁸ Once again, it was acknowledged that Greeks fell short of an idealised model, this time located in a field to which meaning attached as an indicator of European cultural superiority: the domestic environment. The inevitable co-existence of the local with the foreigner or, otherwise, his invasion of the Greek home overturned up to this moment all the strategies of symbolic protection, so that he would be kept at a distance from the domestic environment. The new fantasy frontier nevertheless existed, and this was none other than cleanliness. If we bear in mind only its symbolic power and its various connotations as a constituent of medical discourse from the mid nineteenth century onwards on the European continent,⁷⁹ we shall realise how self-evident this matter was in the behaviour of someone who sought to have the right to be part of the civilised world recognised to him.

Cleanliness, in any event, apart from being a private value, was also elevated, as we have seen, into a constituent of national self-affirmation and was the major issue of

77. Rivers, *The Fate of Shechem*, *op. cit.*, 99-102.

78. *Ladies' Journal*, *op. cit.*

79. See, indicatively, Alain Corbin, *Le Miasme et la jonquille*, Flammarion, Paris 1986.

the policies of intervention as a necessary condition for the reception of the foreigners. But what was the approach to the specific problem and the solutions proposed within their context? To what extent, in other words, was the discourse on a clean city compatible with a more general line of thought articulated around the medical ideas on hygiene of the period? We shall carry out our review of this matter by invoking the picture of the Athens of normality and not of the event.

Athens in the late nineteenth century faced significant problems, above all that of a water shortage. The long-term efforts to find a permanent solution had not been crowned with success. The shortage of water, in conjunction with the flare-up of epidemics and the high mortality rate chiefly among the lower social strata had increased worries both in medical circles and with the local authorities, but this was not accompanied, until the early twentieth century, by the taking of the necessary measures and the laying down of welfare policies. The criticisms by the press of the poor state of the Athenian streets, the failure to plant trees, the dust, the question of the city's water supply, and the inadequate lighting had been more or less daily since the 1870s. The chronic economic problems of the municipal authority, the dependence of the Municipality on the government of the day and the more general political climate, since many members of the City Council were also Members of Parliament, and the confusion of responsibilities between the Municipality and the Prefecture intensified the stagnant state of affairs in the finding of a solution to the problems.⁸⁰ We must add to the above reasons the constant arrival of migrants from within Greece. This factor, in conjunction with the failure to draw up a new city plan, resulted in the appearance of neglected working-class districts, outside the historic city but in immediate proximity to it, where living conditions were wretched.⁸¹

Just five years after the Games, the committee of the Athens Municipal Council that had undertaken to compile a report on public health and cleanliness conditions in view of the epidemics of plague among the Asiatic populations presented a dark picture of the districts of the city.⁸² With the exception of the area between Omonia Square and Syntagma Square (which was where the palace, the more important public buildings, and the venues of the social life of the upper social strata of Athens were situated), the rest of the areas faced aggravated problems. The Town Hall itself, the

80. Eleni Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens*, op. cit., pp. 198-200. Also G. P. Paraskevopoulos, *Oι δήμαρχοι των Αθηνών (1835-1907). Μετά προεισαγωγής περί δημογεροντίας* [The mayors of Athens (1835-1907). With a preliminary introduction on the *demonerontia*], Athens 1907 (photocopy reprint, Athens 2001; on the period of the Olympic Games, pp. 391-2).

81. On the genesis of a working-class district of Athens in the nineteenth century, centring on the appearance and permanent establishment of the productive 'zone' of the city and the arrival of the migrants, see Christina Agriantoni, 'Συνοικία Μεταξουργείο' [The Metaxourgeio district], in Christina Agriantoni/Maria Christina Hatzioannou (eds), *To Μεταξονογείο της Αθήνας* [Metaxourgeio, Athens], Athens 1995, pp. 157-71.

82. *Η πόλις των Αθηνών υπό έποιην καθαριότητος και νυείας. Έκθεσις της εκ Δημοτικών Συμβούλων Επιτροπής επί της νυείας και καθαριότητος της πόλεως* [The city of Athens from the point of view of cleanliness and health. Report of the committee of City Councilors on the health and cleanliness of the city], Athens 1901.

Varvakeio building, parts of the commercial triangle of the city in Athinas Street, even the newly-built Neapoli district, with its good-quality street layout, were afflicted with stagnant waste of every kind, which hindered the circulation of vehicles and pedestrians, gave off disagreeable stenches, and was a constant source of infections for the nearby houses. The further one went from the centre of the city towards the neglected western and south-western districts, the worse the situation became: mounds of human and animal excrement, a lack of gutters and pavements, ditches and potholes of sludge, together with open-air urinals made up the profile of a city exposed to epidemics of every kind. The city councillors noted as a basic and permanent cause the shortage of drains and the lack of water to clean the very few which did exist. A co-ordinated and ambitious plan of action for the cleanliness of most of the districts of the capital had to be put into operation by the Municipality and the police, which would include the laying of drains, frequent fumigations, unblocking of gutters, extension of the city cleaning services to the remote districts, and supervision of the citizens by the police to force them to comply with the proposed rules of hygiene. In spite of their comments on the defective functioning of the municipal cleaning services, their attention remained steadily focused on the behaviour of the members of the poorer households, confirming yet again the conviction of the bourgeoisie that the poor were largely co-responsible for keeping the threat of epidemics alive by the contempt that they showed in their daily life for observing elementary preventive measures.

The ‘cleanliness’ spoken of by the press on the occasion of the Olympic Games was not the ‘cleanliness’ of medical discourse, which demonised epidemics and constructed social representations for the degraded strata. The interventions on the body of the city that were considered necessary did not concern principally the everyday Athens of the outlying districts, the Athens described in such detail by the city councillors in their report, but specific spaces that were very likely to be exposed to the view of the visitors: the Piraeus-Athens railway station, archaeological sites, such as parts of the interior of the Acropolis or its environments and the Dipylon, and, of course, central streets or points near public buildings. Furthermore, ‘cleanliness’ was dissociated from the protection and safeguarding of the health of Athenian society. The shortage of water, in the first case, proved the inability to solve the city’s hygiene problems. Its abundant use, in the second, was called for to deal with the troublesome dust. The elimination of bodily secretions from public places by the installation of urinals was not required as a measure to avoid creating sources of infection, but as a measure to eliminate the offensive image and the bad odours. At the same time, co-ordinated efforts were seen as called for to restore, correct and arrange the more general image of the city: the planting of more trees and care for those which already existed, the immediate repair of pavements, their liberation from the wares of shopkeepers and their ‘dirty awnings’, repair of the streets, so that pedestrians could walk in them safely, and the removal of beggars, shoeblocks and itinerant salesmen from the central streets.⁸³ In this way, cleanliness and good order became the weapons of

83. *Asty* newspaper, 13 March 1896.

the people of the city in turning Athens into a place of the ordering of the senses. The bodies of the foreigners would be protected from the secretions of the body of the city, whether these were annoyances to the senses of smell and sight or undesirable contacts with beggars and offensive noises from street vendors.

Spectacles and festive events could not be left out from this control of the senses of the visitors. The organising committee took action to monitor systematically both the nature of the celebrations and of the mass entertainment and the decoration of the city. Thus it refused to adopt various proposals by individuals and groups as to the holding of events of a popular character, such as eating contests, while at the same time it declined to provide space for puppet performances, or to others which, though within the spirit of the revival of antiquity, were deemed exaggerated.⁸⁴ Antiquity in particular was too powerful a symbol for it to be allowed to be managed by others. It accepted, on the other hand, three performances of ancient drama and was responsible for bringing bands from the Ionian Islands. It also instituted a prize of 6,000 drachmas for the best Greek melodrama theatre company to give performances during the course of the Games.⁸⁵ The European artistic profile of the capital was completed by the arrival of Italian and French melodrama companies. The more general stage set was complemented by the erection, in the Palace Square, of two pyramids following the design of the Eiffel Tower (these were decorated with escutcheons, flags, laurels, myrtles, and royal symbols⁸⁶), three panoramas, of which two depicted historical subjects – one scenes from the Greek Revolution and the other the siege of Paris in 1871 – while the third was an entertainment in the form of a labyrinth,⁸⁷ and three arches, one in the Stadium, one at the entry to Stadiou Street, and another in Syntagma Square.⁸⁸ Finally, the crowning glory was electricity and the phantasmagoria that it produced. As it is known, the use of gas and, later, electricity was a real revolution in the lives of the people of the cities of Europe from the late eighteenth century. The lighting of public and private places drove out sexual immorality, broke up the suspect shadows, and made dealing with criminality by the police more effective by transforming the city into a supervised field of human visibility. The liveliness of nightlife, with the easy and safe circulation of citizens, a feature reinforcing communalism, turned the city into a permanent spectacle. Gas and electricity were elevated into symbols of modernity and their multi-faceted application was adopted relatively quickly by the countries of the periphery and the local authorities of the cities in the nineteenth century. The setting up of permanent lamps along the main

84. Philimon, the committee's secretary, himself rejected a re-enactment of the ancient Panathenaic festivals on the grounds that it would be insulting to one's ancestors, while the holding of Bacchic routs by a group of actors does not seem to have materialised, in spite of the initially favourable response to the proposal; *Acropolis* newspaper, 25 February 1896.

85. *Asty* newspaper, 19 March 1896; *Acropolis*, 24 February 1896.

86. *Estia* newspaper, 14 March 1896.

87. *Acropolis* newspaper, 14 February 1896, 17 February 1896, and 25 February 1896; *Asty* newspaper, 17 March 1896.

88. *Acropolis* newspaper, 8 March 1896.

streets was a sign of progress and modernisation, a fact which enhanced the image of the cities in the eyes of the foreigners, chiefly European visitors.⁸⁹

The planning of the committee charged with the city's decoration included the installation of gas lamps on main streets, and on the three major streets that ended at or passed by the Palace, that is, Panepistimiou, Amalias, and Olgas, the utilisation of the Auer system of mantles.⁹⁰ At the same time, the illumination of the ancient monuments and public buildings was ensured, while lighting in an arc was to bring out the arches and other decorative interventions at the beginning of major streets and in the squares.

The long-suffering capital of previous decades, because of the permanent problem of insufficient lighting, breathed to the rhythm of a European capital. It borrowed for the occasion from the European tradition the extensive use of electricity, arches, even the Eiffel Tower, as well as the practice of panoramas, particularly common in European cities during the course of public ceremonies and exhibitions.⁹¹ Their use turned them into symbols of modernity, while at the same time it served as a steady reminder to the foreigners of the identity of modern Greece. The themes, however, of the decorations of the city operated in precisely the reverse direction by suggesting, ironically, the Greek content of an international event. The opening of the Olympic Games coincided with the celebration of 25 March and the 75th anniversary of the Revolution. The national panorama, a novel spectacle for the Greek public according to the press,⁹² depicted an unsuccessful attack of the Turks during the siege of

89. On the association of street lighting by electricity with the idea of modernisation and of progress in cities of South America, see Samuel J. Martland, 'Progress illuminating the world: Street lighting in Santiago, Valparaiso and La Plata, 1840-1890', *Urban History* 29/2 (2002), pp. 223-38.

90. *Asty* newspaper, 29 February 1896.

91. Panoramas were paintings of large dimensions on a flat or curving surface, which revolved round the viewer or projected before him. The subject matter was varied: battle scenes, portraits, landscapes, views of cities. Their use as a public spectacle dates from the late eighteenth century, as an extension of the familiarisation of the public with the illustrated press. Nevertheless, this visual combination of the spectacle with science was grounded in the educational and recreational orientation of international exhibitions addressed to the general public, in which the industrial world was transformed into a vast spectacle of images through which the viewers were able to take journeys in the mind among various nations and cultures, identifying the individual characteristics of each, their 'progress' or their 'backwardness', and acquire a clear sense of the separation of their present from their past. Panoramas, photography and the use of cinematographic camera were new methods of depicting 'reality'. These methods belonged within an attempt to manage, control and represent a world that was rapidly changing because of colonialism, industrialisation, urbanisation and the rising tourist phenomenon. Supported by new conditions in the field of typography (printing of designs and illustrations) and of industry, they shaped a new visual structure, bringing about a breach with the visual culture of the Renaissance and opening the way for the modern digital culture. See, indicatively, M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory. Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments*, MIT Press, Massachusetts 1996, and more specifically pp. 217-19, 252-7, 260-9, 318-21, and Mitsos Bilalis, 'Ιστορίες "υπολογιστικής έρασης". Αναγνώσεις του 19ου αιώνα σε ψηφιακά περιβάλλοντα έρευνας' [Stories of 'computer vision'. Readings of the 19th century in digital research environments], *Mnemon* 24 (2002), pp. 387-402.

92. *Acropolis* newspaper, 22 February 1896.

Mesolongi and the ‘rabid’ resistance of the Greeks, against a background of the Greek countryside.⁹³ On the day of the anniversary, the foreigners, from the balconies of their hotels, became spectators of the daylong events to mark the national anniversary.⁹⁴ On the occasion of the 75th anniversary, a large arch had been set up in front of the University, with national symbols and pictures of national martyrs in a group, covered with flags and garlands of myrtle and bay.⁹⁵ The patriotic image of the city was complemented by the many Greek flags on houses and various spontaneous acts by private citizens in the city’s central streets, such as the exhibition of a painting in front of a shop in Aeolou Street symbolising the Greek revolution and the rebirth of the nation.⁹⁶ A few days before the opening of the Games, a contributor to *Estia* noted the necessity for citizens to hang some foreign flags from their balconies, on grounds of elementary hospitality, since there had been a host of orders for Greek flags only.⁹⁷ On approaching the Stadium, the visitor could observe that the national symbols had been replaced by those of the origins of the modern Greeks. The second arch, at the Stadium, on the end of Irodou Attikou Street, was decorated with flags and with plaster representations in relief of heroes of mythical times,⁹⁸ while at the entrance to the Stadium four life-size casts – two discus-throwers, an athlete resting, and the goddess Athena – had been set up.⁹⁹ The presence of foreign symbols was restricted to the panorama of the siege of Paris – very little promoted by the newspapers, apart from a reference to setting it up, by way of contrast with the national panorama – at the bridge of the Stadium, to the coat of arms of the eight competing nations, along the entrance of the Stadium, to the flags along Stadiou Street, and to some escutcheons in Syntagma Square.¹⁰⁰ The international athletic event had, then, taken on Greek colour and meaning. If the beholder were in a position during the course of the Games to see clearly the relation of descent between modern athleticism and ancient Greece, in touring Athens during the days of the Olympiad he would have been informed of Greek history. All its traces, permanent and for the occasion, from the Parthenon and the casts at the entrance to the Stadium to the celebration of the 75th anniversary and the Greek flags on the balconies, were a reminder of common-places of reference between Greece and Europe: antiquity and the nation.

All these practices had as their ultimate aim to turn Athens into a hospitable city, capable of rendering the honour owed to its distinguished guests. Nevertheless, the specific interventions were at the same time according meaning to the social relations between the residents and legitimating the existing social hierarchies, because the initiatives corresponded to the semantic horizon of the host, in other words, the bourgeois strata, since the connotations of cleanliness, respectability, and order were a reference to the principles of organisation of the bourgeois household. The festive atmosphere and the floodlighting were a reference to bourgeois private communalities,

93. *Asty* newspaper, 17 March 1896.

94. *Asty* newspaper, 26 March 1896.

95. *Asty* newspaper, 7 February 1896.

96. *Asty* newspaper, 21 March 1896.

97. *Estia* newspaper, 16 March 1896.

98. *Asty* newspaper, 14 March 1896.

99. *Asty* newspaper, 14 March 1896.

100. *Asty* newspaper, 18 March 1896.

controlled by the host and organised on the basis of a strict ritual: the invitation to the visitors, the announcement on their part of their acceptance of it, their welcome at the entrance to the house, the generous provision of food and drink to the accompaniment of music and the keeping up of the pleasant atmosphere throughout the evening by the hosts.¹⁰¹

The Athens of the daily problematic living conditions with the majority of its residents as victims, of the innumerable dangers for the pedestrian, gave its place to a space strictly supervised by a large police force. The Athens of the Olympic Games was a city within the city, a spatial and temporal field for the event, in contrast with the chaotic urban space of everyday routine. The writer in *Asty* was worried about the image and the fate of one very specific part of the capital when he put forward his proposals for the improvement of the appearance of the city: ‘At least the more important and much-frequented streets, Stadiou, Panepistimiou, Akadimias, Ermou, Aeolou, Athinas, Philellinon, Amalias, Patission, Kiphisias, should not have all been completely paved with cement now as an emergency...’¹⁰² It is not difficult to comprehend that this concern for the paving of the streets or, in the last resort, daily sprinkling ‘in order to lay the white and red clay of our streets’¹⁰³ corresponds, with the exception of the last two streets, to the space of Athenian communalism and bourgeois consumption, the public buildings and the Palace, the national symbolisms and public ceremonies. Patission Avenue may have led to the countryside frequented at that period by the working-class strata, but a part of it included the Archaeological Museum, while Kiphisias Avenue led to other countryside, to the summer resort of the upper social strata. The official Reception Committee had divided the city into six parts, so that it could be controlled better and more effectively. But apart from some discouraging observations in the middle of the preparations to the effect that the cleaning of certain parts had made no progress at all, we do not encounter any other reference of this kind.¹⁰⁴ The greater part of Athens, the wretched districts that were to be reported upon some years later by the city councillors, remained, it seems, outside the priorities of the authorities for cleanliness and embellishment.

The city of the Games, delineated clearly in contradistinction from the productive functions of the workshops and the factories, which were located on its western fringes, incorporated a host of services directly associated with the concept of spare time and its subjects. It was there that the most notable hotels, the cleanest restaurants, the most European cafés were to be found, in an environment ideal for strolling, cleansed of odours and noise, where the gaze of the visitors, curious and penetrating, could take in the continuous landscape of Greek modernity. Here were the

101. On the ritual of bourgeois private communalism based on the practices of the Piraeus bourgeois see Yannis Yannitsiotis, ‘Η διαμόρφωση της αστικής τάξης του Πειραιά, 1866-1909’ [The shaping of the bourgeois class of Piraeus, 1860-1909], unpublished doctoral thesis, Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens, Athens 2001, pp. 374-6.

102. *Asty* newspaper, 21 February 1896. 103. *Ibid.*

104. *Asty* newspaper, 2 March 1896 and 3 March 1896.

modern athletics monument of the city (the Panathenaic Stadium), the symbols of political power (Palace and Parliament), the kingdoms of bourgeois privacy (mansions of Greeks from abroad), the pockets of progress and science (banks, Library, University, welfare organisations), the ‘preservation’ of past time (museums). The modern city was, nevertheless, not bereft of the ancient. On the one hand, the neoclassical architecture of the buildings remained a constant reminder of the on-going presence of the illustrious past in the Greek present. On the other, electricity undertook to blend them harmoniously: the sight of the illuminated Acropolis was elevated to a fixed point of orientation within the city, as it was transformed into a spectacle.

A VISITORS' NIGHT-TIME TOUR OF ATHENS

The feature article of the *Ladies' Journal* was devoted to the subject of the Olympic Games for a long period – before, during, and after the event. The impressions of the editor, Kallirhoe Parren, were systematised in six texts - open letters addressed to ‘a good friend’ living in Paris.¹⁰⁵ In these, references to the image of the city occupy a special place. Our interest will centre on one of these that describes the impressions and comments of a group of foreign visitors, headed by the French journalist Hugues Le Rout, on their visit to the Acropolis and the central points of the capital.¹⁰⁶ The proposal that they should take a night-time excursion in the capital was that of Parren, and, as she notes, it was anything but chance and spontaneous: ‘When I proposed, my dear friend, that outing by night, you must understand that my plan did not include only the Acropolis, but anything that could raise the prestige of our city and dispose the visitor favourably towards it from the very start. Of course, our ancient monuments are unrivalled in the world [...] But do we not also have, as a new city, as a new nation, new monuments, capable of being compared with and standing out among all the modern monuments in the world?’ Parren’s ‘plan’, which was based upon her efforts to turn the attention of the foreigners from ancient to modern Greece and at the same time to organise on her own terms the collective self-presentation, could be seen as a paradigmatic version of the overall undertaking of Greek self-presentation to the foreigners.

Parren knew what the foreign visitors were unaware of as they remained attached to a picture of Athens from the past and approached it only as a museum of ancient monuments: the progress that had been made in the country in the last decades of the century. The tour took as its starting-point a landscape familiar to the ‘unsuspecting’ foreigners, the Acropolis and its monuments. Here, the foreigners’ knowledge of antiquity was indisputable and, at the same time, instructive for the Greeks: ‘I was

105. *Ladies' Journal* 10/436 (24 March 1896), 10/437 (31 March 1896), 10/438 (7 April 1896), 10/439 (14 April 1896), 10/440 (21 April 1896), 10/441 (28 April 1896).

106. *Ladies' Journal* 10/440 (21 April 1896).

rewarded by so many of his [Le Rout's] fine ideas and thoughts concerning our ancient greatness', Parren notes. But when the French journalist, after the night-time tour of the modern capital, impressed by the modern monuments of the city, admits that Athens is distinguished by its external elegance and the architecture of its buildings and that, apart from 'the great Museum, in which ancient civilisation exhibits the finest of its treasures', it is at the same time a modern museum, Parren has achieved her purpose. Like an open-handed host, she provides the guests with the enjoyment of a tour in the city, but on her own terms: she arranges the route followed by the carriage and the places to be visited and chooses night-time as the most suitable moment for taking the tour, when the illumination of the Acropolis and of the main streets of the city produce an impressive spectacle. To begin with, she provides them with the illusion of familiarity with and knowledge of the meanings of the space, thus confirming European perceptions of Athens. But then she shatters these by disputing their right, taken for granted up till then, of being the judge of the modern Greeks and thus symbolically reversing their roles in a relation of guidance between the two sides in favour of the locals.

Before turning to the text itself, we need to pause over how its author chose to 'stage manage' her communication with the journal's readers. Central figures for the structuring of her narrative are, on the one hand, the French journalist and, on the other, the imaginary addressee of the open letter, who lives in Paris. Hugues Le Rout was a friend of Parren's, probably through her husband, Ioannis Parren, a French journalist and founder of the Athens News Agency.¹⁰⁷ His impressions of the Olympic Games published in *Figaro*, the newspaper 'of aristocratic society, not only of Paris, but of the whole world', were very favourable. It was the intention of Parren not only to impress just any foreigner, but a specialist, and in this case, who better than a journalist, a mediator, that is, between civilisations, on a famous European newspaper? By distinguishing him, moreover, from the journalists and writers who at any earlier time had given expression to negative comments on Greece and its people and extolling his general standards, the authoress sketches the profile of the person most suitable to judge Greece, suggesting at the same time the ways in which European eyes should see modern Greece and its capital: someone of repute recognised throughout Europe, capable of understanding what others of his own cultural environment have not understood or have not wished to understand, and one who is intending to make known the progress of modern Greece.

We come now to the second character, the 'friend' - the addressee of the letter. Parren explains in her first letter that through the letters which will follow, both her friend and many other readers who have not managed to attend the Games will be informed of the events. But why did she choose to locate her in Paris? We should, in our opinion, preclude the possibility from the start that Greek women abroad were represented by this friend. The Greek communities and the 'enslaved brethren' were in the Mediterranean and the Balkans and not in northern Europe. We could prob-

107. Varika, *H εξέγερση των κυριών*, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

ably suppose with greater certainty that the French capital (as one of the most indisputably modern environments in the contemporary world) was chosen in order to serve as the pole of communication with Athens, just as, by analogy, Parren did with the friend whom she has appointed interlocutor by the choice of the letter as a means of communication. Thus, the desire to inform a friend of what went on during the course of the Olympic Games was turned into a pretext, so that through the narration of the events, the two capitals would 'converse'. In their normal state these two cities had very little to share: cosmopolitan and splendid Paris was so different from the small Greek capital, known only thanks to its ancient Greek past. The course of the Games, however, altered this objectively unequal relation: as long as the Games were going on, Athens became the centre of attention of the modern world. World news took on a Greek colour – and an Athenian colour at that.

The tour involves four staging-points - visits to places: the Acropolis, a small church in the Byzantine style, the University together with the Library and the Academy, and the statues of Rigas Pheraios and Patriarch Gregorios V. It takes place chiefly by means of the main streets, such as Peiraios, Stadiou and Panepistimiou. This permits the visitors to include in their visual horizon additional landscapes: the 'exceptionally smart and adorned' Omonoia Square, the illuminated arches along Stadiou Street, the private mansions of marble, and the very spectacle of the Athenian streets flooded with people and lights.

The basic field for the focusing of the tour is the comparison of the modern and the ancient city, turning upon the monumentality of the buildings. The external form of the city, however, serves as a preliminary schema for the narrative of the text to centre on its creators and to organise itself around pairs of antitheses: the ancient and the modern Greeks, Greek women and the women of the Mediterranean, Greek women and Levantine women, Greeks and Levantines. The Greek Revolution and its metonymic expression through the national martyrs are fitted into this schema in an eccentric manner, whereas the position of the Byzantine church is entirely marginal.

Having justified the thinking behind her 'plan', Parren sketches the profile of the creators of the modern city. The benefactors, then, 'spent their gold, which they had acquired by blood and sweat [...], the price of the youth that they sacrificed [...] the joy that stems from family life, which they had renounced, which they had been deprived of, most of them condemning themselves to a lonely, desolate, life, so that they should not deprive their homeland, this ideal divinity of their great hearts, of the rich heritage garnered for it'. Compared with their ancient ancestors, though inferior to them in many respects, they proved in this specific matter superior to them, because Pericles used public treasures in order to beautify the city of Pallas, while they employed their precious mite, gained by endless toil. Moreover, their conduct as an indication of the patriotism of the modern Greeks more generally was an important factor in the differentiation of the latter from the Levantines. In addition, by serving 'not only the beautiful but also the good', they had endowed the city not only with works of art rivalling those of antiquity, but also with charitable institutions, by way of contrast with the French public benefactors, who had confined themselves,

according to Hugues Le Rout, to giving money ‘to serve ugly things. For buildings which are large, but inelegant, black, hopeless, as are those whom they house’.

Parren is seeking in the idealised figures of the Greeks of the diaspora the link between the individual and the nation. The promotion of the personality and seeing it as a causal factor in the image of the modern city suggests the value of individualism, which was founded on the Euro-centric priority of national particularity. At the same time, the compliance of the individual with the mandates and the needs of the state generated patriotism. Thus, individualism, patriotism and masculinity, on the one hand, made up Greek particularity in the face of the Levant, while, on the other, they provided evidence that the Greek nation came from the womb of Europe. But this triptych was also charged with responsibility for the national façade, self-presentation, as that was symbolised by metonymy by the external appearance of the city. We can extend this reasoning to discover the analogies between Greeks from abroad and those in authority as to the preparations for the Games, thus understanding the glorification of private initiative and of its role as evidence of the European identity of modern Greece.

The visit to the Acropolis and the admiration for the Caryatids gave occasion, according to Parren, for the French journalist to sing the praises of modern Greek women. He likened them to ‘Caryatids who come down as far as the Stadium’; like the statues, they also are characterised by unrivalled nobility and grace, while the colours and patterns of their clothing are distinguished by particular harmony. Having noted their aristocratic appearance in the Stadium, regardless of their social class, he regarded them as superior to the women of Italy and Spain. He also drew attention to their striking physiognomy, consisting in great strength of the life force, intelligence, and self-initiated activity, and their rich emotional world, noting that Greek women are more developed than one would expect in the case of a people until recently enslaved. Apart from anything else, their knowledge of several languages was proof of this progress. Parren, through the comments of the journalist, is seeking to lay claim, in the name of her gender, to a women’s presence in modern Greece by stressing the female expression of the progress that had, in the meantime, been achieved after the Struggle for Independence. We have the impression that in the favourable observations of the French journalist about modern Greek women we can ‘read’ claims made by women’s discourse, as that was expressed in the *Ladies’ Journal* in the late nineteenth century, against the prevailing views about the inferiority of women and the rhetoric of the domestic sphere. Thus the ‘great strength of the life force, intelligence, and self-initiated activity’, the ‘much heart’, characteristics with which Greek women win the favourable impressions of the foreigners hint at staking out the claim to women’s difference: emotion as against male rationalism, the significance of their social role in the public space as against the rhetoric on their restriction to the private sphere, intelligence and life force as against the discourse on biological inferiority, self-initiated activity as an ability to conceive inequality and collective action.¹⁰⁸

108. On the genesis of a ‘feminist consciousness’ in Greek society, as that was expressed in the discourse

The recognition in the person of modern Greek women of the grandeur and grace of the Caryatids, in spite of the fact that few of them had the same stature and that they fell short of the statues in the perfection of the lines, turned them into symbols of the recognition of Greek continuity. It is a known fact that many Europeans, imbued with their Christian and classical education, hoped and sought in the place and people of ‘the cradles of Christian and European civilisation’ of the Mediterranean, scenes and images from an imagined past. As John Pemble remarks, ‘trained to see life in Greek statues, British travellers looked for Greek statues in life’.¹⁰⁹ Some easily recognised the survival of ancient Greek beauty in the bodies and the faces of the modern Greeks, but many were bitterly disappointed. So in the faces and stature of modern Greek women, foreigners were able to recognise ancient Greek *kallos* (beauty). Their partial incompatibility with the ancient Greek model at the level of perfection was not perceived as a negative. Furthermore, they were compared with statue-models and not real women. The modern version of beauty in the case of ‘real’ women seems to have been expressed now in the finesse and taste of the external appearance. The emphasis of the French judge on the harmony of the colours and patterns that he observed in the clothing of Greek women corresponded to a widespread idea in Europe in the late nineteenth century centring on women of the bourgeois strata in accordance with which the public image of the woman and her exhibiting of herself half depended upon clothing. What clothing represented for the body, speech represented for the brain.¹¹⁰ The stressing of the importance of clothing constructed a specific version of femininity interwoven with female representation in public space. If, then, modern Europe was regarded as the splendid evolution of ancient Greek civilisation, the ancient Greek ideal of beauty acquired new expressions and new meanings, basically sexist. Thus, women’s external appearance was turned into a hierarchical system of classification of cultures on the criterion of the dominant model of femininity. The fact that the external appearance of Greek women coincided with the criteria of the upper degree of Europeanness or came close to it put them in a higher position than the women of other European countries and distanced them once and for all from those of the Levant. Hugues le Rout also extolled in Greek women their knowledge of foreign languages, which resulted in the foreigner feeling that he was in his homeland. Knowledge of languages was, in other words, the metaphor through which the Greek environment was transformed into that of Europe. The semantic codes of clothing and speech ensured, in their turn, a favourable out-

of the *Ladies’ Journal*, a discourse that ranged between the demand for equality and the claim to difference – with its often striking ambiguity as a result – see Varika, *ibid.*, pp. 205–76.

109. Pemble, *The Mediterranean Passion*, *op. cit.*, p. 118; more generally on the imaginary conception of the Mediterranean by British travellers in accordance with the apprehensions of European education and culture, pp. 113–28.

110. Interest in women’s clothing belonged within the public dialogue between politicians, social reformers, doctors and feminists on female sexuality and attempts to define it in relation to that of males. See, by way of indication, Cheryl Buckley/Hilary Fawcett, *Fashioning the Feminine. Representation and Women’s Fashion from the Fin de Siècle to the Present*, I. B. Tauris, London/New York 2000, pp. 30–1.

come for day-to-day communication with the visitors. Consequently, Greek women made a significant contribution to national self-presentation either by being the incarnation of ancient Greece or by being invested with the European identity of modern Greece.

Parren stresses the complementariness of the two genders at the level of national self-presentation. On the one hand, the *loci* of comparison (ancient Greece, the Levant, Europe) are common to both. On the other, male and female participation in progress is bounded by the roles of each gender in the interior of the community: the men take care of the façade of the city/nation by erecting modern monuments, while the women are in charge of national self-presentation in the context of everyday communication. Both are momentarily alienated from antiquity: the men because of their superiority to their ancestors in the ways of conceiving their contribution to the city, the women by their departure from the perfection of the statues. Thus, however, both sides succeed in making their own what Western culture made a priority. But their relation with the ancient Greek past has not been severed. The re-appropriation is effected through the Western paradigm, since the foreigners recognise in the ‘façade’ of the city the similarities between antiquity and modern Greece. The meeting of the two worlds and their co-existence are symbolised, for Parren, by the positioning of Athena and Apollo, ‘deities fallen from their greatness’, on the top of the Academy building.

We have left till last Parren’s account on an intermediate stopping-place on the tour, the small Byzantine church, which has to be the Kapnikarea. This is intermediate, as is the position of Byzantium between ancient and modern Greece in the national narrative of the past. The visit is not accompanied by any comment or question on the part of the foreigners. Parren confines herself to contrasting the humility, simplicity, and modesty of the new religion with the ostentation, wealth and artistry of the old. The sole Byzantine monument on the tour seems to be enclosed in its own self-referential nature, given that the meaning ascribed to it is very distant from the dynamic process of national self-presentation. However, the ‘elimination’ of Byzantium from the body of the city is more general. Apart from what are anyway the very few Byzantine survivals, also absent are the churches restored after the end of Ottoman rule, together with those newly built in the ‘Helleno-Byzantine’ or ‘Othonic’ style, the most obvious example being the Cathedral itself, at the core of the religious and civil ceremonies of Athenian society. There at least, it would be difficult not to recognise an intention of imposing the ecclesiastical mass on the space, in contrast with the little church in a gloomy district near the railway station. A similar absence of churches and their Byzantine connotations from the body of the city is also to be encountered in the guide by Démétrius Georgiadès addressed to foreign visitors. On the other hand, the inclusion of the churches in the ‘construction of visibility’ of the visitors is to be found in the Hellenic Olympic Committee’s guide. We shall deal with both of these in the next section.

This choice on Parren’s part may be interpreted by placing it in the context of the quests and lines of thought of Greek architecture in the nineteenth century, in con-

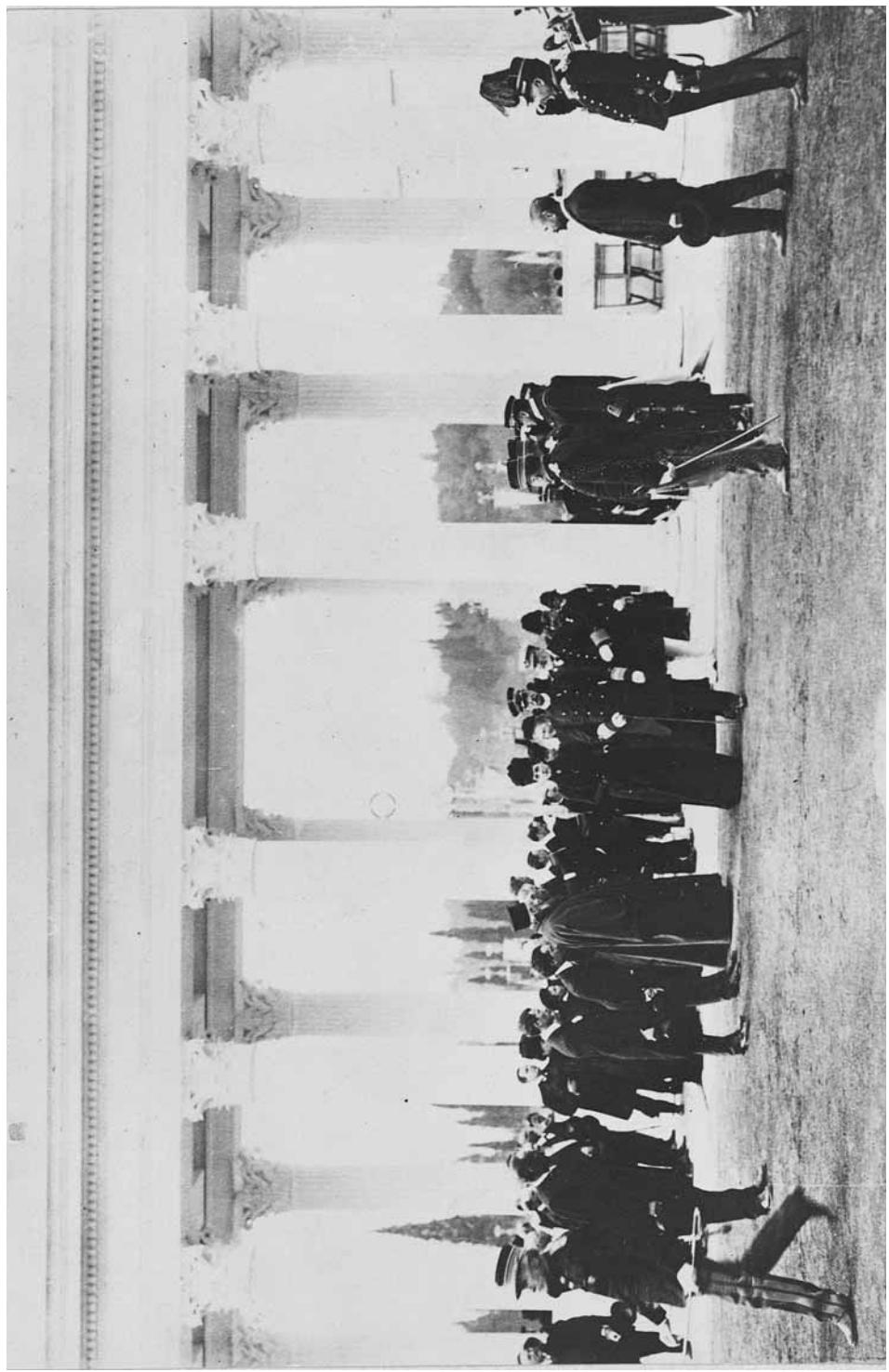
junction with the rehabilitation of Byzantium as an institution after its recognition as a link between antiquity and the new Hellenism by national historiography. As Dimitris Philippidis notes, ecclesiastical architecture, from the time of Otto and the establishment of the so-called ‘Helleno-Byzantine or Othonic style’ to the beginning of the twentieth century, attempted to combine Classicising and Romantic with Byzantine systems of style. This was a groundless conception, since it was based on the marriage of two essentially heterogeneous approaches to the composition of space: on the one hand, Classicism and Romanticism, two basically morphological systems invested in each instance with the appropriate ideological cover, and, on the other, the Helleno-Christian, a constituent of the *Megali Idea*, without a corresponding background. This fact was a source of constant questionings and wranglings both as to the ways of combining the two elements and as to the result.¹¹¹ Church architecture, in other words, had nothing to set against the confidence of the neo-classicism of the private mansions and public buildings, where, in spite of the mixture of Romanesque, Gothic, and Classicising models, it exuded imitation and reproduction of the ancient model. Furthermore, the rehabilitation of Byzantium within the framework of the national ideology, which coincided with an increased interest on the part of the European intelligentsia in the medieval world within which Byzantium belonged, did not automatically mark its rehabilitation in the collective consciousness. In the course of the last quarter of the century, in Athens, some interest had been shown in the medieval and Ottoman past of the city, in which intellectuals and the Municipality played a leading role.¹¹² Essentially, however, a more general Greek interest in Greek medieval history was systematised in the first three decades of the twentieth century with the setting up of societies, the publication of journals, and the establishment of the first chair of Byzantine History at the University.¹¹³ In relation to this, the marginalisation of the Byzantine monuments by Parren’s ‘plan’ should be seen in the light both of the more general meaning that the Greeks ascribed to the revival of the Olympic Games and of the low to non-existent degree of recognisability of Byzantium on the part of the foreign visitors. In both cases, antiquity gave meaning either to the revival of the Games or to Athens as a tourist destination.

We close this sub-section with the last stopping-point of the visit: the statues of Rigas and the Patriarch. The two national martyrs and the Struggle for Independence complement the Greece that is ‘unknown’ to the foreigners. Parren informs the ‘emotionally moved’ and ‘enthusiastic’ visitors of their contribution to national renaissance, while they commend the gesture of the crowning of the statues by students as a recognition of their sacrifice by the nation. National martyrs and benefactors thus

111. Philippidis, *Νεοελληνική αρχιτεκτονική*, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-8.

112. Nasia Yakovaki, ‘Μεσαιωνική και Νεώτερη Ιστορία: μια νέα συνείδηση για την πόλη της Αθήνας οτα τέλη του 19ου αιώνα’ [Medieval and Modern History: a new awareness of the city of Athens in the late 19th century], in *Αρχαιολογία της πόλης των Αθηνών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-27.

113. Tonia Kioussopoulou, ‘Η πρώτη έδρα Βυζαντινής Ιστορίας στο Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών’ [The founding of the first chair in Byzantine History at the University of Athens], *Mnemon* 15 (1993), pp. 257-9.



King George with Queen Alexandra of the United Kingdom and her husband, King Edward VII, with Queen Olga enter the Stadium (9 April 1906).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K2.8]

become the symbols of the recent past and the present. Individualism, patriotism, and masculinity, sacrifice and national rebirth, and a conspicuous position in the national memory make up the modern materials of the Greek image. Their representations in the body of the city lay claim to their immediate recognisability by the distinguished guests.

JOURNEYS IN THE CITY

Guides to the city make it possible for us to examine another narrative, different from that of the press, addressed to the foreigners themselves. The tourist guide, a part of the broader tourist discourse, marks out the notional pathways of exploration in the city represented, constructs the map of the points that will attract the traveller's eye and will provide him with the 'advisable' safe orientation, excluding or neutralising on his horizon other places-environments of the city through the selective process of not indicating them. Thus the urban space is registered within the cognitive conceptions of the tourists, in the system of pre-established ideas and concepts which they know, through which they seek to decode the places, at the same time understanding their meanings.¹¹⁴ The 'construction of visibility' of the visitors by official texts turns the city into an organised field of subjective places from which the images of everyday routine are expurgated.¹¹⁵ At the same time, guides to cities 'constitute a separate genre of literary production, a literature of reception, the product of the history of geographical mobility and reception', which must be examined together with other kinds of travel literature.¹¹⁶

Two of the three guides compiled by Greeks do not belong within any genealogy of Greek tourist texts centring on Athens.¹¹⁷ These are not, in other words, evolved

114. Penny Travlou, 'Go Athens. A journey to the centre of the city', in Simon Coleman / Mike Crang (eds), *Tourism. Between Place and Performance*, Berghahn Books, New York 2002, pp. 108-27.

115. Nevertheless, representations of this type do not reflect the ways in which the tourists themselves apprehend the city. The normative discourse of the guides does not remain unassailed by the tendency of the objects to trespass between the bounds that it sets. Modern studies based on less official texts presenting the city, such as texts in magazines and newspapers, but also in travel journals, dispute, on the one hand, the schematic approach to the participation of the subject in space only through vision, excluding the other senses, and maintain, on the other hand, that tourists often choose to move within the framework of a city regardless of the guide, 'violating' the fantasy boundaries isolating specific places from others, which are described as dangerous or falling below tourists' expectations. See Gruen, 'Everyday attractions', *op. cit.*

116. On the literary character of city guides and the term 'literature of reception' see Gilles Chabaud, 'Les guides de Paris: Une littérature de l'accueil?', in Daniel Roche (ed.), *La Ville promise. Mobilité et accueil à Paris (fin XVII^e - début XIX^e siècle)*, Fayard, Paris 2000, pp. 77-108, and more specifically p. 79.

