

50 YEARS
INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMY
Inspirations & Memories

Photographs in this book come from the personal archives of the writers and the IOA Photographic Archive.

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DTP, filmset: ANAGRAMMA
Printed by: Petros Ballidis & Co. Graphic Arts
June 2011

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ISBN: 978-960-9454-10-0

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Preface

ISIDOROS KOUVELOU
President of the IOA

JACQUES ROGGE
President of the IOC

SPYROS CAPRALOS
President of the HOC

LAMBIS NIKOLAOU
President of the IOC Commission
for Culture & Olympic Education

Editor

KONSTANTINOS GEORGIADIS
Vice-Rector of the University of the Peloponnese
Honorary Dean of the IOA

ATHENS 2011



With this volume, the International Olympic Academy wishes to offer to the wider international community a rich mosaic of autobiographical reminiscences from participants in its activities over the 50 years of its existence. In this anniversary album, the Academy has produced a social and scientific history based on these reminiscences. Since 1961, the Academy has provided accommodation and education to thousands of people from both Greece and the rest of the world. It has functioned as a small ‘Olympic Village’, offering to its residents the joy of living and learning in an environment of multiculturalism and scientific pluralism. This contribution of the Academy, quite unique in the world, develops a fresh social awareness among the different people who meet for a short period of time in the same setting with its impressive history,

following the same academic courses with the common goal of disseminating the Olympic ideals. Their cooperation and teamwork cultivate a feeling of deep solidarity and an acceptance of common values that are none other than the Olympic values.

This experience is not easy to put into words. However, the Academy and the authors of this volume wish to attempt to convey the uniqueness of the experience and to relive it with the reader. I believe that this new presentation of the Academy’s history, through the personal testimonies of the people who lived, taught or were taught, and formed bonds with Greece and Olympia during their stay, will provide a more personal view of the IOA’s work and its significance for all those who have visited it over the years. The Academy, as ambassador for the ancient Greek ideal, the Olympic idea, modern Greek civilization and Olympism, has always contributed to international understanding and the promotion of humanism through sport. I am especially pleased to be writing the preface to this edition, which I believe will contribute to a better understanding of the Academy’s history, while I also hope that it will constitute a legacy for the future and for young people all over the world.

ISIDOROS KOUVELOU

President of the International Olympic Academy



Milestones are always a time to reflect on the past, and the 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy is the perfect opportunity for us to remember all the important work undertaken by the Academy since it first began in 1961.

The Academy has come a long way in 50 years. Participants these days are housed on a beautiful campus replete with library, conference centres, an amphitheatre and sport facilities in the mountains of Ancient Olympia. The mountains were the same in the 1960s but the conditions were quite different, with the original participants then living and learning inside tents.

The message, however, remains largely the same. The administrators and participants in 1961, like in 2011, shared the belief that embracing and promoting Olympic values can have a positive impact on society. Olympic values such as respect, fair play, excellence and joy in effort need not be confined to the world of sport. On the contrary, they should be applied to all walks of life.

The Academy has become a cornerstone in Olympic education. Members of the Olympic family, including those from the International Olympic Committee, the International Federations and National Olympic Committees regularly meet at the Academy for exchanges on a variety of Olympic-related topics.

The Academy is, of course, open to people outside the Olympic Movement as well. On any given day, one can see intellectuals rubbing shoulders with athletes, artists learning alongside scientists, and young people taking part in cultural and educational programmes.

The founder of the modern Olympic Movement, Pierre de Coubertin, was a staunch supporter of such an academy, although he never lived to see the IOA become a reality. I am certain that he would be very pleased with the centre and all the work that has taken place there over the last 50 years.

As you read through this book, you will undoubtedly be impressed by how many lives have been touched and improved by the Academy. Perhaps even more impressive is that there are thousands of other stories just like these not contained in this tome. And that is as glowing a tribute as any to the last 50 years of the IOA.

I would like to thank the Academy for its exceptional work during its first 50 years, and I wish it continued success in the years to come. I would also like to thank the Hellenic Olympic Committee for its strong, continued support of the Academy. It is highly appreciated.