117. Démétrius Georgiadès, *De Paris à Athènes*, *op. cit.*; *Guide d'Athènes. Comité des Jeux Olympiques*, *op. cit.*

narratives presenting a city in relation to the altered level of the possibilities of typography, the nature of the organisation of hotel services, the differing addressees of the information each era, and the change in the political framework. The Baedeker guide, on the other hand, is part of the new paradigm of city guides that came out in the early decades of the nineteenth century (the period at which organised tourism was taking its first steps) and concentrated interest on highlighting the city as a spectacle and as a place of recreation and enjoyment.¹¹⁸ For this reason, without calling into question the setting of their aims and their narrative structure, which is appropriate to that of guides, we believe that we should read them at the same time as texts of the ideological and political circumstances of the time, as parts of a broader, and not only tourist, national discourse, produced and promoted on the occasion of the Games, with the foreign visitors as the addressees.

All the guides have a common narrative structure. Having given the necessary information about travel, the climate, and accommodation in the city, they refer to the historical past of Athens, present a picture of the modern city, and devote a section to the description of modern Greece focusing on the political situation, productive relations and the level of the economy, and, finally, social manners and customs. In spite of the external similarity of their narrative structure, the narrative strategies and the attempt to give meaning to the city diverge significantly. The most significant differentiations are observable between Greek and foreign guides, but there are also degrees of difference between the Greek guides.

The guides of Georgiadès and the HOC offer systematic references to the past of the city where the Olympics were to be held. In Georgiadès's guide the beginning of the Athenian past is placed in the prehistoric period and the division between the historical phases follows the phases of national historiography and the corresponding connotation: the fifth century BC is seen as the supreme period, those which followed are described as times of gradual decline and crisis, while the term 'occupation' is the title given to every subsequent historical phase, apart from the period of Macedonian domination, where we encounter the term 'Macedonian protectorate'. This is followed by the 'Roman occupation', the 'Frankish occupation', and the 'Turkish occupation', with 'Byzantine Greece' – the rehabilitation, that is, of the once 'dark ages' by a marriage between antiquity and Christianity – intervening. The cycle of national and Athenian drama closes with the 'intellectual awakening of Greece', the Greek revolution, and 'modern Athens'.¹¹⁹ The HOC guide is brief in its references to history and 'Athenocentric'. The high point of Athenian history is set at the time of the Persian Wars and of Pericles and is followed by the many centuries of decline after the Peloponnesian War, the Macedonian conquest, and the 'Byzantine kingdom'; the decline ends with the national Struggle of 1821 and the arrival of Otto.¹²⁰ The relevant text is written by Spyridon Lambros, professor of history in the University and a

118. Chabaud, 'Les guides de Paris', *op. cit.*

119. Georgiadès, *De Paris à Athènes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-92.

120. *Guide d'Athènes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-50.

member of the Committee. The highlighting of Greek particularity occupies a dominant place in Georgiadès's guide. The author draws the attention of foreigners interested in visiting Greece to the fact that 'it is not an ordinary country, which we visit only for pleasure or for relaxation and rest, as we would a spa, or exclusively to admire the beauties of nature, as in the case of Switzerland. Even more than Italy, Greece should be an object of study [...]. Even the least educated person is impressed by these great historical names that he was taught to mumble in childhood [...]. History, which was until recently an idea, an exercise of memory, or for some, an object of philosophical dissertations, this history of the first period of humanity is revealed before him'.¹²¹

Georgiadès's didactic tone to the French-speaking tourist devises a tourist destination different from those that up to now he has been accustomed to visit and, at the same time, a different object of contemplation. By relegating the familiar locations of Francophone tourism, given that he describes them indirectly as devoid of historical significance and intended solely for physical enjoyment, he evaluates Greece as an ontological *locus* of human existence, the field of origin of human civilisation, in which the thinking tourist sees revealed before him the essence of knowledge. Georgiadès seems to be aware of the tourist culture of the country in which he lives; in all probability he himself shares it. One could, of course, point out to him with great ease the central position of nature in the mythology of the inhabitants of the cities, and particularly of the middle and upper classes, as well, naturally, as the increasing importance of the practices of management of spare time, one of which was visiting spas. One could also add that neo-classicism and the cult of antiquity already had their headquarters in Rome and other Italian cities. Nevertheless, this Greek of the diaspora articulates in the present instance a tourist discourse based on the projection of images and feelings to serve as an attraction in a competitive framework as to which place 'more authentically' contains within it the beauty of nature and antiquity.

Nevertheless, Georgiadès's contribution to the informal battle between antiquity and modernity is clearly to the detriment of the former. The material signs of the ancient past are struck out in the chapter on 'Curiosités',¹²² and he confines himself to a description of the more important monuments, leaving, as he himself says, their more detailed presentation to the specialists. Nor does he make the slightest reference to the city's Byzantine monuments. The Committee's guide, on the other hand, devotes many pages (in relation to its summary length) to presenting the monuments; these, moreover, occupy a central section, immediately after the chapter on the city's history.¹²³ In both cases, the guides seem to be addressed more to ordinary readers than to travellers who would rely on them. The traces of the past (monuments, museums) and the city of the present (streets, squares, buildings) make up two closed

121. Georgiadès, *De Paris à Athènes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

122. *Ibid.*, pp. 263-71.

123. *Guide d'Athènes*, pp. 50-69.

sets without any communication between them. The chronological narrative not only distinguishes clearly the past of the city from its present, it also constructs two different places, without anything in common. Thus the city's monuments are detached from the tourist ritual, the tour, and consequently from the construction of visibility, as they are transformed from points of recognition and decoding of concepts and understanding of meaning into meanings themselves. As we shall see below, the foreign guides give expression to a different conception of the relation between past and present in the body of the city.

Any differences between the two guides can probably be seen as a result of their differing character: the HOC guide is above all an official text, compiled by university professors; it gives expression to the spirit of the Committee, on which the heir to the throne was supreme and follows a specific structure and economy of subject-matter, because of its summary form as a guide. Georgiadès did not have to face such constraints. In spite of this, the shared narrative option of dividing the past of the city from its present should not escape us. This hypothesis can be traced when we turn our attention to the way in which Athens and the nation in the nineteenth century are presented, and to the ways in which the spatial planning relation between ancient and modern Athens is constructed through the material signs of each. In the HOC guide, the history of Athens closes with a reference to the marble-clad buildings of the city, 'which, 70 years after [the Revolution] raise the city to the status of a political and spiritual metropolis of modern Hellenism'. Immediately afterwards begins the description of modern Athens entitled 'The New City'. In Georgiadès's guide 'Athènes moderne' also constitutes a separate unit. Here the nineteenth century in Athens is depicted as a period of impressive changes in the city's physiognomy, since a breath of regeneration blew through all areas of life. 'When Otto was proclaimed first King of Greece, Athens was a miserable city of a few thousand inhabitants who lived in ruinous hovels. In the whole of Athens there was not a single house that could be used as a temporary residence for the King [...]. Half a century passed and the changes it brought to Athens are such that if it was not for the Acropolis the city would not be recognisable.'¹²⁴ Georgiadès emphatically separates out a sub-period of Athenian development within the framework of the nineteenth century. This is the period after 1870, when the gradual arrival of Greeks of the diaspora to the capital was accompanied by the construction of many residences and public buildings, resulting in 'Athens being incomparable because of the beauty of its ruins but also worthy of hosting them. With its mansions of sparkling Pentelic marble, its gardens, its monumental edifices, its wide streets, [Athens is] one of the most intriguing capitals and the most pleasant cities in modern life'.¹²⁵

The stressing of the exceptional progress that had been made in Athens in just a few decades has a cumulative function in highlighting the city's differences from its past: on the one hand, in relation to the state of absence of freedom and of enslavement, so that 'twenty centuries' of non-existence have been balanced out by seven

124. Georgiadès, *De Paris à Athènes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-1. 125. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

decades of self-determination, and on the other to its renowned ancient past, so that Athens is not approached as a mere survival of it, but as worthy ‘of hosting the ancient ruins’. The expression of the metamorphosis of Athens by synecdoche through the rebuilding and progressive replacement of the ‘ruins’ and the ‘rubble’ on the arrival of the first King by buildings that ‘could be likened to palaces’, follows the dominant metaphor of a reborn Greece, particularly in the early post-Revolution years, after the lengthy Ottoman domination.

The efforts to revise the stereotype image in the light of which the foreigners approached Greece, as a survival of a brilliant past, had as their target, first of all, a section of the written travellers’ tradition that was responsible for its propagation (Georgiadès systematically uses many quotations from travellers’ texts, chiefly in French, when speaking of Athens). Second, the aim was the revision of the negative impressions created by the bankruptcy of 1893, by the inability, that is, of the economic and political system to manage the matter of the modernisation of Greek society and, by extension, to modernise it. In his guide, Georgiadès devotes a large number of pages to the country’s economic and monetary condition, in an attempt to explain the chronicle of bankruptcy and, at the same time, to rebut the charges – unjust, in his view – that had been made against Greece. The issue was, then, that the modern version of Greece should be promoted – and this would be achieved through its capital – and at the same time that a suitable climate should be created for the foreigners to understand contemporary Greek society before rejecting its worth in favour of antiquity. That would be possible when they focused their attention not on the era of the marbles but on the past of the long period of occupation, so that they could easily discern that a second ‘miracle’ had taken place – that of the rebirth of Greece from the ruins. We are, in our opinion, very far removed from the European expectations – and their disappointment – after the Greek Revolution that the new kingdom would be a revival of the ancient world, a conviction that had been adopted by the Greeks themselves. The question had to be reformulated no longer in terms of survival, which, as it had proved, had condemned the present to live as a tragic survival in the shadow of the past, but on terms of a breach with other pasts (that of occupation, but also the recent past, that of the first decades of the Greek state), on terms of refamiliarisation with antiquity through a selective identification with it and the quest for prerequisites for the linkage with present and future. Having asked the foreigners not to be hard on so young a country, Georgiadès attempts to present its political, economic, and social state and in this way to explain Greek particularities and deviations from the Western paradigm. But the thinking now is no longer to the relation of present and past, but of present and future, and for that reason he uses an argument familiar to the Europeans: that of the city as a symbol of evolution. ‘Those who believe or have been allowed to believe that Greece is a country without a tomorrow have only to visit Piraeus and Athens. Their criticisms of the new kingdom would then be less harsh.’¹²⁶ To the leaps and bounds of economic progress achieved by Piraeus he

126. *Ibid.*, p. 204.

has already made special reference.¹²⁷ It is self-evident that in choosing the two cities of the country with the largest populations, he is suggesting that the first contains modernity through the prestige that is lent to it by kingship, the monumental buildings, and, of course, the ancient monuments, while the other contains it through the central position it holds in the development of trade and industry.

Let us now take a walk in the streets of the city with the two guides in our hands, following the route they recommend.

The first thing Georgiades shows us of modern Athens is neither the monuments, nor the Palace, but the Grande Bretagne Hotel, stressing that it is comparable with the first-class hotels of Paris. In his quest for the historicity of modern Athens, he does not hesitate to discover it in its 'modern monuments', such as this specific hotel, as he gives an account of the history of the enterprise and stresses the fact that it has consistently been the first choice of distinguished figures, foreign and Greek, both for accommodation and for the quality of the food. Nor does he omit to point out that the hotel is the core of bourgeois communalism in the capital.¹²⁸ His second move is a gesture of rehabilitation: the stay here is accompanied by comfortable and deluxe transport in the city, and at this point he hastens to defend Greek cab drivers by challenging the bad reputation they had acquired because of their high fares.¹²⁹ Georgiades's emphasis on comfortable accommodation and transport is not a matter of chance; we should see it in the perspective of the expression of a discourse on Greek tourism, centring on the capital. Georgiades's text engages in a dialogue with travellers' texts, guides, and newspapers. The two pages devoted to the rehabilitation of cab drivers are in reply to Deschamps, while the travel guide he warmly recommends is that of Joanne. In reflecting on the problem of the economic state of Greece, he stresses the necessity of beginning the 'industry of exploiting foreigners', seeking at the same time to discover the reasons why the latter, in spite of the fact that Greece has a better climate than Switzerland and Italy, do not choose it as a place for their holidays. In noting that the main problem is the absence of facilities and infrastructures, such as hotels, streets, and gardens, he quotes articles from newspapers that have been written on the basis of the comments of highly-placed foreigners who have argued in favour of creating the conditions for the conversion of Greece into a magnet for tourists.¹³⁰

Georgiades, in conducting tourists through modern Athens, systematises the image of a modern capital, articulated around the monumentality of its buildings, the creative management of free time, as that is understood by visits to various museums, and strolling for pleasure in the wide and comfortable boulevards and the gardens. The visibility of the city, as in the newspapers, is confined to a strictly bounded space, in which specific practices of management of spare time are carried out and the appropriate services are on offer. Furthermore, the conception of ancient Athens through the traces of the monuments does not compose with the modern a single urban space

127. *Ibid.*, pp. 132-4. 128. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-8.

129. *Ibid.*, pp. 199-201. 130. *Ibid.*, pp. 227-32.

for a stroll, in which the everyday functions of the city, such as the market held in the area of the Stoa of Attalus or a walk in the Palace gardens, would be accompanied by the highlighting of the monuments and the everyday life of the Greeks' ancestors. This type of representation of the city is to be found *par excellence* in the foreign guides of the period, such as that of Baedeker. Georgiadès is well aware that such a narrative strategy would lead inevitably to the downplaying of the modern city because of the attraction of the ruins.

In the HOC guide, the presentation of the antiquities follows the division into historic periods, and the attention of the author of the relevant chapter, Nikolaos Politis, professor of folklore, centres on demonstrating the boundaries between the ancient and the modern city on the basis of the walls.¹³¹ The clear division between the two cities in accordance with the traces revealed by the excavations, over and above the fact that it endows with the authority of academic discourse the planning development of the modern city, suggests at the same time that the latter is a product of a political decision, so that the monuments of antiquity, symbols of another urbanism, occupy their own distinctive space.

As in the case of Georgiadès's guide, in the HOC guide the urban space is delineated by the buildings of modernity, but with a significant difference: the Byzantine monuments and the modern churches now occupy an organic place as being sights worth seeing. Unlike the classical monuments, anything that is Byzantine or Helleno-Byzantine belongs within an unbroken continuity of various buildings-symbols from Omonoia Square to Ermou Street, where it stops with the ruins of Byzantine churches in the vicinity of the Cathedral. The second observation worth noting is the fact that the tour does not start out from the symbol of political power, the palace, but from Omonoia Square, with the Town Hall as the first building/stopping-place. The visitor encounters the palace when he has first entered the Zappeion, coming from Ermou Street, and has advanced to Kiphisias Avenue. Syntagma Square and the palace serve as starting-points for the descent of Panepistimiou Street. During his tour, the visitor not only learns to recognise the symbols of a modern city; he is informed, in addition, about its creators. Given that the frequent references to the beauty of the buildings and the aesthetics of neo-classical architecture are made on the basis of the private mansions and public buildings, the version of Athens as a city of monarchy seems anaemic in comparison with the version of a city of Greeks from abroad. The visitor, with the aid of the guide, sees a 'fully equipped' modern city: public buildings (ministries and banks), intellectual institutions (the University, the Polytechnic, the Library, schools, archaeological schools, clubs), welfare foundations (hospitals, orphanages, asylums), athletics venues (the Panathenaic Stadium), exhibition halls (the Zappeion), premises for creative spare time (theatre), areas of natural greenery (gardens).

In the normative organisation of what the tourist sees, an important place is occupied by the concentration of attention on the aesthetics of some of the above

131. *Guide d'Athènes, op. cit.*, pp. 50-69.

buildings. In front of the University building, for example, the visitor is called upon to visit the premises, since the guide informs him of the decorated parts of the building. However, apart from the buildings, the guide brings out another dimension of the modern city, which is not to be found in Georgiadès's guide: the semiosis of the modern memory within the framework of the urban space. The monuments, and particularly the statues of the heroes and the philhellenes, as representations of the Struggle for Independence of 1821, occupy a conspicuous place in the orientation instructions for the foreign visitors. At the same time, the suggestion of the investing of the urban space with memory by starting out from modern history reinforces the intention of the authorities to compare the organic linkage of the recent past of the city and the hopeful present with the heavy heritage of antiquity.

The image of the city in the HOC guide, as in the press and in Georgiadès's guide, is devised on the basis of an evaluation and exclusion from the tourists' horizon of the greater part of the city, that is, the poor, heavily populated districts, made wretched by the lack of elementary infrastructure, which extended into the south-western section of the city but at the same time touched on the guide's spatial boundaries, such as the tasteful Omonoia Square. The streets that start out from this square, for example, do not lead to the Gazi or Metaxourgeio districts, but serve as signs for departure from the city in the direction of its countryside or as signposts for public institutions and churches. The city of the Olympic Games, nevertheless, is not identified only with a strictly defined space in the context of which everyday reality is refracted through the monumentality of its buildings, and the versions of consumerism and spare time. It also takes on the appearance of a stage set without the slightest presence of depth or perspective. The streets at right angles to the great avenues, often narrow, dark and dirty, just a few hundred metres away from the stage of the palace, the squares, and the splendid buildings, have been struck off the tourist horizon, so that the visitor has the impression that he can move only along the streets radiating out from Syntagma Square to Omonoia Square and *vice versa*.

The representation of Athens at the period of the Olympic Games and the characteristics of a construction of visibility for the visitors on the part of the Greek authors of the guides become more intelligible when we examine them in conjunction with the ways in which the city is presented by the foreign tourist guides.

The 1889 edition of the Baedeker guide¹³² for travellers whose destination was Greece, like the subsequent editions from this publishing-house, treats the Greek capital as a place for a visit within a broader network of cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. Greek cities in the late nineteenth century were intermediary stopping-places on the journey of Europeans to the Ottoman Empire and its cities, with Constantinople taking pride of place. It is also worth remembering that large numbers of the visitors to Athens during the course of the Games were expected from Egypt and the tourist resorts of Cairo and Alexandria. The arrival of the European tourists in Greece and its capital had been preceded by a visit to Italy and its cities. If the

132. Karl Baedeker, *Greece. Handbook for Travellers*, London 1889.

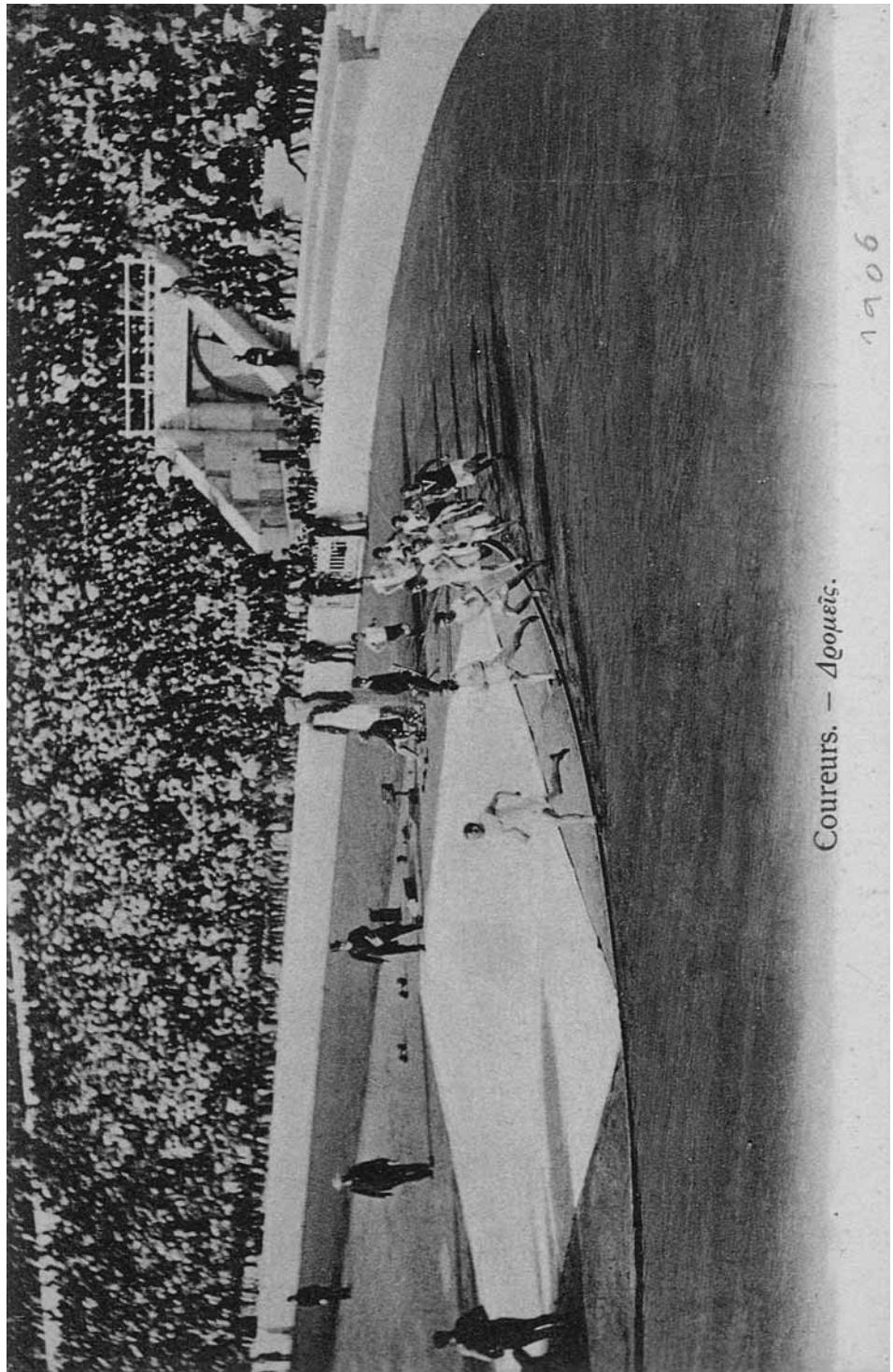
exoticism of the Levant was sought in the cities of the Ottoman Empire and of Egypt, the ‘pilgrimage’ to the greatness of antiquity took place in Italy. Greece and Athens, as cultural locations, were in the middle: the Baedeker guide mentions the probable disappointment of the visitor when, on his arrival in Greece, he sees the poor conditions in which the monuments are exhibited and compares them with the superb galleries of Rome and Naples.¹³³ This cultural deficit is, nevertheless, balanced out from the moment that the European character of the Greek capital and the more general progress of the Greek kingdom are discussed. The picture of a country, and a city more particularly, that balances between West and East runs all the way through Baedeker’s narrative. Athens, for example, in terms of the features of accommodation (hotels and prices), is reminiscent of Naples and Palermo, while its town planning puts it among the most beautiful and the most rationally planned cities of the Levant.¹³⁴ However, at the same time, the everyday social life of cities such as the capital and Hermoupolis leads to disheartening conclusions, since the visitor has the impression that he is seeing a caricature of the French way of life.¹³⁵ The construction of the image of a poor copy of the advanced West is complemented by emphasis on the fact that all the citizens concern themselves with politics in their favourite place – the coffee-shops – and ends with an account of the Greek political system, and its condemnation. Even the commercial and industrial Piraeus of Georgiadès, with its leaps and bounds of progress, is described as an indifferent city for tourists, with the exception of the small but interesting museum of its antiquities.

But let us examine the ways in which the image of Athens is constructed for the benefit of the readers of the guide. As in the guides written by Greeks, the history of the city is there, from ancient times to the Revolution.¹³⁶ Together with the historical events and periods, the narrative includes various references to the history of the monuments, making clear the intention of the authors that the narration of the past of the city should be understood in parallel with the works of art. It has been preceded, in any event, by a detailed account of Greek art, occupying many pages.¹³⁷ The chapter is completed with the remark that Athens was chosen as the capital of the new kingdom because of its ancient past and not for other reasons such as the development of trade or industry. It is added that its rapid development was due exclusively to its being the seat of monarchy.

The stripping of modern Athens off enchantment in the eyes of the foreigners and its presentation as the product of political decisions and expediency is in total opposition to the attempts of the guides described above to link Athens with Greek rebirth. Moreover, the breach with the earlier image of the capital is not located in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, but in the arrival of Otto and the planning of the new city by the Bavarian bureaucracy in a northern and eastern direction, so that the Acropolis area would not be incorporated into the urban fabric. The foreign contribution to the shaping of the Athenian landscape is recognised with

133. *Ibid.*, p. xi. 134. *Ibid.*, p. xii. 135. *Ibid.*, p. lii.

136. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-44. 137. *Ibid.*, lxv-cxiii.



Coureurs. — *Δρομεῖς.*

1906

Runners in the Stadium at the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.47]

the initiatives of the monarchy and of the foreign architects Hansen and Ziller as a point of reference, but is constantly stressed throughout the whole tour of the city, with reference to the buildings and the public spaces. Thus, apart from the palace, attention is drawn to the Anglican Church in Philellinon Street, the Gardens of the Muses, where foreign companies put on plays during the summer months, the Protestant cemetery with the grave of the ‘historian of modern Greece’ (as he is termed) George Finlay, the clock-tower (a gift from Elgin in exchange for the Parthenon marbles, near the Gate of Hadrian) and Schliemann’s mansion in Panepistimiou Street, while an account is given of all the archaeological schools carrying out excavations in Greece.

The contemporary and modern version of the capital, though recognisable by its references to the modern buildings, the major avenues, and the spaces for recreation and strolling, is not the main narrative strategy of the guide, as it was in the case of those discussed earlier. In these, its Greek character is brought out through the monumentality of the modern buildings and the intentions of their founders. The Greeks from abroad are absent from Baedeker’s guide, whereas the European contribution to the birth of the new city is present. Its Greekness, when not being condemned for imitation of foreign models of lifestyle, is explored marginally in relation to the physical spaces, such as the popular market in Aeolou Street with its practitioners of craft industries, the makers of the traditional shoes (*tsarouchia*), and the Greeks in traditional costume. A similar orientalistic way of looking at things is also to be found in Joanne’s guide, in dealing with the fact that the market was burnt down in 1884. Although the neo-classical architecture of the central buildings is praised, it is nevertheless stressed that their construction, together with the town-planning restructuring of the districts – even the oldest of these – has robbed the city of its ethnic colour. It is noted that the picturesqueness of the market has now been lost for the Europeans.¹³⁸ Baedeker’s readers do not move about in a city that is a stage set, as the readers of the previous guides do. In these, the old city and its streets were absent. In the foreign guide, the broad avenues, which are reminiscent of Western European cities, are contrasted with the innumerable winding alleys that start out from their sides. The hidden part of the city, however, comes to light so that it can be excluded from the tourists’ view. The guide notes the lack of cleanliness in these streets and suggests that the visitor should steer clear of these districts.

However, the differences between the Greek and the foreign guides are not grounded so much in the highlighting of specific aspects of a modern capital and the undervaluing of certain others. The devising of visibility for the visitor on the part of the Baedeker guide is carried out in the light of the assumption that it is ancient Athens which is of interest and worthy of attention, and not, of course, the modern city. But the former is not understood as a separate, securely entrenched ekistic unit in relation to the latter – an option we have encountered in the previous guides. This guide composes the Athenian landscape on the basis of the co-existence of the old

138. Guides Joanne, *Athènes et ses environs*, Paris 1888-1889, p. 29.

with the new, unfolding natural everyday pictures before the eyes of the reader/visitor and always organising these around some individual centre of reference, which changes position as the visitor moves. The epicentre of contemplation, as the reader/traveller gradually comes to understand, is the ancient monuments, with the Sacred Rock of the Acropolis the most prominent among these. The traveller in the city is called upon by the guide to be on the alert as those positions from which he can obtain a view of the Sacred Rock are frequently suggested to him.¹³⁹ Although antiquity is the centre of the Athenian panorama, the starting-point of the basic axes of touring it is the palace. From there, by following a southerly direction, the traveller can extend his visit gradually to the spaces around it, such as the Royal Gardens, the Zappeion, the Arch of Hadrian, the Olympieion and the open-air theatre, the Gardens of the Muses and the Graces, the ancient Ilissus and the Monument of Lysicrates. In an impermeable framework, the descriptions of the monuments and the everyday life of ancient Athens interweave with the modern functions of the urban space and the symbols of power, like the walks and the theatre life just next to the seat of monarchy. It is again from the palace, and through the city and its commercial streets, such as Ermou and Aeolou, that the Theseion, the Pnyx, and the Philopappos Monument can be reached. The palace is the starting-point for the major avenues with their important modern buildings, according to the guide, such as the University, the ministries, the Academy, the Iliou Melathron, the Town Hall and the Varvakeion building in Athinas Street. But the shadow of the Acropolis seems to fall heavily on the whole of the city. The guide, in closing its tour from the Lycabettus hill, before taking visitors north in the direction of the countryside of Athens, does not lose the opportunity of pointing out that the best view of the city is from a specific point half-way up the hill, because the Acropolis in particular, as you climb higher, shrinks and finally loses its significance.¹⁴⁰

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139. Baedeker, *Greece*, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 89, 102.

140. *Ibid.*, p. 104.

When the New World meets the Ancient

American and Greek experiences of the 1896 ‘revival’ of the Olympic Games

ELEANA YALOURI

Together with the development of the concept of the nation-state in the nineteenth century, a rich body of myths, symbols, practices and values was formed and provided a reservoir of meanings for national ideology and rhetoric to draw from when communicating their messages. A series of national and international traditions were established, providing not only a means of identification with the ‘imagined community’ of the nation, but also a forum where nations would compete for international rank.¹ In these traditions the nations’ progress was judged and their national status, power and prestige were displayed and negotiated. Along with royal jubilees, the Bastille Day, the Tour de France, the Cup Final and international exhibitions, the international spread of sport, the establishment of international sports organisations, the growth of competition between national teams, and international rules for specific sports characterised the last quarter of the nineteenth century.² The aspiration towards a well-trained and healthy human body became a metaphor for the aspiration towards a well-balanced, harmonious and healthy community. Athletics, the means to train and improve the human body, became another means by which the political and social balance of the national body would be achieved. The establishment of the modern Olympics in 1896 should be viewed against the background of these nineteenth-century international contests that provided people with a mode to classify themselves and ‘others’ and to demarcate their symbolic space on a national and international level.

The present paper discusses in particular the American participation in the Olympic Games’ ‘revival’ in Greece. Both the metaphorical and literal travel of the Americans to Greece are examined as a process during which Americans did not only explore the land and the people that hosted those first Games but they also defined and situated themselves in reference to others. Several aspects of the American perceptions can be better understood when read in comparison to respective Greek impressions. Therefore, American and Greek representations of themselves, of the Games, and of each other are juxtaposed in an attempt to indicate, on the one hand

1. E. Hobsbawm, ‘Mass-producing traditions: Europe, 1870-1914’, in E. Hobsbawm/T. Ranger (ed.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1983, pp. 263-307.

2. J. A. Maguire, *Global Sport: Identities, Societies, Civilizations*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1999, p. 82.

the variation in the cultural meanings of the ‘revival’, and on the other the impact the Games had on the contact between those different cultures. Through a series of descriptions, narrations and judgements by American and Greek journalists, intellectual and political figures and athletes, the present research aims at highlighting the Olympic Games as a site where different cultures communicate and construct each other and as a dynamic field of modernist national self-definitions where global ideas and practices are translated, perceived and readjusted on a local level.

Sports in America at the end of the nineteenth century

Although the USA was a young nation overcoming the experience of a civil war (1860-1865), by the 1890s it had been gradually transformed into an industrial power out-classing Britain, France and Germany.³ The growth of nation-wide media towards the end of the nineteenth century fuelled the rise of spectator sports, and better living conditions as well as increased leisure time also increased the public’s interest in sports.⁴ Athletics gradually became for the American intellectual and middle classes part of the national self-definition.⁵

Between the 1870s and the 1880s popular sport developed gradually alongside the upper class sports.⁶ In 1879 Lloyd Bryce, the editor of the *North American Review*, one of the oldest and most distinguished American newspapers of the end of nineteenth century, published a paper entitled ‘A Plea for Sport’. There the author made an appeal for the ‘democratization of sport’, which until then had been mostly a privilege of the upper class. Echoing the signs of his times, Bryce foresaw that together with other American political and social institutions, popular games would ‘usurp the throne vacated by the sports of a privileged class’.⁷ Encouraging sports was for him ‘the dictate of patriotism’ and he urged every educational establishment in the land to provide ample facilities for outdoor exercise, while he measured the level of each nation’s development by the level of their athletic training.⁸ For him, it was the cultivation of sport that in a great measure resulted in ‘the healthy tone of English political life’,⁹ while he thought that ‘the avoidance of all unnecessary physical exer-

3. S. D. Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age. From the Death of Lincoln to the Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, New York University Press, New York/London 1988, p. 15.

4. R. D. Knott, ‘The sport hero as portrayed in popular journalism 1886-1920’, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Tennessee, 1994, pp. 2-4, 31; R. D. Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics*, University of California Press, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1976, p. 45.

5. M. Dyreson, ‘America’s athletic missionaries: Political performance, Olympic spectacle and the quest for an American national culture, 1896-1912’, *Olympika* I (1992), pp. 70-91, esp. p. 71.

6. J. J. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol. Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1981.

7. L. Bryce, ‘A plea for sport’, *The North American Review* 128 (May 1879), pp. 511-25, esp. p. 519.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 522. 9. *Ibid.*, p. 524.

tion [...] may be assigned as one of the principal reasons why Asiatics, when opposed to Europeans, have invariably gone to the wall, from Xerxes' time down to the present day'.¹⁰

For Bryce athletics was considered not only a national mark of distinction but also a means of communication among nation-states, 'a means of bringing the family of nations into more friendly relations'. As Bryce put it, the Anglo-American boat race 'contributed to a greater degree toward inspiring both nations with mutual respect [...] than did the much-lauded principle of [political] arbitration as exemplified in the settlement of the Alabama claims [...].'¹¹ According to Mandell,¹² international sporting competitions existed already in the mid nineteenth century among professionals – mainly Anglo-Saxons on both sides of the Atlantic – and by the 1890s international contests expanded beyond the professional sport.

Bryce's conviction was to have a significant future in Pierre de Coubertin's decision to expand the amicable relations among 'the family of nations' beyond the Anglo-American world.¹³ In his speech for the jubilee of the Union des Sociétés Francaises des Sports Athlétiques at the Sorbonne in 1892 Coubertin announced his faith in the great potential of athleticism:

It is clear that the telegraph, railroads, the telephone, dedicated research congresses and expositions have done more for peace than all the treaties and diplomatic conventions. Indeed, I expect that athleticism will do even more.¹⁴

For Coubertin, like for Bryce, the international dimension of athleticism did not undermine its national dimension. Instead, the nations constituted athleticism's primary competing unit.¹⁵ It is not a coincidence that one can sense in one of his later explanations of how he got the idea for the revival of the Olympic Games that even the idea itself was motivated by his own national competitive urge: 'Germany had brought to light what remained of Olympia; why should not France succeed in rebuilding its splendors?'.¹⁶

What was needed now was a widely shared ideology to support and to frame the international athletic meeting and this was found in the *lingua franca* of Hellenism, which pervaded the educational system of nineteenth-century Western Europe.

The spirit of the ancient Olympic Games, as expressed in the idea of the ancient Greek 'Εκεχειρία' (Holy truce), required the cessation of hostilities, and the forthcoming Games were also seen as a chance for the nations 'to fraternize in the noble

10. *Ibid.*, p. 522.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 524; cf. Dyreson, 'America's athletic missionaries', *op. cit.*, p. 87, n. 18.

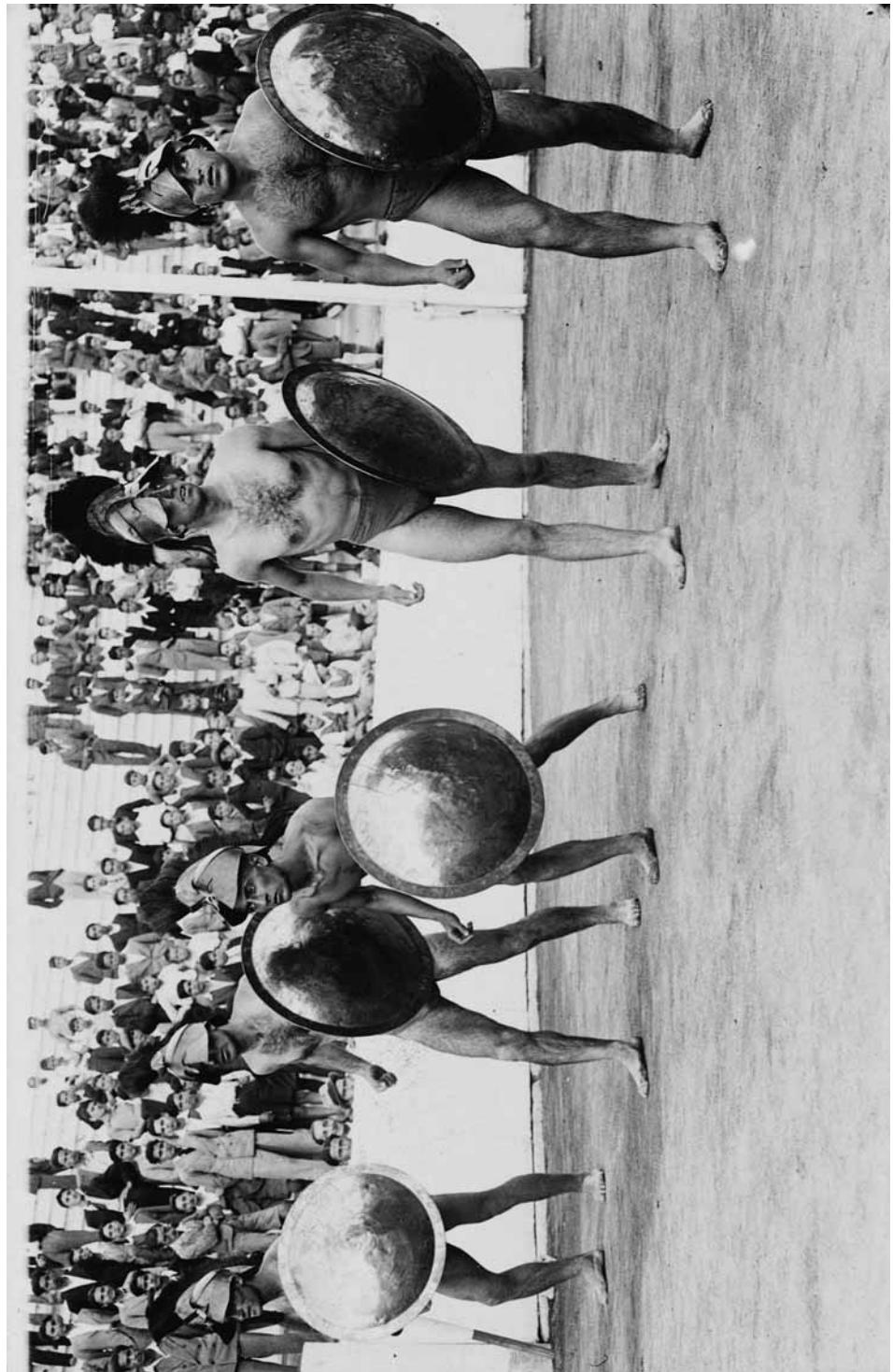
12. Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

13. Cf. Dyreson, 'America's athletic missionaries', *op. cit.*, pp. 73-4.

14. Quoted in Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

16. Quoted in MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, p. 138.



Students of the Gymnastics College in the hoplites' race as part of the representation of classical games at the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games (20 May 1934). [HOC Photographic Archive: K3.29]

cause of athletics'.¹⁷ Dimitrios Kalopothakes, a Greek alumnus of Harvard, rejoiced that 'in the presence of majestic antiquity and the undying monuments of its great achievements all modern quarrels are hushed in awe and admiration'.¹⁸

Kalopothakes was not alone in his conviction. Among several others, Charles Waldstein, who had been the Director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens between 1889 and 1891, also thought that the staging of the first revival in Athens was befitting, given that Athens was the place where the French, the German, the English, and the American schools of classical studies were engaged 'in friendly emulation in intellectual work'. 'Greek soil', Waldstein stated, 'has thus brought us together in the sphere of intellectual effort. It will now do the same for us in the physical sphere of athletic games'.¹⁹

America and the Classics

The classical Greek (as well as the Roman) past had a major impact on the lives and thoughts of Americans. Having inherited the classical tradition from Britain and Europe, Americans applied it in their education, statecraft, the church, the literature and art as early as the first settlements.²⁰ And while the national government that was established with the American Independence looked for its ideals in both the Greek and Roman past, during the first half of the nineteenth century the imperial Roman past had started to fade compared to the Greek past, which was now seen as purer and more in pace with the democratic ideals of the national government.²¹

Although for Europeans the Grand Tour to Italy, Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean was established by the eighteenth century, American travelling to these lands was almost non-existent and it was further prohibited by the outbreak of the Revolution against England in the end of the eighteenth century.²² It was not before

17. D. Kalopothakes, 'The new Olympic Games. Athens', *Harper's Weekly* 39 (1895), pp. 919-24, esp. p. 924.

18. *Ibid.*

19. C. Waldstein, 'The Olympic Games at Athens', *Harper's Weekly* 40 (18 April 1896), p. 391.

20. R. M. Gummere, *The American Colonial Mind and the Classical Tradition. Essays in Comparative Culture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1963, p. 1.

21. Revealing in that respect is a comment by the American historian Thomas James de la Hunt (1866-1933) referring to the Olympic Games: 'To Greece, then, must we look for the earliest form and fullest development of the ancient games. The shows of the Roman circus were at best a shadow – and in the empire's later days a travesty – of those in the Grecian groves; and from the noblest spectacle in the world, the Greek Olympia, the downward course of public games may be traced till we reach the ignoblest, the Roman amphitheatre, of whose horrors we can still form a faint picture from its latest survival, the Spanish bull-fight', in Th. J. De la Hunt, 'Athletic sports of ancient days', *Lippincott's Magazine* 56 (July-Dec. 1895), pp. 838-43, esp. pp. 842-3.