DR JACQUES ROGGE

President of the International Olympic Committee



Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the man who was inspired to revive the Olympic Games, said, many years ago, that Olympism is a Movement whose ideas we must study, safeguard and disseminate.

Today, Olympism is an important social force that extends to all spheres of human life. There is no other human movement or ideology, of a philosophical, cultural, scientific or religious dimension, with as many proponents as Olympism, judging by the number of countries that have signed and applied the Olympic Charter.

Thanks to its solid and always relevant philosophical base, Olympism has managed to survive world wars, acts of terrorism, political interventions, international boycotts and the scourge of doping, and continues to offer the world the perennial

freshness of those democratic and humanitarian ideas conceived by the ancient Greeks, keeping the flame of hope alive for a much desired universal peace.

This is where the mission of the International Olympic Academy has its purpose. Over the last 50 years, as a global academic institution, it promotes methods for the proper teaching of Olympism and the propagation of the Olympic ideals worldwide.

In 2011, the International Olympic Academy is not simply celebrating 50 years of existence, but is entering into its most mature and active phase, under the guidance of its President Isidoros Kouvelos, who, in the first two years of his mandate, has taken initiatives that enhance the Academy's true dimension and upgrade its role and work.

I have shared, together with everybody who has visited the host premises in Ancient Olympia, the philosophy of Olympism in this sacred place still vibrant today with that same powerful energy! And what is most positive is that this energy is not confined to the land that gave birth to the Olympic Games, but is carried to every corner of the world by the members of the Olympic family – intellectuals, athletes, officials, ordinary people, and the young men and women who participate in the programmes of the International Olympic Academy and Olympic education.

Thus, the deep and lasting impression that a visit to this fascinating place leaves on each individual's soul will produce one more ambassador for the Olympic ideals, who will carry, for as long as he or she lives, the philosophy of Olympism for a fairer, more peaceful and more united world.

This promise I can make, both as someone who has breathed the air of Ancient Olympia and as President of the Hellenic Olympic Committee: my support for the mission of the International Olympic Academy will be, over

the coming years, stronger than ever before, so that it becomes a major educational institution on the world stage and a shining 'beacon' to Olympism. If all of us involved in Olympism and Sport join forces, then, without doubt, we can make the following years the most glorious in the history of the IOA!

Happy anniversary to the IOA!

SPYROS CAPRALOS

President of the Hellenic Olympic Committee



L'Académie Internationale Olympique, 50 ans après sa fondation, publie le présent album dans le but d'informer la famille du sport sur ses activités et sur sa contribution à l'olympisme.

L'Académie Internationale Olympique rend incontestablement, avec l'aide morale et financière du Comité International Olympique, de précieux services au mouvement olympique.

Je souhaite que son œuvre créative soit poursuivie dans l'avenir.

LAMBIS NIKOLAOU

*Président de la Commission du CIO
pour la Culture et l'Education Olympique*

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Prof. Konstantinos Georgiadis

Vice-Rector of the University of the Peloponnese, Greece
Honorary Dean of the IOA



Introduction

THE PURPOSE of this anniversary album is to present the educational experiences and impressions of participants in the IOA's sessions. During its 50 years of existence, the International Olympic Academy has been a source of inspiration for Olympism through its exhaustive creative contribution to the humanitarian goals of the Olympic Movement.

From its first session (16-23 June 1961) until the present day, its educational activities have generated endless enthusiasm for learning and a strong desire to create a better world community. The short time which participants in its sessions spend together leaves a lasting impression on their lives. Memories remain vivid and all participants have a strong desire to return to the cradle of Olympism, Ancient Olympia.

So let us identify the elements that have made the Academy such an exceptional educational centre for Olympism. In the shadow of the Kronion Hill and in close proximity to the archaeological site, one way to interpret the appeal of the Academy's location is that it reflects an afterglow of the mythical struggle for

the creation of the world and the historical reality that permeates this place with all its archaeological remains.