22. S. Dyson, *Ancient Marbles to American Shores. Classical Archaeology in the United States*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1998, pp. 14-15.

the nineteenth century when the political situation, namely the defeat of Napoleon, the Anglo-American peace treaty and the reduction of the Barbary pirate menace, allowed Americans to travel to Europe and to come more directly in touch with the Romanticism that at that time dominated England and Germany and greatly influenced American thinking in the early nineteenth century.²³ Germany in particular became the place of education for an increasing number of American classicists.²⁴ In this atmosphere it is not surprising that Athens was preferred over Rome as the place of the first American overseas school.²⁵ The classical education and readings of Americans in Romantic authors, such as Shelley, Keats, and Byron, led to a philhellenic disposition that favoured the Greek struggles for independence and even drove Americans, like Dr Samuel Gridley Howe, to go to Greece to aid its War of Independence.²⁶

With the prospect of the Olympic Games a series of philhellenic writings were published expressing the American sympathy for ‘the efforts of the genuine descendants of that people whose mental culture we all inherit’²⁷ and even supporting the Greek ambitions encapsulated in the Greek concept of the ‘Great Idea’.²⁸

But the greatest good of this first meeting of the New Olympic Games will accrue to Greece herself. It will be a great rallying time for the people of Greater Hellas. The inhabitants of the Kingdom of Greece are but a minority of their race [...]. When the clock shall strike the hour of doom for the Turkish Empire, Greece will be all ready to take the place that is rightfully hers. [...] This is not merely the vision of a single enthusiast. All Greeks know that old tradition that Constantinople will again be theirs when a Constantine and a Sophia shall be their sovereigns. When Crown Prince Constantine with his Prussian wife Sophia ascends the throne that condition will be met. [...] Supremacy of Slavic rule in the East will end forever the dreams of a united and fully liberated Hellas. It will do more. It will replace Turkish barbarity with Slavic intolerance and plunge the East into darkness for another half millennium.[...] If these New Olympic Games shall lead to closer contact between Greece and the western nations, give to us a truer estimate of the Greek and a juster

23. *Ibid.*, p. 18. 24. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-6. 25. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

26. H. Schwartz, *Samuel Gridley Howe: Social Reformer*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1956, pp. 7-38; W. St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, Oxford University Press, London 1972; P. Pappas, *The United States and the Greek War of Independence*, Columbia University Press, New York 1985, pp. 118-20, cited in Dyson, *Ancient Marbles to American Shores*, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-1.

27. D. Quinn, ‘The Games of Olympia’, *Catholic University Bulletin* II (1896), pp. 172-9, especially p. 173.

28. The ‘Great Idea’ [*Megali Idea*] is a term introduced by the Greek Prime Minister Koletis in 1844 and was attributed different meanings in different contexts. It could stand for territorial expansion of Greece, its cultural regeneration and domination in the East, or the Greek state’s reorganization. See A. Politis, *Pομαντικά χρόνια: Ιδεολογίες και νοοτροπίες στην Ελλάδα του 1830-1880* [Romantic years. Ideologies and mentalities in the Greece of 1830-1880], Athens 1993, pp. 62-3; E. Skopetea, *To ‘Πρότυπο Βασίλειο’ και η Μεγάλη Ιδέα: Όψεις των εθνικού προβλήματος στην Ελλάδα του 1830-1880* [The ‘Model Kingdom’ and the *Megali Idea*. Aspects of the national problem in Greece 1830-1880], Athens 1988.

conception of his possibilities and rights, and bring to him greater appreciation and emulation of western civilization, we as well as he will be the gainers.²⁹

The travel

Despite the philhellenic bias of the American educated opinion as well as the ‘athletic craze’ that pervaded the USA in the 1890s the American team that went to Athens consisted of only 13 athletes, most of whom had a privileged family background and average athletic skills.³⁰ April, the time for when the Games were scheduled, was the middle of the spring semester and the fear of putting the performance of the athletes in intercollegiate competitions at stake prevented wider participation. After the first American successes at the Olympics in Athens *The Alumni Princetonian* (9 April 1896) expressed its ‘utmost confidence in the faithfulness and staying powers of [America’s and Princeton’s] representatives’, and predicted ‘a final showing of which America and Princeton may well be proud’. However it admitted that when the American athletes departed several objections were voiced on the grounds that such a voyage might affect the American performance in the Olympic Games and that ‘the absence of the men from the scene of active training would work to our disadvantage in the meets with Yale and Columbia’.

This is an indication of why many Americans were not willing to give up their participation in American competitions that traditionally had been important to them. In any case, compared to local competitions American newspapers did not give much coverage to the Olympic Games that were under preparation in Athens.³¹ As Ellery Clark, one of the athletes of the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) reminisces:

In view of the excessive excitement of recent years, there was little interest in America over the plan, and it was not until the winter of 1896 that the BAA decided to send a team to the games. The whole idea sprang from a chance remark uttered in jest. At the club’s annual games in January, Arthur Blake, our best distance runner, won the thousand yards, after a spectacular finish and in very good time. After the race Mr Burnham, one of Blake’s friends and a prominent member of the club, was congratulating him on his showing, and Blake laughingly answered: ‘Oh, I’m too good for Boston. I ought to go over and run the Marathon, at Athens, in the Olympic games’. Mr Burnham looked at him for a moment in silence and then: ‘Would you

29. W. A. Elliott, ‘The new Olympic Games’, *The Chataquan* 23 (1896), pp. 47-51, esp. p. 51. Ruth Ash, College Archivist of Pelletier Library in Allegheny College, Pennsylvania, kindly informed me that William A. Elliott was Instructor and Principal of the Preparatory School at Allegheny between 1889-1892 and Professor of Greek and Latin between 1892-1935. Between 1894 and 1895 he took a leave of absence to study in Greece.

30. Dyreson, ‘America’s athletic missionaries’, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

31. Cf. Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.



Thomas Curtis (USA), first Olympic victor in the 110 m. hurdles (26 March 1896).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.55]

really go if you had the chance?' he asked. 'Would I', Blake returned, with emphasis; and from that moment Mr Burnham made up his mind, if it could be brought about, that the BAA should send a team to the games. A month later everything was definitely decided upon.³²

This is how the decision for the BAA participation was described by Clark. The final team from the BAA consisted of the BAA's coach, John Graham, and the track-and-field athletes William Hoyt, Arthur Blake, Thomas Burke, Thomas P. Curtis, and Ellery H. Clark. Most of them had a connection with Harvard or Boston universities. Other members of the American team was James B. Connolly of the Suffolk Athletic Club in Boston, a Harvard drop-out, Summer and John Paine, two brothers who were captains in the army and pistol marksmen, and the swimmer Gardiner Williams.

The BAA team was joined by a team from Princeton University, which was brought together by William Milligan Sloane, professor of French history at Princeton and head of the American Olympic Committee. The four students – also field-and-track athletes – who constituted the team were Herbert B. Jamison, Francis A. Lane, Albert C. Tyler, and Robert Garrett.³³ Garrett, the captain of the team, was of a Baltimore banking family, which agreed to cover also the expenses of the other members of the team as Sloane had not managed to arouse interest from outside the track team of Princeton University.

After the establishment of the Greek state, especially between the 1840s and the 1850s, Americans started visiting Greece, which until that time had been isolated because of the war, banditry and disease.³⁴ By the 1890s travelling was no longer restricted to the upper classes, and a growing American middle class was getting exposed to European culture through travelling.³⁵ Still, the prospect of the American team travelling to Greece for the Olympic Games was met with several concerns. A writer in the *New York Times* observed:

Princeton may have a heavy surplus in its treasury, and the team may be in need of an ocean voyage. These are purely local questions. But the American amateur sportsman in general should know that in going to Athens he is taking an expensive journey to a third rate capital where he will not even have a daily post from the outside world, where he will be devoured by fleas [...], where he will suffer physical torments greater than at Saratoga Lake and where if he does win the prize will be an

32. E. H. Clark, *Reminiscences of an Athlete. Twenty Years on Track and Field*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston/New York 1911, pp. 124-5.

33. For the Princeton participation of and connection to the 1896 Olympics, see Llewellyn Smith 'The 1896 Olympic Games at Athens and the Princeton Connection', *Princeton University Library Chronicle* (forthcoming).

34. Dyson, *Ancient Marbles to American Shores*, *op. cit.*, pp. 19, 21, 54.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

honor requiring explanation. It is more than 2000 years since the Greeks practiced the art of keeping their pores open by manly sport once a day.³⁶

An American visitor to Greece on the occasion of the Olympic Games summed up the idea he thought Americans had regarding the safety of travelling to Greece in an interview he gave to the *Acropolis* newspaper (15 April 1896):

[Americans] imagine that if one wants to go from Athens to Marathon one needs to have a battalion of custodians and a legion of translators! Yet, I went by coach and came back on foot without meeting, even one suspicious shadow. On the contrary, wherever I travel [within Greece] I find prompt hospitality and politeness of the people. These facts, however, are unknown in America and these misconceptions may only start to dissolve now.

More specific, though unusual, fears were also expressed when people imagined what it would be like to deal with situations that might be unfamiliar to Americans, such as the sheepdogs that were abundant in the Greek countryside and ready ‘to bite pretty severely any moving object upon the road’ (*New York Times*, 25 March 1896). In fact a Dr Clarence H. Young, professor of Greek in Columbia College, in a talk about the Olympic Games, recommended that for that reason the marathon runners should carry some good size rocks to keep the dogs away.³⁷

Despite the fears regarding safety in Greece the American athletic delegation did not report any unexpected event that justified American concerns. An exception was Arthur Blake’s reminiscence of the evening prior to the marathon when a ‘tremendous fellow’ came into the inn where he and Graham, the coach, were, ‘with a six-foot gun over his shoulder, a goat’s-skin hat, and whiskery face’.³⁸ Blake asked the landlord what the man did with the gun. ‘He shoots game, wild animals, and other men’, responded the landlord. ‘I understood then why the American ambassador had given us Colt .45s when we arrived’, Blake said.

While the prospective travel to modern Greece caused insecurity to its American visitors, the latter felt much more on their homeground with their imaginary visit to ancient Greece that this travel represented.

36. Cited in Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics*, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-15.

37. Although no such accidents were reported during the marathon competition, one American did take his precautions. According to the newspaper *Acropolis* (30 March 1896), the son of the American ambassador in Greece who participated in the marathon was reported to hold a long whip against dogs, although he did not use it in the end as ‘all necessary measures had been taken’.

38. Cited in J. Shaw, ‘The unexpected Olympians. How Harvard dominated the first modern games – in spite of itself’, *Harvard Magazine* (July.-Aug. 1996).

Modern Greece through the classicist lens

After the plans for the Olympic Games were announced, ancient Greek texts and classicist readings were dusted and a series of educated articles appeared in American periodicals describing the form and the meaning of ancient Olympic Games.³⁹

Due to the flourishing classical scholarship in European and particularly German universities, most Western travellers to Greece experienced the Greek landscape through the lens of its ancient past. It has been noted that for most Western travellers ancient sites were ‘more literary *topoi* than geographical realities’, experienced through classical learning.⁴⁰

One can sense a similar attitude in the writings of American travellers to Greece, many of whom were educated in and had strong links with Britain and Germany. When viewing the landscape of Attica, events from the ancient Greek history paraded before their eyes. One example is a paper by George Horton, who was the US consul at Athens for many years and a prolific author of fiction stories in Greek settings and of books about Greece. In that paper about the upcoming 1896 ‘Olympian Games’ he suggested that no-one visiting Athens on the occasion of the Games should fail to make a trip to Pentelicon, the place of the ancient quarries of Attica, and he described his own experience of that trip.⁴¹ Throughout the narration of his trip he constantly ‘read’ the modern Greek landscape through his knowledge of the Greek past: in the cultivated fields of the suburbs of modern Athens he saw the fields that the ancient Spartans and their allies plundered during the first years of the Peloponnesian War; the modern Attic farmers brought to his mind Strepsiades, the farmer of Aristophanes’ *Nubae*; the well situated on the ancient road leading to the quarries made him imagine that this ‘may have furnished water to the men and animals of Pericles or perhaps to those of Herodes Atticus’ when the latter undertook the restoration of the Panathenaic Stadium in Roman times. When he finally reached the summit of Pentelicon he encountered ‘one of the finest views in Greece’, ‘especially valuable for the glance afforded at the field of Marathon, and its moon-shaped bay in which the Persians drew their ships. The whole scene of the battle lies below like a panorama’.⁴² It was a panorama that oscillated between past and present, reality and imagination, a panorama of historical events that defined the delight he found in viewing the Greek landscape.

39. See, for example, De la Hunt, ‘Athletic sports of ancient days’, *op. cit.*; A. Marquand, ‘The old Olympic Games’, *The Century Magazine* LI/6 (1896), pp. 803-16; Quinn ‘The Games of Olympia’, *op. cit.*; W. S. Bansemer, ‘The Olympian Games’, *The New England Magazine* XIV/3 (1896), pp. 261-77; W. A. Robinson, ‘The Olympian Games at Athens’, *The Bachelor of Arts* II/5 (1896), pp. 581-93.

40. R. Eisner, *Travelers to an Antique Land. The History and Literature of Travel to Greece*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1993, p. 67-8; cf. A. Leontis, *Topographies of Hellenism: Mapping the Homeland*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca/London 1995, p. 42.

41. G. Horton, ‘Revival of Olympian Games’, *North American Review* 162 (1896), pp. 266-73, especially p. 269.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 271.

Similarly, for Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve, who was educated in Germany and was the founder of American classical philology, the view of Cape Taenarum became meaningful through Herodotus' story about the musician Arion who, according to the legend, was saved by a dolphin that took him out of the sea to one of the cape's coasts. Similarly, while sailing along the coast of the Peloponnese, Gildersleeve was making himself aware that he was sailing in 'Odyssean waters', and he recognised the landscape from the Homeric narration and the adventures of Ulysses.⁴³

An account that differs somewhat from the others is that of Burton Holmes, an American travel writer from a wealthy family of Chicago, whose recount of his sojourn in Greece described in length his experiences of the contemporary Greek life. One reason for the difference of Burton Holmes is that, unlike most other authors, he was not a classicist or diplomat or elevated man of letters, but a professional writer and lecturer who had his 'public' in mind, and that public wanted picturesque vignettes of modern life as well as reflections on antiquity.⁴⁴ This is how Holmes' travel story begins:

It is a mistaken belief that he who knows not ancient Greece, as revealed in the immortal works of poetry, philosophy and art, he who has not spent his life in the companionship of the Greek classics, he who cannot in his own soul realize the Greece of old, is not fitted to approach her shores. The Olympian Games were the excuse for my intrusion into the land of the scholar and the archaeologist. I knew too well that I would bring to Greece only a love of travel, an eye not wholly blind to beauty, and a deep respect for the history, the letters, and the art of Greece. While to the student of antiquity Greece offers a larger reward than to any other, for every one she has gifts according to the worth of his mental capacities; and even upon him who, empty-handed, humbly bows before her, she bestows an ample recompense – the power to appreciate and to enjoy her natural charm. Let no one therefore hesitate to visit Greece. Pallas Athene is no longer stern; she asks of the children of the present century, not that they sacrifice to her upon the altar of unceasing study, but only that they bring to her hearts rightly turned, eyes alive to form and color, souls in which dwells the love of loveliness. She asks no more than that which almost every one of us can offer.⁴⁵

Although Holmes welcomes his readership to 'set forth upon a strictly modern Odyssey [...] without a classical dictionary, without our Homer or our Plato', he cannot escape from his attachment to the past: the speech of modern Greece falls on to his ears 'like a sweet though distorted echo from the past'; the 'vitality' of the

43. B. L. Gildersleeve, 'My sixty days in Greece', *The Atlantic Monthly* 79 (Febr. 1897), pp. 199-212, esp. pp. 206-7.

44. Llewellyn Smith: personal communication.

45. B. Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens, 1896. The First Modern Olympics*, Grove Press, New York 1984, p. 5.

Athenian dust convinces him ‘that it must be the dust of those old Greeks who never were subdued’; the male Greeks who take their lunch ‘upon the public curb’ represent ‘young Pericles and Alcibiades’; he is disappointed by ‘this shoddy modern dress’ which robs modern Greeks ‘of all dignity, and successfully conceals whatever grace and beauty they have inherited from the Greeks of other days’.⁴⁶ Holmes clearly states his conviction that the main interest in the 1896 Olympics lay not in modern athletics, which ‘were not remarkable save in one respect, the invincibility of our American champions’.⁴⁷ For him what gave the Olympic Games deeper meaning was their ‘immortal background’, their ‘splendid setting’, which allowed views to the Acropolis and to the Bay of Salamis.⁴⁸ For Holmes the treasures of Greece were not of gold or silver, which she lacked, but of marble.⁴⁹

Not all Americans had this kind of purely idealistic affinity to the Hellenic heritage. As S. D. Cashman noted in reference to the so-called ‘Gilded Age’ of America (1865-1901), ‘although architects and artists in the Gilded Age were inspired by the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome, their patrons never let them forget the priorities of the present. It was their task to celebrate the confidence of accumulated capital’.⁵⁰ An idea for the exploitation of this Greek ‘marble treasure’ is offered by an American whose name is not known, in an interview he gave to a Greek reporter for the newspaper *Acropolis* (15 April 1896). There the American argued that it is towards the side of the Acropolis facing the sea that the city of Athens should expand if it wanted to attract tourists who would be a major asset for Greece and who would only visit it because of its antiquities. In the same interview the American announced his own plans for the modernisation of Athens: He intended to build a huge hotel with all the necessary equipment, with gardens and groves on a site that he could not yet reveal. All he could say was that it was a place that was not flat and that he would therefore need to level it out. His long-term idea was that other businessmen would imitate him and the city would gradually develop towards his hotel so that in a short time it would reach the Bay of Phalirio.

An investment of a different kind was sought by another American who, according to a rumour that circulated in the headquarters of the Greek Olympic Committee, offered 500,000 dollars for the completion of the Stadium provided that his statue would be erected facing the statue built in honour of Averoff, the Greek benefactor who sponsored the rebuilding of the Panathenaic Stadium.⁵¹

Finally, the American athlete James Brendan Connolly, who came from a poor Irish Catholic family, and who had on various occasions criticised the ‘materialists, the men with money to spare’,⁵² described the American visitors to Athens on the occasion of the Olympics as ‘eager, rushing everywhere, with seemingly inexhaustible

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 8, 19, 33, 27. 47. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1. 48. *Ibid.*, p. 60. 49. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-2.

50. Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

51. *Estia* newspaper, 2 April 1896.

52. J. B. Connolly, ‘The spirit of the Olympian Games’, *Outing Magazine* (April 1906), pp. 101-4, esp. p. 104.

supplies of energy – likewise of money. They had but to see a thing – a trinket, a relic, a bit of sculpture – to demand at once the price and immediately to buy. Of course many things were not to be bought, and they would ask, “Why not? Why not?” impatiently’. Many of them, Connolly argued, ‘seemed not to understand that even an unlimited purse is not always potent’.⁵³

The ‘religion’ of Hellenism

Despite any opportunistic and speculative dispositions the dominant stances towards the Games were those that drew from Coubertin’s interpretation of Hellenism as a ‘religion of humanity’.⁵⁴ That interpretation echoed the construction of Greece as a sacred ground by its Western ‘pilgrims’ educated in classics.⁵⁵ It is interesting that as part of the pilgrimage to the ideal Hellas on the occasion of the Olympic Games’ revival, a procession of native and foreign scholars marched past the Academy to Kolonus, where they ceremonially placed wreaths at ‘the somewhat neglected monuments’ of the classical scholars and archaeologists Karl Otfried Müller and Charles Lenormant.⁵⁶ The pilgrimage to Hellas thus became at the same time a pilgrimage not only to the ancient Greeks, but also to the classical scholars and archaeologists who honoured them throughout their lives.

The aesthetic and largely ethical appreciation of Hellenism’s values elevated it onto the non-political and unreachable sphere of the ideal and vested it with a ‘sacredness’ that would not bear any ‘polluting’ elements. Thus, the ‘missionaries’ of Hellenism could not allow the sacred spirit of the ancient Games to become ‘infected’ by the ‘polluting’ properties of money, which were linked with the ‘dangerous’ growth of the professional spirit. In the USA, where professionalisation in sport loomed large, several idealists pointed at the ‘vulgarity and uncleanness’ that ‘creep in when boys begin to think more of winning than of the means by which they win’.⁵⁷ On the occasion of the Olympics several argued against the professional athlete and pleaded for the sports’ ‘rescue from the control of those whose goal is the almighty dollar and not the simple olive branch’.⁵⁸ In fact some tried to warn the rest of the

53. J. B. Connolly, *An Olympic Victor. A Story of the Modern Games*, Charles Scribner’s sons, New York 1908, σ. 85.

54. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

55. Cf. Leontis, *Topographies of Hellenism*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

56. R. B. Richardson, ‘The new Olympian Games’, *Scribner’s Magazine*, XX/3 (1896), pp. 267-86, especially p. 269.

57. J. Hawthorne, ‘The building of the muscle’, *Harper’s Weekly Magazine* 69 (Aug. 1884), pp. 384-7, esp. p. 387.

58. Elliott, ‘The new Olympic Games’, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

degenerating power of professionalism and paid sport by drawing examples from ancient Greek history itself.⁵⁹

The sacred undertones that were attributed to the Olympic Games and that one cannot fail to notice in the reports about the 1896 revival did not have to do only with their association with classicism and the ‘ideal Hellas’. They were also related with the fact that the idea of the Games as a means to foster international peace attributed to the revival of the (pagan) games also a ‘Christian’ mission highlighted in the words of G. T. Ferris who was writing in *St Nicholas*, a magazine for the American family circle in the late nineteenth century:

The so-called revival of the Olympic games suggests a promise bigger and fairer than anything we have practiced as international sport. [...] It can touch the men of today with the deep sense of human brotherhood, and the projectors of the revival have embodied this thought in eloquent words. Once more the world has heard from the top of the Hill of Mars the swelling note of the apostle Paul in praise of the ‘Unknown God’, who ‘hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth’.⁶⁰

The ‘sacredness’ that the Games were vested with had yet another even more important aspect, linked with ‘the worship of the nation’: In his formulation of ‘Neo-Olympism’ Coubertin held that ‘In this secularized century one religion was to hand for this purpose, the national flag, symbol of modern patriotism, climbing to the mast of victory to reward the winning athlete’. For Coubertin, ‘this would carry on the ancient cult beside the rekindled hearth [...].’⁶¹ Several scholars have noted the similarities between nationalist imagining and religious ideology,⁶² a fact that has led Anderson⁶³ to observe that both religion and nationalism should be seen as cultural systems, the second following and drawing from the first. Anderson elaborates his argument by suggesting that the dawn of nationalist ideology in eighteenth-century Europe coincided with the dusk of religious systems of thought. The new group identity, the ‘imagined community of the nation’, he infers, had to absorb and incorporate many religious concepts and

59. Waldstein ('The Olympic Games at Athens', *Harper's Weekly* 40 [18 April 1896], p. 391) linked the degeneration of athleticism in ancient Greece with the growing professionalism in Hellenistic times, overlooking the fact that professionalisation in athletics existed also in classical times (cf. Gildersleeve, 'My sixty days in Greece', *op. cit.*).

60. G. T. Ferris, 'The Olympian Games', *St Nicholas* XXIII (Part I, Nov. 1895 - April 1896), pp. 508-12, esp. p. 512.

61. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-2.

62. E.g. M. Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece*, Texas University Press, Austin 1982, pp. 34-9; B. Kapferer, *Legends of People, Myths of State*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington / London 1988; T. H. Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives*, Pluto Press, London / Chicago 1993, pp. 107-8; E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, Oxford 1983, p. 56.

63. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London / New York 1991, p. 12.



Charilaos Vasilakos, second Olympic victor in the marathon (1896).
[HOC Photographic Archive: K1.69]

ritual practices. Anderson's idea can be illustrated by the meaning that the Olympic Games acquired as a new secular religion right from the moment they were restored in 1896.⁶⁴

As many critics of the so-called 'revival' argued, in order for the event to avoid becoming a 'pedantical effort of worshippers of the past'⁶⁵ they had to be modern in character;⁶⁶ they had to find an object of cult that would be meaningful and intelligible by all and would be able to substitute the object of the ancient Greek religion. An example of how this was achieved is highlighted in a text by Gildersleeve to which I also referred earlier:⁶⁷ Although the long-planned trip of the sexagenarian editor of Pindar to Greece coincided with the Olympic Games, he decided not to arrive to Athens until after the Games were over. Like many of his contemporaries, Gildersleeve did not want to see Athens 'vulgarized by the crowds', neither did he want to witness the ancient institution becoming a mere spectacle devoid of the ancient games weight. He knew that 'religion hallowed ancient Greek athleticism' and that to renew the Olympic Games one should have a religious basis but he could not see how the modern 'revival' could substitute this ancient religious basis.⁶⁸ It was only after Gildersleeve finally arrived in Athens that he received an answer to that question in the brilliantly illuminated faces and the joy that he encountered in the streets of Athens on the day following the Greek marathon victory as well as in the cry 'Zito Ellas' that, as he said, gave the Games 'the sacredness they would otherwise have lacked'.⁶⁹ For Gildersleeve it was 'the nation' that had become the substitute of the ancient religion, and successfully 'hallowed' the modern Olympic Games.

But how was it that the 'revival' of the Olympic Games was experienced by its participants – athletes or spectators – as a means of 'the cult of the nation'? To answer this question I will put some examples of the Greek experiences of the Games alongside those of the Americans.

The Greek 'revival'

Greece had nothing comparable to the political and economic power of the US. A recent bankruptcy had isolated it politically and financially, a large number of Greek

64. See also K. Weis, 'Religion and sport. The social connection', in F. Landry/M. Landry/M. Yerlès (επιψ.), *Sport... The Third Millennium. Proceedings of the International Symposium Quebec City, Canada, May 21-25 1990*, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, Canada 1991, p. 216; Ch. Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αυτοκήσ κοινωνικότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, p. 109.

65. Elliott, 'The new Olympic Games', *op. cit.*, p. 47.

66. Ferris, 'The Olympian Games', *op. cit.*, p. 511.

67. Gildersleeve, 'My sixty days in Greece', *op. cit.*

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 203-4.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

populations was excluded from the borders of the Greek state, and other Balkan ethnicities had started claiming parts of the Ottoman Empire contested also by the Greeks. The prospect of the staging of the Olympic Games was particularly welcomed as an opportunity to come closer to the other nations and as a step towards the realisation of national aspirations. The coincidence of the Olympics with the Greek Easter celebration as well as with the anniversary of the Greek Independence Day added to the festival that was already heavily invested with symbolic meaning as it was seen as a ‘triple Resurrection’ (*τριπλή ανάστασις*): That of Jesus, of the Nation, and of the ancient Greek civilisation.⁷⁰ It alluded to the regeneration of the Greek nation, which was now seen as re-inhabiting the ancient Greek land. This idea, which had already been nurtured in Greece with the War of Independence and the consequent establishment of the Greek state in the early nineteenth century, also defined the revival of the Olympic Games from the Greek perspective.⁷¹ On the day commemorating the Greek Independence the *Asty* newspaper (24 March 1896) proclaimed:

What a mysterious coincidence! Along with the Resurrection of the God man and with the national reinstatement we are also celebrating the revival of the Olympic Games. It is as if out of divine providence all these three events that constitute an unbreakable chain coincided.

The proclamation by King George of Greece of the opening ceremony of the otherwise ‘international’ Games was a cheer to the Greek nation: ‘I declare the opening of the First International Olympic Games in Athens. Long live the Nation! Long live the Greek people!’.⁷²

The ‘survival’ was a concept that was put to use widely by Greek folklorists and was meant to bridge ‘the gap’ between the ancient and the modern Greek world and to provide testimony of the continuity that would unite these two worlds in the national Greek consciousness. That concept was also applied in athletics in an effort to prove the continuity from the ancient Greek athletic tradition.⁷³ The romantic conviction that the Olympic Games along with the ancient Greek spirit had ‘survived’ all along in the Greek land is explicit in the following text by the Greek Chargé d’Affairs in London, Ioannes Gennadius:

[...] the traditional love of athleticism remained, along with the language and the consciousness of nationality, singularly fresh and strong [in modern Greece:] [...] in

70. *Estia* newspaper, 25 March 1896.

71. Cf. Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστυχίας καινοτομίας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-8.

72. *Estia* newspaper, 26 March 1896. Connolly (‘The spirit of the Olympian Games’, *op. cit.*, p. 101) explained the meaning the Games had for modern Greeks in the following words: ‘To understand what it meant to a patriotic Greek, one must bear in mind that it was like a reincarnation, an invocation of the gods, a living over again of the days when his country led the world in all the things the world held worthy, and a revival of the period when in the young men were developed brain and body harmoniously’.

73. Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστυχίας καινοτομίας*, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

the great epic of the klephitic songs, among the highlanders of Crete, among certain Greek communities in Macedonia; among the hardy mountaineers of Acarnania, from whom the best Greek troops are recruited; and among the Greek Albanians and the Souliotes of Epirus. [...] Every element is there to favour the success of the entire undertaking. [...] It will be early spring when the celebration takes place – the sweetest and loveliest season in a climate always benign, when the very stones in Greece seem to blossom with flowers. It will be Easter-tide, the great festival of the venerable Church of the East, heralding joy and hope to all. It will be the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the Sacred Struggle for independence – a triple inspiring symbolism of resurrection, such as only Greece can supply from the wealth of her poetic traditions. The demi-gods and heroes of Greece will themselves arise from their secular slumbers, stirred up by the acclamations of victors in the Stadium of Athens, called back to life by the hymns of praise sung in every tongue.⁷⁴

As has been discussed elsewhere,⁷⁵ classical antiquity as the Greek national antiquity par excellence became imbued with sacredness since the establishment of the Greek state. The classical heritage of the Olympic Games in particular was ascribed further national importance, given that it was thought of as offering Greece the opportunity to display its modernisation and to claim a position in the family of ‘the civilised’ nations.

Especially the marathon, on which the Greeks had set their hopes of winning, took a mythical hold over the Games as it followed the route run by the ancient Athenian from Marathon all the way to Athens in order to announce to his fellow citizens the Greek victory over the Persians in the battle of Marathon.⁷⁶ It was that feeling that Tyler, one of the American athletes representing Princeton, tried to communicate to his American compatriots in his letter to *The Alumni Princetonian* (9 April 1896): ‘Football enthusiasm cannot compare with it. The crowd was fully three times larger than ever seen at a football match’. It is remarkable how non-Greeks were swept away by the wave of Greek emotions which willed the Greek athletes to win the marathon and projected the marathon as a game the victory of which rightfully belonged to the Greeks. Several Americans reported fondly on the Greek victory even long after the event and some even reproduced the Greek idea that the ancient Greek spirit was resurrected upon the Greek victory.⁷⁷

74. J. Gennadius, ‘The revival of the Olympian Games’, *Cosmopolis*, II/4 (April 1896), pp. 59-74, esp. pp. 70, 74.

75. Y. Hamilakis/E. Yalouri, ‘Sacralising the past: Cults of archaeology in modern Greece’, *Archaeological Dialogues*, 6(2) (1999), pp. 115-59; E. Yalouri, *The Acropolis. Global Fame, Local Claim*, Berg, Oxford/New York 2001.

76. As Sir Michael Llewellyn Smith pointed out to me, it is quite interesting that it was in fact the invention of a Frenchman, Michel Bréal, classicist and friend of de Coubertin, which immediately took hold, because it was so well suited to the circumstances.

77. For Charles Waldstein for example, ‘the old god Pan, who had been sleeping here for two thousand years, awoke [from the cheers coming from the Panathenaic Stadium] and smiled [at the Greek victory in the

The coverage of the event of the marathon by the editor of the *Acropolis* (30 March 1896), is indicative of the ways the sacredness attributed to this particular event was also experienced in Christian Orthodox terms.⁷⁸ His narration begins with the description of the athletes' movements before the competition in the little village of Marathon where,

Papaviliotis a most pious priest has been ringing the church bell since early morning. People come to church with piety, but the most pious of all are our poor runners. Some of them have now entered the church. They fix their lips on the Panayia's icon and they are kissing her. They want to say something to her with their kisses, they want to confide something to her. They kiss her a lot, unceasingly. But she will also help them. Be sure.

The *Acropolis* editor described the enthusiastic departure of the Greek runners, who were accompanied by blessings, cheering and tears of farmers, among whom was an old man who bid his farewell to the runners by shouting to them 'Χριστός Ανέστη' (Christ has risen), an exclamatory expression in the Greek Orthodox Church affirming the resurrection of Christ. The description of the athletes' setting off was concluded by (his personal?) prayer to God:

[...] a prayer from the bottom of the heart, heard only by the hills of that area, a request as deep as the sky's height is sent to God. Let the Greeks not show an inferior performance. Ah, God, no! Do you think that He heard?

After the win of Louis, the heroified Greek Marathon winner, the reporter described his compatriots the farmers of Marousi, as cheering and weeping from happiness, while he compared them to the ancient farmers from Karytos who burst into tears when their compatriot Kymylos won the wrestling in ancient Olympia. The coverage ended with the reporter's conviction that

[...] the bones of the ancient Greek victors of the Battle at Marathon would become living skeletons and would come out of their most sacred tombs in order to congratulate modern Greeks and to salute with enthusiasm the [Greek] flag and the modern Greek marathon winner.

marathon race]. He remembered how 2776 years ago he had gladdened the heart of the runner Pheidippides when he raced back from Sparta in despair at not obtaining Lakonian help to meet the Persian foe threatening Athens before Marathon; how he, the great god Pan, had promised him and the Athenians success against their barbarian enemies. [...] The Marathon runner who died with the blessed words on his lips, sinking down in the market-place of Athens [...] was a certain Philippides [sic]: C. Waldstein, 'The Olympian Games at Athens', *Harper's Weekly* 40 (16 May 1896), p. 490; see also M. Butler, 'The Olympic Games', *The Outlook* 53 (1896), pp. 993-5; Richardson, 'The new Olympian Games', *op. cit.*

78. Cf. Yalouri, *The Acropolis*, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-86.

Other accounts of the Marathon abound in similar associations between past and present, ancient and Christian Orthodox Greeks. Louis himself was said to have confessed to the priest of Marathon before setting out. He was reported to have justified such a move by saying that he did not know if he would survive such a long distance and he did not want to go to hell and by saying that the ‘Holy Communion gives strength to man’. The reporter referring to the event praised Louis, for such a ‘simple farmer of spade and scythe’ was religious and pious.⁷⁹

The classical metaphors the newspapers were using extended also to Louis’ father who was compared to Diagoras, the ancient Greek father who was fortunate to witness the victory of both his sons before he died. He was reported as having entered the tunnel of the dressing quarters in the stadium after Louis’ victory and having embraced his son with passion while the latter said to him smiling: ‘You see father, you told me not to come back unless I win. There you go...’⁸⁰ – another reference to the past, namely the prompting of ancient Spartan women to their boys not to return home from war unless they were winners.

Classical Hellenism and Byzantine Christian Orthodoxy as the two main pillars of the Greek national identity meet up here through a series of, at times supernatural, associations: The farmers of Marousi to the farmers of ancient Kymylos, Diagoras to Louis’ father; the Underworld of the ancient Greeks to the world of the (Christian Orthodox) modern Greeks, the Resurrection of Jesus to the ‘resurrection’ of the Greek nation upon a potential marathon victory. What should be especially noted is the key role of the Panayia throughout the reporter’s narration. The Virgin Mary, encapsulating the concept of motherhood, is invoked to come to the ‘Greek boys’ aid in their hour of need, exactly like in times of war, to protect the Greek nation. The Greek athlete appears then as a fighter who goes to defend his homeland, a fact that reminds us of the idea of international sports as ‘the most important form of metaphoric war between nations’.⁸¹ In that respect, the words of a major of the Greek army who cheered the Greek marathon runners before the beginning of the competition are also revealing: ‘Boys, think of your homeland, remember that the Greek flag is waiting [to be risen] before the flagpole of the Stadium. From us, the people of the army, our homeland asks to give our blood, from you our flag asks you to honour it’.⁸²

For Coubertin the symbol par excellence of the new ‘religion’ was the national flag. ‘The national flag, symbol of modern patriotism, climbing to the mast of victory to reward the winning athlete – this would carry on the ancient cult beside the rekindled hearth’.⁸³ And indeed emotional accounts are given on a daily basis in Greek daily

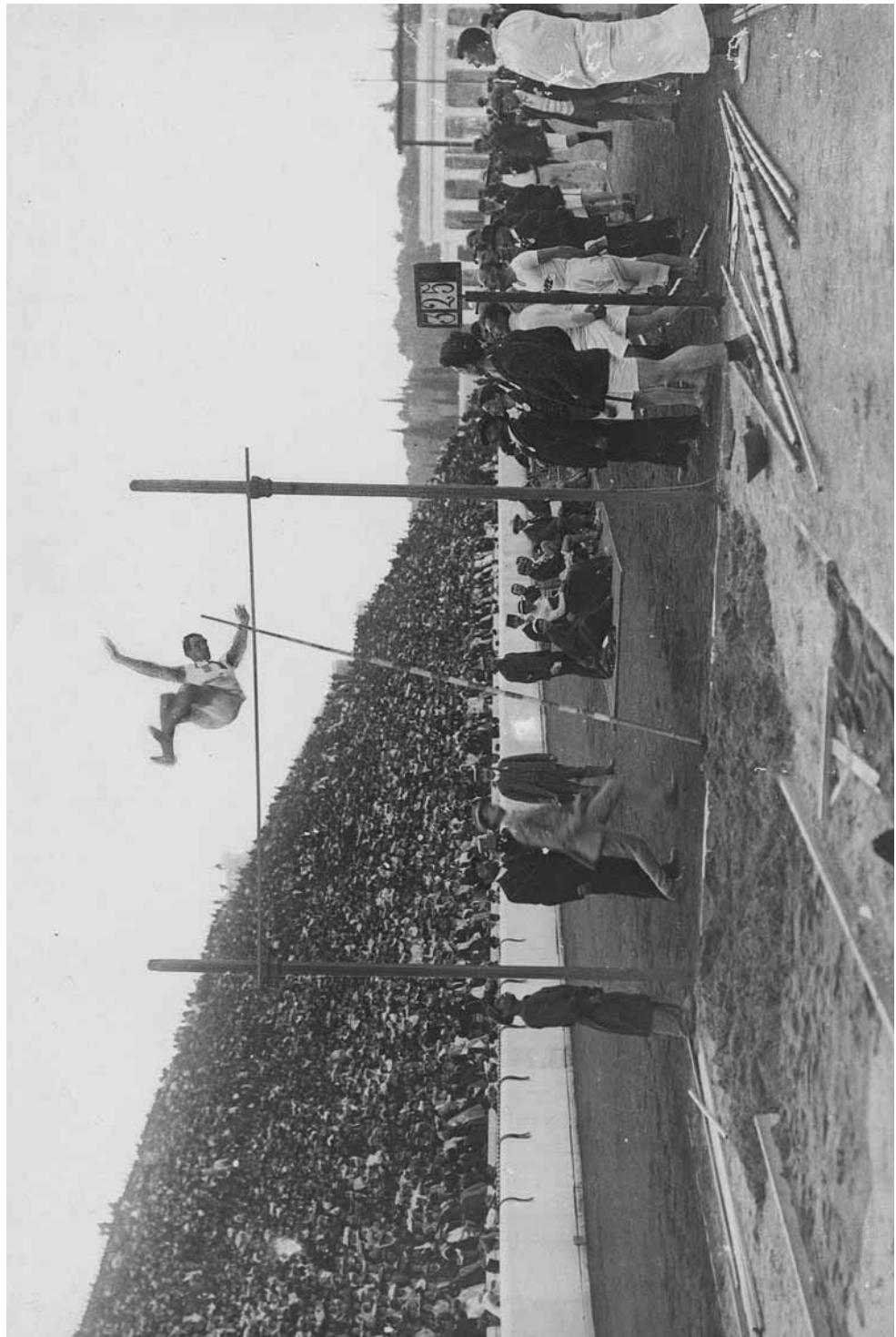
79. *Asty* newspaper, 30 March 1896.

80. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 March 1896.

81. E. P. Archetti, ‘Masculinity and soccer: The formation of national identity in Argentina’, paper presented at the American Ethnological Society spring meeting, Charleston, SC, USA, 14-16 March 1991, in Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, *op. cit.*

82. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 March 1896.

83. Quoted in MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, p. 141.



F. Conder (France), first Olympic victor in the pole vault, in one of his attempts (10 April 1906). [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.18]

press on the power that the Greek flag on the pole had to ‘send every Greek heart into a sea of enthusiasm’.⁸⁴ The flagpole on which the flag of the nation winning each event was to be hoisted became a site loaded with national sentiment throughout the Games.

The New v. the Old World

The American athletes who are reported to always be ‘wrapped in the American flag’,⁸⁵ give also very emotional descriptions of the feeling the sight of Stars and Stripes waving victorious stirs in them.⁸⁶ In his book *An Olympic Victor* inspired by the Greek marathon winner Louis, Connolly⁸⁷ the American winner of the triple leap and later writer of sea tales, describes the feeling of ‘an American’ (who is in fact Connolly himself) after having won the triple leap:

[In the triple leap] it was the American who won, and then ensued a scene for which, to have the honor to fall on one of themselves, hundreds of Greeks there felt that they would gladly offer up their lives. The moment it was declared that the American had won, his name was elevated, the consolidated band broke into the first notes of the ‘Star-Spangled Banner’, and at the same instant the flag of his country, beautiful with the alternate bright stripes of red and white and the little stars against the blue field, rolled and unrolled against the sky of Greece. The band continued to play, and everywhere the people cheered, while the countrymen of the victor, everyone seemingly, mysteriously produced a small copy of that great ensign and waved it frantically aloft. ‘How proud he should feel, that American’, breathed thousands of throats fervently, and doubtless he did, the first winner, after fifteen hundred years, of an Olympic championship.

If for the Greeks the revival was a re-instatement of their national ‘regeneration’, for the Americans the 1896 Olympics constituted for the American audience the field where the American athletes as conveyors of the American spirit would prove to the Old World the strength of the New.⁸⁸

When in 1906 Connolly tried to describe the importance for the Americans to

84. *Nea Ephimeris* newspaper, 28 March / 9 April 1896, cited in D. C. Young, *The Modern Olympics. A Struggle for Revival*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore / London 1996, p. 149.

85. *Estia* newspaper, 27 March 1896.

86. E.g. Clark, *Reminiscences of an Athlete*, *op. cit.*, p. 132. Hobsbawm (‘Mass-producing traditions: Europe, 1870-1914’, *op. cit.*, p. 280) reminds us that ‘the worship of the American flag’ became daily practice in the American educational system from the 1880s onwards.

87. Connolly, *An Olympic Victor*, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

88. Cf. Dyreson, ‘America’s athletic missionaries’, *op. cit.*, p. 75. Greek newspapers also identify the American athletes with the New World. *Estia* newspaper (Β' Πανηγυρικόν Φύλλον των Ο.Α., Μάρτ.-Απρ.)

capture the Olympic spirit that made the 1896 Games so successful, he argued that no other country than America could find this more useful given that America was ‘standing now, awake and eager, where old Greece once slept – on the threshold of the world’s leadership’.⁸⁹

After a series of American victories *The Alumni Princetonian* (16 April 1896) proudly declared that ‘the place held by the stalwart ancient Greeks has been surrendered to the Americans’ and that ‘henceforward the cherished traditions of classic strength will be mingled with stories of modern achievements’. Referring to the American victories, the American traveller Holmes⁹⁰ wrote that ‘the American flag and honor were upheld’ by four men from Princeton and by a team of athletes ‘who come to the Athens of the Old World from the Athens of the New, for they wear the colors of the Boston Athletic Association’ – Boston having earned the nickname ‘Athens of America’ because of its reputation as a city of high culture. In fact, Holmes argued that as in ancient Greece ‘the name of the winner of the one-hundred-meter race was always given to the quadrennial period following the games [...] the last four years of the nineteenth century must be known to history as the ‘Olympiad of Thomas Burke, of Boston’!⁹¹

In the same spirit, the *Atlanta Constitution* boasted that, ‘though America has none of the traditions and but little of the training possessed by these nations of the Old World, she has evinced her superiority over them in the games of their own choice. For the *Atlanta Constitution* that meant that ‘from the heights of Mount Olympus [America] has transferred the laurel branch to her own distant borders’.⁹² American accounts on the Games in general underlined that it was ‘the nation, the youngest of all that carried off the palm and gained by far the greater number of prizes’,⁹³ thus projecting the New World as the worthy heir of the ancient.

In the eighteenth century western world onwards Hellas had became ‘a home away from home’ due to classical education and scholarship⁹⁴ and a point of reference for ‘defining the value of [the western Europeans’] own national traditions’.⁹⁵ Given this identification of Greece as ‘an extension of home’, it should come as no surprise that a few months before the ‘revival’ of the Olympic Games Horton was writing that ‘all of us who love beauty, who have done no impiety or sacrilege, who believe in fair play, and who have stout hearts, are Greeks in the highest sense’,⁹⁶ echoing words by English and German Helleno-Romanticists, such as Shelley, who in 1821 claimed

1896 [Second celebratory issue for the Olympic Games, March-April 1896]) in particular, states that ‘the New World defeated the Old’.

89. Connolly, ‘The spirit of the Olympian Games’, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

90. Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

92. Cited in Dyreson ‘America’s athletic missionaries’, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

93. Waldstein, ‘The Olympian Games at Athens’, *op. cit.*, p. 490.

94. Leontis, *Topographies of Hellenism*, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

96. Horton, ‘Revival of Olympian Games’, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

that ‘We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our art have their root in Greece’.⁹⁷

It was this ideal of the Greek archetypical man that the American athletes were seen by some of their compatriots to resurrect. An eloquent example is the account of Gildersleeve when he describes his voyage to Greece on the same ship as the American team.⁹⁸ Viewing the American boys exercising daily on the steamer’s deck he regrets the neglect of sports of his own times while he praises the ‘cult of the body’ in modern athleticism.

[...]the cult of the body is Greek [...]. To be Greek is to be agile in body as in mind, and I did not trouble myself to ask anything about the ‘class standing’ of the young athletes, towards whom my heart went forth as I saw them landing at Naples, and speeding without the loss of a train, to the scene of the contest. [...] So I bade them good-bye, not to meet them again until I saw them in Athens fresh from the success which they wore as simply and modestly as if each one had been an *ephebos* of the best Greek period.

It is obvious that Gildersleeve sees the American athletes and takes pride in them as if they were Greeks, Greeks in ethos.

In fact, a series of comparisons between American and ancient Greek athletes were drawn: Allan Marquand (1853-1924), founder of the Department of Art and Archaeology at Princeton, praised the ‘wonderful versatility of the American athlete’ who, considering the little practice after his long voyage, achieved a score better not only than that of his modern Greek opponent, but even of that by Phayllus, the ancient Greek Olympic victor in discus throwing, (*Scientific American*, 18 April 1896).

In various athletic events the Greeks laboriously had copied the style of ancient Greek athletes as depicted in ancient vases and statues. If for the Greeks ‘the revival’ was experienced in ‘the classic style and grace’ of the Greek athletes’ bodies who in the words of the Crown Prince of Greece were ‘a harmony of motion’,⁹⁹ for the Americans it was to be found in the well trained bodies and efficiency of the New World. The *New York Daily Tribune* (25 March 1906), referring to the Olympic Games of 1896, reminds its readership that ‘no sooner were the runners away before the bounding, jumping Greek contestants fell behind the low-gliding forms of the Americans, whose legs worked with the regularity of clocks, and who in speed seemed to resemble the far-famed coyote of their native land’.

Anthropological literature has been engaged in the investigation of the social construction of ‘the body’ – how ‘the body’ is produced by and reproduces knowledge and discourse. In the case of the 1896 revival the ‘movements of ancient grace’ of the Greek athletes, imitating ancient Greek imagery, were dictated by the national ideol-

97. P. B. Shelley, *The Complete Poetical Works*, Oxford University Press, London 1934, p. 447.

98. Gildersleeve, ‘My sixty days in Greece’, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

99. *New York Daily Tribune*, 25 March 1906.

ogy of the Greek nation's 'resurrection'. Although the discourse/knowledge reproduced through that performance was apparent to the Greek audience as well as to a number of spectators familiar with classical readings and education, this was not the case for several Americans who found it incompatible with their own knowledge and discourses of sport. As Christina Koulouri has noted,¹⁰⁰ by viewing the human body as a machine which had to be incorporated effectively in the production process, the Industrial Revolution and the development of the capitalist system attributed it a rational function compatible with the ideology of the new economic system. Thus, the Greek performance was criticised by Americans on the grounds of athletic 'efficiency' lacked by the Greek athletes. Thomas Burke, the BAA athlete who won the 400-m race in Athens, developed his own criticism against the Greek athletes 'who almost tied themselves in knots in preparing for a throw'.¹⁰¹ When asked why the Greeks fell so far behind, he answered: 'They jump up and down on their heels, and waste their energy in going up into the air instead of ahead. They are like high steppers at a horse show, beautiful to look at, but not what is wanted for speed. From what I can make out, the ancient Greek sprinters ran much the same way'.¹⁰²

On the occasion of the discus contest, the graceful Greeks were contrasted to the 'powerful, long-armed' Robert Garrett, who entered this event 'purely for the fun of it' and came first despite the fact that he was not familiar with the sport as the Greeks were.¹⁰³ It was Garrett's style and performance that for Holmes represented 'the same undaunted spirit which has ever characterised the Anglo-Saxon race' and 'that infinite capacity for "catching on" which seems to be the birthright of every Yankee'.¹⁰⁴

100. Christina Koulouri, 'Στο δρόμο για την αναβίωση' [On the road to revival], in 'Αθήνα 1896 και ο Α' Διεθνές Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες' [Athens 1896 and the first International Olympic Games] (forthcoming).

101. *The Alumni Princetonian*, 16 April 1896.

102. *Ibid.* It is worth noting here that an article in *New York Times* (21 October 1906), ten years after the 1896 Olympics, announced the proposal by the Amateur Athletic Union of America to abandon the 'American style' in discus throwing and to adopt the ancient Greek one. The writer of the article criticises the American performance of discus throwing in 1896 as well as the American style that developed thereafter based on victory and the best score achievement and ignoring the ancient Greek style considering it irrelevant to the athlete's proficiency. He argues that the 1896 American team, while in Greece, learned that this sport 'was more than a competition; that it was more than a sport; that it was an art, an education, a development; that it seeks the attainment of perfection of grace and form rather than achievement'. He informs his readership that the above proposal was made on the grounds that the particular sport is 'the most perfect physical training of any in the repertoire of modern knowledge', one that 'develops the symmetry of the human form to its highest perfection' and he is looking forward to see the ancient Greek statues 'revivified and reproduced by Yankee athletes in flesh and blood'.

103. *The Alumni Princetonian*, 16 April 1896.

104. Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-5.

The contact between the two worlds

So far we have seen how Americans and Greeks separately celebrated their nation. But apart from a national celebration, the Olympic Games were also international, a meeting point of cultures. What turned out to become an important ‘contact language’,¹⁰⁵ in the communication between Greeks and Americans was the college and club cheering introduced by the American spectators from the first time Stars and Stripes was hoisted victorious. This is how Thomas P. Curtis describes the event:

I think it was on the third or fourth day of the games that the Americanization of Europe began. Our team sat in a box not far from that of the king, and whenever the circumstances seemed to call for it, such as a win for the United States or a particularly good performance, we gave the regular BAA cheer, which consisted of ‘B-A-A-Rah! Rah! Rah!’ three times, followed by the name of the individual performer who had evoked it. This cheer never failed to astonish and amuse the spectators. They had never heard organized cheering in their lives. During one of the intervals between events we were much surprised to see one of King George’s aides-de-camp, an enormous man some six feet six tall, walk solemnly down the track, stop in front of us, salute, and say: ‘His Majeste, ze King, requests zat you, for heem, weel make once more, zat fonnee sound’. We shouted ‘B-A-A-Rah! Rah! Rah! three times and then ended up with a mighty ‘Zito Hellas!’ whereupon the King rose and snapped into a salute and everyone applauded vigorously.

King George was much intrigued by this barbarian custom. When we breakfasted with him the day after the completion of the games, he asked us to cheer in the middle of breakfast. If we had only known then about the movies and Hollywood and Henry Ford and mass production, we might have considered ourselves the advance agents of Americanization, and committed suicide.¹⁰⁶

In the days to follow these cheers became one of the main features of American popularity; they were imitated and re-adjusted by Greeks themselves as the circumstances required and they were seen as conveying the American enthusiasm or, as a newspaper put it, ‘the New World’s breath which had infused a new life [in Greece].’¹⁰⁷

Given that throughout the 1896 Olympics’ staging these cheers were becoming a code for admiration, respect and friendship between Greeks and Americans, it was not surprising that this code of communication was also chosen when the time came to make their farewells. This is how *Asty* (6 April 1896) describes the Americans’ departure:

105. M. L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*, Routledge, London/New York 1992, p. 6.

106. T. P. Curtis, ‘High hurdles and white gloves’, *The Atlantic Monthly* 198 (Dec. 1956 [1932]).

107. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 March 1896.

Under the train cars a group of the [American] athletes' friends began to wish them goodbye by the well known [cheer]: B-A-A, Ho-Ho-Ho, Boston, Boston, Boston. The Americans cheered Greece lively. Afterwards, the Greeks cheered separately for each American victor, adding the victors' names in the end of each B-A-A, which they imitated harmoniously. The Americans of both universities answered immediately back to them cheering also for Mr Alexander, the ambassador of the US in Greece, M. Gouskos, S. Versis, K. Manos, and even for *Asty*, which had been especially hospitable to them also by publishing their beautiful images in the first place of its artistic display. All ladies had come out of the cars' windows and were also cheering, especially Mrs Garrett, the mother of the amiable victor and Miss Payne, who waved goodbye with the Greek flag.

Both American and Greek reports of that time witness the popularity American athletes met with in Greece. The report of the BAA athletes to the *New York Daily Tribune* (7 May 1896) sums up the feeling of the young team:

We had a glorious time and nothing was too good for us. 'The Greeks did all they could for us' said Arthur Blake. 'They toasted and gave dinners for us from the king all down the line, and our appearance on the streets was the signal for cheers. [...] We hobnobbed with the king and knew the princes well enough to slap them on the back. There must be a dearth of brass buttons in the royal household, for they denuded their uniforms of buttons to furnish us with souvenirs. 'It was the same way everywhere in Athens. Why, the merchants could hardly be persuaded to take our money for anything, and our badges – little silk American flags – were passports anywhere and everywhere. Americans are at a high premium in Athens just now, and any Americans who visit there won't regret it. If we ever get the chance we will certainly go back. All the other Bostonians were equally enthusiastic over Greece and the Greeks.¹⁰⁸

At that time the popularity of America and Americans in Greece was attributed to several reasons: to the philhellenism that Americans had displayed for the Greek cause in 1821 and in the Cretan revolt of 1867, as well as to the fact that the Americans espoused the cause of the Olympic Games in Athens with 'friendly readiness', especially in times of political isolation for the Greek kingdom.¹⁰⁹ Another reason that was given was that the American athletes became great favourites because 'they lived so far away as to take the place occupied in Homer by "the blameless Aethiopeans", almost

108. Benjamin Ide Wheeler, American educator and classical scholar, wrote to the *New York Daily Tribune* (17 May 1896) while he was still in Athens, that the 'fine impression' that American athletes left in Greece 'their straightforward and manly behaviour as well as their athletic achievements have served to strengthen appreciably the current of philo-Americanism which has been showing itself unmistakably to recent years'.

109. D. Kalopothakes, 'The Olympic Games at Athens in 1896', *The Nation* 61/1579 (1895), pp. 237-8, especially p. 237.

beyond the sphere of their jealousies and antipathies'.¹¹⁰ The Americans were indeed 'distant' and 'blameless' compared to other European nations that had been directly involved in the Greek political life since the establishment of the Greek state.¹¹¹ Another reason could be that Greeks felt honoured by a people who came to Greece all the way from the other side of the Atlantic to celebrate what the Greeks saw as their national event. As Rufus Richardson, director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (1893-1903), noted at that time: 'Greece will not soon forget this frank response from so remote a land'.¹¹² The appreciation that Greeks had for the fact that Americans had undertaken such long voyage also shows in their concern about the hospitality they should exhibit to their guests. In a planning meeting for the Olympic Games Timoleon Philimon the secretary general of the Greek Olympic Committee and former mayor of Athens made a speech in which he argued that

[...] we will dazzle and impress our foreigners neither with our wealth nor with the beautification of the city; we will try to oblige them, to fill them with enthusiasm or rather, allow me the word, to infatuate them with our care, willingness and open heart with which we must greet them.¹¹³

In a similar vein the newspaper *Asty* (21 February 1896) argued:

We must show to our guests that we organised our household in line with our means and our possibilities. Exactly as a housewife prepares her humble house, lays the floor with some colourful carpets, whitens her house, cleans up and beautifies her yard when she expects a foreign visitor, who will have his own needs, after he informed her that he accepted the invitation to honour her house.

Viewing hospitality as part of a system of exchange relations between Greece and its visitors may shed new light on this urge for hospitality as displayed in the texts above. Considering the fact that the Greeks had set some of their hopes for 'national regeneration' on the Olympics, hospitality can be seen as an (immaterial) gift from the Greeks to their guests; a gift that would create what Munn calls 'an immemorable impression',¹¹⁴ not necessarily requiring some specific future repayment of 'the debt',

110. Richardson, 'The new Olympian Games', *op. cit.*, p. 277. Cf. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, p. 219; Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

111. Cf. Mandell, *The First Modern Olympics*, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

112. Richardson, 'The new Olympian Games', *op. cit.*, p. 272.

113. *Asty* newspaper, 20 January 1896. Sir Michael Llewellyn Smith brought to my attention the fact that Philimon's quote follows in a tradition already established by Vikelas and the Crown Prince. The idea that it will be Greek hospitality, plus the Attic sky and monuments, which will matter and make up for lack of modern resources, goes back to the time of the Paris Congress of 1894 at which Athens was officially announced host city of the 1896 Olympics.

114. Cited in D. E. Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of food and Memory*, Berg, Oxford 2001, p. 48.

but constructing an honourable Greek national identity and position in the Western nations' world.¹¹⁵

The anthropologist David Sutton has illustrated how 'nationalist ideologies achieve their appeal by accommodating themselves to local-level discourses and by mobilizing already existing cultural ideas'.¹¹⁶ In treating an issue of national importance as an issue of family/household importance, the writer of the above text has obviously internalised and reproduced this 'analogic thinking' through which nationalism achieves a wider response. Because the Olympics were seen as an issue of national/personal importance in Greece, Greeks were doubly grateful to the Americans who responded enthusiastically to their 'hospitality' and 'rallied to contribute to the celebration of such a national memory'.¹¹⁷

The newspaper *Eotía* (2 April 1896) expressed its 'innermost and sincere gratitude' to the American and Hungarian athletes, for they displayed 'sincere happiness over their successes'. For the same newspaper:

Whoever socialised with these amiable foreigners was persuaded that the success of this first international festival, celebrated on Greek soil, had also become a matter of personal honour for them. [...] the Americans anticipated the result of the marathon, which had acquired a national character, with an expectation similar to that of every Greek.

What made the Greek appreciation for Americans take off was also the American support of the Greek claim to stage permanently the Olympic Games in Greece. With their document signed both by American athletes and American residents in Athens, they supported the Greek king's initiative.¹¹⁸ An article in the *Acropolis* (7 April 1896) reveals the extent of Greek gratitude:

HIP! HIP! HURRAH!

For the American fine upstanding youth of the Panathenaic Stadium. For the amiable students of the American Universities. [...] For these sincere young people whose every word is true! For the enthusiastic noisy people who shed so much life among us; [for those who] represented the enthusiasm of the ancient spectators of the Panathenaic Stadium. Because only this way our ancestors must have been enthused and carried away. Hip! Hip Hurrah! For the tigery Connolly and his wild fellow athletes. They came rough and strong, they conquered the victory and they left taking with them the scent of the Greek grace. The victorious representatives of the

115. On memory and exchange relations, see *ibid.*, pp. 43-71.

116. D. E. Sutton, *Memories Cast in Stone. The Relevance of the Past in Everyday Life*, Oxford/New York 1998, p. 174.

117. *Acropolis* newspaper, 30 March 1896.

118. R. B. Richardson, 'The new Olympian Games', *Scribner's Magazine* XX/3 (1896), pp. 267-86, esp. p. 284; *Acropolis* newspaper, 6 April 1896; cf. MacAloon *This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-8.

New World came with piety as pilgrims to this old land that encompasses the most sacred memories and they left with the conviction that only in this small and glorious land their victory would be real. Their national selfishness ceded before the glory of Greek athleticism. They could, if they wished, construct ten iron Stadia in their homeland and they could represent the entire area around Ilissos, the entire city and the Acropolis in a few days time. But the noble youth sacrificed its national pride to the historical truth and it became the flag-bearer of the idea that the Olympic Games should take place here, under the shadow of the Acropolis and inside the Panathenaic Stadium. And along with them other distinguished citizens of the United States and their ambassador, the great philhellene Mr Alexander agree enthusiastically over this idea in their written declaration.

The American athletes made themselves very popular also with their empathetic celebration of Greek successes. Especially in the marathon the Americans were reported to join enthusiastically in the Greek celebration over the Greek success, with wild hurrahs and applause, waving hats and flags emphatically. Greeks newspapers wrote highly of the Americans and reported American compliments for the Greeks,¹¹⁹ as on the occasion of an interview with Connolly where he expressed the American enchantment by the Greek hospitality and praised the grace and the great potential of the Greek athletes.¹²⁰

Maybe the Greek appreciation for the Americans would not have been the same if the performance of the latter had not been so admirable. It was the general perception that the ‘huge’ and ‘agile’ American athletes looked ‘as if they had made a contract with victory’.¹²¹ Connolly, who according to the newspaper *Acropolis* jumped in a way that reminded of the jumps of wild animals, was called ‘kouneli’ (meaning ‘rabbit’ in Greek) by the locals. The American athletes and ‘their flag which one thought that it wanted to fly forever on the flagstaff of victory’ made the young Americans invincible in people’s imagination and ‘surrounded by an indefinable mythical glamour’.¹²²

119. E.g. *Acropolis* newspaper, 29 March 1896; K. Anninos, ‘Οι αμερικανοί αθληταί’ [The American athletes], in *Η Ελλάς κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας του 1896. Πανελλήνιον εικονογραφημένον λεύχωμα* [Greece during the Olympic Games of 1896. Panhellenic illustrated album], Athens 1896, pp. 136-7.

120. *Estia* newspaper, 28 March 1896. In this interview Connolly, who has been well-known for his exaggerations, pointed out that even Garrett who was ‘one of the most famous discus throwers in the entire America’ defeated his Greek competitor with tremendous difficulty (in fact discus throwing was a sport pretty new to Garrett and to all Americans). Connolly even argued that if the same competition had taken place in America, it would be the Greek athlete who would have been announced winner because of his style. One cannot be sure whether these comments are based on Connolly’s genuine feelings, whether he wanted to play to the Greeks’ feelings that the discus-throwing (and not only the marathon) should have been ‘their’ event, or whether the Greek reporter added his own feelings in recounting the interview.

121. *Acropolis* newspaper, 27 March 1896. MacAloon (*This Great Symbol*, *op. cit.*, p. 221, quoting Richardson, ‘The new Olympian Games’, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-8) argues that the Greek good feeling towards Americans might not have endured many more American victories, or more untamed enthusiasm from the part of the American spectators.

122. *Estia* newspaper, 27 March 1896.



Girls from the Lyceum of Greek Women garland the flags of the member-states of the IOC, which are held by Evzones of the Model Battalion at the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games (19 May 1934). [HOC Photographic Archive: K3.23]

The fact that American athletes were treated as invincible also justified in the Greek popular opinion the repeated defeat of the Greeks. If the Americans were of equal standard with the Greeks the latter might not have been so understanding. For example *Asty* (31 March 1896) offered an explanation of the inferiority of the Greek performance by informing its readership of the eighty-two first and second prizes that the American Jamison had won in several competitions until that day. How could inexperienced Greeks, the newspaper wondered, compete with athletes like Jamison. Whether this information about Jamison was true or constructed by Greeks who wanted to give credit to the Greek athletes or by Americans who wanted to increase their athletes' mythical profile, it still offered a satisfactory explanation to the newspaper's readership.¹²³

American observers did not fail to proudly report on the praising comments for the Americans by Greeks. Holmes, for example, rejoiced that 'Our boys are now called the "American invincibles"',¹²⁴ and reported on other 'curious' Greek statements, such as that of an Athenian daily paper 'which explained the superiority of the Americans on the grounds that they joined to the inherited athletic training of the Anglo-Saxon, the wild impetuosity of the red-skinned Indians!'.¹²⁵ Even Diliannis, the Greek Prime Minister, was reported to have asked an American minister in despair, 'Why did Columbus ever discover your unconquerable country?' after having seen the American flag go up for the fourth time.¹²⁶

The admiration for the American athletes at times became almost a mystification, a thing that entertained Holmes. A Greek newspaper, for example, reported on the 'very curious' American custom to keep a hare's leg with them to which they whispered before they competed, while it also noticed that American athletes, and especially Connolly, covered their face with their hands and 'whispered American prayers'. While for the Greek reporter 'whispering prayers' was a practice that made sense and also explained the American 'invincibility', for Holmes was simply a misinterpretation of 'the custom of blowing on the hands to moisten them before grasping a vaulting-pole or a hammer! According to Holmes, another Greek reporter, 'having observed the use of the chewing-gum, informed an eager public that the Americans had great endurance because they chewed pitch to strengthen the lungs!'.¹²⁷

123. In a similar spirit, *Estia* newspaper (30 March 1896) informed its readership that 'those who admired the American athletes at the Stadium should know that these are not the best athletes in America. In fact American newspapers and athletic associations do not even recognise them as representatives because they were not distinguished in games with important athletic clubs. You can imagine then what the athletes who are recognised and distinguished in their homeland will be like'.

124. Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-7; cf. *Estia* newspaper, 27 March 1896.

125. Holmes, *ibid.*, p. 68.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 71. The newspaper *Acropolis* (27 March 1896) referred to the same comment ('Ah! Why did Columbus discover America') as a comment by a Hungarian athlete.

127. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-9; cf. *Asty* newspaper, 31 March 1896. The diet of the Americans was another issue that caused curiosity throughout the Games. The Greeks were surprised by the abstinence of the American athletes who were staying in bed during daytime, ate only meatballs and broth, did not drink wine or beer and never smoked. Even when they went out in the evening they would only ask for lemonade (*Asty* newspaper,

At the same time Holmes could not hide his amusement with Greek efforts to imitate American tactics and styles in sport. Greek athletes, lacking the American development in sport, tried to engage with and apply the latters' idioms:

The open air gymnasia were thronged every day with school-boys and young men, all striving to emulate the deeds of the Americans. But sometimes, during the games of 1896, imitation rather than emulation was indulged in. This was apparent, especially in the pistol-shooting matches. The American marksmen, the Payne brothers, arrived on the very day of the matches, and, to steady their travel-disturbed nerves, took frequent sips of whisky from pocket flasks. On the second day not a Greek contestant sighted a gun, without first applying a black bottle to his lips. The Messrs. Payne also found it necessary to cover their pistol barrels by smoking with burning matches; the sunlight glistening from the polished steel would have prevented accurate aim. Next day although the sun was overcast, the Greeks smoked their weapons lock, stock, and barrel, almost reducing them to ashes in their desire to do the proper thing.¹²⁸

In some American viewers' minds, Greeks and Americans had each one of them a different domain of speciality and different things to offer in this international gathering: Greece offered 'history', and Americans high standards in sports.¹²⁹ This profile of Americans as sport specialists led American observers to comment on events and attitudes from a position of power. Burton Holmes boasted that 'The Greeks begin to tremble at the thought that our Blake is even now running against their champions on the road from Marathon' and sarcastically commented that after the Greek victory in the marathon 'the King of Greece so far forgets his royal dignity as to rip the visor from his royal cap in waving it like mad'.¹³⁰

Thomas Curtis¹³¹ gave an account of his own encounter with the Greek inexperi-

26 March 1896; cf. Anninos, 'Οι αμερικανοί αθληται', *op. cit.*). The Americans on the other hand, were astonished by the fact that the Greeks cared little about any kind of diet. Ellery Clark reminisces about the quantity of champagne offered to them: 'Until we were able to explain the reason of our abstinence, international complications threatened. Even then, I think our hosts scarcely understood. Training? What did that signify? A strange word. Come, a glass of wine to pledge friendship'. Louis gave his own interpretation of 'diet' when asked whether he had gone through a diet before the race. 'Diet', he said, 'is to eat what you eat everyday and what your stomach is used to. I ate my usual food and drank my usual wine. My diet is that I will go to church to pray'. What Louis meant by that was that the prayers would enhance his competitiveness as much as any diet could.

128. Holmes, *The Olympian Games in Athens*, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-5. It was not only the American athletes' behaviour that Greeks thought of as unusual. *Asty* newspaper (30 March 1896) reports on a dialogue between two Greek housewives who reacted strongly to the sight of the young sister of the two American pistol marksmen cleaning her brothers' guns and changing the bullets. They could not believe that a woman was dealing with pistols.

129. Richardson, 'The new Olympian Games', *op. cit.*, p. 270.

130. *Ibid.*, pp. 71, 72.

131. Curtis, 'High hurdles and white gloves', *op. cit.*, pp. 60-2.

ence in sports in his narration of his meeting with the proprietor of the hotel that accommodated him during his stay in Athens:

[The landlord] asked me in what events I was going to compete, and when I named particularly the high hurdles, he burst into roars of laughter. It was sometime before he could speak, but when he had calmed down enough, he apologized and explained that it had seemed to him inexpressibly droll that a man should travel 5000 miles to take part in an event which he had no possible chance to win. Only that afternoon, the Greek hurdler in practice had hung up an absolutely unbeatable record. With a good deal of anxiety, I asked him what this record was. He glanced around guiltily, led me to a corner of the room, and whispering in my ear like a stage conspirator, said that the record was not supposed to be made public but that he had it on unimpeachable authority that the Greek hero had run the hurdles in the amazing time of nineteen and four-fifths seconds. Again he was overcome with mirth but recovered to say that I should not be too discouraged, perhaps I might win second place. As I had never heard of anyone running the high hurdles, 110 metres, in such amazingly slow time, I decided that I should not take the mental hazard of the Great Greek Threat so seriously. [...] When it came to the high hurdles, I learned how the Greek Threat had managed to spend nineteen and four-fifths seconds in covering the distance. It was entirely a matter of technique. His method was to treat each hurdle as a high jump, trotting up to it, leaping, and landing on both feet. At that, given the method, his time was really remarkable.

The Olympic Games could be seen as a ‘contact zone’, a term originally introduced by Marie-Louise Pratt to examine how travel and exploration writing had represented the world to European readers ‘at particular points in Europe’s expansionist trajectory’.¹³² According to Pratt’s definition:

‘Contact zone’ is an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term ‘contact’ I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A ‘contact’ perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. [It stresses] co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power.¹³³

The Olympic Games was an occasion for interaction and reciprocity between cultures. Reciprocity, however, as J. Clifford reminds us, is not perceived and experi-

132. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, op. cit., p. 5; cf. J. Clifford, *Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass./London 1997.

133. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, op. cit., p. 7.

enced similarly by cultures of ‘asymmetrical power relationships’.¹³⁴ Not all nations entered that international meeting with the same status and background. As far as the US and Greece were concerned, the former came with the self-confidence of a strong political system and the air of the know-how in sports, while the latter was a state that had experienced direct foreign interference in its political system since the beginning of its short life as a nation-state and a recent bankruptcy which had led to political isolation.

The inequity in international power and wealth, however, did not seem to undermine the mutual construction of what defined ‘the other’ and what defined the event itself. Both sides selected fully from materials they encountered and determined which bits they adopted and absorbed into their actions, their behaviour and their language in order to achieve their goals.

In the US the interest in the revival was restricted to a group of people who were lovers of sport and/or classical antiquity and found little response in the newspapers of that time. Only after the first American successes and the enthusiastic atmosphere during the staging of the Games at Athens did it arouse a wave of national feeling among Americans. In Greece, however, the revival was presented as a national enterprise right from the very beginning. By participating in the Olympic Games, which were coined by their organisers as a meeting of ‘the civilised nations’, Greece earned this title and came into the limelight of international attention. The Greek ‘symbolic capital’¹³⁵ of Greek heritage was enacted and from ‘a land of brigands, pirates, swindlers, and knaves’¹³⁶ Greece was officially elevated to being the rightful heir of the classical legacy. Americans, on the other hand, having displayed in full the athletic prowess of the New World elevated the latter’s profile in its encounter with the Old World. Apart from their heroification while in Greece, they enjoyed the laurels of their victory also upon their return to their homeland, which welcomed them triumphantly while their departure for the Games had gone almost unnoticed.¹³⁷

Most American participants in the 1896 Olympics had no illusions as to the fact that ‘no magician’s wand and no millionaire’s money can ever charm back into material existence the setting in which the Olympic Games took place’.¹³⁸ Referring to Herodotus’ account of Leonidas and his three hundred men, who were the only ones to confront the advancing tide of the Persian invasion in Thermopylae because of the simultaneous staging of the Olympic festival, William Andrew Robinson¹³⁹ very accurately pointed out that it would make no sense in modern terms that ‘the defense of

134. Clifford, *Routes*, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

135. Y. Hamilakis/E. Yalouri, ‘Antiquities as symbolic capital in modern Greece’, *Antiquity* 70 (1996), pp. 117–29.

136. Kalopothakes, ‘The Olympic Games at Athens in 1896’, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

137. As typical examples, see *The Daily Princetonian*, 30 April 1896; *New York Daily Tribune*, 7 May 1896; Clark, *Reminiscences of an Athlete*, *op. cit.*, pp. 140–1.

138. R. B. Richardson, ‘The revival of the Olympic Games. Restoring the stadium at Athens’, *Scribner’s Magazine* 19 (1896) pp. 453–9.

139. Robinson, ‘The Olympian Games at Athens’, *op. cit.*, pp. 581–2.

the nation's very existence against a dreaded foe was delayed in order that a football game between Princeton and Yale and Harvard may be fought out undisturbed!'. It was clear to him that 'it would be hopeless to try to experience with modern means the meaning that the Olympic Games had in the life of ancient Greece'.¹⁴⁰ A series of several other educated papers went to great length to show how much (or how little) an ancient Greek would have recognised if he came back to life and attended the modern Olympics. Several supporters of the idea of 'the revival' insisted that the Games were not a 'kind of archaeological show, an acting panorama of the past, a historical object-lesson or spectacle', but a response to ideas and needs of the present day.¹⁴¹

Still, the event was coined 'revival' implying that it was an institution that had risen from its ashes and it was thus pervaded by a feeling of animation of the ancient Greek spirit. This spirit, however, was not a term that meant the same thing to all those who alluded to it. It changed forms as it was defined by different ideologies, whether these were classicist, American national, Greek national or other. The ancient Greek spirit could thus represent simultaneously the 'immortal Greek soul', the 'American undaunted spirit' or the 'ancient Greek legacy' that was re-enacted through athletic performance in the 'original', or rather 'revived', setting; a setting that provided an illusion of lapse of time that brought together the past and the present, the ideal and the real, the romance and the novelty.

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140. *Ibid.*

141. Waldstein, 'The Olympic Games at Athens', *op. cit.*, p. 391.

The Olympism of the ladies

The international Olympic events in Greece (1896, 1906) and the *Ladies' Journal*

ELENI FOURNARAKI

The present work will investigate how the first modern Olympic Games of 1896 and the Intermediate Olympics of 1906 were presented by the *Ladies' Journal* (*Ephimeris ton Kyrion* – Athens, 1887-1917), a periodical produced exclusively by women and intended for women. This periodical gave expression in Greece to the ideas of women's 'emancipation' 'through education and work' before the vote was claimed by the organised feminist movement of the inter-war years.¹ The *Ladies' Journal* was the life's work of one of the few female intellectuals and professionals in Greece at that period. That is, those women who, having started out from the only acceptable profession for middle-class women of the nineteenth century, that of schoolmistress, succeeded in making full use of the possibilities afforded by it for the acquisition of knowledge and, at the same time, for some kind of economic independence, sometimes also escaping from the absolute control of the patriarchal family, with a view to improving their social position, to entering the world of the intellect, and to transferring to professions that were closed to women. Public expression in the form of writing on subjects in principle 'in accord with' their 'nature', such as educational matters, was one route of entry into the public sphere that women of these strata now had available to them and that they opened wider towards the end of the century, when the figure of the 'authoress', though now exposed at all times to misogynistic criticism and satire, tended to become one of the 'norms' of women's public action, which together with those of teacher and charity worker enjoyed, in principle, social acceptance.²

1. On the feminism of the *Ladies' Journal* see Eleni Varika, *H εξέγερση των Κνουόν. Η γένεση μιας φεμινιστικής συνείδησης στην Ελλάδα 1833-1907* [The Ladies' Revolt. The birth of a feminist consciousness in Greece 1833-1907], Athens 1987 (particularly the last chapter, pp. 205-76). On the organised feminist movement in inter-war Greece see Efi Avdela / Angelika Psarra, 'Introduction', in Avdela / Psarra, *O φεμινισμός στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου. Μία ανθολογία* [Feminism in Greece in the inter-war period. An anthology], Athens 1985, pp. 13-97, and Efi Avdela, 'Οι γυναίκες κοινωνικό ζήτημα' [Women, a social issue] in Christos Hatziosiph (ed.), *Iστορία της Ελλάδας των 20ού αιώνα* [History of Greece in the 20th century], vol. A1 *O Μεσοπόλεμος 1922-1940* [The mid-war years 1922-1940], Athens 2002, pp. 337-59. For a comparative approach to women's demands and the ideological identity of women's protest in the late nineteenth century, on the one hand, and the inter-war period, on the other, see in particular: Efi Avdela, 'Between duties and rights: Gender and citizenship in Greece, 1864-1952', in Faruk Birtek / Thalia Dragonas (eds), 'Citizenship and the Nation State: Greece and Turkey', Frank Cass (forthcoming).

2. Avdela, 'Between duties and rights', *ibid.* On the possibilities provided by the profession of school-

It was within the framework of these schematic possibilities that Kallirhoe Parren, née Siganou (1859-1940), started out on her journalistic venture. Born in Crete, she came with her family to Piraeus and then to Athens immediately after the failure of the Cretan uprising of 1866. In spite of somewhat difficult economic circumstances, she was able to attend classes in women's secondary education, which were provided exclusively by private initiative. She received her teacher's certificate in 1878 and then, as was customary at the time, she became headmistress of two girls' schools within the Greek diaspora: first in Odessa in 1878 and then, in 1882, in Adrianople, ending her teaching career two or three years later when she married Ioannis Parren, a journalist from Constantinople, of Anglo-French descent, who was later to become director of the Athens News Agency. She had already settled in Athens and had become associated with journalistic circles when, in 1887, she brought out the *Ladies' Journal*, which was soon supported by the regular contributions of well-known women writers and educationalists, acquaintances of Parren's from her teaching career. It was this undertaking in journalism, as well as her literary salon – a meeting-place for her associates but also for important intellectuals of the time, and particularly of the younger literary generation of the 1880s –, followed a little later by her own literary work, and, certainly her own personal prestige and education that established her in the intellectual life and the intellectual 'elite' of the capital. There were many factors that contributed to her reputation as the main representative of women's action of her time: the longevity and wide circulation of her periodical, her indefatigable work in the fields of education, philanthropy, and social reform (where she played a leading part in many women's initiatives), her passion and persistence with which, as a 'moderate feminist' (a description which she willingly accepted), she strove for the civil and social rights of women, and the maintenance of a wide network of contacts with international feminism. All the above established her, entirely reasonably, in the consciousness of her contemporaries and the more violent of her adversaries, men and women, as the leading figure in women's emancipation before the appearance of the feminist movement of the inter-war years.³ However, she was alienated from the

mistress, particularly before some of the university faculties of Greece opened their gates to women in the 1890s, see E. Varika, *H εξέγερση των Κνηών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-91.

3. Kallirhoe Parren has not up to the present been the subject of a satisfactorily thorough and reliable biographical research, formulated in modern historiographical terms. I have extracted the purely biographical information from a very recent full-length narration of her life and work: Maria Anastasopoulou, *H συννετή απόστολος της γυναικείας χειραφεσίας. Καλλιρρόη Παρρέν. Η ζωή και το έργο* [The prudent apostle of women's emancipation. Kallirhoe Parren. The life and work], Athens, s.a., pp. 25-79. For Parren's literary work see also Maria Anastasopoulou, 'Feminist discourse and literary representation in turn-of-the-century Greece: Kallirhoe Siganou-Parren's "The Books of Dawn"', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 1/15, pp. 1-28. For a historical approach to Parren's contribution both to the Greek social novel and to the women's novel, see the study by Angelika Psarra of what was her best known novel in her own time, *H Χειραφετημένη* [The Emancipated Woman], a French translation of which was published in 1907 in the columns of the *Journal des Débats* (seven years after its first publication in serial form in the *Ladies' Journal* in 1899/1900) and which is a kind of feminist *Bildungroman* (a novel of 'self-revelation') and at the same time the first part of the trilogy 'Τα βιβλία της Αυγής' [The books of Dawn], which belongs within the

struggle of this movement for civil *and* political equality by the advanced conservatism of her ideas, which, in any event, were difficult to reconcile with the radicalisation of a new generation of feminists.⁴

It is a fact that the *Ladies' Journal* had what was for the periodical press of Greece a particularly long career (it came out weekly from 1887 to 1907 and then bi-weekly until 1917) and managed at the same time to retain a permanent editorial team of about twenty women, as well as an extensive support network of correspondents and subscribers, which extended beyond the frontiers of the independent state to the Greek Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire. All the evidence suggests that subscriptions were the basic source of funding for the journal. Furthermore, figures and evidence rank its circulation as exceptionally high among the weekly journals – at least during the period with which we are concerned here. This fact that takes on special significance if one bears in mind the limited response other journals of social questioning had in Greece at that time.⁵ More than quantitative data or editorial characteristics, more than the outstanding personality of the publication's editor, what was the basic criterion for its selection for the present work of research is precisely the fact that it was a *channel of systematic expression of women's contestation and protest*. Moreover, it was the instrument for the rallying and co-ordination of women's collective action, reflecting the processes of the birth of a collective feminine consciousness among the women of the middle social strata, and even the process of transition to a first form of *feminist* consciousness.⁶

Our basic intention is to study in what way the 'great festival of bodies' (as Parren calls the two international athletics events) and the idea of Olympism were received within this collective women's questioning, as expressed in the *Ladies' Journal* – a festival and an idea that historically were marked at first by the exclusion of women, and then, after the unofficial appearance of women as competitors in the Paris (1900) and the St Louis (1904) Games, by the long-lasting impositions of restrictions, prohibitions, and discrimination against women's participation. How, then, did the

literature of the New Woman: 'Το μυθιστόρημα της χειραφέτησης ή η "συνετή" ουτοπία της Καλλιρρόης Παρρέν' [The novel of emancipation or the 'prudent' utopia of Kallirrhoe Parren], 'Addendum', in Kallirrhoe Parren, *Η Χειραφετημένη* [The Emancipated Woman], Athens 1999, pp. 407-86. On the social and ideological profile of the editor of the *Ladies' Journal*, see also Varika, *Η εξέγερση των Κνημών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-10.

4. As she belonged to the 'liberal conservative' section of the movement, Parren, who, as a royalist and pacifist, was exiled by the government of Eleftherios Venizelos, soon turned, together with the organisation of the Lyceum of Greek Women, which she had founded in 1911, 'from feminist questioning to the moralising and archaising intellectual cultivation of the female sex': Dimitra Samiou, 'Η διεκδίκηση της ισότητας: τα φεμινιστικά έντυπα το Μεσοπόλεμο (1920-1940)' [The demand for equality: feminist publications in the inter-war years (1920-1940)], *Diavazo* periodical 198 (14 September 1988), pp. 25-6 (devoted to 'Greek feminist publications'). On the trends and disputes within the inter-war women's movement, and their affinities with political trends of the period see also Avdela/Psarra, 'Introduction', *op. cit.*

5. On the editorial characteristics and all the details of the journal's dissemination and circulation, see Varika, *Η εξέγερση των Κνημών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-7.

6. *Ibid.*, particularly pp. 217 ff.

ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΚΥΡΙΩΝ

ΕΚΔΙΔΟΜΕΝΗ ΔΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΜΗΝΟΣ ΕΠΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΟΣ

Τὰ περιόδια ἡμῖν χειρόγραφα ὑποβάλλονται εἰς τὸν ἔλεγχον τῆς ἐπὶ τῆς «Ἐφημερίδος τῶν Κυριών» ἀπειροποίησ·
Δημοσιεύμενα ἢ μὴ, δὲν ἐπιστρέφονται. Άνυπόγραφα δὲν εἶναι δεκτά.

ΣΥΝΔΡΟΜΗ ΕΤΗΣΙΑ

Διὰ τὸ ἀσωτερικόν..... Δρ. 5
Διὰ τὸ ἀσωτερικόν..... τρ. χρυσᾶ 6

ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟΝ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΕΩΣ
ΟΔΟΣ ΜΟΥΣΩΝ

ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΡΙΑ
ΕΥΑ ΠΡΕΝΑΡ
Γραφείον ἀνοικτὸν καθ' ἐκστην ἀπὸ 10—12. Π. Μ.

ΤΙΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

Πρόγραμμα.—«ἁχομεν μητέρας; — Φόρος ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγάμων. — Παιδαγωγικά. (Ἐλένη Α.) — Θρησκευτική Μελέτη. — Αμερικανὶς δημοσιογράφος. (Μαρία Γ. ἵκ Κωνιτζέως). — Πολιτικὸν Διάλογον. — Εἰδήσεις. — Ποικιλία. — Συμβουλαὶ. — Γνωμικά.