Myth and History have always been useful elements of the educational process. At Olympia they acquire major significance but they cannot, in themselves, account for the magic felt by those from different age groups who participate in its sessions.

On the other hand, the beauty of the natural environment, the great variety of trees – olive, orange and lemon, pine, oak and eucalyptus – together with the wild flowers, the nightingale's song, all combine to create the true sense of being in a small paradise.

Olympia's natural environment embraces human presence. Nature does not impose itself on man. His presence has remoulded the site with a respect for nature. This harmonious relationship between man and nature soothes the instincts and nurtures the soul.

The energy radiating from the ancient stadium and the finds housed in the two museums at Olympia is exceptionally powerful.

The sculptures depicting the chariot race between Pelops and Oinomaos and the battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs convey humanity's struggle for change, wisdom and justice through the cultivation of man's virtues. Visits to the Museum and to the archaeological site are a unique experience for everyone. Instructional representations of the past convey their own educational messages, engraving them on our collective human memory.

The IOA's accommodation facilities were built close to the archaeological site after a period (1961-1967) during which participants lived in tents. The buildings and their surroundings were designed by architect Petros Tzanetos, who created a complex of functional buildings and sports facilities that blend harmoniously with the natural landscape.

Shaped like a huge amphitheatre, the Academy is located at the centre of the surrounding hill ranges. Its facilities were completed gradually, the last one being the modern conference centre, which was completed by the Hellenic Olympic Committee during the presidency of Mr Lambis Nikolaou and inaugurated in 1994. The creative imagination of all those working for the IOA has shaped an ideal setting for educational activities.

On the western side of the site lies the Pierre de Coubertin grove, where a commemorative stele erected in his honour was unveiled in his presence in 1927. This is the starting point of the torch relay, which carries the educational messages of the Olympic Games

to all the inhabitants of our planet. This site links the ancient stadium with the IOA, the modern centre of Olympism, and symbolically connects the past with the present, and tradition with innovative concepts of the brotherhood of man.

The two men who influenced the IOA's creation, P. de Coubertin and Ioannis Chrysafis, derived their educational ideas from history; their thoughts were then moulded by the contemporary educational ideas of the IOA's pioneers, John Ketseas and Carl Diem, to become the mainstay of its vision. A vision that educators Otto Szymiczek, as the IOA's Dean, Professors Cleanthis Palaeologos and Nikolaos Yalouris, George Papastefanou (founder of the first Museum for the Modern Olympic Games, 1961) and Nicolaos Nissiotis as the IOA's President have faithfully served. The IOA's scientific work was also supported by distinguished men of letters and sport, both within and outside Greece.

One of its main features is also its brilliant educational work. In its fifty years of existence, the different presidents of the IOC have also developed their positions from its podium. Avery Brundage's contribution was decisive for its recognition and Lord Killanin's support uncontested. Juan Antonio Samaranch's interest in the IOA strengthened its role within the Olympic Movement with the unreserved support of Olympic Solidarity. Jacques Rogge's educational concerns have helped National Olympic Academies to intensify their activities as promoters of the Olympic ideal.

The support and contribution of the Hellenic Olympic Committee and the IOA's Board (Ephoria) have also proved invaluable.

Since 1961, the IOA's contribution to Olympic education, which began with its first Session for Young Participants, has been impressive. Its facilities in Ancient Olympia have hosted:

- 50 International Sessions for Young Participants (1961-2010)
- 9 International Sessions for Educators of Higher Physical Education Institutes (1978-1991)
- 3 International Sessions for Directors and Officials of Higher Physical Education Institutes (1986-1990)
- 8 International Joint Sessions for Educators and Staff of Higher Physical Education Institutes (1993-2008)
- 8 International Sessions for Members and Officials of National Olympic Committees and International Federations (1978-1991)
- 10 International Sessions for Directors of National Olympic Academies (1986-2009)
- 10 International Joint Sessions for Directors of National Olympic Academies, Members and Officials of National Olympic Committees and International Federations (1992-2010)
- 2 International Sessions for Olympic Medallists (2007-2010)

- 17 International Postgraduate Seminars in Olympic Studies (1993-2009)
- 12 International Seminars for Sports Journalists (1986-2009)
- An Olympic Studies Master's Degree Programme (2009-2011, 2010-2012)

In recent years, the increase in the number of events has meant that the IOA has been operating for longer periods. The Academy is not only a 'summer university', since it welcomes students from all over the world for at least eight months a year.