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ

Θοσοὶ τὴν θέσιν τῆς γυναικὸς ἔν τε τῇ οἰκογενείᾳ καὶ τῇ πολιτείᾳ καλῶς κρίνουσι, θὰ ἐμολογήσωσι μεῖον ἡμῖν πόσων κακῶν πρόξενος γίνεται ἡ παρ' ἡμῖν ἀποτάξις αὐτῆς ἀπὸ παντὸς εἰδοῦς πνευματικῆς ἐργασίας.

Ἐὰν ἔξαρσῃ τις τὴν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐπιουσίου ἄρτου ἐργαζομένη διδασκάλισσαν καὶ τὰς ὑπὸ τῶν καθηκόντων καὶ ὑποχρεώσεων τῆς μητρὸς περιβαλλομένας γυναικας, αἱ λοιπαὶ σχέδιον πᾶσαι δὲ φαίνονται παρ' ἡμῖν ἔχουσαι προσορισμὸν ἄλλον ἢ τὸ κομψοπρεπῶν ἐνδύσιοι· καὶ ὑποτάσσονται εἰς ἀπόσας τὰς ιδιοτροπίας τοῦ συμφου, τοῦ ἀληθόύς τούτου Πρωτέως; τὸ ἀνταλλάσσονται ἐπισκέψεις, τὸ καθ' ἔκειν μόνον τῶν δακτύλων κυμβαλίζειν, τὸ περιπατεῖν, τὸ ἀναγινώσκειν ἐπιφυλλίδα τινὰ τῆς ψυχοφθόρου τῶν μυθιστορημάτων μούσης, καὶ τὸ ἐρωτοτροπεῖν.

Ἐὰν δὲ νεώτερος πολιτισμὸς ἐπρόκειτο κατὰ τοῦτο νὰ βελτιώσῃ τὴν γυναικα, ἀπαλλάσσων αὐτὴν τῶν δεσμῶν, οἵτινες τὴν συνεῖχον τὸ πάλαι, ἥν μυριάκις προτιμότερον νὰ ἔχηκολούσθει αὐτῇ ἀποτελοῦσα, ὅπερ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀρχαιότητι, μέρος τῶν δούλων. Διατρίβουσα τότε ἀειπότε σχέδιον ἐν τῷ ἐνδοτάφῳ τῆς οἰκίας μέρι, εἰς ὃ οὐδεὶς προσήρχετο, πλὴν τῶν ἐγματώντων κατὰ γένος, καὶ ἀσχολουμένη εἰς τὴν ἔριουργίαν, τὴν ὑφαντικήν, καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν θεραπείαν, ἔξησφαλίζει τὴν ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ οἰκονομίαν καὶ τὴν ἡθικήν, τὰς δύο ταύτας ισχυρὰς βάσεις, ἐν ταῖς οἰκοῖς εὐθὺς καταρρέει, καὶ ἡ κοινωνία ἀποσυντίθεται. Τανῦ δὲ δὲ κύκλος, ἐν ὧ περιστρέφονται ἡ γυνὴ καὶ τὸν ἀνωτέρῳ περιεγγάφαμεν, δὲν δεικνύειν ἡ τὴν διάρροην τὸ βάραθρον πρὸς δὲ ἀκατασχέτως φερόμεθα. Τοσοὶ

είναι ὑπερβολικὴ ἡ δέξια τοῦ Πλάτωνος, δεῖται ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ τῆς Πολιτείας αὐτὸν κεφαλαίῳ σπουδᾶς: ν' ἀποδεῖξῃ, ὅτι ἡ φύσις οὐχ ἡττον ἐπιτηδείων παρεσκεύαστε τὰς γυναικας πρὸς πάντα ἔστι δήποτε πράττουσιν οἱ ἄνδρες δὲν είναι δικαὶοι καὶ ἀνυπόστατοι· διότι ἐὰν αὕτη φαίνηται τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀπολεπμένη κατὰ τὴν σωματικὴν ισχὺν καὶ τὴν φύμην, καὶ δὲν δύναται ἐπομένως διὰ τοῦτο «ἀκοντίσαι δόρυ, οὐδὲ ἀφεῖναι βέλος», δύναται οὐχ ἡττον περὶ πάνταν εἰς ηγήσασθαι αὐτὸν μηδὲν μηνίν· Ή Ἐλληνὶς καταλείπουσα τὸ μὲν διεύποντον διὰ τὴν θεωμανίδα, τὴν δὲ μαλακήν καὶ ἡδυπαθῆ νωράλεταν διὰ τὴν Ἀρμενίδα καὶ τὰς τοῦ νέου πολιτισμού ἀξιώσεις διὰ τοὺς κατοίκους τῆς Δύσεως, δύναται νὰ ἔξελθῃ τοῦ κύκλου, ἐν ὧ περιστρέφονται, μαρανομένη καὶ φθίνουσα, εἰσλαθή δὲ ὅπως δήποτε εἰς τὸ στάδιον τῆς ἐνεργείας καὶ ἀναλάθῃ τὸν τῆς ἀναπτύξεως τῆς ἀγῶνα μόνη, μὴ προσδοκῶσσεν ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ τούτῳ τὸ παράπαν τὴν συνδρομὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς· διότι μὲ δλῆν τὴν μεταξὺ τούτου καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς φύσει ὑπάρχουσαν φιλίαν, κατ' Ἀριστοτέλην, προκειμένου περὶ τῆς μορφώσεως καὶ τῆς ἀναπτύξεως αὐτῆς, συνήθως οὗτος ἀδιαφορεῖ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἔγωμοφ αὐτὸν ἐν μόνον βλέπει, ἐν ἐπιθυμεῖ καὶ θέλει, τὴν δυσλικήν τῆς γυναικὸς ὑποταγὴν εἰς τὰ νεύματά του· Αναγνωρίζομεν, διότι οὐ μόνον ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκογενείᾳ κατ' ἀξιώματα πρέπει νὰ πρωτεύῃ ἡ θέλησις τοῦ ἀνδρὸς· ἀλλὰ μὴ διὰ τοῦτο φιλέτονται τοῦ ἀνδρὸς, ἀλλὰ μὴ διὰ τοῦτο φιλέτονται τοῦ ἀνδρὸς· διότι οἱ πρόγονοι ἡμῶν μετὰ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης τὸν Ἐρμῆν, τὰς Χάριτας καὶ τὴν Πειθώ συγχατάτασσουσι; Μή δὲ τοῦτο οἱ ἀνδρες πρέπει νὰ δέξιανται τὸ μονοπώλιον τοῦ ὀρθοφρονεῖν καὶ κρίνειν; Ήμετες νομίζομεν, διότι ἡ πολιτεία δὲν θὰ βλασφῇ ἐν τῆς συγετικῆς ἡμῖν ἀναμέλεως εἰς τὰ πράγματα αὐτῆς, οὐτε δὲ ζημιωθῶσιν ἐκ τούτου οἱ ἀνδρες, ἐκν ἔχωσιν ἐνίστεις οὐδεὶς καὶ τὴν γνῶμην ἡμῖν ἐν πολλοῖς. Συνηδρά ταῖς ἀνωτέρω σκέψεις ἀνέλαβον τὴν σύνταξιν καὶ ἐκδόσιν ίδιας τῶν γυναικῶν ἐφημερίδος ὑπὸ τὸν τίτλον «Ἐφημερίς τῶν Κυριών».

The first issue of the Ladies' Journal. The periodical's editor, Kallirhoe Parren, signs here with her pen-name of Eva Prenar.

Ladies' Journal handle the issue of this exclusion and how did it attempt to ‘appropriate’ the Olympic event on behalf of women? These questions are examined in the first two parts of this work, within the broader context of the ‘Greek’ version of emancipation that the periodical promoted. Thus, through the *analysis of the discourse* of the articles that deal with these leading athletics events aspects of the ideological physiognomy of the *Ladies' Journal* will be brought to light, which in each case bears the stamp of the views of its editor. In any event, the writings concerning our subject are leading articles, usually unsigned, written by Kallirhoe Parren herself.⁷ At the same time, however, this discourse will be more generally analysed as a *paradigm of narration* of the event and of the spectacle of the Games within the *nationalist ideology*. Nationalism was a constituent of the discourses on athleticism, refuelled by symbolic national opponents within the framework of the international contests. But over and above this, nationalist feeling appeared particularly exacerbated in the Greek narratives of the Olympic Games of 1896: structured, in any event, around the privileged appropriation of an ‘ancestral’ model, these narratives were articulated in a moment of an upsurge of irredentism, which a year later, as a result of the flare-up of the Cretan issue, would lead to the Greek-Turkish War. As the *Ladies' Journal* reflected all these aspects of the refuelling of nationalism, but also intervened in the shaping of its features, it permits us, in addition, to approach them through a discourse that by definition involves the dimension of gender relations. To the degree that the discourses on physical education and sport constitute a ‘privileged field for the investigation of changing stereotypes of the nationalist ideology’ and that the ideological constructions of the national identity are interwoven with the dimension of gender and class, the relevant questions run through the thinking of the present research project.⁸ However, they are posed more particularly in the last two parts.

‘They would close the gates of the Stadium on us.’

Handling exclusion

Together with the rest of the press of the time, the *Ladies' Journal* welcomed the revival of Olympism on the soil that had given it birth and, subsequently, celebrated the achievements of the Greek athletes, which triumphantly proved their glorious origins, the physiological-psychological ‘continuity’ of the race – the ‘inherited instincts’, accord-

7. In the case of the Olympic events that we are examining here, the contribution of writing of the associates of the *Ladies' Journal* consisted chiefly in the publication of their poems.

8. It is from a similar viewpoint that I have approached the discourses on gymnastics in the nineteenth century in an earlier work, from which the expression in quotation marks is taken: Eleni Fournaraki, ‘Σωματική σγωνή των δύο φύλων στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα’ [Physical education of the two sexes in nineteenth-century Greece], in *Πρακτικά των Διεθνούς Συμποσίου ‘Οι χρόνοι της Ιστορίας. Για μια Ιστορία της παιδικής ηλικίας και νεότητας’* [Proceedings of the International Symposium ‘The times of History. Towards a History of childhood and youth’], Athens 1998, pp. 293-315.

ing to Parren's characteristic choice of expression. But however willingly the editor of the journal allows her fulsome discourse to be carried away by the crescendos of the feeling of national 'self-regard', the sense of exclusion is at the same time clearly present. From the very beginning, she spoke of the 'unjust and unreasonable proscription' of her sex from the Games both of antiquity and of the modern world, a result not of the indisputably inadequate practice of physical exercise among women, but of the enduring male-dominated order of things, which imposes the rules here too: 'Unfortunately, physical exercises, even those most appropriate to our sex and contributing to the strengthening and suppleness of the body are so neglected that no Greek or foreign woman can claim a place as a competitor, or express any complaints because the committee has not thought to appoint contests and prizes specially for our sex. In any event [...], of course, and even if we were suitably prepared to compete with the men, they would close the gates of the Stadium on us, in imitation of those who insisted so intensely to remove woman from the sacred site of Olympia that they created a special law in order to expressly forbid her this right'.⁹

The *Ladies' Journal* did not lay claim to a 'place as a competitor' for women. In several Western countries women's physical exercise had become an established tradition; moreover, in some of them, recreational sport for the women of the 'elite' and organised sport for the women of the middle social strata (the latter mainly through the development of education) were in the process of taking shape. In the case of Greece, however, Parren had nothing comparable to invoke in order to support such a claim: even school gymnastics for girls, a demand in the discourse of specialists – doctors and pedagogues –, was not to become a systematic educational practice before the turn of the century.¹⁰ Nor did Parren expressly raise the issue of women competing, when, in the Intermediate Olympics of 1906 the Denmark's women's gymnastics team put on a spectacular display, which, of course, Parren welcomed with enthusiasm: the 'white maidens of the North', although not competing, triumphantly laid to rest the myth of women's weakness. Firm in her defence of the equal right of women to intellectual and physical development, the journal's editor found here another opportunity to promote the image of 'supple' and 'invigorated' women's bodies, a symbol of movement and freedom, a symbol of the release of the female sex

9. [K. Parren], 'Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [B']' [Greek women during the Olympic Games (II)], *Ladies' Journal* 9/429 (4 February 1896), p. 1. Since all the unsigned articles, as is stated in the heading of the periodical, were written by Kallirrhoe Parren, from now on in my references to these, her name will be omitted. Also, from now on, the *Ladies' Journal* will be abbreviated to *LJ*.

10. On the processes of valorisation of gymnastics for girls within the context of modernising educational ideas and initiatives in the last quarter of the century see Fournaraki, 'Σωματική αγωγή των δύο φύλων', *op. cit.*, pp. 307 ff. I would cite by way of indication the fact that with very few exceptions, in girls' secondary education, which belonged exclusively to the sphere of private initiative, the teaching of gymnastics did not start to become general before the turn of the century, while it was only in 1891 that, on the initiative not of the state, but of the Panhellenic Gymnastics Association, the first accelerated course for the training of professional female gymnasts to staff female primary education was set up (see also below, 'Concluding hypotheses').

from that state of weakness and dependence that was regarded as ‘natural’, but was imposed by the male-dominated order of things: ‘the tradition of the physical weakness of women was yesterday dealt its final blow’, she wrote of the Danish gymnasts; ‘the flexible muscles of steel gave in the Stadium their final answer to the powerful fists, which for centuries now have been flourished against us as symbols of superiority’.¹¹ But more than as a condition of liberty, these dynamic representations of women’s exercised bodies, of bodies that would bring forth the coming generations, were put forward as the strongest guarantee of the future strength and flourishing condition of the race and of the nation.¹²

It is in precisely this attitude that the limits of the contestation expressed by the journal become apparent. Let us attempt from the very beginning a very general hypothesis. To the extent that the right of women to physical development was displaced from the field of common human needs to that of the specificity of women’s maternal ‘nature’ and ‘vocation’, the dimension of equality was undermined to the benefit of the ideological concept of sexual difference, which, in any event, was called into play every time it was felt that a male stronghold was under threat; in the present case, that of classic athleticism and sport. It was precisely the prevailing assumption as to the existence of a female ‘nature’ that legitimised exclusions or, at least, limitations on women’s access to the activities of competitive sport. The assumption, that is, that female ‘nature’ had a particularity – a physiological-psychological particularity, which also, by extension, was ‘determining’ social characteristics – to which women’s physical exercise had to be fastidiously adapted. This assumption was basically shared by the *Ladies’ Journal*. The relevant argumentation, which, by reproducing a series of gender stereotypes, accompanied these prohibitions in the history of women’s sport, is familiar; and however much these prohibitions were redefined, whether what was chiefly at stake was the complete exclusion of women from classic athleticism and sports or the standardisation of a special ‘female’ sport, a basic nucleus of arguments remained largely constant: on the one hand, the excessively ‘violent’ and ‘tiring’ exercises (read: purely athletic achievements) threatened the sensitive reproductive function of the female body, or, its beauty, ‘natural’ grace and elegance; on the other, competition itself or those events with a high degree of competitiveness, compatible *par excellence*, with ‘male’ competitive values in the public space – politics or the marketplace – risked to ‘masculinise’ women, thus threatening the existing gender hierarchy. More, however, than the involvement in athletic competition, it was the *public* display of this involvement, particularly as sports were being rapidly transformed into a mass public spectacle, that was considered unfitting to ‘innate’ female modesty and inappropriate for the accepted standards of good behaviour of girls of the middle and upper strata.¹³

11. ‘Από το Στάδιον’ [From the Stadium], *LJ* 20/873 (16 April 1906), p. 2.

12. *Ibid.* See also ‘Αι γυναίκες εις τους αγώνας’ [Women at the games], *LJ* 20/872 (9 April 1906), p. 2.

13. On what I have stated here in an entirely schematic and abstract manner, see, indicatively, the following works, which include the dimension of sexual difference in their analyses or study how the very concept of gender was reconstructed in the context of social practices and of the ideology of physical



Gymnastics demonstration by the Danish women's team at the Intermediate Olympiad.
[HOC Photographic Archive: K2.15, K85.30]

Argumentation of this kind had shaped in the late nineteenth century an ideal of female physical exercise, features of which can also be found in the discourse of the *Ladies' Journal* of the period with which we are concerned: whether identified with the health-orientated or the 'disciplinary' priorities of gymnastics or subject to the principle of moderate exercise, this ideal corresponded to mild physical exercise, harmonious and tasteful, not in competition with 'femininity', as that was associated, of course, with distinguishing features of the social identity of the women of the middle and upper strata. To the extent that it did not go beyond this ideological framework, the feminism of 'equality in difference' – as it was later named –, which was typical of the *Ladies' Journal*, did not favour the entirely unreserved, unambivalent and unrestricted defence of women's sport activities; nor, of course, did it favour any dynamic claim on their part to participate in the supreme athletic event. The arrows of criticism that, as we shall see, the journal shot in 1896 against the deliberate circumvention of the whole issue on the part of the males in charge – that is, against the total absence of regulations that would have clarified and on certain terms rendered possible some form of women's participation – were aimed first and foremost at laying bare male partiality, at criticising the *tacit* exclusion of women, *regarded as self-evident*; they did not, however, result in the crystallisation of a demand to participate. In any event, the position taken by the journal on women's physical exercise and sport does not appear to be crystallised from the beginning. It takes shape, albeit not without ambivalence or contradictions, during the period of time that we are examining, between the two leading athletics events, also as a result of the unprecedented experience of sport spectacles, which set its seal on this period.

In choosing to put forward other forms of female representation in these international 'festivals', the *Ladies' Journal* nevertheless developed a discourse that attempted, in a variety of ways, to appropriate the event on behalf of the female sex. A basic channel for such 'appropriation' was first of all a turn towards the past, towards that privileged 'once' and 'elsewhere', which supplies history mixed up with mythology. We can approach the retrospections into history with which the narration of the two international athletics events are garnished, regardless of their historical accuracy, as *par excellence* attempts at reconstituting a distant past in which women's physical and competitive activities were possible, in exceptional circumstances or on certain conditions, or even socially acceptable; we can approach them, that is, as *attempts to search for models and at the same time for legitimation of questionings about the present*.

education and sport: J. A. Mangan / Roberta J. Park (eds), *From Fair Sex to Feminism*, Frank Cass, London 1987; P. Vertinski, *The Eternally Wounded Woman: Women, Exercise and Doctors in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1990; Jennifer Hargreaves, *Sporting Females. Critical Issues in the History and Sociology of Women's Sport*, Routledge, London / New York 1994; Susan K. Cahn, *Coming on Strong. Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Women's Sport*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. / London 1994; Pierre Arnaud / Thierry Terret (textes réunis par), *Histoire du sport féminin*, L'Harmattan, Paris 1996, 2 vols; Annick Davis / Catherine Louveau, *Sports, école et société: La différence des sexes. Féminin, masculin et activités sportives*, L'Harmattan, Paris 1998.

In the most distant, indeterminate and mysterious part of this past, lost *par excellence* in myth, the warlike Amazons stand out: fearless and independent, but also harsh and arrogant, particularly towards the male members of their tribe, they owe this total loss of their feminine characteristics to their ‘greater devotion to bodily exercise’.¹⁴ Leaving behind, then, these shadowy and masculine figures of the Amazons, somewhat exotic, as is the mythical athletic figure of Atalanta,¹⁵ the historical retrospections focus on the sun-drenched and verdant land of sacred Olympia: on those Greek women who, without betraying the virtues and the dignity of their sex and their aristocratic descent, enjoyed the exceptional privilege of taking part, indirectly, but also directly, in competitive events. What is being discussed here, of course, is, on the one hand, the participation, by way of exception in the chariot-races of Olympia in the role of breeders of horses, and, on the other, in the well-known *άμιλλα δρόμου παρθένοις* (foot-race for maidens), which was held every four years among the women of Elis in the same stadium as the Olympic Games, but on different dates, of course, within the context of the Heraia, the festivals in honour of Hera.¹⁶ A tangible gesture of honour towards women, this equal treatment of women by their ancient ancestors, although exceptional according to Parren, made even more blatant the bias of their imitators in the modern age of progress. The reconstruction of the past of the Heraia was, then, the main channel for criticising exclusion in the present: the modern organisers of the Olympic Games, ‘with all the equality of the two sexes little by little universally evidenced, with all the freedoms that woman has acquired, and with the statements made by foreign women who have sought to take part in the contest, have spoken not a word about women, either in their invitations or in their programmes’; not a single article of the relevant regulations referred ‘to women athletes, nor has any exercise been appointed in which they would be able to compete, even among themselves’. By way of contrast, the ancient founders of the Olympic Games, ‘with all the humiliation and the restriction to which woman was condemned at that time, with all the religious prohibition decreeing that she should be far removed from any involvement with men in public, set up special contests for women [...].’¹⁷ In those games,

14. ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων. Ανοικτά επιστολά [A]’ [Impressions from the Olympic Games. Open letters (I)], *LJ* 10/436 (24 March 1896), p. 4.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

16. ‘Αι αθλήτραι εις τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας’ [The women athletes in the Olympic Games], *LJ* 10/433 (3 March 1896), pp. 1-2, and ‘Εντυπώσεις [A]’, *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7. See also ‘Αι γυναίκες εις τους αγώνας’, *LJ* (9 April 1906), *op. cit.* It should be noted that the customary reference in historical reviews to the physical exercise of the women of Sparta alongside the men is absent from the attempt to reconstitute a *special female* athletic past. I have encountered only one ‘telegraphic’ reference to the exception made by the Spartans, who ‘trained the young women jointly with the youths in the most laborious exercises’: ‘Και αι γυναίκες;’ [And women?], *LJ* 19/867 (5 March 1906), p. 1.

17. ‘Αι αθλήτραι εις τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας’, *LJ* (3 March 1896), *op. cit.* Parren’s reference to ‘foreign’ women seeking to take part in the Games probably concerns the possible application of an American woman athlete to take part in the marathon, to which Parren referred more specifically on another occasion (see in this connection below). This information, also known from other equally vague references in the press, remains, as far as I know, inadequately investigated.

moreover, the women competed ‘on virtually the same terms as the men’. Participation in the games demanded female bodies equally ‘well and systematically exercised’; the prizes were awarded by women judges of aristocratic birth, and in the same ritual and reverential atmosphere; the victors were crowned, as were the men, with a shoot from the sacred olive, ‘being entitled to see, there on the sacred soil, their representations, placed by the statues of the immortal Olympic victors’,¹⁸ and, of course, being entitled, as they were, to the same immortality among mortals: above all, the victors at the Heraia had the same entitlement to honour and glory among relatives and fellow-citizens, but also to ‘jealousy’ among competitors. In other words, they shared equally with men all the powerful feelings produced by success, which accompany the victors forever through their lives.¹⁹

Nevertheless, in these idealised representations of the Heraia, the female figures engaging in athletics have nothing masculine about their movements, which are full of ‘grace and freedom’. Whether they were elegant and ethereal, virtually dematerialised, ‘gliding rather than walking, flying rather than running’, or strikingly female (read: erotically provocative), with their light tunic to the knees ‘and so far off the right shoulder as to leave the breast almost bare’, with their ‘hair abundant and loose’ covering ‘like a silk veil their snowy-white and sculpted shoulders’, these ancient runners provided an incomparable spectacle ‘of beauty and picturesqueness’, worthy of the characteristics of their sex.²⁰ Thus, in this ancestral model of women’s athletics, moderate and tasteful, even the *public* display of femininity, free and without bashfulness because of the needs of exercise, did not seem to threaten either female virtue or the dignity of high descent. At the Heraia, a spectacle was provided of high aesthetics, which, moreover, together with the other beautiful events involving women in honour of the goddess of marriage, had a ‘much more sacred character’ than the men’s Olympic Games, because in the Heraia, ‘human blood was not spilt, nor were noses broken, or teeth uprooted, or eyes gouged out, or ears and lips cut off’.²¹ The contrast between the descriptions of these two models of competition is obvious: on the one hand, the male Olympic Games, which turned ‘the sanctuary of the Altis into a wrestling-ground of barbarians, where handsome youths in their prime were mutilated, swimming in their blood to the cheers and applause of the spectators’, and, on the other, the peaceful women’s festivals of the Heraia, which represented *par excellence* the values of beauty, of moderation, of reverence. The very origin of these festivals also witnesses to the humane and peaceable feelings of the female sex, since they were established to honour the successful initiative of the women of Elis in reconciling their menfolk with a neighbouring people with whom they were in conflict.²²

18. *Ibid.*, and ‘Εντυπώσεις [A]’, *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

20. *Ibid.*, and ‘Αι αθλήτραι εις τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας’, *LJ* (3 March 1896), *op. cit.*

21. ‘Εντυπώσεις [A]’, *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 6.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

This historical construct of a *special female version of competition* was therefore at the same time a channel for criticism of the male ancient Greek model of the Olympic Games, a criticism that was somewhat rare in the historical reviews of other publications. Nevertheless, it was precisely this 'barbarity' of male athletic competitions, together with the 'total nudity' of the bodies it required, that provided the editor of the *Ladies' Journal* with the argument necessary to justify the exclusion of women from attending the Olympic Games of antiquity, thus restoring the ancient ancestors of the Greeks to their undisputed pedestal. If, then, 'men of the genius and intelligence of our ancestors', who had introduced special women's religious festivals in the same place and elsewhere, prohibited on pain of death even the physical presence of women at the Olympic Games, this was not because they believed that their presence 'would defile the sacred Altis'. On the contrary, it was because, in honouring the particular feelings of women's 'nature', their innate compassion and tenderness, as well as their inherent sense of modesty, they wanted to protect women from a spectacle that offended these feelings.²³ Even if the sight of the 'brutality' of the men's games did not 'arouse the love of humanity, innate in woman's heart', prompting mothers to forbid their children to take part in them, the consequences would have still been catastrophic: through the force of habit and with the passage of time, these feelings would have been blunted, making women 'harsh, inhuman, without pity, as Roman women were [...] when they cheered enthusiastically whenever a wild animal tore apart an unfortunate slave'.²⁴ Thus the female sex would not have been able to fulfil the social role that nature dictated, that is, to safeguard, at the other extreme from the competitive public space, all those essentially different (read: superior) values of private life: values of peace, mutual assistance, friendship, inner tranquillity, and prosperity, *without the counterbalancing function of which* the predominance of the competitive values of the male public space would have been the cause of ills: 'then the sanctuary of the hearth, at which friends and enemies were accepted with the honours due to guests, at which the man, exhausted by wars, sought peace and joy, would have been turned into a *hell*, and not only the purpose of the games would have been frustrated, but *they, too, would have been the cause of great ills*'.²⁵ Therefore, according to this argument, the strict exclusion of women from the Olympic Games of antiquity was converted into the necessary price women had to pay in order to safeguard the saving values of the sphere that had been committed to them, and, by extension, in order to avert the ills that the overthrowing of the *complementary antithesis of the two spheres* entails. The elevation of the feminine/private values into a foundation of social harmony in no way invalidates the logical extrapolations of the argument. As a result of the overthrowing of the sexual division of labour, this '*hell*' brought about by the cancellation of the counterbalancing functions and values of private life, disturbed the balance between public and private on which, in the end, the

23. *Ibid.* See also 'Αἱ γυναῖκες εἰς τοὺς αγώνας', *LJ* (9 April 1906), *op. cit.*

24. 'Ἐντυπώσεις [A]', *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 6.

25. *Ibid.* All the emphases in the quotations are, unless stated otherwise, mine.

whole social order seemed to be based. Thus, in this argumentation, the cancellation of the public-private balance becomes synonymous of overall social upheaval. This is, then, how, in this ideological framework, the exclusion of women from a male activity was furthermore converted into a saving strategy for the overall preservation of social order. Although the justification of this exclusion concerned the society of antiquity, the modern organisers of the Olympic Games could not perhaps have found a better argument for the exclusion of women in the present, thus reconfirming the modern normative dichotomy of the two spheres and its sexist basis. Despite the fact that the prevailing ranking of this dichotomy was disturbed to the benefit of the private/feminine sphere, Parren's argument – whether it concerned the 'invention' of a special women's competitive-athletic 'tradition' or the justification of exclusion from the men's Olympic Games of antiquity – was reproducing the idea of the complementary antithesis of gender roles, rendering obvious the bounds of the contestation articulated within this ideological framework.

'Let us give ... evidence of life and existence.'

Propositions for the appropriation of the Olympic event by women

In avoiding, therefore, contesting in a direct way the exclusion of women from the modern Olympic Games, the *Ladies' Journal* sought other ways to give women a presence at the great athletic and cultural event. These ways were compatible with the forms of collective action taken by women in Greece at the time, but at the same time consistent with the (ideological and social) identity of the moderate tendency of 'intellectual and moral emancipation and emancipation through [paid] work' expressed by the journal. As has already become apparent, a first attempt at reading the pages that the *Ladies' Journal* devoted to the Olympic Games of 1896 and the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906 brings out some aspects of the 'Greek' version of emancipation promoted by the journal. It also highlights the bounds of this version or its contradictions, at a period, moreover, when the slightest claim on the part of women was treated as a dangerous potential for the introduction into Greece of the political claims of women's movements in other countries, giving rise to deep suspicion, if not hostility. In the more general *fin de siècle* ambient atmosphere and the 'modernistic' dynamics and consequent ambivalence that were typical of it, the debate on 'women's emancipation' in Greece of the period did not cease to be haunted by the phantom of the demand for the vote. This was so despite the fact that women had not yet formulated such a demand. Indeed, even the most fervent champion of 'emancipation', Kallirrhoe Parren, considering premature for Greek women to have the right to vote (for Parliament) attempted insistently to purify the concept of emancipation of its directly political connotations – although not with any particular success.²⁶

26. On the meaning given to emancipation by Parren and her associates, and on what recent research has

This is in no way paradoxical. In a certain way, the dimension of politics, albeit women's politics, is diffused throughout Parren's discourse. As studies on the subject have shown, the whole ideological enterprise of the *Ladies' Journal* was based on the elaboration of a special *female version of citizenship*, which, shaped in the name of extending the virtues of women's 'nature' to the public space, nevertheless decisively redefined the acceptable limits of women's action in it, also redefining the established counterpoint of public-private, and, above all, the established *hierarchical order* of the two spheres.²⁷ This female version of the citizen is not mediated through conventional participation in the central political scene, and consequently not necessarily through political rights; it is centred upon civil and social rights and is invested with the halo of a *mission*. It takes on flesh and blood through the social, civilising and patriotic action of women of the middle social strata, collective and individual action, in the name of the special duties of women towards the nation and civil society. However, at the heart of these duties, motherhood, as a biological function and a socialising role in the service of the renaissance of the race, of nationalism and of irredentism, is strongly politicised, incorporating the whole of women in this special version of citizenship, identifying it with the *essence* of the (female) sex.²⁸ In this sense and within such an ideological framework, the redefinition of and the claim to the political is a dynamic that permeates, with greater or lesser intensity, more or less directly, the discourse of the journal.

Thus, for example, when, in view of the preparations for the Games of 1896, the contribution offered by women as active members of civil society was totally ignored or undervalued, the editor of the *Ladies' Journal* not only did not conceal her indignation, but for a moment seemed to forget the reassuring attempts to dissociate women's action from directly political claims. This reaction on the part of Parren was provoked chiefly by the critical intervention of a journalist on another publication, who expressed his surprise at the fact that the ladies of Athens had not troubled to set up an association to be responsible for the cleanliness of the capital, following the

termed 'the Greek version of emancipation'; on the lively debate on women's emancipation in Greece at that period; on the hostility with which this concept was treated among male intellectuals and among the representatives of female collective action insofar as it was identified with the demand for the vote, see, in particular: Angelika Psarra, 'Μητέρα ή πολίτις; Ελληνικές εκδοχές της γυναικείας χειραφέτησης (1870-1920)' [Mother or citizen? Greek versions of female emancipation (1870-1920)], in Diotima Centre for Women's Studies and Research, *To φύλο των δικαιωμάτων. Εξονσά, γυναίκες και ιδιότητα του πολίτη* [The gender of rights. Power, women, and citizenship], Athens 1999, pp. 90-107. For a division into periods and a critical review of the issue of the political rights of women, as posed in Greece by the establishment of men's universal suffrage in 1864 until their final safeguarding in 1952, see Dimitra Samiou, 'Τα πολιτικά δικαιώματα των Ελληνίδων (1864-1952)' [Greek women's political rights (1864-1952)], *Mnemon* 12 (1989), pp. 161-72.

27. On this female version of citizenship, as given expression particularly by the *LJ* and Kallirrhoe Parren, before the appearance of the organised feminist movement of the inter-war years, which gave priority to the demand for the vote, see: Varika, *H εξέγερση των Κυριών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-3 and 258-60; Psarra, 'Μητέρα ή πολίτις', *op. cit.*; Avdela, 'Between duties and rights', *op. cit.*

28. Avdela, 'Between duties and rights', *op. cit.*

example of the Boer women. Parren commented, with a considerable measure of sarcasm, upon the recommendation of her colleague, willingly admitting that ‘up to now we have not even thought of having recourse to Africa [...] to seek lessons for our imitation’, and noting, of course, that the cleanliness of the city would not be achieved ‘even if all the women of Athens descended upon the Games with sweeping-brushes in our hands’.²⁹ However, faced with this obvious undervaluing of women’s capabilities of contributing to this international athletics event, the editor of the journal politicised the matter in a much more direct way: ‘In truly civilised countries, in which women take an active part in the cleanliness and public health of the city, *they do not do this as citizens in their private capacity, but as city councillors and, generally, as representatives of their fellow-citizens in their municipality*'.³⁰ The vote in municipal elections, compatible, of course, with the female version of the citizen, was the only direct political function that Parren did not find premature for Greek women.³¹ But in an environment where even the physical presence of women during municipal elections was considered a crime, in an environment often negatively disposed towards even the action of women’s charitable societies, the barriers were self-evident for Parren. What was not evident however was the hypocrisy of the ‘stronger sex’, which, while setting up these barriers, rebuked women for dereliction of duty in the face of the great athletics event: ‘how can they demand that we intervene in other people’s tasks, self-appointed, without any right, without any invitation or support from those responsible?’.³²

The exclusion in practical terms of Greek women from any opportunity of contributing to the ‘great international festival’ of 1896 was repeatedly criticised by the *Ladies’ Journal*: ‘The burning question of the day, which moves and concerns everybody alike, is that of the Olympic Games. Committees and sub-committees, journalists and businessmen, hoteliers and merchants, professional men and artists, the opinion of all these has been heard, the assistance of all of these has been and is sought [...]. Only we women, apart from the familiar idea thrown out by a colleague about the cleanliness of the city, have not been deemed fit and suitable either to propose any idea or to demonstrate any evidence of our existence as civilised women’.³³ However, the voluntary abstention of women from any activity that could accompany the athletics event as such did not suit either the energetic nature or the ideas of the editor of the journal. Thus the *Ladies’ Journal*, within the ideological framework that we have described, elaborated its own argument for the appropriation of the great event of 1896 by women. The successive proposals put forward by the journal, mostly addressed to the women’s associations of the time and depending

29. ‘Αι Ελληνίδες και η καθαριότης της πόλεως’ [Greek women and the cleanliness of the city], *LJ* 9/426 (14 January 1896), p. 1.

30. *Ibid.*

31. See in this connection Samiou, ‘Τα πολιτικά δικαιώματα των Ελληνίδων’, *op. cit.*, and Avdela, ‘Between duties and rights’, *op. cit.*

32. ‘Αι Ελληνίδες και η καθαριότης της πόλεως’, *LJ* (14 January 1896), *op. cit.*

33. ‘Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [A]’, *LJ* 9/428 (28 January 1896), p. 1.

upon their availability, were not implemented. It is in the probable lack of response on the part of these collectivities, in the difficulties of their co-ordination – which in the present case fell within the responsibility but also beyond the capabilities of the circle of the *Ladies' Journal*, and of its editor personally (as she herself leads us to understand) – and, of course, in the shortness of the time, that we should seek the reasons that prevented these proposals from becoming reality. But this in no way diminishes their significance for our analysis.

The general idea was to promote the most representative example of the individual and collective work of Greek women in the social, economic and cultural field, by holding exhibitions and events on the model of international exhibitions and international women's congresses. Kallirrhoe Parren had, in any case, experience of such events gained from taking part in two such congresses, that of Paris in 1889 and of Chicago in 1893; these had been convened precisely within the framework of the international exhibitions in those two cities. Thus on the occasion of the holding of the Olympic Games, the journal's editor invoked the precedent of these events, their great success, and the official support they had had – in this way drawing upon greater authority for her proposals. At the same time, however, she took occasion to contrast the local forms of inertia with the shining example of the French and the Americans, who in practice recognised and willingly highlighted the contribution of women to their national progress.³⁴ As a significant example of a similar contribution on the part of Greek women, the holding of a Panhellenic exhibition of the products of women's work, a 'women's art and craft industry exhibition', was the first proposal put forward by the *Ladies' Journal*.³⁵ This proposal, which passed effectively unnoticed by the press of the time and by the authorities – given, anyway, the particular difficulties and demands that its realisation would have presented – was abandoned almost immediately. It was replaced by another, less complicated in its implementation and more directly dependent on the will and initiative of the women themselves. Serving equally well, if not better, the general idea of 'a dignified presence of the female sex at the Olympic Games', and making use of the existing women's collective structures and potential, the new proposal was founded on the following idea: a programme of events should be compiled in a collective and representational manner to bring out in a multiplicity of ways, in the case of Greece, the 'progressive action' of women, which, in any event, was not confined to 'women's industry'. Philanthropy, education, literature, journalism, and art 'are so many branches of activity in which the Greek woman can be compared with the women of the civilised world', Parren notes. In that spirit, activities could be developed, which, by forming, in parallel, networks of hospitality and welcome for foreign ladies, particularly for those who would be travelling alone, could include: (a) a set programme of visits to charitable institutions and to girls' senior schools, during the course of which 'the purpose and mission' of each of these institutions would be

34. 'Αἱ Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [B']', *LJ* (4 February 1896), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

35. 'Αἱ Ελληνίδες και η καθαριότης της πόλεως', *LJ* (14 January 1896), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

explained; (b) evening lectures by ladies, to be alternately in Greek and in French, and to deal with the activities of contemporary Greek women, but particularly with their history from antiquity to modern times and the ‘rebirth of the nation’; (c) ‘a joint visit to the ancient monuments and instruction from a specialist archaeologist’.³⁶ Through activities of this type, Parren adds, a number of purposes would be served at one and the same time: the foreign women would be assured of the necessary welcome and assistance; women’s activities would be represented as ‘presentable, worthy of a civilised people’; the various aspects of these activities would be evaluated separately, they would be established in the awareness and they would be reinforced; and ‘our women’s history, unknown even to the majority of our own people, will give rise to enthusiasm’.

However, the success – if not the very realisation – of such a proposal raised, in the nature of things, the issue of the collaboration and co-ordination of the women’s associations. The promoting of all aspects of women’s activities at the Olympic Games of 1896, as conceived and formulated by Kallirrhoe Parren through the *Ladies’ Journal*, gave her the opportunity to propose another interesting and innovative undertaking: the uniting, albeit temporarily, of ‘all the associations, all the women’s centres, all the prominent female figures for systematic and joint action’.³⁷ Here this seems to be a matter of a plan for uniting in a central institutional framework and a common programme all the scattered forces of women’s action, individual and, above all, collective. This was perhaps the first time that the journal had expressly voiced such a plan, which, not in terms of its institutional form, but certainly in those of its aims, mass nature, and breadth of the activities that it would bring together, is reminiscent of the first major women’s association founded on Parren’s initiative in autumn 1896: the Union of Greek Women, with its multifarious activities and the most composite organisational structure.³⁸ Inaugurating, effectively, its public activity during the Greek-Turkish War of 1897, in which it was the most important organisational lever in a patriotic mobilisation of Greek women of the middle and upper strata unprecedented in numbers and in the breadth of its activities, the Union of Greek Women

36. ‘Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [A’], *LJ* (28 January 1896), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

37. *Ibid.*

38. Parren conceived the idea of setting up a broad-based women’s union whose primary aim would be to represent the Greek women’s movement at an international level when she was taking part in the international women’s congress in Chicago in 1893; when she returned, she attempted repeatedly to implement it, but three years had to pass before the Union of Greek Women was finally set up (on these attempts, see M. Anastasopoulou, *Η συνετή απόστολος της γυναικείας χειραφεσίας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-8). In a later reference in this connection, Parren stated that the women’s union as she had thought of it in 1893 would not have been restricted, like other national women’s unions, to a ‘narrower’ (meaning ‘strictly political?’) ‘programme circle’, but would have been ‘to the benefit [...] also of our social and national progress’, and would have constituted a broad undertaking to concentrate ‘the principal women’s forces’ in all fields where these were developing, with a view to achieving an ‘agreement of these views and thoughts for common action’. We may see here, I believe, an ambition that the union planned should function as a rallying point and a home for the women’s collectivities which had been dispersed up till then: ‘Εργασίαι του Γυναικείου Συνεδρίου. Ημέρα Τετάρτη’ [*Acta* of the Women’s Congress. Day Four], *LJ* 14/627 (2 July 1900), p. 2.

subsequently adopted an equally full programme of women's 'progressive activity' in a composite organic schema of specialised 'sections', which were sub-divided into 'ephorates' and 'committees'.³⁹ In the light of the above, we can attempt a hypothesis: at a time when every new collective initiative on the part of women in the public space was directly connected with the 'dangers' of their claiming political rights, the Olympic Games and the priority of highlighting the 'socially and nationally beneficial' work of Greek women provided a legitimate opportunity and reason to communicate such an idea as the unification and co-ordination of the scattered women's associations. But this idea, or more precisely, some of its aspects and aims were to be accomplished through the Union of Greek Women and its action, at another, much more favourable, juncture: that is, in the context of irredentist effervescence provoked by the Cretan revolution of 1896 and the war of 1897, and in the name of the expected national unity, which called for the rallying of all the nation's resources, male and female, in the common struggle. In the name, more specifically, of the redeeming maternal qualities of women's 'nature', as those qualities, in such an ideological framework, were 'legitimately' transformed by the women themselves into patriotic action, which extended the established forms and introduced innovative and unprecedented types of women's intervention in the public domain. Some examples: apart from the more 'classic' forms of financial support and treatment of the Cretan refugees and the indigent families of reservists, this activity was developed in a number of other areas such as welfare work (with the offering of training opportunities in 'women's arts and crafts' and/or provision of occupational rehabilitation for the women members of these categories), hospital treatment for the wounded (with the equipment of field hospitals and the training of the first Greek nurses by a woman doctor and three female medical students), and the organisation of international women's solidarity. The Union of Greek Women, with this new face of 'patriotic motherhood' – as worked out first and foremost by the *Ladies' Journal* and Parren herself –, was to become in the years which followed an 'archetype of a legitimate women's association'.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, its broad public undertaking did not escape, particularly in its

39. For information on the organisational structure and activities of the Union of Greek Women in the early years of its operations, see, indicatively, 'Το έργον της Ενώσεως μετά τον πόλεμον' [The work of the Union after the war], *LJ* 492 (30 March 1897), p. 4; Kallirhoe Parren, *Έκθεσις των πεποραγμένων της Ενώσεως των Ελληνίδων (1897-1898)* [Union of Greek Women, Report for the years 1897-1898], Athens 1899, and *eadem*, *Η ζωή ενός έτους. Επιστολαί Αθηναίας προς Παρισινήν, 1896-1897* [The life of a year. Letters of an Athenian lady to a Parisian lady, 1896-1897]. We have no modern systematic study of the Union of Greek Women, or of the patriotic activities of women during the Greek-Turkish war of 1897. See in this connection Angelika Psarra, 'Οι γυναίκες του 1897: Ο πόλεμος των σουσουράδων' [Women of 1897: The war of the wenches], *Sunday Avgi* newspaper, 25 May 1997. There is plentiful factual material in Koula Xiradaki, *Οι γυναίκες στον ατυχή πόλεμο του 1897* [Women in the unfortunate war of 1897], Athens 1994.

40. Psarra, 'Οι γυναίκες του 1897', *op. cit.* The ideological framework of the public action of women during the course of the war and immediately afterwards is analysed in Efi Avdela/Angelika Psarra, 'En-gendering "Greekness": Women's emancipation and irredentist politics in nineteenth-century Greece', *Historia. Journal of the Historical Society of Israel* 5 (2000), pp. 109-21 (in Hebrew).

early stages, from fuelling the usual reflexes against the supposed threatening dynamics of women being involved in politics and demanding the vote.⁴¹

A little while before the patriotic endeavours of the Union of Greek Women began – to return to the occasion of the Olympic Games of 1896 – the idea of the creation of a central formation that would permit, by co-ordinating the available women's forces, the organisation of activities to promote the work of Greek women at the international festival came to nothing, as did the proposal for such promotion itself. Similarly, another, less demanding, proposal put forward by the *Ladies' Journal* was not acted upon: that is, the holding of a small exhibition of commemorative works of art produced by 'amateur women artists'.⁴² But the discourse that accompanied all these proposals for the appropriation of the great event by women, *appropriation, in the last analysis, of the national field itself on the occasion of this great event*, bore the typical imprint of the ideology of the journal and of its editor.

Such women's initiatives, by providing a framework of communication for women between themselves, would have given, as we have seen, 'evidence of life and existence', but also of *solidarity* of women within an event being held by men. More than that, however, by displaying, particularly in the eyes of foreign observers, 'palpable examples of a superior and more noble life' of Greek women, it would have permitted the latter to rebut the prevailing identification of their national character with the backward (read: degenerate) manners and customs of the Levant. Thus, they would be able to show that they were deservedly laying claim, along with their partners, to another dimension of that character – in other words, their share in the ancient Greek heritage and in the higher values of the Western world: 'Then the foreign journalists and travel writers will not speak only about the beauty and elegance and superficiality of Greek women, or about *their bulky dimensions and their Oriental nervelessness* [...] and *their servings of sweetmeats and fruit and nuts*, descriptions to which they have accustomed us up to now, but they will judge them as intelligent and reasonable beings, with hearts and feelings and patriotism, as wives and companions of a people worthy of its great and renowned origins'.⁴³ The promotion, therefore, of women's activity, by annulling the stereotype depictions of Greek women as 'worthy successors of the harems that seven or eight decades ago formed to a large degree the population of our country', would reconfirm, after all on behalf of the whole nation, their share in the values of progress represented by the West. And, of course, through their participation in practice in these values, Greek women would at the same time claim to be

41. Anything but unified, the women's movement of the time had a considerable share in the resistance to the Union. Indicatively: 'Τυναικεία Ένωσις. Τα πάτρια και το καθεστώς' [Women's Union. The traditions and the regime], *LJ* 472 (12 January 1897), pp. 2-4, and 'Καθημερινά Εντυπώσεις' [Daily impressions], *LJ* 473 (19 January 1897), pp. 2-4.

42. 'Αι καλλιτέχνιδες και ερασιτέχνιδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας' [Women artists and amateurs during the Olympic Games], *LJ* 9/431 (18 February 1896), p. 2.

43. 'Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [A]', *LJ* (28 January 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2. (the emphasis is that of the original text). See also 'Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [B]', (4 February 1896), p. 2.



Gymnastics lesson at the Aspasia V. Skordeli Hellenic Girls' School in Athens.
[E.L.I.A. Photographic Archive]



Union of Greek Women: Gymnastics lesson, very probably at the School of Women Gymnasts, which was set up by the Education Section of the Union in 1897. [E.L.I.A. Photographic Archive]

the rational subjects consolidated by Western civilisation; they would be shown to be, before all else, '*thinking and reasonable beings*'.

Leaving, then, for the present, physical achievements to the men, the women would worthily claim, through their achievements in work and culture or social reform, their share in the nation and the society of citizens. Once again, the clear claim to this participation is legitimised, on the one hand, through the projection of the achievements (i.e.: *rights*) of women in education and in (paid) work, as members of the *fundamental human community*, and, on the other, through the invocation of *specific* women's tasks and social *duties*. In this delicate balance of 'equality in difference', the scale could easily tip towards the prevailing women's domestic roles. In the discourse of the *Ladies' Journal* there is no shortage of appeals to the 'attention of housewives' who will let rooms to the host of foreign visitors or Greeks from abroad, or recommendations on the 'most thorny' issue of their hospitality. Among these recommendations, however, we shall not find the established invocations of traditional Greek hospitality, of which 'natural' ministers and guardians are the women. According to Parren, in the matter of the 'pleasant' stay of the foreigners, the ladies would have the opportunity to show their skills and talents in creating a domestic environment worthy of that to which 'all the civilised peoples of the West are accustomed', that is, worthy of the bourgeois ideal of domesticity. Order and precision in the use of time, scrupulous observance of the rules of hygiene, and the ensuring of the material conditions of good taste and comfort, as well as the 'moral' ones – that is, 'courtesy and politeness' in the behaviour between family members – are the constituents of the '*domestic well-being*' that the ladies must create. This is because it was precisely these features that were absent from the 'excessive austerity' and 'the simple manners' of the Greek home, and that were not valued as '*either among the first or among the necessary enjoyments of life*'.⁴⁴ This criticism, in other words, of the inadequate development of the special *sense* of 'domesticity', testifies to the process, a slow one, but already beginning, of the formation and valorisation of 'familial intimacy' as a separate field in the private sphere;⁴⁵ within this field, the bourgeois model of the cultivated housewife was beginning to take on flesh and blood, and this model was a fixed point of reference for the *Ladies' Journal*.

To sum up: within the context of the Olympic festival, the highlighting and development of all the above aspects of women's activities, domestic and public, could not, according to the editor of the journal, be compared with any dubious athletic-competitive achievements by women. Without doubt, they could not be compared with that regrettable, marginal appearance of a 'woman of the mob' who ran, by way of a trial, the distance from Marathon to the Stadium a few days before the beginning of the Games of 1896, and, 'barefoot', 'dishevelled', 'in a full-length garment', and in the obvious hope of financial reward, sought persistently to compete with the male athletes in the marathon race. These are the expressions of Parren's writing that repre-

44. 'Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας, *LJ* 9/432 (25 February 1896), pp. 1-2.

45. On this process in Greece in the nineteenth century see Varika, *H εξέγερση των Κυριών*, *op. cit.*

sent the much-discussed undertaking of Stamati(n)a Revithi, a truly poor woman from Piraeus, the mother of a large (?) family, originally from Syros, who, in the end, in spite of the official rejection of her application to run in the marathon, ran it alone, the day after the event was held.⁴⁶ This undertaking, although attracting at the time the interest of the press as an exceptional and curious event, as one of the *faits divers* of the Games, was veiled in a certain mystery, and contributed to subsequent arbitrary mythologising, which is even reproduced in the relevant bibliography. Thus, it would seem, this female figure ‘of the people’, marginal and picturesque in the context of the Olympic idea and event, marginal also for modern research interest, easily nurtured a more convenient myth: that of the more ancient-sounding ‘Melpomene’, a pioneer of her time, who, having trained systematically, demanded, in spite of the prohibitions, to take part in the marathon, thus protesting against the exclusion of women from the Olympic Games.⁴⁷ Perhaps such a female figure could be more easily incorporated into one of the acceptable historiographical ‘canons’ – in any event, much more than some Stamatina Revithi, whose name suggests anything but descent from the ancient Greeks, and who, for at least the Greek social realities of the practice of athleticism, suffered from the double ‘unorthodoxy’ of belonging to the most needy strata of the urban population and of being a woman; nor was she, on all the evidence, motivated by a desire to protest against the exclusion of women from the Games. Probably indifferent to that exclusion as well as to the dominant models of femininity that imposed it, under the pressure of financial needs and responsibilities, perhaps, moreover, as the head of a household, she does not seem to have seen her decision to run as a ‘challenge’ but rather as an opportunity for certain – albeit indirect – material benefits, an expectation that in all probability she shared with some of

46. Details of Revithi’s attempt to take part in the Olympic Games of 1896 and of her life are to be found scattered among press articles of the period. See chiefly: *Palingenesia*, 27 February 1896; *Acropolis*, 28 February 1896; *Messager d’Athènes*, 2 March 1896; *Estia*, 23 March 1896; *Acropolis*, 29 March 1896 (with a kind of interview with Revithi by a ‘correspondent’ of the newspaper at Marathon); *To Asty*, 12 April 1896. See also Athanasios Tarasouleas, ‘Σταμάτα Ρεβίθη: η πρώτη γυναικα μαραθωνοδρόμος’ [Stamata Revithi: the first woman marathon-runner], *To Vima* newspaper, 14 April 1996 (supplement ‘A hundred years of the Olympic Games’), pp. 10-11; Eleftherios Skiadas, *100 χρόνια νεώτερη ελληνική ολυμπιακή ιστορία* [A hundred years of modern Greek Olympic history], Athens 1996, pp. 123-4.

47. The marathon-running Melpomene is referred to in many later publications. For example: Ismene X. Messinezi, *The Wild Olive Branch*, Exposition Press, New York 1973; *Women’s Athletics Yearbook* 1975, p. 275; Betty Spears, *Typhosa, Melpomene, Nadia and Joan: The IOC and Women’s Sport. The Olympic Games in Transition*, Illinois 1988, p. 368; Greta L. Cohen (ed.), *Women in Sport: Issues and Controversies*, Sage, Newbury Park 1993, p. 185; Jennifer Hargreaves, *Sporting Females*, *op. cit.*, p. 210; Evangelos Albanidis / Xanthi Constantinidou, ‘Τύναικα και Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες’ [Women and Olympic Games], *Αθλητική και Κοινωνία. Περιοδικό Αθλητικής Επιστήμης* 14 (Komotini 1996), p. 110. Athanasios Tarasouleas (‘Stamata Revithi’, *op. cit.*, p. 11) states that in a publication of 1984 the German Professor Carl Lennard, citing texts by the Hungarians Franz Kemény (member of the first International Olympic Committee) and Alfred Hajos (Olympic victor in 1896), speaks of two women marathon-runners in 1896, one of whom was called Melpomene.

the men.⁴⁸ Where should then one fit this ‘unorthodox’ undertaking of this ‘woman of the mob’, which still awaits for its history to be written?

It is certain, however, that it did not fit into the models of the *Ladies’ Journal*. At the opposite extreme from the amateur athletics, which were the distinctive characteristic of the middle and upper strata, Revithi’s exploit, inspired by ‘sordid’ financial incentives and no noble ‘ambition’, not even that of distinguishing herself in competition with men, gave the lie, moreover, to all the characteristics of the women’s athletic-competitive model, as this was elaborated by the editor of the journal through the representations of the Heraia. To be precise, the image of Revithi, defined by the totally negative meaning assigned to her lower-class status and characteristics, stands out as the absolute opposite, the ‘countertype’, which permitted the further valorisation of the ‘magnificent spectacle’ provided by the maiden runners of ancient Elis, adapted to modern bourgeois models of trained female bodies, with the ‘picturesque’ garments suitable to the occasion, and with all the beauty, the skill, and the propriety that one would expect from these bodies. The female body ‘of the populace’ seemed in its very nature incompatible with these lofty aesthetic models, in the context of these apprehensions of the athletic ideal, strongly determined by gender and class considerations. This extract gives a typical summing-up: ‘She is quite simply a woman of the mob, ugly, without even expressive features, without the motive of ambition for distinction and honour, competing alongside men. Quite simply, she sought to take part in the Games in the hope of a monetary reward, with which to provide for her daughter’.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, according to Kallirhoe Parren, given that the Olympic Committee did not have in its regulations a provision prohibiting or regulating women’s participation, it did not have the right to prevent Revithi from competing or to impose terms

48. As can be seen from the press articles mentioned above, Stamatina Revithi, who seems to have initially believed that there were monetary prizes, persisted in her decision to compete, in spite of the rejection of the Olympic Committee, in the hope of attracting the interest of the authorities and of public opinion in her acute financial problem and of obtaining some kind of economic or other assistance. In this, she probably partially succeeded, to judge by the fact that at Marathon she stayed for four days as a guest in the house of the Mayor of Marathon, Dimitrios Koutsoyannopoulos. It was known, in any event, that although there were officially no monetary prizes for the victors, the daily press was flooded with offers of gifts from businessmen to the victors, and more particularly to the winner of the marathon: a restaurateur offered meals for a year, a coffee-shop owner two cups of coffee a day, a merchant a gold watch, a shoemaker would meet his needs in footwear for a year, Ioannis P. Lambros offered an ancient vessel from his collection, etc. The *Acropolis* (22 March 1896) justly observed that ‘the winner of the marathon will make his fortune. What has he not been offered? [...] To shave him for the term of his natural life, to make his clothes, to design his house for him, if he ever builds one, to give him free milk for life, and so many other things that we forget them’. Perhaps it was no accident that in the particular case of the marathon, an additional heat was held on 24 March because of the great interest shown in the last weeks before the event, in which, it seems, a large number of peasants from the Mesogheia, like Spyros Louis, took part. In this context, then, the gifts offered and the expected utility of the glory of the victor must have served as incentives to take part in the Games for those from the working-class and agricultural strata, as they did for Revithi.

49. ‘Εντυπώσεις [A]’, *LJ* (23 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

governing respectable appearance – either on her or on the other two women whom the journal mentions as intending to compete: ‘Miss Mistain, a young American runner’ in the marathon, and a ‘famous [sic] markswoman from Sparta’, who would also be entitled ‘to come before the foreigners, who knows in what woollen overcoat and in what general attire’. In this way it would be impossible to prevent the ‘ridiculous parody’, which would diminish ‘the standing of the modern Greek woman, not now as an athlete, but as a woman’.⁵⁰ On the contrary, Parren’s hopes of a ‘respectable’ representation of the female sex are expressed in the case of the American woman athlete, of whom she says that she is reputed to be ‘a runner of the first order’.

However, the participation of women in the first modern Olympic Games vindicated the expectations of their chief inspirer, Pierre de Coubertin: it was confined to cheering the athletic triumphs of the men.

*‘Their blood was transfused in so genuine and pure a state into ours.’
The Olympic athletic event and its privileged heirs*

In view of the holding of the Olympic Games of 1896, the proposals that we have examined as to the promotion of the work of women in the field of women’s crafts, education, philanthropy, literature, journalism, etc., were accompanied by a more general evaluation, and concern, on the part of the journal’s editor: in the context of the event, economically and industrially retarded Greece, which, in addition, lacked any athletics tradition, would not be able to take its place with dignity alongside the ‘powerful nations’ of the West and change the image of the ‘Levantine’ if the projection of its indisputable achievements in fields such as those mentioned above, and particularly in that of the intellect, was not organised.⁵¹ Otherwise, it would have nothing more to show than what it usually showed: the ancient monuments, ‘of which the age-old display is the object of pilgrimage of the whole of humanity’, ‘the beautiful and rich edifices with which the generosity of our fellow-Greeks of the diaspora have enhanced this place’, ‘the beauty of nature and our even more beautiful sky, and nothing more’. On the other hand, the organisation of educational, literary and academic conferences of every kind was the most adequate way of certifying the share of Greece in modern progress: ‘make every effort, therefore, to prove that whatever light may be lacking from our boulevards and squares and avenues is abundant and running over in the heads of

50. ‘Αι αθλήτριαι εις τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας’, *LJ* (3 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2. For a first reference to the American athlete’s application to take part, together with the above information and favourable comment: ‘Πουκίλα’ [Miscellany], *LJ* 9/431 (18 February 1896), p. 6; see also ‘Εντυπώσεις [A]’ *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 4 – here, however, other details are not given. There are also vague references to some American woman who sought to compete in other publications of the period; see in this connection *Acropolis* (30 March 1896) and E. Skiadas, *100 χρόνια*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

51. See ‘Αι Ελληνίδες κατά τους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνας [B]’, *LJ* (4 February 1896), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2, from which the quotations in this paragraph are taken.

the myriads of our scholars, which are illuminated by the unsleeping sun of science'. These conferences, comparable with the modern technological achievements, would demonstrate 'that, if we are not an industrial people, an artistic people, a mercantile people, or an athletic people – as it is not known whether we shall have any athletes – we are, however, a people seriously concerned with letters and sciences', that is, with the fields through which the ancient ancestors of the Greeks 'were proved to be the most exceptional people on earth'.

Thus, according to the official view of the journal, on the eve of the great athletics event, a basic concern of the authorities should be the holding of events in the field of the intellect. A sure indication of a share in Western modernity and, at the same time, evidence of descent from illustrious ancestors, the work of the modern Greeks in letters and sciences could not be compared with their rather dubious athletic achievements, which, in any event, seemed a rather inadequate credential of progress in the context of this discourse.

The stance taken by the *Ladies' Journal* is yet another example confirming the more general observation that the holding of the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 was the decisive turn for familiarisation with the athletic ideal not only of broader awarenesses within the Greek urban population but also of those of the intellectual and political 'elites'.⁵² The journal's attitude as we have described it, which, in any event, gave expression to doubts about the success of the specific international athletics event, altered as the whole undertaking advanced towards the final straight. As doubts began to dissolve – particularly after the Panhellenic Games (9-10 March) – both about the success of the event and about Greece's ability to be represented with dignity in the Games, the discourse of the journal followed the general trend of apotheosis of the event. Over and above this, however, basic features of the discourse that we have just seen changed radically during the course of the narration of the Games. I will summarise by way of introduction, necessarily schematising. The concerns about Greece's slow progress as compared with advanced – economically and in terms of athletics – Western peoples or as to its capability of refuting the stereotypes of a retrogressive 'Levantine' identity and claiming its share in progress and in the 'civilised' West were allayed. Accordingly, the certainties about this share in progress necessarily passing via letters and science, a privileged field of linkage with the Greeks' ancient ancestors and with Western modernity, gave ground. In the place of this discourse, *the cult of physical competitions and achievements as a 'predisposition' inherited from these ancestors* unfolded – irrefutable evidence of direct descent from the ancient Greeks. This bodily inheritance no more presupposed the

52. On the significance of the Games of 1896 in the popularisation of the athletic ideal and familiarisation with the sport spectacle, and, of course, for their 'accelerating' role in the process of the development of athleticism in Greece, both as concerns education and, above all, club sport, see Christina Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας. Γυμναστικά και αθλητικά σωματεία 1870-1922* [Sport and aspects of bourgeois sociability. Gymnastics and sports associations 1870-1922], Athens 1997, pp. 110-12, and *eadem*, 'Αθλητισμός και στοο' [Athleticism and sport], in Christos Hatziosiph (ed.), *Ιστορία της Ελλάδας του 20ού αιώνα*, vol. A2, *op. cit.*, pp. 404-5.

legitimating mediation of Western cultural values; it was also irrefutable evidence of the *organic* continuity (i.e., ‘*natural superiority*’) of the race, whose future, through the ‘manly’ bodies and spirits, obeyed the same natural determinism of prosperity, glory, and domination. In the end, the apotheosis of athleticism as the necessary cultivation of an ‘indigenous’ fruit of the ancient ancestors, not as a process of apprenticeship to a modern Western institution, is what unfolded. In this ideological climate, the ‘baton’ passed to the spirit of the self-sufficiency of ‘Hellenism’ in the face of the West. This self-sufficiency, familiar to the nationalistic ideology, was reinforced, as was the dimension of structuring the national identity in contrast with the ‘advanced’ Western peoples.

What we have said above was no peculiarity of the *Ladies’ Journal*. It could very well serve to sum up typical features of the discourses on physical education and sport that had taken shape in Greece at the turn of the nineteenth and in the early years of the twentieth century.⁵³ In the ambient atmosphere of the Olympic event and spectacle of 1896, those discourses were *redefined*, recording displacements of elements of the national ideology such as those we have just described in the case of the *Ladies’ Journal*. This is, then, a typical example of these displacements, and, at the same time, a somewhat special one, given that the change in the discourse of the journal (from the time of the holding of the Panhellenic Games onwards) is particularly marked. Therefore, an analysis of this example serves, we believe, to bring out aspects and extrapolations of the nationalistic redefinitions.

The basic feature of these redefinitions in the nationalist discourse of the journal has already been indicated already by our previous summary. Unlike the cultural grounding for the continuity of the nation or the emphasis on cultural characteristics – letters, science, democracy – which make up the argument for the superiority of the West and of the ancient Greek model as opposed to the East, the nationalist rhetoric now draws upon the vocabulary of eugenics and the ‘biological’ continuity. The organic body itself, its qualities and tendencies, ‘blood’ and the principle of heredity are converted into a dominant legitimating feature of descent from the ancient Greeks. ‘We differ so little from our ancestors’, writes Kallirrhoe Parren, commenting upon the spectacle of the Panhellenic Games of 1896, ‘their blood was transfused in so genuine and pure a state into ours, the path we have followed up to now is so much in accord with their own, that there can be no doubt that we too will achieve great things one day’.⁵⁴ In spite of history and cultural changes, the glorious origins were identified with blood, the organic body, and inherited qualities; and so, in this context, these

53. On the discourses on physical education within the Greek intelligentsia in the nineteenth century see Fournaraki, ‘Σωματική αγωγή’, *op. cit.*, and Giorgos Kokkinos, ‘Υγεία, αλκή, παλοκαγαθία: Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία και σωματική αγωγή. Οι αντιστάσεις και η βαθυαία προσαρμογή’ [Health, vitality, nobility: The Orthodox Church and physical training. Forms of resistance and gradual adaptation], in *Πρακτικά του Διεθνούς Συμποσίου ‘Οι χρόνοι της Ιστορίας. Για μια Ιστορία της παιδικής ηλικίας και νεότητας’, op. cit.*, pp. 317-45. There are also many relevant references in Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-82.

54. ‘Εντυπώσεις [A]’, *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

origins could be defined directly as a ‘natural superiority’: ‘[...] the beauty of our athletes, the perfect proportions of their physical form, have proved that the centuries have altered only the clothing of the Greek, but not his natural superiority to all other races’.⁵⁵ In the expression of this discourse, the descent from the Greeks’ ancient ancestors and the continuity of the race are none other than the objective body, the blood that flows pure in the veins of the race, presaging a future no less glorious than the distant past; blood that is ‘pure’, but also royal, since the concept of the superiority of the race is most commonly mediated by the ideal of aristocracy and the metaphors of noble origins. Tracing its descent from the once powerful ‘queen of queens’, modern Greece, ‘tiny’ but ‘filled with manly courage’, for the first time discovers the regenerative effect of aristocratic descent and its vindication: ‘But the titles of nobility, the parchments of the queen of queens, let us say, have filled the tiny descendant with manliness, and in its small size and weakness it draws upon super-human strengths [...].’⁵⁶ Natural robustness, ‘manliness’, and aristocratic descent make up, then, an indivisible whole of symbolisms of power and superiority, which determine the nationalistic rhetoric of the apotheosis of physical competition.

This discourse, in the present instance, does not presuppose the formation of some quasi-scientific argument concerning the anthropological superiority of the Greeks. It presupposes somewhat familiar (and considerably irrational) nationalist stereotypes concerning the existence of an ahistorical, fixed, and unalloyed ‘natural’ national ‘character’, and certain inscrutable innate ‘instincts’ and ‘inclinations’ that act down through the centuries. However, this discourse revitalises these stereotypes through the ideas about eugenics ambient at that time, drawing its legitimation from these and from their projected scientific validity. Indeed, in this mode of thought, determined by national considerations, how else were the distinctions of Greek athletes, unthinkable a month earlier, to be now explained but through the natural skills and tendencies ‘inherited’ from their ancestors? It is precisely the previously despised backwardness, meaning the lack of any athletic training and tradition, that is now turned into a special advantage, since it calls attention to the organic continuity and ‘purity’ of the race through the blood and the ‘inherited instincts’. In a typical reversal of the argument, these instincts balance out the deficiencies in all the other areas, and, moreover, in the field of education. In discovering this continuity at every opportunity – in the victories of the Greek athletes, in the events in which they distinguished themselves, in the way in which they trained, in the spectacle, of sublime aesthetics, provided by them, and in the enthusiastic popular response to this spectacle – the editor of the *Ladies’ Journal* now expresses ‘the conviction that the ancient Greek race truly continues in the present generation and that the inherited instincts of the ancients *make up for education and all the deficiencies of the present*’.⁵⁷

In the light of the logic of the same argument, physical competitions, and the

55. ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων [Δ’], *LJ* 10/439 (14 April 1896), p. 2.

56. ‘Η Ελλάς εν τη δόξῃ της’ [Greece in its glory], *LJ* 10/435 (17 March 1896), p. 1.

57. ‘Εντυπώσεις [Δ’], *LJ* (14 April 1896), *op. cit.*

success or evaluation of them, are completely dissociated from education, science and technique and are made to appear to stem exclusively from a *fundamental and primary predisposition or aptitude* that is particular to the Greek ‘race’, distinguishing it from the modern, athletically more advanced, Western peoples. More precisely, the athletic achievements of the Greeks seem to stem from a continuity of specific innate and inherited qualities and tendencies, which confirm, first and foremost, their descent from the ancient Greek forefathers and, secondarily, their more modern ancestors, the heroic fathers of the Greek Revolution, who ‘aquit themselves like men’ in fighting the conqueror, thus developing even further, and bequeathing, the tendencies of the battling nation. It is through these constructs that, at the same time, the particularity (read: superiority) of a *Greek physical-athletic character* is declared, through which the more general national ‘character’ is manifested.

The central core of the argument was revised constantly and re-adapted in a multiplicity of ways in order to vindicate every instance, particularly those that did not offer an obviously convenient opportunity to claim the continuity of the national character as did the victory in the marathon event. The Greek victories in events such as the rings or rope climbing, fencing or shooting proved triumphantly that ‘we are victorious in those things in which our fathers were victorious’, since by these the emergence of ‘superb fighters, superb men for the struggle’ was perpetuated.⁵⁸ Similar significance was taken on by victory in an absolutely modern contest, for which, moreover, the editor of the journal did not conceal her aversion. This was cycling, and, more specifically, the bicycle marathon, which, however, in the present instance, and in contrast with the events at the velodrome, which required method and technique, proved Greek superiority, since it brought out the innate inclination to compete against ‘insuperable difficulties’, ‘a legacy from our fathers who achieved their manhood in difficulties’: ‘It was natural that the foreigners should be victorious where technical specialisation was required, where great experience and method were required. [...] But what we have as an age-old privilege, what is in our blood, what is an integral part of our existence is strength of spirit precisely in difficult moments; it is our resilience in the moment of danger; it is the intoxication by which our fathers of yesterday and our ancestors centuries ago were seized whenever the defence of honour was in question’.⁵⁹ Conversely, failure to achieve the first place in some classic athletics events did not demonstrate any weakness on the part of the contemporary heirs of the ancient Greek athletic model, which was now revised in order to be totally dissociated from the harshness of competition, the crude display of muscular strength or the tasteless attainment of high achievements (the negative characteristics that had

58. ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων [B’]: Χαιρέτε, χαίρομεν και νενικήραμεν!’ [Impressions (II): Hail, we rejoice and we have conquered], *LJ* 10/437 (31 March 1896), p. 2 (here the victory of Spyros Louis is also described). See also in connection with the achievements in fencing and shooting: ‘Εντυπώσεις [Δ’], *LJ* (14 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 4, and ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων [E’], *LJ* 10/440 (21 April 1896), pp. 4-5.

59. ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων [ΣΤ’], *LJ* 10/441 (28 April 1896), p. 2.

Ἐφημερίς τῶν Κυριῶν

ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΙΑΙΑ

ΣΥΝΤΑΣΣΟΜΕΝΗ ΥΠΟ ΚΥΡΙΩΝ

ΣΥΝΔΡΟΜΗ ΕΤΗΣΙΑ
ΠΡΟΠΑΝΤΟΡΕΑ
Διά τὸ Ἐσωτερικὸν Δγ. 5.
Διά τὸ Ἐσωτερικὸν φ.χ. 8.

ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟΝ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΕΩΣ
34 Ὁδός Φιλέλληνος 34
Ἀπίστηντος Ἀγγλ. Ἐκπολιτείας
Γραφεῖον ἀνοικτὸν καὶ
ἴσιδην ἀπό 10—12 π. μ..

Πικάσια παρατήρησις ἵκε τῆς
ἀποστολῆς τοῦ φίλου γίνεται
δεκτὴ μάνος ἑντός ΟΚΤΟ
ἡμέρων.

ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΡΙΑ
ΚΑΛΑΙΡΡΟΗΝ ΠΑΡΡΕΝ

Συνδρομεῖται ἐγγράφονται εἰς τὸ Γραφεῖον τῆς
Ἐφημερίδος τῶν Κυριῶν
καὶ παρὰ τοῖς διεύθυντοῖς Βιβλιοπεργ καὶ «Επιτίμαι»

Ἐν τῷ Ἐσωτερικῷ δὲ παρ' ἀπασὶ τοῖς
διντυποδόποις ἡμέρων.

Σύμμαχοι πλήρη τοῦ α', β', γ', δ', ε', καὶ σ' ἔτους ἀφίσκονται
παρ' ἡμέν καὶ παρ' ἄκρας τοῖς ἀντιπροσώπους ἡμέρων.

Διά τὰ ἀνυπόδειρα πέρα
εἰδούσαται ἡ συντάκτης αἵτοι
Καρλ Καλαϊρρόην Παρρέν.

Τὰ πεικόμενα ἡδὺ χρηματο-
ργαρα ἢ διμοινόμενα ἡδὺ
ἢ διπλατόργαρα. — Ἀντι-
τύπαρα καὶ μὲν διδόνεται
τὸν διαιροῦν τῆς ἀποστα-
λούσης δὲν εἶναι δεστά. —
Πάλιον ἀγγείλανται ἡδὺ
τὰς Κυρίας γίνεται δεστά.

Ἄλιμα βαθύλακκον ἢ διεύθυ-
ντο δρεπονονταν ἢ ἀποστόλων
γραμματόσημον 50 λεπτών
πρόστικτον νέας ταύτης.

Διὰ τὰ ἀνυπόγραφα δρόμα εὑθύνεται ἡ συντάκτης αὐτῶν
κυρία Καλαϊρρόη Παρρέν.

ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

Ἐντυπώσεις ἐκ τῶν Ὀλυμπιακῶν Ἀγώνων
ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ Β'.

ΕΝΤΥΠΩΣΙΣ ΕΚ ΤΩΝ ΟΛΥΜΠΙΑΚΩΝ ΑΓΩΝΩΝ

ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ Β'.

Χαίρετε, χαίρομεν καὶ νενικήκαμεν;

Ἐνικήσαμεν, καὶ λίγη μου σίλη! Ναί! ὁ Μαραθώνιος δρόμος είναι ιδίους μας. Ἡ κυκνόλευκος ἀγαρέτισ τὴν ἀφεῖν πρότοι τοῦ Ἐλλήνος δρομέως καὶ ὑπέρθιν τοῦ Παρθενώνος μας, δυτὶς κατὰ τὴν ἀπερτάτην τεύτην τῆς διξῆς τῆς συγχρόνου Ἐλλάδος στιγμῆς, ἀντιπροσώπευεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀπιστονοῦς ὅρον του τὴν ἀρχαίνην διξῖν, ἐξεγύθη δέσμην χρυσῶν ἡλικιῶν ἀκτίνων, ητὶς κατηγύγασεν δὲς πολύτιμον ἀκτινωτὸν τὸ μέτωπον τοῦ νικητοῦ.

Ναί! Ἐνικήσαμεν. Ἡ μικρὸς Ἐλλάς ἐνίκησε τὸν Πλακιώτην καὶ Νέον Κόσμον. Ἡ Ἐλλάς ὑριζεῖται, ἀναδεικνυμένη ἀξέιν τῆς περδόξου ἀρχαίκης της λαμπρότητος. Νικηταὶ τοῦ Μαραθώνος, ἔχοιτε τὸν τιμητικῶτερον στέρχοντα τὸν Ἀγώναν, ἔχομεν τὴν πρώτην θέσιν μεταξὺ τῶν νικητῶν. Ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς Μαραθώνοις νίκης τῆς ἀρχαίτητος ἀνέψης γέθει ἐν τῷ προτώπῳ τοῦ σφραγιλοῦ νέου Ἀθηναίου, τοῦ νικητοῦ Στρυδίωνος Λουΐ, τοῦ ὄποιον τὸ δυνομά φέρεται ἀπὸ γέθεις ἀνὰ τὰ κεῖλα ἐκκούταδες χιλιάδων λαοῦ μετ' ἐνθουσιώδους εὐγνωμοσύνης καὶ ἐθνικῆς ὑπερφρενείας.

Πίσσον εἰς λυποδηματική, διέστι δὲν ἀδυνάθησε καὶ σὺ νὰ μετά-

σῃς τῆς γλυκείς προχθεσινῆς συγκινήσεως καὶ τοῦ μεγχλοπρεποῦς θεάματος τοῦ προγθεσινοῦ θράσυμου μας. Ἐκεποντάδες γιλιάδων ἀνθρώπων, τῶν ὄποιων οὐ καρδίας ἐπικλεν ἀπὸ κοινοῦ τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐναγανίους τῆς προσδοκίας πεκλιούς, τῶν ὄποιων ὁ λογισμὸς καὶ οὐ σκέψις ἐφέρετο ἀδελφικώτατες πρᾶς τὸ αὐτὸν ἀσημένον, τῶν ὄποιων αἱ ψυχαὶ μίσι καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἐν τοῖς μυχικιτάτοις αὐτῶν ἡμέροντο εἰσχόντος. Τὴν νίκην! τὴν ἔνδοξον νίκην τοῦ Μαραθῶνος! Μίξις ἀνθρωπολήματρις δικυρίθετος ἀνὰ τὸ Στάδιον, ἀνὰ τὰς ὁδούς Ἡρώδου τοῦ Ἀττικοῦ καὶ Κηφισίας, ἀποτελουμένη ἐξεκατοντάδων γιλιάδων λαοῦ, ητὶς ἀδιακρίτως πλούσιον καὶ κοινωνικῶν τάξεων, μίκην τὴν στιγμὴν ἐκείνην εἰχεν καρδίαν, μίκην ψυχὴν, ἐν πόθον, μίκην φιλοδοξίαν, ἐν ὄπερον, ἐν ίδικυιν: τὴν νίκην!

Καὶ ἡ νίκη ἡλθε, θέτουσα πτερά εἰς τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ὀλυμπιακού μας καὶ διαχέουσα τὴν ἀνδρὸν αἰγληνής της ἀνὰ τὸν Ἐλληνικὸν ὄριζοντα. Ἡ νίκη ἡλθε, τονίζουσα παίκιας νέας διξῆς διὰ τὴν σύγχρονον Ἐλλάδα. Ἡ νίκη ἡλθε μυρούμενη ἀπὸ τὰς δάρικας τῶν ἀρχαίων Ὀλυμπιακινῶν καὶ ἀρωματίζουσα μὲν τὴν ζείδωρον πονήν της νικητῆν. Καὶ έλοι οἱ γίγαντες τῆς ἀρχαιότητος, πρὸ τῶν ὄποιων σύμπασα οὐ ἀνθρωπότης ἀποκαλύπτεται μέχρι σήμερον μετ' ἐνθουσιώδους, ἐφριάσκων ἐντὸς τῶν τάφων των φρικίστων χαρᾶς καὶ δευτέρας διξῆς, διέτι τέκνον ιδικόν των, εἰς τὰς στέρνους τοῦ ὄποιου πάλλεις καρδίας Ἐλληνικῆς οὐ οὐδεὶς τῶν νικητῶν, εἰς τὰς φλέβας τοῦ ὄποιου τρύπει αἷμα ἀγνὸν καὶ ἀδόλον. Ἐλληνικόν, μετὰ πάροδον γιλιάδων ἐτῶν, ἀνεδείχθη ἀντάξιον ἐκείνων. Καὶ διγύρευος τοῦ Μαραθῶνος ἀπὸ τὰ ὑψη τοῦ Ἐλληνικοῦ οὐρανοῦ μας, ἐν διπλερύγιε χέθεις οὐ ψυχὴ του, ἀπέστειλε διὰ τὰς ζωγράνους αὔρας τοῦ ζεύρου τὰ πρῶτα καὶ ἀγνότερα φιλήματα πρᾶς τὸν νικητήν, πρᾶς τὸν ἀνδρὸν διάδοχον του, τὸν Σπ. Λουΐ, τὸν ἀπλούστατον καὶ ἀφελῆ, καὶ ἀγκύθινον ήρωα τῶν Ὀλυμπιακῶν Ἀγώνων.

The issue of the Ladies' Journal (31 March 1896) that reports the victory of Spyros Louis.

been attributed to the male Olympic Games in contrast with the women's Heraia). Serving, as did the masterpieces of Hellenic sculpture of male bodies in training, the display of beauty and the achievement of a sublime aesthetic result, the classic events were those in which, regardless of formal distinction, the Greeks actually shone, since they demonstrated all the inherent qualities of the athletic model of the race, as well as its superiority: 'but what neither the Americans or the Europeans have is the grace with which the Greeks take exercise, the plasticity of their bodies, their marvellous outlines' or 'the statuesque picturesqueness of the movements', etc.⁶⁰ The examples of the innate-inherited qualities of the national – always male – body could be multiplied, maintaining however the firm dissociation of the athletic achievement from technique, training and education. According to the same logic, environmental and climatic conditions also play their part in shaping the tendencies of Greek bodies in competition.⁶¹ In the end, the instances when the Greek athletes lagged behind were to be attributed to chance and to the inertia of the Olympic Games Committee: they had been inactive not in the matter of training, but of finding and gathering athletes from all over Greece, and so had restricted the opportunities of all those 'men of the seas and the mountains, who cut through the waves like swordfish and put the shot like gods of antiquity' of demonstrating their talents.⁶²

Thus, by way of contrast with the innate collective qualities of the modern heirs of ancient Greek athletic greatness, particularly with the beauty, the harmony and the plasticity of the movements, the athletically developed peoples of the West base their achievements, and the evaluation of those achievements, exclusively on muscular strength, on the cultivation of technique and of the 'mechanical' part of exercises, since they have no inclination, or, rather, they are *unable*, to develop the 'artistic cultivation of the body' and provide a spectacle of high aesthetic quality.⁶³ Here we would like to put forward another hypothesis: through these comparisons of the 'Hellenic' with the 'Western' athletic character, this discourse, like every similar narration of the international athletic event, constructed in addition a *national athletic-competitive tradition*. By investing with value certain events – in the present case, the contests of ancient Greek tradition and the events befitting a battling nation – it ascribes to them meanings, qualities, and symbolisms that refer us to an equally selective and manufactured 'national' past. It is precisely such a process of constructions, in which the dimension of gender and of class is important, that we have already followed in the reconstruction of the 'national' past of the Heraia undertaken by Parren on behalf of the 'ladies' of the middle and upper classes. If here too we approach the narration of the editor of the journal from this viewpoint of the 'inven-

60. These expressions are stereotyped in the journal's discourse on the Greek performances in classic athletics. The quotation here: 'Εντυπώσεις [B]', *LJ* (31 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

61. See, for a typical example, the references to swimming: 'Εντυπώσεις [ΣΤ]', *LJ* (28 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 3.

62. *Ibid.*

63. See in particular the comments on the discus contests: 'Εντυπώσεις [Δ]', *LJ* (14 April 1896), *op. cit.*, 1-2.

tion' of a 'tradition',⁶⁴ and not simply as a commonplace expression of a classicising and chauvinistic discourse, I think that we shall be able to understand it more fully. Through its paradigm, we can throw light, in continuing and concluding what we have already noted, on certain other aspects of nationalism, as that mediated the apprehension of athleticism as a phenomenon of Western modernity.

One aspect of this 'tradition' is, then, track events, not simply because they constitute a self-evident part of the ancestral heritage, but also because of the meaning ascribed to them through a particular reconstruction of the characteristics of the ancient Greek athletic model: inspired by the 'cult' of artistic representations of the male body in training, this reconstruction links athleticism not with the inculcation of liberal individualistic competitive values, but with the pursuit of beauty and *aestheticism* as the *central* aim of sport. One of the constituents of the Olympic ideal as it was being shaped in those years by its first inspirers, aestheticism, here, nevertheless, is structured in contrast with another element of this ideal, the intensification of muscular strength which builds 'character';⁶⁵ in contrast with the development of the body-machine of the modern industrial age, and, by extension, in contrast with basic values of modern sports. By means of the paradigm of discus-throwing, Parren gave the following typical description of the ideal trained male body, worthy of the best ancient Greek sculptured representations: 'The discus-thrower is first an artist and then a gymnast. At the supreme moment of the sacred emotion of the contest, his duty is not to concentrate his attention on the muscular power of his arms, but particularly on the curves that the trunk of the body will form during the throw, on the regular and graphic spacing of the legs, on the graceful inclination of the head, on the plastic bending of the knee, on the harmonious raising of the arms, on the ellipse-shaped flexing of the back, on the general expression of the physiognomy not only of

64. On the definition of the concept of an invented tradition and its various applications in history, see E. Hobsbawm/T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1984; on athleticism and sport as invented traditions see more particularly Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-producing traditions: Europe 1870-1914', *ibid.*, pp. 288-9, 298-303. Although in the above article the concept of invented tradition refers to the social practices of gymnastics and sport (and to the socially cohesive function of the repeated rituals which took shape within them), I believe that this concept can also serve as an interpretative tool in the study of the discourse which invests these practices and which gives them meanings and symbolisms. Furthermore, in Hobsbawm's view, the Olympic Games were one of the major invented traditions of Western modernity, and if we approach them from this viewpoint, the discourses which narrate the event constitute an integral part of this tradition, in the present instance, as that was mediated by Greek nationalism. Since, however, invented traditions are not always 'national', while they always presuppose a selective use of the past on behalf of various collective subjects, through the symbolisms and meanings produced by the discourse, the particularity of identities not only of the nation but also of different social groups or categories can be signified, as those groups appropriate in their own interests the national past and 'character', redefining them in the process. Consequently, the dimension of class and of gender determines this process of constructs – in this instance of the athletic and competitive 'tradition'.