Many alumni of the Sessions and the Postgraduate Seminar, in particular, return to the Academy as lecturers, having taught subjects related to Olympism in their own countries. This is, in fact, the most important part of the Academy's work because the people who have lived and experienced Olympism during its Sessions become the best advocates of its philosophy. Having experienced Olympism, they know that 'Olympism is not the theory of practice, but the practice of theory'.

One of the most beautiful and remarkable aspects of the Academy's activity is its cultural diversity. In this welcoming Olympic Village, the traditional costumes, the different languages and traditions, the songs and dances, movements and expressions, attitudes and games come from all corners of the globe, the colours and ideas creating a blend of cultures that shows how different and at the same time how similar people are.

The sense of justice and equality is palpable at the Academy. Participants of different religions and ideological views, from all social classes, intellectuals, government officials, professors, IOC members and students abide by the rules and take part in democratic academic debates on the Olympic Movement. As they themselves admit, this creates a sublime and idealistic atmosphere, far from today's reality, which all wish to experience even for a short while.

The Academy has its own tradition and the people who are no longer with us but have left us the legacy of their work are part of this tradition. They are the presidents who contributed to its creation and development, Ioannis Ketseas (1961-1965), Theodosios Papathanassiadis (1965-1966), Prince George of Hanover (1966-1969), Epaminondas Petralias (1970-1974), Athanasios Tzartanos (1974-1976). When Professor Nicolaos Nissiotis took over the presidency (1977-1986), the Academy's specific role and theoretical approach became more clearly defined. New concepts such as the 'Olympic education' became subjects of study and research and a plan of action was drawn up.

The following two decades were characterized by the presence of Nikos Filaretos at the helm of the IOA (1986-1992, 1997-2005), when this author's collaboration with the IOA began. Together with its President and the late Dean Otto Szymiczek (1962-1990), for a shorter period in his case as he was reaching the age of retirement, I was actively involved in the plan-

ning of its activities. I experienced at first hand the joy and happiness one feels at the success of a vibrant organization's action and development, as well as the anxiety over its future direction.

The creation of the NOAs marked a new period because the IOA's active involvement in their coordination was becoming essential. The IOC gave its full support to these efforts, and educational activities now focus on issues relating to the academic quality of studies in the philosophy, objectives, methodology, content and evaluation of Olympic education programmes. The steadily growing number of NOAs meant that the Academy's educational activities had to be adjusted in order to provide adequate ongoing training to their members. In addition, it was decided to launch new educational programmes, such as the Postgraduate Seminar (which I personally proposed in 1991), aimed at a specific target group: students specializing in Olympic issues. Each year meant a new step forward and these efforts continued under the presidencies of Fernandos Serpieris (1993-1996) and Minos Kyriakou (2006-2008).

New objectives and innovative educational projects such as the Olympic Studies Master's Degree Programme were initiated during the presidency of Isidoros Kouvelos (2009-2012). In collaboration with the University of the Peloponnese and under the author's direction, the first international Master's Degree Programme in Olympic Studies was initiated. Its

realization came about thanks to the generous sponsorship of the John Latsis Foundation.

The staff are also part of the IOA's tradition and one of the pillars of its sessions' success. Their services have always been of the highest quality thanks to their commitment, availability and readiness, allowing participants to devote themselves fully to their educational activities. Of course, over all these years, we have also had to face difficult situations related to everyday life in the IOA, such as health problems which we have overcome thanks to the devotion of the IOA staff.

Ceremonies, including the singing of the Olympic anthem, laying of wreaths and awarding of diplomas at the opening and closing of the sessions, are another integral part of the IOA's tradition.