65. See, by way of indication, the factors of Olympism as defined by Jean M. Leaper: 'Women and modern Olympism', *Report of the Seventeenth Session of the International Olympic Academy at Olympia*, Hellenic Olympic Committee, Athens 1978, pp. 150-9.

the face, but also of the body'.⁶⁶ This idealised trained body of the discus-thrower, typified by 'the lifelike form' representative of the Greek athletes in the sculpture by Phidias, found, as we shall see, its absolute opposite in that of the cyclist, a model *par excellence*, in this approach, of the body-machine of modern Western sport. In expressing, of course, ideological tendencies of the time, this strong 'aestheticist', and at the same time 'elitist' approach to athleticism served, in this instance, as a process of differentiation from the 'foreign', that is, the athletically and industrially advanced peoples of the West, but also at the same time from the 'common people', since this discourse involves – as we have already pointed out in the case of Stamatina Revithi – a dimension of social distinction in identifying the lofty aesthetic result of physical exercise and the very ideal of bodily strength and beauty with distinguished social origins.

Nothing illustrates this whole attitude more typically than Parren's sharp criticism of cycling, *par excellence* a modernistic symbol and at the same time, in the case of Western Europe at least, a more popular sport and among the first to be opened up to the masses. In her reportage from the Olympic Games of 1896, written in the form of letters to her 'Parisian' friend, this event is not only described as 'alien' and 'an interloper' in relation to the revived festival of antiquity, but also as an 'ugly exercise', which had made her 'literally freeze' and 'gape' 'even more at this tedious spectacle'. Regardless of whether it was seen as beneficial from the point of view of health, from an aesthetic viewpoint it was unacceptable, since the beauty of the [trained] body, the very human body itself, 'is annihilated' completely by the machine: '[the body] quite simply is turned, as it is twisted, bent and doubled up, into a propulsive engine of which only the legs and the head are clearly discernible, though the latter is bent downwards. [...] At these cycling contests, I did not succeed in seeing more than the wheels of the bicycles as they turned at a dizzying speed around the velodrome. This soulless, shapeless machine, without rhythm or regularity or pattern, completely annihilates man. Up there on the iron axle, the most artistic, the most harmonious body is turned into a cat-like device, so much united with that iron machine that iron and man constitute one graceless moving thing, swiftly covering the track'.⁶⁷

The argumentation against this modern sport is reinforced by recourse to the characteristics of gender. If cycling annihilates the beauty of the male body, for the body of the 'fair sex' it is disastrous, since it is a direct affront to femininity: by one-sidedly training only certain parts of the body, it destroys all the special characteristics of female beauty – the 'regularity' of bodily proportion, the 'harmony of the lines', and the 'grace of the movements' – which make up 'the greatest charm of our sex'. Here, however, what is in question is the charm and the femininity of women 'of good taste'

66. 'Εντυπώσεις [Δ]', *LJ* (14 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 1. On the cult of the artistic ancestral model of the nude male athletic body as that unfolded in the narrations of the Games and, moreover, as a constituent of the athlete/national hero, see Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και οψεις της αυτικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, pp. 114–21.

67. 'Εντυπώσεις [ΣΤ]', *LJ* (28 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 1.

and of good society, like her ‘Parisian’ friend: Parren ‘shudders at the very idea’ that *she*, an elegant young woman, ‘is astride this iron machine’ and, bent like a rachitic, ‘red, of course, and ugly’, ‘like a cat clinging on to chimneys’ crosses the Champs Elysées, where she could distinguish herself ‘only as a fine Amazon’.⁶⁸ Through these expressions, which scarcely conceal a Victorian puritanism, the ‘infectious cycling mania’, which in Greece also was starting to draw young ladies on to the ‘downward path’ for reasons of fashion and ostentation, is denounced. If in the case of the women of the Greek cities, ‘who have our household as our only employment’, the bicycle was no more than a ‘pointless’ and ‘ridiculous’ insinuated novelty, the same did not hold good for the first women cyclists in the world: for the working women of the middle classes in the big cities of America bicycling was a practical necessity, economical and, in the end, ‘beneficial’.⁶⁹ Closely bound up, it would seem, with the ‘distant elsewhere’ of her Utopias of emancipation,⁷⁰ Parren’s attitude towards the bicycle, this supreme ‘emblem of the New Woman’, according to the modernist Vlasis Gavriilidis (editor of the newspaper *Acropolis*), was somewhat ambivalent. Reflecting the most radical versions of the New Woman, who would be emancipated by the vote as well as ‘by the grace of ... the bicycle’, adopting men’s clothing, this Greek journalist met with the strong reaction of Kallirhoe Parren over this threatening ‘masculinisation’ of women.⁷¹ The bicycle – like the vote – did not fit well within Parren’s ‘Greek’ version of emancipation.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

69. *Ibid.* It is obvious here that Parren is reproducing the moralistic criticism of a ‘problem’ that was not so much related to Greek reality as to the resistance generated by the mass spread of women’s cycling at precisely that time in America, where it introduced women of the middle class to sport and in fact made people talk about a ‘bicycle craze’: S. K. Cahn, *Coming on Strong*, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

70. On the way in which the Utopia of the New World functioned in Parren’s novels of emancipation (American women are portrayed as the only ones in the world who have been given the opportunity to achieve the harmonious combination of a professional career, social work, and family peace), see Psarra, ‘Το μυθιστόρημα της χειροφέτησης’, *op. cit.*, pp. 441-2. It should be noted here that in one of these novels, *Mágyosza* [The Witch] (Athens 1901), the emancipated heroine who cycles is a Greek-American.

71. The radical views of Vlasis Gavriilidis concerning the women’s question were marginal in nineteenth-century Greece. On these views, which he linked with the social question, while at the same time speaking unreservedly in favour of women’s political rights, see Psarra, ‘Μητέρα ή πολίτης’, *op. cit.*, p. 97. These views were expressed by the Greek intellectual and journalist in a series of articles under the pen-name of ‘Radical’ in the *Acropolis* newspaper in summer 1896 (between 16 and 25 June), which were published in 1921 as a separate study under the title *Ai γυναίκες* [Women]. In linking here, as Parren herself did, emancipation with the equal right of women to physical development and training, he does not share the reservations and marked ambivalences of his colleague about the practices of women’s athleticism, the excesses of which could potentially threaten ‘femininity’ and the ‘dignity’ of women of the middle and upper strata. On the contrary, one of the basic reasons why Gavriilidis defended women’s physical exercise, and particularly cycling, was the powerful *symbolic* significance of the adoption of men’s clothing, which stressed the *fundamental human nature of women*: by revealing, as he wrote in a typical passage, that woman is a ‘two-legged animal’, the bicycle would lead to a definitive change in women’s clothing, and ‘from lunatic garments, as is the case today, because one day women’s adornments will be deposited in the psychological museums [...], [they will be changed] into the clothing of a reasonable being’, *Ai γυναίκες*, Athens 1921, p. 36. On Parren’s reply to Gavriilidis’s views more generally, see Varika, *H εξέγερση των κυριών*, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-40.

The criticism of the bicycle on the occasion of the narration of the Olympic Games of 1896 was converted into a channel of criticism generally of new industrial times and peoples, who developed technology beneficially, ‘but the good, the beautiful does not, of course, preside over the creativity of the modern generations’. This weakness was in the end imprinted on the practices of their athletics, if one compared them with the exercises of the ancients.⁷² Ten years later, this attitude had not changed. On the occasion of the Intermediate Olympics, the editor of the *Ladies’ Journal* would express her disappointment at the predominance of the Western model of athletics in the revival of the Olympic Games to the detriment of the ‘resurrection of the cult of beauty’, which characterised the ancestral model. Of the new international athletics event she did not expect ‘victors in beauty’ to emerge, not even from among the Greek athletes, since for ten years ‘the work of preparation of the gymnastics associations has been confined to the mechanical part of the exercises only’.⁷³ Of course, these views belonged within a broader critique concerning the negative effects on the health of the athletes and generally of those in training, effects caused by the abusive and irregular exercise of muscular strength, in view of the intensive preparation for a specific competition or a gymnastics display. However, what was basically at stake remained the neglect of beauty by the modern practices of athletics and the invocation of the paradigmatic ancestral model, together with aestheticism, elitism, if not also a latent pinch of social racism, which can accompany this invocation: ‘I thought that the organisers of these fine international festivals would have followed the example of their ancient colleagues, who selected both their runners and their wrestlers from among the most handsome youths of each place and from among the prominent houses. [...] And at that time people who were ugly and disportioned were not deemed worthy of these honours [i.e., of victory].’⁷⁴ To counterbalance the under-representation of beauty at the international athletics event, Parren proposed the ‘resurrection’ of the Panathenaic procession. This is now the argument put forward for the appropriation of the event by women, and, of course, by the nation, since it would set the seal on this event with a genuine Greek festival of ‘beauty’: a considerable number of maidens ‘from the most beautiful and stalwart’, in ancient costume and bearing baskets of flowers, would adorn the prize-giving ceremony with their presence, and would immediately afterwards accompany the prize-winners and the crowds in a sacred pilgrimage to the Parthenon. Parren, inventing by this a supreme *symbolic ritual* of national athletic-competitive ‘tradition’, described in all its magnificence the reconstitution of the Panathenaia, which would serve, furthermore, to blazon abroad the necessity of holding the Olympic Games permanently in the classic land that gave them birth. The symbolic *self-sufficiency* of that classic land surfaces once more: because the foreigners ‘have neither an Acropolis, nor a Parthenon, nor

72. ‘Εντυπώσεις [ΣΤΓ]’, *LJ* (28 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 1.

73. ‘Η πομπή των Παναθηναίων’ [The Panathenaic procession], *LJ* 19/868 (12 March 1906), pp. 2-3.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

marble-clad stadiums, nor a past of beauty and harmony such as ours, nor a sky that has once roofed such holy and sacred bands'.⁷⁵

The other side of the national athletic-competitive tradition is occupied by the events, 'ancient' and modern, that fit the qualities and destinies of a 'fighting' nation, a 'battling' people. As we have seen, this role could be allotted to any event (for example, rope climbing or the cycling marathon), regardless of whether it could be associated in a direct manner with martial skills and virtues. In the case of this side of the nation's athletic tradition, it was not the nature of the events that structured it, but the meaning that was given to them as supreme expressions of the aptitudes for battle and contest inherited from fathers and forefathers. In reality, in the paradigm of discourse that we are examining, the appeals to the combative values and to the virtues of contest do not presuppose the *autonomous role* of liberal values of 'friendly competition', of 'fair play' and of equal opportunities, but these appeals are steadily made subject to – and are mediated by – the past, and the future, of course, of a nation 'destined' to test its strength against its enemies, 'if it wishes to live'. The projection of the future military contest with the enemy on to the present peaceful contest with the 'foreign' fellow-athletes is not merely diffused throughout, sometimes it is given specific expression: 'and thus from the peaceful victory of two men on peaceful soil an idea springs up, a dream, a hope of great victories, for which all of us thirst so much, we who owe our existence to repeated heroic victories'.⁷⁶

The critical state of the nation's affairs in 1896 would not have been needed, of course, for the creation of healthy bodies, brave and 'manly' principles and disciplined spirits to be made subject to the service first and foremost of the *Megali Idea* of irredentism and of the immediate military campaign of the nation. However, this particular combination of national crisis with the great festival of bodies and the Greek 'triumph' in it, fuelling as it did nationalism and irredentism with all these invocations of the natural superiority of the race or even its capacity to dominate and impose its will, further reinforced this 'thirst' for immediate contest and the war-mongering mood that also possessed the *Ladies' Journal*, in spite of the civilising and peaceful values of women's 'nature': 'Truly, when I think that this exercise [shooting] of the part of so many young men has one main purpose, is addressed to one aim, to allotting death to unfortunate people who have inalienable rights to life and happiness, I assure you that I am beside myself and that I curse the unjust, the harsh custom of war. But, on the other hand, when I consider how many of our own people's lives have been unjustly sacrificed, how much of our wealth has been looted, how much iron chain has been used in the bonds of our free-born brothers [...], precisely because we have not always had enough bullets and enough weapons and enough trained men to defend us, then I become a supporter of war, then I think

75. 'Και αι γυναίκες,' *LJ* (5 March 1906), *op. cit.*, p. 3. See also 'Η πομπή των Παναθηναίων' *LJ* (12 March 1906), *op. cit.*, p. 4.

76. 'Εντυπώσεις [Δ']' *LJ* (14 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 4.

that not only the men but also we women should apply ourselves to target-practice'.⁷⁷

Undoubtedly, there was no need for women to apply themselves to target-practice in order to be incorporated into the destinies of the fighting nation, and into the great athletics event that made them apparent. It sufficed that they were the ones who watered with their blood the robust flesh and bequeathed the spirit of bravery to those who would distinguish themselves on the 'noble field of honour' as well as on the field of battle. The discourse of the *Ladies' Journal* has re-arranged the terms in order for women to be incorporated into the great event, and into the body of the nation itself. As mothers, they were there, on the packed terraces of the Stadium, in order to absorb the 'triumph', the 'greater' triumph, which was theirs by right. They were there, in any event, more generally as the *public*, as was the 'people', in order to bring out by their presence in the narration, as we shall see in the final section, the significance of the athletics spectacle as a *symbolic ritual of national unification*.

*'We who did not descend on to the field of honour ...
have carried off the greater triumph.'*

The athletics spectacle as a symbolic process of 'nationalisation'

'Open-air spectacular festivals, and, moreover, those relating to the strength and robustness of the body' were a self-evident element of the Greek 'temperament', which did not require rational proof. In spite of this, Parren does not cease to extol the catalytic function of those festivals in the inculcation of the modern ideal of physical exercise, which prepared the rebirth of the race and the future campaigning of the nation, in a broader range of consciousnesses – particularly in the consciousness of the more 'traditionalist' lower classes: lined up all along the route of the marathon race, the peasants in their *foustanellas* (traditional 'kilts'), indifferent until the day before to athleticism, had only one idea in their heads: 'how to teach their children to run [...], how they could become *palikars* [brave men], like those young men who rent the air like white arrows'; thus, 'imperceptibly, without theories and urgings and patriotic recommendations', the issue of the spread of physical training 'has been solved for all classes and even for the most reactionary, those who do not understand this need and the benefits stemming from it'.⁷⁸

Thus the chief function of the athletics spectacle, the popularisation of the modern athletic ideal, was a 'patriotic' issue: it was placed first and foremost in the service of the national cause – it was virtually identified with it – through a discourse that absorbs any dimension of highlighting the *autonomous recreational* function of the athletics spectacle and of physical exercise itself as a particular leisure activity and as a

77. 'Εντυπώσεις [E]' *LJ* (21 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 4.

78. 'Εντυπώσεις [A]' *LJ* (24 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 3.

separate field of urban (and middle class) sociability. Up to a point, the descriptions of the Games give expression to the pleasure felt by the spectators and, of course, by the narrator herself: the fluctuations of feeling, the ‘suspense’ in awaiting the result, the psychology or the passion of the supporter, the ‘flavour’ of the competition. Nevertheless, these feelings do not succeed in permeating the core of the subjection of the athletic ideal to the nationalistic and ‘eugenicist’ priorities and in taking on an autonomous existence in the discourse of the journal. It is in the same context, in any event, that the autonomy of the athletics spectacle as a *popular* spectacle is shaken. The vivid presence of the lower-class crowd is taken in hand completely by the nationalist rhetoric as it is turned into idealised romantic pictures of the identification of the people with the nation, which annul any trace of autonomy in that presence. After the ‘picturesque’ villagers of Marathon, the host of the ‘common people’ who from early in the morning crowded the Arditos hill and by their own lively reactions regulated those of the spectators on the benches of the Stadium became the object of appropriation in a similar but even more marked manner. This colourful crowd was transformed into a ‘voice from one chest’ of one single nation-spectator, and through the mediation of religious metaphors was frozen into the position of a symbol: ‘all these people, wonderfully surrounded by the sapphire-coloured horizon, seemed like ethereal beings, motionless in the religious silence of expectation, like heads of those angels that the painters of the West put in their pictures floating in the midst of the clouds. And those heads were in a stepped arrangement, some above others, ever more rising upwards, ever more idealised [...], forming a picture of ideal beauty, a gigantic group of a human mass, [...] which in its religious devotion seemed to draw strength to send up applause and cheers for the victors the length and breadth of the heavens’.⁷⁹

Thus what occurred in the Stadium, this ‘new font of faith’ in which the nation was rebaptised in order to be regenerated, was not only catharsis of everything foreign; principally there, all the differences that could divide the national community internally were washed away, in order to achieve the maximum of national unanimity, ‘regardless of wealth and social classes’. At the expense of any appeal to the internationalism of the Olympic ideal (particularly rare in the journal’s discourse in 1896), attendance at the Olympic events is described as a supreme process of reconciliation and concord within the nation, with royalty as the central symbol.⁸⁰ The royal power was apotheosised, as, in any event, it too was rebaptised in the ‘font’ of the new

79. ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων [Γ’]’, *LJ* 10/438 (7 April 1896), p. 2. As Christina Koulouri comments about the Games of 1896, ‘it can be seen from contemporary accounts that the motive for being a “spectator” was not linked with athleticism as such, but with national feeling’: *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αυτικής ποινωνικότητας*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

80. See particularly the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games of 1896: ‘Εντυπώσεις [Γ’]’, *LJ* (7 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2-3. It should be noted here that the text which gives the greatest emphasis to the internationalism of Olympism, but still as an achievement of the ‘ancestral’ spirit which created the Olympic ideal, is the work of a contributor to the journal: Maria Delvou, ‘Ζώσα εικών’ [Living image], *LJ* 10/438 (7 April 1896), pp. 5-6.

religion of competitive athleticism, and, indirectly, of its liberal values. ‘In this Stadium of honour and glory’, nothing symbolised in a more exemplary fashion the process of national ‘homogenisation’ than this picture of free mingling and ‘fraternisation’ between the athletes and the King’s sons: as the princes were at the side of the athletes in order to contribute their princely organisational abilities, but also their princely encouragement, the athletes ‘as brothers, as close friends’ spoke with them, ‘and as equals [...] sought their right, without any observance of formalities, producing a picture unique in the world’s chronicles of princes’.⁸¹ In this somewhat exceptional invocation – not without a touch of paternalism – of the liberal spirit released by competitive athleticism, this spirit has effectively been displaced from the track itself on to the ritual of the spectacle as a process of national unification, and particularly of ‘fraternisation’ of the people with the Crown.

The conclusion and culmination of the unifying function of the athletics spectacle, as multiply represented here, are, of course, the exceptional and unprecedented awakening of the feeling of belonging together in the community – the national community, that is. Evidence of existent aspects of this conjuncture and an image mediated by the nationalistic ideology, this dimension of *disruption* in the ‘drowsy’ routine and commonplace of national life and in the everyday ordinariness of the capital stands out strongly in Parren’s discourse about the Olympic Games of 1896 and the Intermediate Olympics of 1906.⁸² ‘Yes, my friend’, Parren writes to her ‘Parisian’ in 1896, ‘the Olympic Games have shaken awake’ this national feeling, ‘which our teachers so awkwardly attempted to teach us with grammar and syntax on the school benches. Love of one’s country for people such as ourselves who have neither seen wars nor have yet erected peaceful trophies anywhere, who from our cradles have been accustomed to admire first the foreign nanny [...] is a mere theory, which is accepted by the brain but very rarely descends lower, and rarely reaches the heart’.⁸³ Succeeding, therefore, in doing what the school mechanism had not adequately achieved, and wiping out, moreover, the consequences of a ‘mania for things foreign’, the great ‘festival of bodies’ is here restructured as *par excellence* a mass process of ‘nationalisation’; a measure of this is the flaring up of the ‘heart’ of the female public, particularly of the ladies of good society, who had been most inadequately ‘nationalised’, as they are represented by Parren: having been more coldly

81. ‘Η Ελλάς εν τη δόξῃ της’ [Greece in its glory], *LJ* (17 March 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2. The specific picture concerns the Panhellenic Games, but the hints at monarchical power (as this was embodied above all in Crown Prince Constantine) as a supreme symbol of the process of national unification and, of course, of the coming (military) campaign of the nation is diffused throughout the narration. It is interesting that in the narration of the Intermediate Olympiad also, the rare references to the liberal spirit of athleticism are made in order to extol the ‘democratic’ spirit of the crowned heads of the time, who appeared in the Stadium in ordinary costume, without any other distinctive mark of their power than a ‘band of purple’, scattering around them ‘the radiant smiles of love and goodness’: ‘Από το στάδιον’, *LJ* (16 April 1906), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

82. See the narration of the full daily programme of the Athenians on the days of the Games, which pleasantly changed their habits, filling them with energy: ‘Από τους αγώνας’, *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

83. ‘Εντυπώσεις εκ των Ολυμπιακών αγώνων [Z]’, *LJ* 10/442 (5 May 1896), p. 4.

disposed and indifferent towards this feeling by reason of upbringing, more self-centred and, above all, more ‘possessed of xenomania’, now they are fully incorporated into the general patriotic enthusiasm of the crowd. These were the respectable and spoilt ladies and young misses who, in pouring rain at the ceremony of the award of the olive wreathes in 1896, refused to be ‘put to flight’ and, sharing precisely the same feelings with the rest of the people, stayed in their places, caring nothing for the inconvenience, finally transcending their own over-protected selves; ‘where did all this heroism come from, all this self-denial of our sex?’ the editor of the *Ladies’ Journal* wondered.⁸⁴

The answer emerges effortlessly in the framework of all these symbolisms and metaphors with which the nationalist ideology invested the narration of the great athletics event and spectacle as an exceptional experience of partaking of the collective feelings and the collective destinies. In the ‘font’ of the Stadium, in which the race and the nation were rebaptised into a new life and into a new ‘faith’, where, for the first time, ‘the mystery of the greatness’ of their ancestors ‘was revealed’ and union with them was effected, linking ‘in a way that cannot be severed the great past with the great future that is being inaugurated’; there, all the men and all the women were transformed into ‘giants’, capturing something from the sturdy bodies and the ‘manly’ souls of the athletes themselves. The ritual of participation in the event, the unifying function of the spectacle, reached its climax in this image of a *transfusion of power from the bodies of the athletes into those of the spectators*: ‘The trained muscles of our athletes, the bodies revealed through gymnastics as superb throughout Europe [...] filled the atmosphere with such electricity that manliness and self-confidence in our natural superiority were transfused into our own souls and into our own bodies, through their resilience’.⁸⁵ However, in this general transfusion of ‘manliness’, the participation of the women had a different significance, because they were taking back something that they themselves had given, something that belonged to them by right, like the triumph of victory – a victory which did not need the track in order to be won: ‘We women, [...], we mothers, we who have shaped these fine and harmonious bodies of the men, who with our blood have watered that exquisitely shaped flesh as of ivory, who have inspired in our children the profound feeling of love of the homeland by which they have wrought miracles during these days, we came out of the Stadium on that day proud above all others, happy above all others. We who did not descend on to the field of honour carried off the greater triumph, since we stirred up the admiration of the world for our children’.⁸⁶

Creators and nurses of the robust flesh and the manly spirit, once pregnant with the good seed that would give the fertile fruit of the future, in the narration of the *Ladies’ Journal* of 1896, the women, without it being necessary for them to compete or even to give ‘evidence of life and existence’, would in the end derive the ‘greater

84. *Ibid.*

85. ‘Εντυπώσεις [Δ’], *LJ* (14 April 1896), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

86. *Ibid.*

triumph' from the very *essence* of their sex. This essence, which objectifies the unification of all women in a common 'destiny' as mothers-teachers of the national body, is suddenly transformed into an adequate condition for their incorporation into the event, in complete affinity with the dominant nationalist stereotypes. The strictly gendered structure of the national ideology emerges reinforced in the context of this whole discourse, which promotes the inherited instincts of the Greek race into a principal channel, into an exclusive privilege, of appropriation of the international athletics event, and, in the last analysis, into a primary element in the reconstruction of the imagined community of the nation itself.

Nevertheless, at the same time, the *specificity* of the women's 'mission' within this community took on a new dynamic through this decisive linking of nationalism and irredentism with eugenic values. It was precisely within this 'biologising' nationalist ideological framework, as we have seen it through the discourse of the *Ladies' Journal*, that the necessity of spreading women's physical education was reinforced and re-defined as a special and important issue. In the field of school education as well as within the ranks of the gymnastics associations – and with increased participation by women themselves – a trend towards promoting and *normalising* the physical training of girls, basically of the middle and upper strata, developed. This trend, though it had its origins in an earlier period, after the Olympic Games of 1896 was reconstituted on the basis of a *debate* concerning the type of physical exercise that was fitting for the delicate reproductive function of future mothers, who would ensure the future flourishing state of the race and the nation. At the same time, however, at the other extreme from this approach, women began to take part in certain recreational modern sports where, moreover, the practice of them was mixed, such as tennis and horse-riding, as well as in the administration and social life of the sports clubs involved, which, of course, were restricted to members of the upper bourgeois class and had a closed family-dominated structure, which ensured that women were under surveillance.⁸⁷

Concluding hypotheses

In decisively reinforcing the highlighting of maternal roles as *primary factors* in the physical well-being and superiority of the race and in the projected campaign and acme of the nation, the marriage of nationalism with eugenic priorities permitted the circle of women on the *Ladies' Journal* to strengthen the argument of 'patriotic motherhood' (as it was later to be called), which, as we have seen, was the main legitimating foundation

87. On the first steps and characteristics of women's participation, beginning at the turn of the century, in gymnastics associations and in sport clubs with a recreational purpose, particularly at the Lawn Tennis Club, see Koulouri, *Αθλητισμός και όψεις της αστικής κοινωνικότητας*, *op. cit., passim*, and *eadem*, 'Αθλητισμός και σπορ', *op. cit.*

for the new and abundant collective action that women of their class developed in the public domain from the time of the war of 1897 and onwards. It was also the main feature of the female version of citizenship, as it was elaborated by the editor of the journal, through the analysis of this action. Within the double conjuncture of the Olympic Games and of the looming national crisis, the ideological framework that we have analysed with which the *Ladies' Journal* invested the Olympic event was, I believe, a decisive moment in the process of the structuring of this argument. This was, of course, further strengthened by the mass mobilisation of women during the Greek-Turkish War, and even more so by the defeat in the war and the powerful blow struck to the prevailing irredentist visions of the *Megali Idea*. In the breaches this blow left behind, in the context, moreover, of the feelings of humiliation as well as of the mandates for new action, for a 'renewed nationalism' that would transcend the 'degenerate' romantic aspects of the *Megali Idea*, women, having already by their patriotic mobilisation given the lie to the myth of the weakness of their sex, could *redefine the needs of the nation and their extra duties within these*: it fell to *their* lot to re-activate the nation, it was *their* duty to shape the coming generations with the vital power of 'Hellenism'.⁸⁸

After the critical point of 1896-97, the study of the discourse on women's physical training as this is expressed by the *Ladies' Journal* and its editor must be placed precisely within this ideological framework of the reinforced regenerative mission of women in relation to the nation. The same goes for the study of the initiatives that women took in this field in order to fill the gaps left by the state educational policy. The most important of these initiatives was the setting up of the School of Women Physical Educators by the Union of Greek Women in 1897.⁸⁹ In welcoming this initiative, Kallirhoe Parren provided the main legitimisation by linking it directly with the war of 1897, which had so dramatically proved false the triumphalism of the journal a year earlier: now the war had glaringly proved the inadequacy of the contemporary generation of men, particularly those of the cities, whose bodies, 'self-

88. Avdela/Psarra, 'Engendering "Greekness"', *op. cit.*

89. One of the first steps in the post-war activity of the Union of Greek Women was to rehabilitate an earlier, but short-lived, initiative of the Panhellenic Gymnastics Association, concerning the training of professional women gymnasts for the needs of girls' schools. Those needs were not being met because the state maintained only a school for male physical educators. Thus, in 1897, the Education Section of the Union set up a School of Women Physical Educators where teachers or future teachers could attend a one-year course, to which the state *ex post facto* gave official status by undertaking to hold the final exams. However, the continuing successful operation of the School owed much to the collaboration of the Union with the world of private athletics associations, more specifically with the National Gymnastics Association. See the dense supply of information in the *Ladies' Journal* on the activities of the Education Section of the Union; more particularly on the foundation of the School of Women Physical Educators and the beginning of collaboration with the National Gymnastics Association in 1901, see, respectively: 'Αι γυμνάστριαι της Ενώσεως των Ελληνίδων' [The women physical educators of the Union of Greek Women], *LJ* 12/535 (7 June 1898), p. 6, and 'Αι εξετάσεις της γυμναστικής του Παιδαγωγικού Τμήματος της Ενώσεως των Ελληνίδων' [The examinations in gymnastics of the Education Section of the Union of Greek Women], *LJ* 15/665 (20 May 1901), pp. 7-8.

indulgent, soft, virtually degenerate', fostered moral sickliness and weakness of soul; and these bodies 'inherited', of course, 'self-indulgence and softness and a special inclination towards the quiet and relaxed life' from their mothers.⁹⁰ It was, then, the reform of this modern 'soft' and 'degenerate' manhood that the School of Women Physical Educators promised, by contributing to the forming of mothers with exercised and strong bodies 'in which the juice of youth and of life cannot but flow brave and rich, and not exhausted and sickly and faint-hearted, giving rise to cowardice and humiliation'.⁹¹ Typical of Parren's discourse is this reversal whereby the dynamic pictures of bodily and psychic health are ascribed to the exercised bodies of the School's girls, 'those small battalions of the women of tomorrow', in contrast with the 'gloved, delicate, anaemic' generation of men in the modern industrial age. In stressing the ideal of 'patriotic motherhood', the whole argument was able at the same time to invoke equality: 'Now that steam and electricity have replaced men's hands [...], when the fate of wars is judged by strategic genius, perfect armaments and the moral strength of the fighters rather than by their endurance, now men and women enter into life with the same needs and the same rights of physical and intellectual development'.⁹²

In reproducing prevailing arguments in favour of women's physical exercise, but at the same time differentiating itself from them, the *Ladies' Journal* continued to demand access for women to physical training and to at least some athletic exercises by means of a double discourse, which steadily maintains the tension between equality and difference, between the rights common to men and women to physical development and the special duties of women to the race and the nation. This double discourse and its consequences are, I believe, typically imprinted – as has already been pointed out – on the way in which Parren defends the exceptional happening of the gymnastics display by the Danish women in the Intermediate Olympics of 1906. Ascribing to physical exercise a symbolically strong liberating significance, she welcomes the transformation of women from 'weak members of the human family' and from 'feeble guardians of the sanctuary of the hearth' into 'a bold vanguard of the future'; if, however, women today 'have descended into the wrestling-schools and have sought from exercises of the muscles and from the training of the clubs and weights the strength which for so many centuries they thought that they had been denied by nature' it is because they had become aware not of their rights but of their duties: 'today science and the truth have revealed to them *that they do not have the right to be weak and feeble*, because this weakness brings about the exhaustion and the deterioration of the future generations, the decline and regression of humanity itself'.⁹³

Through the mediation of the priorities of eugenics, what tended to prevail as a legitimating argument, that is, the ideal of 'patriotic motherhood', fuelled an attitude

90. 'Αἱ γυμνάστριαι τῆς Ενόσεως', *LJ* (7 June 1898), *op. cit.*

91. 'Αἱ εξετάσεις τῆς γυμναστικῆς' [The examinations in gymnastics], *LJ* (20 May 1901), *op. cit.*

92. 'Διατί όχι αἱ γυναίκες?' [Why not women?], *LJ* 15/705 (27 April 1902), p. 2.

93. 'Αἱ γυναίκες εἰς τους αγώνας', *LJ* (9 April 1906), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

of reserve towards women's athleticism; a reserve that ran through the journal's discourse: at the same time as it defended physical training as a necessary condition of the fulfilment of maternal roles, it was capable of condemning excessively fatiguing exercises because of their disastrous consequences for women's reproductive capacity, and, consequently, for the vital strength of the race. This privileged relation of women's physical training and exercise with their special collective duties towards the nation or towards humanity not only kept up the notion of women's 'nature' as a regulatory factor for physical exercise acceptable for women; it also seemed to render decisively difficult, at least in Parren's discourse, the recognition and, consequently, the defence on behalf of young girls both of the socialising significance of individualist competitive values and, of course, of the recreational character of sport as a separate and free leisure activity. How else if not as an expression of this difficulty can we interpret the total silence on the part of Parren in 1906, in contrast with her triumphalism over the Danish women gymnasts, about the first appearance of Greek women in an Olympic event, in the tennis, where, moreover, they won distinctions?⁹⁴ The same difficulty allowed Parren, in the run-up to the Intermediate Olympics, a little before admiring the Danish women gymnasts, who appeared 'equal to the men', 'without either their modesty or dignity or grace being diminished', to state categorically: 'I have always pronounced against the public and, as it were, spectacular, exercises of young girls. If young girls train, they are obeying a natural law of health and robustness not only of our sex, but of the whole of our race, but there is no reason for them to descend into public arenas and demonstrate their progress and their success in athletics'.⁹⁵

Without doubt, *ex post facto*, Kallirrhoe Parren also shared with the public the profound impression and acceptance brought about by the special style of high aesthetics presented by the Danish women,⁹⁶ entirely compatible, in any event, with her models for female exercise, whereupon her strong objections to 'public and spectacular' exercises by young girls evaporated. Was there then, from that point on, a perceptible recession in Parren's objections in her discourse, concerning, moreover, not solely professional women gymnasts? What would have been her attitude if instead of Swedish gymnastics, the 'white maidens of the North' had competed in basketball, a new and up-and-coming sport among American college women? Leaving the answers to future research, I will confine myself to noting this difficulty here, this marked ambivalence of the *Ladies' Journal* and its editor towards the culture of

94. The first three places in the women's singles were taken, in this order, by Esme Simiriotou, Sophia Marinou, and Ephrosyni Paspati, while second and third place in the mixed doubles were taken by S. Marinou and A. Matsa, respectively.

95. 'Καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες', *LJ* (5 March 1906), *op. cit.*, p. 1.

96. On the dynamic version of Swedish gymnastics presented by the Danish women gymnasts in Athens in 1906 and two years later at the Olympic Games in London, on their success on both occasions and their contribution to the familiarisation of the public with the image of women engaging in physical exercise, see especially Else Trængbæk, 'Gender in modern society: Femininity, gymnastics and sport', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 14/3 (December 1997), pp. 136-48.

sport for women and competition as a part of this culture – an ambivalence that though it may not necessarily have stemmed from this privileged identification of women's physical exercise with the fulfilment of their major patriotic motherly duty, nevertheless did not cease to be fuelled by it. This ambivalence, which in the last analysis is linked with the deeper tension between the liberating discourse of equality and that of a different women's nature, is particularly apparent in the discourse of the 'apostle' of 'emancipation'. It is true that the emancipated heroine of Parren's novel *The Witch*, that beautiful, and anything but 'androgynous', Greek-American young woman who attended the Olympic Games of 1896, was a fanatic cyclist and did not hesitate to provoke 'oriental' male prejudices by declaring that she would like to compete in fencing. This, however, did not prevent her creator from protesting from the columns of her journal against the innovation of the School of Women Physical Educators to hold, as of 1903, the annual examinations of its students in public: 'the veil of modesty [...] under which at other times maidenly beauty was concealed as something mysterious and sacred is here rent apart publicly, before curious and insolent eyes'.⁹⁷ In fact, this first feminist discourse of the *Ladies' Journal* does not conceal a 'Victorian' puritanism towards the dynamics liberated by the public display of bodies of 'respectable' young women being exercised, threatening innate female modesty and the codes of behaviour of their social class. At the same time, it does not cease to be expressly opposed to the image of the 'androgynous', whose most characteristic emblem is men's attire when taking exercise. 'Let us hope and let us wish that equality will come, but that the dissimilarity of the two sexes will always be maintained', Parren wrote about this specific matter, in 1898.⁹⁸ The socially constructed and imposed contradiction between women's nature and athleticism could hardly be 'resolved' within the framework of this discourse.

97. 'Διατί τα κορίτσια;' [Why the girls?], *LJ* 17/791 (2 May 1904), p. 2. Parren's Greek-American heroine comes from her novel *H Μάγισσα*, *op. cit.*

98. 'Αι αδικούσαι και αι αδικούμεναι' [Women who wrong and those who are wronged], *LJ* 15/552 (22 November 1898), p. 3.

The international dimension of the preparations for the Intermediate Olympics

ALEXANDER KITROEFF

The Olympic Games are an international event and therefore each Olympiad is judged by the number of countries and competitors it succeeds to attract. This was especially true in the early phase of the revival of the Olympics and certainly in the case of the Intermediate Olympics of 1906. Those particular Games did not have the full support of the fledgling International Olympic Committee (IOC), because its president, the baron Pierre de Coubertin, was opposed to that event. He was concerned it was part of a Greek plan to make Greece the permanent venue of the Olympics. As is well known, the Intermediate Games were ultimately a great success and served to invigorate the Olympic movement that was suffering from the negative effects of the poorly organised 2nd Olympics in Paris in 1900 and the 3rd in St Louis in 1904.

The success of the 1906 Intermediate Games is partially due to the efforts of the organisers to establish ad hoc committees in many countries, ensuring the widest possible participation of athletes, coaches and officials. It was these committees, formed in the major cities of the world that co-ordinated efforts within their respective countries and enabled them to take part in the Games in Athens. Known in Greece as the ‘committees abroad’ (*επιτροπές εξωτερικού*), these bodies co-operated to varying degrees with the organising committee in Athens, in an effort to publicise the Games and the Olympic movement, to overcome difficulties such as finance and travel to Athens and, ultimately, to restore the status the Olympics had achieved in 1896.

The study of these committees, a unique feature of international relations in the early stages of the modern Olympic movement, has a twofold significance for the broader study of the Olympics and of the 1906 Games. First, it reveals the remarkable breadth of international support for Greece’s initiative to organising the Intermediate Olympics. Second, the relations between those committees and the organisers demonstrate the depth of Greece’s commitment to holding those Games with the widest possible international participation. To be sure, in practice, the exchanges between the committees and the Greek side entailed a dynamic of trade-offs and compromises over several issues. The successful resolution of those differences serves to underscore the commitment of both the international and the Greek sports communities to the promotion of the Olympic movement as well as Greece’s dedication to making the Olympics international.

This article examines Greece's relationship with the committees, with the help of primary and secondary sources, both on a general level and also in more detail by focusing more closely on the activities of the committees established in Egypt and in the United States.¹ Towards that purpose, this article is divided into three parts. The first examines the general context in which the committees were formed throughout the world and it reveals the extent of international support for the Intermediate Olympics. The second part focuses on the activities of a committee made up of diaspora Greeks in Egypt and its relations with Athens, as a way of understanding the support of the Intermediate Olympics among Greeks. Greek communities settled throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, including Egypt, had maintained very close ties to their homeland and played an integral part in Greece's socio-economic development until the First World War. Greece regarded them as an extension of the nation, and they held the same view. Their attitude toward the Intermediate Games represents, essentially, the views of the Greek middle class. The third part examines the activities of one of the most important of those committees, the one formed in the United States, in order to assess the American attitudes toward the Olympics and measuring their contribution to the Intermediate Games.

THE COMMITTEES: ACTIVITIES, MEMBERSHIP, RESULTS

The Olympic movement was still in embryonic form in the early twentieth century and the National Olympic committees (NOCs) were still in the process of being formed. It was only by the time of the 1908 Games in London that NOCs were sufficiently developed, at least in a few countries, in order to co-ordinate each country's preparations. Therefore, ad hoc, temporary committees were formed in each country for the purpose of making preparations for 1906. The autonomous nature of those committees, coupled with Coubertin's lack of enthusiasm for the Intermediate Olympics, resulted in the IOC doing little to promote the Games, even though they had its approval. Instead, the committees played a crucial role in the preparations.

The wide range of countries where committees were formed confirms the broad spread of international support of the Intermediate Games. Initially, the organisers in Athens were unsure of the international response. Therefore, they envisioned committees abroad headed by Greek consuls.² It soon became clear however, that leading

1. Thanks are due to the Hellenic Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Academy for allowing me access to the HOC's archives, and to archivist Vassiliki Tzachrista for her invaluable advice and assistance. My thanks also to Katerina Trimi for her assistance in obtaining data from the Greek press in Egypt.

2. HOC Archive: K4-Φ4-E1, 4 February 1905.

sports administrators in many countries were willing to guide the committees in their work. In Europe, committees were formed in Austria, Belgium, Bohemia, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Russia. Committees were also established in the United States and Cuba, and closer to Greece in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire.³ Many of these countries either did not have an official national Olympic committee, or had just established one. For example, the British Olympic Association and the Danish Olympic committee had been formed in 1905, the Belgian Olympic Committee in 1906, but Finland's Olympic Committee was only established in 1907 and the Olympic Committees of Austria and Italy were formed in 1908. Other countries acquired Olympic committees even later. Clearly, the ad hoc committees were to play an important role in the 1906 Games.

The membership of the committees, made up of leading figures in each country's social elite and sports establishment, also confirms the international support for the 1906 Games. Coubertin, despite his opposition to the Games, became president of the French Committee; Prime Minister A. J. Balfour was a member of the committee formed in London, and President Theodore Roosevelt became the honorary president of the committee in the United States. The committees also included important sports administrators from each country, several of them members of the IOC. For example, the Reverend Robert Stuart de Courcy Laffan, a member of the IOC since 1897, helped with the creation of the British Committee.⁴ The chair of the Swedish Olympic Committee, formed in November 1905, was a major figure in Swedish and international sport, Colonel Viktor G. Balck (1844-1928). Balck was an honorary member of the organising committee of the 1894 Sorbonne congress that founded the International Olympic Committee. He remained a member of the IOC until 1920 and of the Swedish Olympic Committee until his death in 1928. The German Committee included Count Egbert von der Assenborg, who joined the IOC in 1905, and Willibald Gebhardt, one of the two IOC members who had attended the 1904 Olympics.⁵ The committee in Italy, according to the Greek ambassador in Rome, was made up of 'the most prominent citizens, headed by the prime minister, the members of the ministerial council and the mayors of the largest cities'.⁶ It was significant that Italy's committee was even formed, because the Italian Olympic Committee was preparing for the 1908 Olympics (ultimately they took place in London because of the catastrophic volcanic eruption of Mt Vesuvius in 1906) and did not wish its members to be deflected from their duties.⁷ The organisers in Athens also tried to secure the participation of knowledgeable persons on the committees to help the athletes prepare

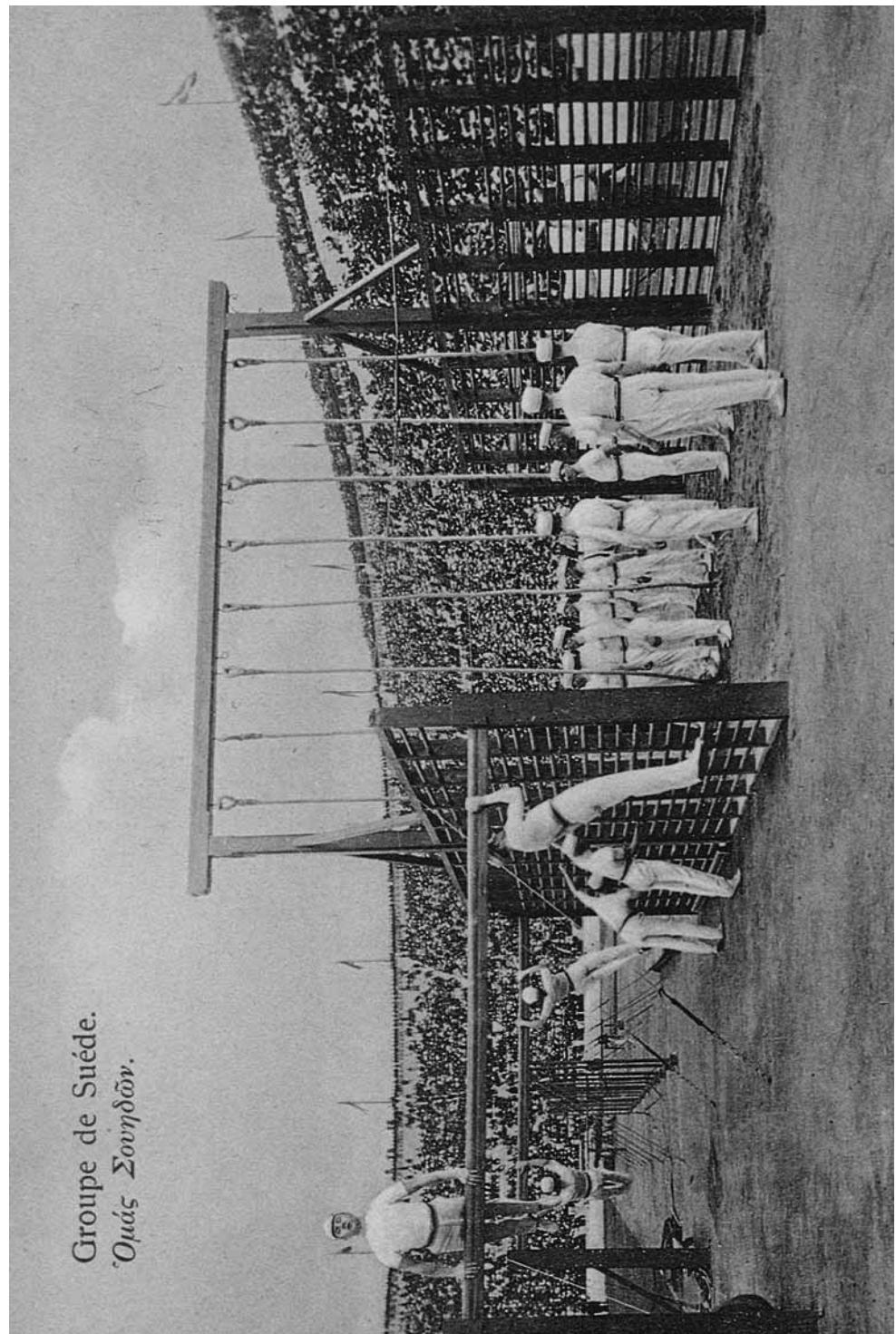
3. For general background on the committees, but not a comprehensive list, see Ελευθέριος Σκιαδάς, *100 χρόνια νεώτερη ελληνική ολυμπιακή ιστορία* [A hundred years of modern Greek Olympic history], Athens 1996, pp. 157, 160.

4. HOC Archive: K7-Φ9-E21, 28 August 1905.

5. HOC Archive: K6-Φ1-E8, 6 August 1905.

6. HOC Archive: K17-Φ2-E14, 19 March 1906.

7. HOC Archive: K8-Φ2-E3, 1 June 1905.



Groupe de Suéde.
Όμας Σουηδῶν.

Swedish team at the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.33]

better. For example they asked the Greek ambassador in Paris to secure the participation of fencing, gymnastics and track and field specialists.⁸

Spyridon Lambros, the general secretary of the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC) was at the centre of Greece's efforts to energise these committees. With the HOC enjoying the full support of the Greek state, Lambros was able to communicate directly with the Greek consular authorities in each country. His contacts had several purposes. In the case of major European cities, where he knew there was a developed sporting culture and where perhaps he even knew who were the important persons in the sporting community's hierarchy, he was able to send precise instructions as to who should be asked to form a committee. For example, it was Lambros who pressed for the inclusion of Count Assenburg on the German Committee and of Balck on the Swedish one.⁹ In other cases, such as in smaller towns in Europe, Lambros ordered the Greek consuls to gather information that would help him decide whether or not steps should be taken toward forming a committee in their particular region.¹⁰

The HOC was willing to help each committee as much as possible, even financially, but could not satisfy all the requests made from abroad. It forwarded a large sum to the Committee in the United States, even though the fund-raising there had been successful. The organisers were evidently very eager to secure the travel expenses for the largest possible number of American athletes. The American committee had raised \$14,000 and the organisers contributed another \$1,500 (7,500 French francs). But there was one particular request the HOC was unable to satisfy, namely that the Games be rescheduled to a later date in the season. Several committees, including those in Sweden and the United States, informed Athens that the April dates of the Intermediate Olympics were inconvenient because universities were still in session and this would make travel problematic for student-athletes, and also because weather conditions would prevent many athletes to prepare adequately for the games. The organisers politely turned down those requests citing the increasing heat in Athens in the late spring as a reason for not rescheduling the Games for the month of May.

The significance of these committees in ensuring the success of the Intermediate Olympics and, by extension, the strengthening of the Olympic movement cannot be overstated. Indeed, it is important to note that the 1906 Games were the first in which athletes participated as members of formally organised national teams. This was the case for the United States, and in fact 1906 was the first time all its athletes participated wearing a team uniform. The Games in Athens witnessed the largest and most organised contingent from Britain. If one compares the number of nations that took part in the Intermediate Olympics with those of the previous Olympics as well as the Olympics in London in 1908, one can easily see that participation in 1906 was at the same level as that of the official games. In Paris in 1900 the number of participating nations was 24, in St Louis in 1904 it was 13, in Athens it was 20 and in London it was 22.

8. HOC Archive: K7-Φ7-E7, 15 August 1905; K7-Φ7-E8, 10 September 1905.

9. HOC Archive: K8-Φ10-E7, 28 August 1905.

10. HOC Archive: K17-Φ8-E2, 17 February 1906.

The committees in Egypt

The committees working to promote the 1906 Olympics included those made up of Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire as well as in Egypt, a former Ottoman province that was under indirect British rule. The role of those committees was to raise as much money as possible from the wealthy Greek merchants based in those regions, in order to assist Greece's preparations. Their purpose was also to assist in the selection of teams made up of Greeks living in those lands that would compete in Athens. The two major committees of this kind were those of Alexandria and Istanbul (Constantinople). Both included wealthy Greek merchants based in those cities. The scope of their activities was more broadly regional. The Istanbul committee co-ordinated similar initiatives in other Ottoman cities with large Greek populations, such as Izmir (Smyrna), Salonica (Thessaloniki) and Trabzon (Trapezounda). The creation of the Alexandria committee soon led to the establishment of another committee on Cairo; they were both in contact with Greeks in smaller towns in Egypt, such as Mansura, Port Said and Zagazig.

The correspondence between the HOC and the consular authorities in Egypt clearly shows the twofold role ascribed to those committees by the Greek organisers: to raise funds to assist Greece's preparations and ensure that the athletes from Egypt (not only Greeks) would participate in the Intermediate Olympiad. The first of those goals was relatively easy. Alexandria, a major cosmopolitan and trading centre in the Eastern Mediterranean, had a Greek population of some 80,000 who had established a complex network of community institutions, clubs, societies, schools, churches, hospitals and so forth. More to the point, the Greeks were prominent in the city's banking and cotton-exporting sectors and formed a large part of its cosmopolitan business elite. Cairo also possessed a wealthy Greek element, as did other, smaller towns in Egypt. This wealthy merchant class maintained very close cultural, economic and political ties to Greece. These communities had been extremely active in making philanthropic contributions as well as investments in Greece in the previous decades. These included a major gift by the Alexandria based Georgios Averoff, who had underwritten the reconstruction of the Panathenaic Stadium that hosted the 1896 Olympics and would also be the main venue of the 1906 Games.¹¹

The second goal, attracting qualified athletes to take part in the competitions in Athens, was more difficult because sporting activities were underdeveloped in Egypt. Due to the country's economic underdevelopment and its quasi-colonial status under British rule, it was mainly the foreign communities that engaged in sports. At the 1896 Olympics there was one participant from Egypt, the Alexandrian Greek Dionysios Kasdaglis, who took part in the tennis competition. Angelos Bolanaki (Volanakis), also an Alexandrian Greek, was appointed member of the IOC for Egypt in 1910 and in the same year he formed the Egyptian Olympic committee under the patronage of the Egyptian royal family.¹²

11. Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks in Egypt, 1919-1936: Ethnicity and Class*, London 1989, pp. 13-31.
12. Angelo Bolanaki, *Histoire du sport en Égypte*, Alexandria 1954.

Fund-raising

The Greek consul general in Alexandria Ioannis Rikakis, well aware of the great possibilities for fund-raising in the city, proposed a list of members for the local Olympic committee that read like a who's who of Alexandrian Greeks. Ultimately, and for practical reasons, the membership of the main committee was limited to five persons from Alexandria and another five from Cairo. Nonetheless, generous contributions came from a wide circle of Greeks in Egypt. Emanoil Benakis (1843-1929) became president of the Alexandria Committee that was formed in early 1905. Benakis was the president of the Greek Community of Alexandria since 1901 and he was one of the city's largest cotton exporters. He had made many philanthropic contributions in Egypt and in Greece and had been named national benefactor by the Greek government in 1927. The other members were Mikes Salvagos, Mikes Sinadinos, Dimitrios Theodorakis and Georgios Zervoudakis, all of whom were prominent in Alexandria's economic life and the community's activities. Sinadinos and later Salvagos would succeed Benakis in the presidency of the city's Greek community organisation. The Cairo members were also prominent merchants.

The fund-raising activities of the committees took on two forms. One was the solicitation of monetary contributions from their members and others capable of making significant donations. The Alexandria Committee members led the way, with Zervoudakis contributing 25,000 French francs, an extraordinarily high sum, and Sinadinos contributing 100 pounds sterling.¹³ There were also substantial contributions, such as one by Aristeides Polymeris, a landowner in the Nile Delta region, who sent 500 French francs.¹⁴ In a further gesture of support, twelve members of the committees in Egypt (Ioannis Athanasakis, Benakis, Nikolaos Dallis, Polymeris, Alexandros Rostovits-bey, Salvagos, A. Sepsis, Sinadinos, Dimitrios Theodorakis, Nikolaos Tsingadas, Dimitrios Vitiadis, and Zervoudakis) declined free invitations to the Games the organisers offered them in recognition of their generous contributions. The members decided to pay their own way and sent 34.5 pounds sterling to the organisers, a sum that enabled the attendance of schoolchildren at the Games.¹⁵ The sale of subscriber vouchers at 75 French francs each permitted the committees to obtain smaller contributions. Although it is not clear how much they managed to raise through this method, in March 1906 Benakis sent 7,152.5 French francs to Athens, representing the proceeds of sales of subscriber vouchers to that point.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Rostovits in Cairo had raised 230 pounds sterling and 2,625 French francs.¹⁷

The HOC assisted the fund-raising efforts in Egypt, most notably when Lambros arrived there in February 1906 and gave a series of public lectures on the revival of the

13. HOC Archive: K15-Φ7-E7, 23 February 1906; K15-Φ7-E3, 23 February 1906.

14. HOC Archive: K15-Φ15-E8, 6 March 1906.

15. HOC Archive: K15-Φ10-E10, 7 April 1906; K15-Φ10-E15, 10 May 1906.

16. HOC Archive: K15-Φ9-E10, 7 March 1906.

17. HOC Archive: K15-Φ10-E10, 28 March 1906.

Olympic Games. Lambros addressed large audiences in Alexandria, Zagazig, Port Said and Cairo. The lectures consisted of a historical account of the Olympic Games in antiquity and concluded by discussing Greece's role in the revival of the Games. His lectures were major events in the life of the Greek communities in each of those cities; they were attended by community leaders, the consular authorities and church leaders and received extensive and flattering coverage in the local Greek press.¹⁸

The pan-Egyptian athletic games

The committees achieved considerable success in rallying interest in the Intermediate Olympics among the Greek and other foreign residents in Egypt. The committee in Cairo supported the local Greek sports club 'Ifitos' in organising 'Pan-Egyptian Athletic Games' in Cairo in early 1906. These should not be confused with the 'First Pan-Egyptian Games' that took place in 1910 in Alexandria and involved Greek clubs (some with non-Greek members) from Egypt, Greece and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹ The 1906 games functioned essentially as trials and the athletes who excelled were chosen to participate in the Intermediate Games. They were 'pan-Egyptian' in name, not in practice, because the participants were Greeks and other foreigners. Unfortunately, the native population's colonial status and the country's backwardness meant that the committees had little impact outside the foreign residents and the narrow circle of the Egyptian elite.

Putting aside the absence of Egyptians for a moment, we should note the importance of this sporting event for the Greeks in Egypt and for Greek sport more generally. In the same way the Greek diaspora bourgeoisie in the Eastern Mediterranean was historically important for the development of modern Greece, the athletic culture in those diaspora communities would also influence the development of sport in Greece. Although there is no systematic study of this topic, the influence of the Greeks of Istanbul and Izmir who sought refuge in Greece after the First World War is very well known and acknowledged. Sporting and recreational activities were especially developed thanks to the cosmopolitan and pro-European environment in which the diaspora communities lived. Through their close contacts with Greece, the members of these communities contributed to the development of sport and organised recreational activities in Greece as athletes and administrators. Their participation in the 1906 Games is an early example, as is the initiative of the Greeks in Egypt to establish a Boy Scouts movement in Greece.

There were several athletic activities among the Greeks in Egypt in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The close ties between the Greeks and the British in Egypt obviously contributed to this phenomenon, which, however, has not yet been

18. *Tachydromos*, 25 February 1906; *Neos Syndesmos*, 27 February 1906.

19. Pavlos N. Manitakis, *100 χρόνια νεοελληνικού αθλητισμού 1830-1930* [A hundred years of modern Greek sport, 1830-1930], Athens 1962, pp. 263-7.

studied in depth. The first Greek sports club in Alexandria, 'Milon', basically a gymnastics club, was established in 1873 followed by the *Omilos Filathlon* sports club in 1908 and a sailing club in 1909. Another one of the earliest athletics clubs was a gymnastics club formed in 1905 in Port Said.²⁰ In 1902, the international association 'Alexandria Amateur Sports' held a track and field meeting in which several Greeks participated. Their successes led them to being invited to take part in the Pan-Ionian Games in Izmir where Bolanakis, 'the fastest man in Egypt', won the 100 and 200-meter races.²¹ From 1910 onward there was a proliferation of sporting clubs in Egypt and within a few years the community schools in Alexandria acquired their own stadium and began holding school athletic competitions at the end of each school year.²² In 1910, the Alexandrian *Omilos Filathlon* organised the 'First Pan-Egyptian Games' mentioned above, a major event in the Greek sporting calendar.

The 1906 trial games in Egypt were a great success. Lord Cromer, the British Consul General who was the virtual ruler of Egypt was in attendance, as were the Greek orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria Photios and many prominent members of the Greek and other foreign communities. Cromer left the stadium a little before the end of the program, at which point the British band present struck up *God Save the Queen*. The president of the Greek community of Cairo, Rostovits-bey, escorted him out. The events on the first day included the 100 and 800-meter races, weightlifting, shot put, a combination of the long and the high jump and the long jump. The events on the second day included the high jump, the triple jump, the 1,500-meter race, gymnastics, rope climbing and the tug-of-war. On the third and final day, the events were the 110-meter hurdles race, the 400 and 10,000-meter races and the discus, javelin and stone throws. Cromer and the patriarch continued to be in attendance and Russian consul Smirnov was also there. At the end of the events of the third day the patriarch awarded medals to all the winners, and the Consul of Greece, Ioannis Rikakis, declared the end of the games.²³

There were very positive reactions to this athletic event held in Cairo. The Alexandrian Greek-language daily *Tachydromos* applauded the effort, adding that the invocation of the ancient Greek traditions of the Olympics was a source of great pride for all the Greeks attending. The Alexandrian *Omilos Filathlon* publicly congratulated its Cairo counterpart 'Ifitos' on its successful organisation of the games.²⁴ Twelve Greek athletes (all men) were chosen to travel to Athens for the Intermediary Games and two Italians also went and competed as members of the Italian team. Of the twelve Greek athletes, five participated in the track and field events (the marathon, the five mile race, the 1,500 meter race and the standing long jump), one took part in

20. Efthimios Souloyannis, *H θέση των Ελλήνων στην Αίγυπτο* [The status of the Greeks in Egypt], Athens, 1999, p. 74.

21. Manitakis, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-3.

22. Radamanthys Radopoulos, *Εισαγωγή εις την ιστορίαν της ελληνικής κοινότητος Αλεξανδρείας* 1830-1927 [Introduction to the history of the Greek community in Alexandria], Alexandria 1928, pp. 79, 87-8.

23. *Tachydromos*, 12, 13 March 1906.

24. *Tachydromos*, 10 March 1906.

fencing, one in gymnastics, three in tennis, one in weightlifting and one in wrestling. The best performance was a second place in the men's tennis doubles by Ioannis Ballis and Xenophon Kasdaglis.²⁵

The committee in the United States

The establishment of an organising committee in the United States must be considered an important success of the HOC. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was a time when the United States was entering the world stage as an important international player, and the presence of its athletes in Athens in 1896 had given the first Olympic Games additional status. The United States, which hosted the 1904 Olympics, was already becoming an important sporting power as well. Theodore Roosevelt, the country's president between 1901 and 1908, was an outspoken proponent of both American power and the virtues of physical exercise and sport. James Sullivan, the leader of the Committee in the United States was an extremely dynamic advocate of sport and the only person who could rival Coubertin's status internationally. His energetic activities in 1906 would enhance the standing of the Intermediate Olympics.

Sullivan & America's Support for the Intermediate Olympics

The HOC's efforts to form a committee in the United States started off on the wrong foot because of its lack of knowledge of the situation there, but within a few months the process began to run smoothly. At first, the HOC asked the consul in Chicago, Nicholas Salsopoulos, to form a committee, but it also gave similar instructions to Dimitrios Botassis, the consul in New York. Salsopoulos managed to form a committee headed by William Hale Thompson, president of the Chicago Athletic Association, with several prominent citizens as its members. But within weeks, the consul in New York was reporting back to Athens that a potentially more influential committee was being formed there. In actual fact, it was essentially the American Olympic Committee that had been formed back in 1893 and was being reconstituted working towards preparing the United States. Lambros and the organisers in Athens recognised it and they also decided that it should absorb the Chicago committee. However, the members of the Chicago committee resisted the idea and resigned, leaving consul Salsopoulos to join Botassis as honorary member of the New York committee.²⁶

Lambros's decision was obviously influenced by his understanding that working with the existing Olympic committee and especially with Sullivan was the most effec-

25. Bill Mallon, *The 1906 Olympic Games*, Jefferson NC 1999, pp. 26-152.

26. HOC Archive: K6-Φ3-E1, 27 May 1905; K6-Φ3-E5, 29 July 1905; K6-Φ3-E6, 1 August 1905; K6-Φ3-E13, 10 October 1905; K6-Φ4-E21, 22 December 1905.

tive strategy – Sullivan was to prove him right. The son of Irish immigrants, Sullivan took his first steps towards becoming the most powerful figure in American sports at the turn of the century by leading a movement to build public sports grounds in New York City and, later on, to establish the Public Schools Athletic League in that city. This was a time when many social reformers favoured the development of sports to counteract the negative effects of industrialisation and urbanisation. Sullivan then became secretary and treasurer of the largest sports organisation in the country, the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). Formed in New York City in 1888, the AAU soon became the dominant authority in sports throughout the United States. In 1893, Sullivan met Coubertin in New York and this led to the creation of the American Olympic Committee. Sullivan and the other leading members of the committee, such as Caspar Whitney, a journalist and a member of the International Olympic Committee between 1900 and 1904, subsequently clashed with Coubertin on several occasions. Their differences with the baron may be an additional reason why the Americans embraced the Intermediate Games so enthusiastically.²⁷

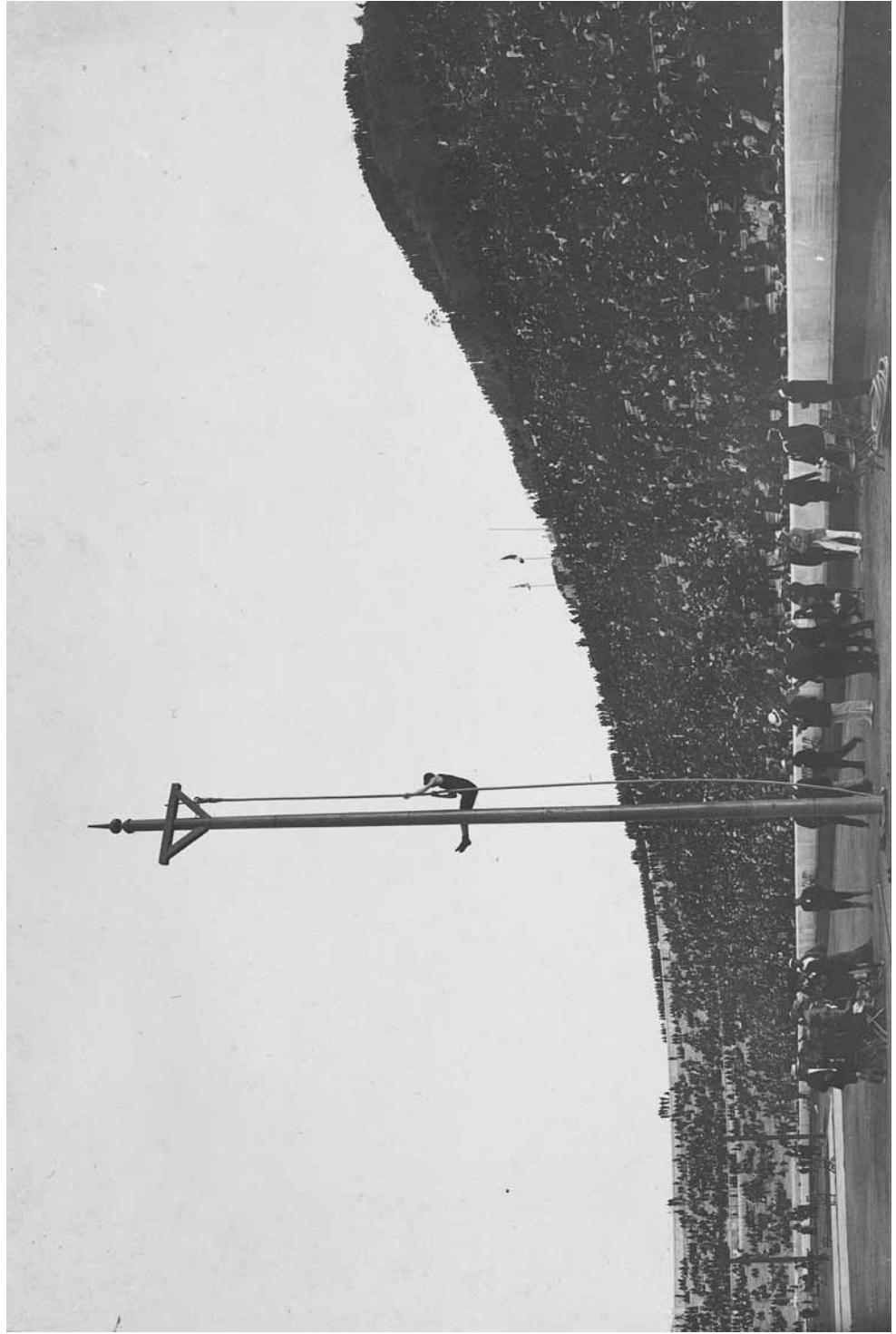
The reconstituted American Olympic Committee, which adopted the name ‘American Committee of the Olympian Games at Athens, Greece, 1906’, included an array of leading American sports administrators. Whitney was president and Sullivan was secretary; many of its members, like Sullivan, had been involved in the St Louis Olympics of 1904 and also had ties to the AAU. Collectively they formed a dynamic group that shared Sullivan’s commitment to an aggressive promotion of American sports. They also shared his enthusiasm for the Intermediate Olympics – at no point in their official announcements of their correspondence with the HOC did they describe the 1906 Games as ‘intermediate’, instead, they described them as ‘the Olympics’ and they also made sure the American athletes would treat the games with the utmost seriousness. The Committee, in the words of a historian of the American Olympic movement, ‘turned the American teams into crusaders for the national aspirations. They resisted regulation by the government, officials in American higher education, or the national organizations. They cultivated good relations with the media, and they sought to finance their ambitious projects through voluntary public subscriptions’.²⁸

Sullivan was successful in gaining the support of President Roosevelt, who agreed to become the honorary president of the Committee. This enhanced the standing of the Committee and guaranteed additional publicity both in the United States and internationally as well. As honorary president, Roosevelt appointed Sullivan the head of the American delegation that would travel to Athens.²⁹ The appointment came at a formal luncheon Roosevelt hosted at the White House for the members of the Committee. The luncheon was held in order to show the American public that Roosevelt

27. John Lucas, ‘Caspar Whitney’, *Journal of Olympic History*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2002, pp. 30-8; Allen Guttmann, *The Olympics: A History of the Modern Games*, Chicago 1992, p. 22.

28. Mark Dyrtson, *Making the American Team; Sport Culture and the Olympic Experience*, Urbana 1988, p. 128.

29. HOC Archive: K14-Φ6-E5, 23 March 1906.



Rope climbing (13 April 1906). [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.27]

took a keen interest in the preparations of the American athletes. The *New York Times* reported that the appointment was made after the State Department informed the President that King George of Greece wished that the countries participating in the Games would send an official representative. Echoing the President and the Committee's positive attitude toward the Games in Athens the newspaper added 'the presence of official representatives from all the leading countries in the world gives the Olympic Games this year a larger importance than they have attained hitherto'.³⁰

Sullivan's success in raising funds for the American team's costly travel to Greece was also significant, and he managed to raise the sum of \$10,000. He persuaded financial magnates such as S. R. Guggenheim (who was also a member of the Committee), August Belmont, George J. Gould, J. P. Morgan and George Pratt to make substantial contributions. Former Olympians Robert Garrett (gold medal in the discus in Athens in 1896) and George Orton (gold medal in the steeplechase in Paris in 1900) and leading sports administrators also made monetary donations as did several major athletic clubs, including the New York Athletic Club, the Intercollegiate Athletic Association, the AAU and the Greater New York Irish American Athletic Association.³¹ When Sullivan informed Lambros of these contributions, he did not shy away from taking credit for those results. He concluded his report on the fundraising by saying: 'I have worked very hard personally on this American Committee.' Sullivan also took the opportunity to assert one more time his support for the Intermediate Olympics: 'I hope it will be the most celebrated Olympic revival that has ever been held, and that it will reflect great credit on you all at Athens'.³²

The United States Committee was undoubtedly successful in its preparations for the Intermediate Olympics. In terms of American athletes, the number of participants (38) was the same as that for the Paris Olympics of 1900 and well over the number of athletes (14) who took part in the first Olympics in Athens in 1896. The United States came third overall in the medals standings after France and Greece and it dominated the track and field events by winning 11 out of the 21 first places.³³ The high number of athletes travelling to Athens in 1906 was due to the funds the committee had managed to raise in a relatively very short time.

American recommendations and requests

Beyond these achievements in terms of fund-raising and organising a strong US presence in Athens, the American Committee and Sullivan also communicated regularly with the HOC with a series of recommendations about the running of the Games, as well as with certain special requests. The first of those recommendations was to reschedule

30. 'U.S. Representative to Olympic Games', *New York Times*, 10 March 1906.

31. Dyreson, *Making the American Team*, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.

32. HOC Archive: K14-Φ4-E9, 16 February 1905.

33. Mallon, *The 1906 Olympic Games*, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-37.

the Games for September because April, when the Intermediate Games were scheduled, was not a good time for American athletes, especially for those who were students. We have already mentioned that this was a request that the Swedes also made. Sullivan, as did the Swedes, accepted that there could be no postponement and added: ‘we will go right on and do the best we can to get a team over in March, but it will not be as large a team as we would like to send’.³⁴

The organisers went ahead with a very short postponement, but it created a different type of problem. Instead of opening the Games on Monday April 16th (April 3rd according to the Julian calendar in use in Greece at the time), the organisers decided the opening day would be on Sunday April 22nd (9th). Upon hearing this, Whitney, the president of the US Committee, threatened to withdraw because he objected to sporting activities taking place on the Sabbath (*Κυριακή Αγία*). Consul Botassis wrote to Lambros drawing his attention to ‘the strictness with which the Sabbath was observed in the Anglo-Saxon countries’.³⁵ Essentially, he meant the specifically Protestant notion that the entire day of Sunday be reserved for worship and contemplation, a view that clashed with the so-called Catholic or Continental (European) version of the Sabbath, embraced by many immigrants in the United States. It called for prayers and church attendance in the morning, leaving the afternoon free for recreation. Due to the influence of the Protestant elite in the United States, bans on professional sporting activities were maintained in many major US cities until the 1920s, and in many cases the 1930s when the Depression created financial needs that overcame religious objections. Ultimately, the problem was solved when the organisers informed the US Committee that the opening day would include only ceremonies and no competitions.

As the Games approached and the preparations were completed, Sullivan turned his attention to the athletic competitions, offering advice tempered by complimentary references to the abilities of the Greek organisers. ‘I have been told of the beauties of your management of the Games’, Sullivan wrote to Lambros, ‘your courtesy and national fairness, which means a great deal. The way you treated our American boys in 1896 has made a lasting impression on American sportsmen’.³⁶ Nonetheless, Sullivan, who personified the American competitive spirit of his era, recommended that aside from the medals, the organisers award points according to the position each athlete gained in the track and field events as a way of creating competition between the national teams. He wrote to Lambros telling him about the scoring systems used in the AAU and the Intercollegiate Championships. ‘If there is not an award up for the countries scoring the greatest points in the track and field department’, he asked, ‘would it be possible for your Committee to present, say, a Greek Flag. America would like to try for a trophy of this kind’. Sullivan also had some recommendations about the particular track and field events that would be held in Athens. He asked

34. HOC Archive: K6-Φ3-E20, 17 November 1905.

35. HOC Archive: K6-Φ4-E18, 13 December 1905.

36. HOC Archive: K14-Φ4-E9, 16 February 1906.

whether it would be possible to add a 220-yard (200-meter) race to the program, as well as a 220-yard race with hurdles, two feet and six inches (76 cm) in height.³⁷

Finally, Sullivan wrote to Lambros a month before the Games began with recommendations concerning the facilities the organisers would provide to the representatives of the press. Sullivan had spoken to four American journalists who had informed him ‘the arrangements for handling the newspaper men in the Stadium and the dispatching of their stories from the Stadium are not as perfect as they might be’; they also mentioned ‘the exorbitant price that is charged by the Government for cable dispatches from Athens’. One journalist had suggested that a special press rate could be charged during the Games. Sullivan added his own thoughts, pointing out to Lambros that if these requests could be met, this would help the publicity the Games would receive in the foreign press, especially since he understood that Greece intended to hold the Games every two years.³⁸

THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF THE COMMITTEES

The work of the committees was essentially finished the moment the Games began on 22 April 1906. Up to that point their contribution to the success of the Games was invaluable. So was the role of the HOC, whose remarkable work to secure the greatest possible international presence in Athens showed that Greece was as concerned about its own national image in 1906 as it was in preserving Coubertin’s idea that the modern Olympics become an international institution. From the moment the Games started, it was up to the organisers and the athletes to ensure their success, and by all accounts they succeeded in doing so. But even at this stage we can talk about the role of the committees, because it was thanks to their existence that many important international sports administrators came to Athens to witness the 1906 Games. They left the Greek capital and returned to their respective countries to inform public opinion there of the success of those Games. Sullivan was one of the most enthusiastic advertisers of the Games. A few weeks after returning to the United States he published a book-length account of the Intermediate Olympics in which he lavished praise equally among the Greek hosts and the American athletes. His words serve as a good epilogue to the story of the committees that helped secure the international dimension of the 1906 Olympics. He wrote:

The Olympic Games of 1906 will go down into athletic history as the most remarkable festival of its kind ever held. They exceeded in every way the successful Olympic

37. HOC Archive: K14-Φ5-E10, 1 March 1906.

38. HOC Archive: K14-Φ5-E28, 22 March 1906.



Games of 1896, and are bound to produce good results, for these Games at Athens this year added a stimulus to sport on the Continent and has greatly increased the interest which will be taken in the future in athletic sports by all countries of the world. The scenes and incidents and everything in connection with the Olympic Games of 1906 made an impression that will never be forgotten and it is hoped that future Olympic Games will be up to the standard of the ones in 1906.³⁹

39. James E. Sullivan, *The Olympic Games of 1906 at Athens*, New York 1906.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ELENI FOURNARAKI studied as an undergraduate in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens and received her doctorate in History from the University of Paris VII in 1992. Her doctoral thesis was entitled *'Institutrice, Femme et Mère': Idées sur l'éducation des femmes grecques au XIXème siècle (1830-1880)*. Her research interests lie chiefly in the fields of the social history of women and of gender, the history of education, and the social history of physical education and sport. She has published articles on these subjects in Greek history journals and in collections of essays. She has done librarian and cataloguing work at the Gennadeios Library in Athens. Since 1995 she has taught in the Department of Sociology of the University of Crete, where in 1999 she was elected to the rank of Assistant Professor in the subject of Modern Social History. She is a member of the Society for the Study of Modern Hellenism, the Greek Archives Society and the editorial team of *Dini - feminist journal*.

ALEXANDER KITROEFF is Associate Professor of History at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. He specialises in the history of Greek identity in Greece and its diaspora, in the areas of polities, society and sports. He received his PhD in Modern History from Oxford University in 1984 and in 1986 he moved from Greece to the United States. He has taught at Queens College City University of New York, Princeton University, Temple University in Philadelphia, New York University and, since 1996, at Haverford College. His major awards include a Senior Research Fellowship from the Social Science Research Council and the Innovative Teaching Prize at Haverford College; he is editor of the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*. He has published numerous books and articles on the history of the Greeks in Egypt and the United States. His latest book, *Wrestling with the Ancients. Modern Greek Identity and the Olympics*, was published by Greekworks Publishers, New York, in 2004.

GIORGOS KOKKINOS was born in Athens in 1960. He is an Assistant Professor of History and History Didactics in the Primary Education Department of the University of the Aegean. He has also worked for a number of years in secondary education, at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Athens (History and Archaeology Department), and in the Department of Philology of the University of Patras. He studied History in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens and at the Sorbonne University (Paris I). He is the author of books and articles on issues of political and intellectual history, epistemology, and the teaching of history, as well as on the history of education. His articles have been published in the journals *Mnemon* and *Ta Istorika*,

among others, as well as in the proceedings of conferences and in collections of essays. He is academic consultant for the series 'Didactic approaches to history teaching' of Metaichmio Publications.

CHRISTINA KOULOURI is Professor of Modern Greek History in the Department of Social and Educational Policy of the University of the Peloponnese. She studied in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens and continued her postgraduate studies in Paris at the Sorbonne University (Paris I) and at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. Her doctoral thesis was submitted to the Sorbonne University in 1990. In 1992 she was elected Assistant Professor and in 1999 Associate Professor in the Department of History and Ethnology of the Democritus University of Thrace. In 1994 she was awarded the Nikos Svoronos Prize. Since 1993 she has been a contributor to the *Vima tis Kyriakis* newspaper. She had the academic responsibility for the classification and the recording of the Historical Archives and of the Photographic Archives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee. She is the author of books and articles on the teaching of history in Greece and the Balkans, on school textbooks, on the formation of the Greek national identity and historical memory, and on the history of sport. Among her books are the following: *Dimensions idéologiques de l'historicité en Grèce (1834-1914). Les manuels scolaires d'histoire et de géographie*, Frankfurt, Peter Lang, Studien zur Geschichte Südosteuropas No. 7, 1991; *Sport et société bourgeoise. Les associations sportives en Grèce 1870-1922*, L'Harmattan, Paris 2000. She was also editor of the following: *Teaching the History of Southeastern Europe*, Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, Thessaloniki 2001; *Clio in the Balkans. The Politics of History Education*, Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, Thessaloniki 2002; *Archives and History of the Hellenic Olympic Committee*, IOA, Athens 2002.

CHRISTOS LOUKOS was born in Athens in 1944. In 1967 he graduated from the Department of History and Archaeology of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Athens. From 1974 to 1992 he was a researcher at the Research Centre for the History of Modern Hellenism of the Academy of Athens. He pursued his postgraduate studies in Paris (1982-1985). In 1984 he received his doctorate in History from the Faculty of Arts of the University of Athens. In 1992 he was elected Associate Professor and in 1996 Professor in the Department of History and Archaeology of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Crete. He is a founder and active member of the Society for the Study of Modern Hellenism, which, *inter alia*, publishes the history journal *Mnemon*. He was responsible for the general supervision of the classification of the Hermoupolis Municipal Archives and for the organisation of the archival collections kept in the General Archives of the State, Archives of the Prefecture of the Cyclades (based in Hermoupolis). Since 1994 he has directed the project 'The City in Modern Times' at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies. He was a member from 1995 to 1997 of the Inspectorate of the General Archives of the State. At the University of Crete, he teaches, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, the Greek War of Independence of 1821, social history of modern Greek cities, other issues in the history of the Greek state, and an Introduction to the history of Latin America.

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LINA LOUVI was born in Sparta. She studied history at the Sorbonne University (Paris I), where she also studied as a postgraduate (DEA) and was awarded her doctorate in the History of International Relations. Her thesis dealt with Greece's foreign policy in the inter-war years (1923-1928). When she returned to Greece, she taught Diplomatic History at the National School of Public Administration and then Modern History in the Department of History and Archaeology of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Crete. In 1994 she was elected Lecturer and in 2002 Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Ethnology of the Democritus University of Thrace, where she still teaches Modern Greek and European History. She has contributed articles to collections of essays and journals on the political history of the Greek state in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Her most recent book entitled *Περιγέλωτος Βασίλειον. Οι σατιρικές εφημερίδες και το εθνικό ζήτημα (1875-1886)* [Ridiculous Kingdom. The satirical newspapers and the national issue (1875-1886)] received the Academy of Athens Prize (2003). She contributes articles to the *Vima tis Kyriakis* newspaper on matters of historical interest.

VASSILIKI TZACHRISTA was born at Pramanta, Ioannina. She studied Archaeology in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Athens and modern Greek urban music in the 'Evretirio' Music Section of the Athens University Club. Since 1997 she has worked as an academic associate with the International Olympic Academy. She has been involved with the classification and recording of archival material at the Museum of the Modern Olympic Games at Ancient Olympia and in the Historical Archives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee. Her research and writing has been chiefly concerned with the ancient and modern history of the Olympic Games.

ELEANA YALOURI has a BA in Archaeology (University of Crete), an MPhil in Museum Studies (University of Cambridge) and a PhD in Social Anthropology (University College London), while she undertook postdoctoral research at the University of Princeton, USA. She taught Social Anthropology at the University of Westminster. She currently teaches at the Department of Anthropology of University College London. Her research interests and her publications in periodicals and edited volumes include the following issues: Material culture; Issues of national identity and the representation of the past; Tourism, heritage, museums and the 'recycling' of the Classical past; Theories of space and the social construction of landscape; The politics of the past, and cultural rights; Issues of relevance in History and Anthropology. Her recently published book *The Acropolis. Global Fame, Local Claim* (Berg, 2001) discusses the modern life of the Athenian Acropolis, and the ways in which modern Greeks deal with the national and international features of their ancient classical heritage.

YANNIS YANNITSIOTIS studied History in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens and continued his postgraduate studies at the Sorbonne University (Paris I). He compiled his doctoral thesis at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens on the formation of the bourgeois class of Piraeus (1866-1909) [*Η διαμόρφωση της αστικής τάξης του Πειραιά 1866-1909*] (to be published by the Historical Archive of the Commercial Bank of Greece)]. He was a member of the team that classified and recorded the Historical Archives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee. He is also a member of the Society for the Study of

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Modern Hellenism, a founder member of the Society for the Study of the Theory of History and Historiography, and a member of the editorial team of the journal *Historein*. For the last two years he has taught as lecturer at the University of the Aegean in the Department of Social Anthropology and History. His research interests focus upon urban history, the history of the Greek middle class, social classes, and the collective memory.

L I S T O F I L L U S T R A T I O N S

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: *Irodotou tou Attikou Street. The entrance to the Panathenaic Stadium can be seen in the background (1896)*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.3]

- a1. *Neo Phaliro at the time of the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.64]
- a2. *The Omonoia Square railway station in 1906*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.5]
- a3. *A moment in the swimming contests, 11 April 1906*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.22]
- a4. *Map of Athens: Léon A. Olivier, Guide pratique d'Athènes et de ses environs. D'après les manuels des voyageurs de Baedeker, Joanne, etc., Athens 1896*.
- a5. *The royal family enters the Stadium, 25 March 1896*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.38]
- a6. *Parade of school students at the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K2.51]
- a7. *The Greek delegation parades in the stadium at the Antwerp Olympic Games, 1920*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.77]

- b1, b2. *Commemorative photograph of members of the first IOC, which resulted from the International Athletic Congress. Seated, from the left: Pierre de Coubertin (France), Demetrios Vikelas (Greece), A. de Boutowsky (Russia). Standing, from the left: W. Gebhardt (Germany), Jiri Guth-Jarkovsky (Czechoslovakia), Ferenc Kemény (Hungary), Victor Balck (Sweden). The photograph was taken in Albert Meyer's studio (June 1896)*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.2]
- b3. *Programme of the 1896 Olympic Games*. [HOC Historical Archive: K1-Φ1-E8]
- b4. *Announcement of a feast organised by the HOC in view of the Olympics of 1904*. [HOC Historical Archive: K59-Φ3-E3.1]
- b5. *Georgios Averoff, sponsor of the renovation of the Panathenaic Stadium (1895)*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K1.7]
- b6. *From the correspondence of the HOC on the subject of British athletes taking part in the Intermediate Olympics of 1906*. [HOC Historical Archive: K16-Φ6-E3]
- b7. *D. Sakorrafos*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K85.1]
- b8. *Postage stamps commemorating the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906*. [HOC Historical Archive]
- b9. *Tickets for the Intermediate Olympiad of 1906*. [HOC Historical Archive]
- b10. *Ioannis Chrysaphis (28 April 1927)*. [HOC Photographic Archive: K3.2]