The idea of Olympic education was created by the Academy. What makes its work stand out, however, is that the educational material and the ideas that are developed for Olympic education programmes are the outcome of a collective effort and the participation of thousands of people from every corner of the world. Among these participants there have been many university professors who have left their educational mark on the Academy and we are thankful to them.

Working groups have devoted time to dialogue and the exchange of ideas and proposals between participants. Their work is governed by fairness and equality. In a similar spirit, painting, sculpture, dance, poetry and photography workshops have been gradually inte-

grated into the educational programme, enriching its activities.

Sport is probably the most important aspect of the Olympic educational process; traditional and Olympic events are an integral part of the Academy's activities. Moreover, students can live and share their experiences with Olympic medallists, role models accessible to all, without the stress of competition.

This edition showcases the Academy's activities as seen through the personal experiences of people who attended its Sessions in various capacities and roles. An alphabetical presentation of testimonies was considered preferable to a chronological display. Because of the anniversary character of this edition, only fifty texts have been symbolically included. This edition complements existing studies on the history of the IOA since it enhances the emotional aspects of its work.

The Academy has become a modern workshop of Olympism as envisaged by P. de Coubertin on the model of the ancient gymnasium: a place of dialogue and reflection for the Olympic family, which offers the best teaching opportunities in the birthplace of the Olympic Games.

*41st International Session for Young
Participants, 2001, Olympic Day Run.
From left to right: J. Rogge (IOC member),
Rosa Mota (Olympic Gold Medallist
in marathon), N. Filaretos (IOA President)
and K. Georgiadis (IOA Dean).*



*14th International Seminar on Olympic
Studies for Postgraduate Students, 2006.*





*3rd International Postgraduate Seminar
on Olympic Studies, 1995.*



*Students of the Master's Degree Programme
2009/2010 in front of the Temple of Hera,
after the official rehearsal
for the lighting ceremony for the Vancouver
Winter Olympic Games 2010. In the centre
the high priestess Maria Nafpliotou
with the IOA President I. Kouvelos (on the left)
and K. Georgiadis (on the right).*

1961



Dr. Tamás Aján

Honorary Member of the IOC ♦ President of the Hungarian Olympic Academy ♦ President of the International Weightlifting Federation



Close ties between the HOA and the IOA



FIFTY YEARS in the history of an organization's life symbolize a respectable age, as well as a wonderful opportunity to look back on the past and remember the good moments, assess the path covered. The 50th anniversary of the foundation of the International Olympic Academy makes all of us, involved in the activities of this noble enterprise either internationally or nationally, very proud. In the following lines let me give you an inventory of the facts, the events and most of all the people that have marked the common history of the IOA and the HOA and left an imprint on these organizations.

It is absolutely clear to all that the goals of both organizations are the same: to spread the Olympic spirit,

preserve the Olympic traditions and values, and initiate scientific research to discover and document the past.

It is of paramount importance for us that on 23 November 1985 the Hungarian Olympic Academy was founded as the 26th Academy in the world. At its founding session Juan Antonio Samaranch, then IOC President, emphasized that our country was among the most outstanding members of the Olympic family. Nicos Nissiotis, IOA President, was also present. Time, full of activities, seemed to fly and in 2010 we held a jubilee session in Budapest celebrating the 25th anniversary of the HOA. The festivities were honoured by the presence of Mr Isidoros Kouvelos, President, and Mr Dionyssis Gangas, Director of the IOA, as well as other dignitaries.

Let me highlight a few events as evidence of the close ties between the HOA and the IOA for many years, which have expanded from year to year. In fact, the cooperation with the International Olympic Academy goes back to 1961, i.e. much earlier than the actual founding of our own Academy. We were present fifty years ago at the first International Session for Young Participants. Later on, lecturers of the sessions included Dr Árpád Csanádi, IOC member (1977), and Mr Pál Schmitt, IOC member, current President of the Republic of Hungary (1988).

The IOA-HOA relations were highly promoted and aided by Otto Szymiczek, who received his diploma of physical education teacher in Budapest. Although he spent most of his life in Greece, he remained a Hungarian at heart.

The first Hungarian student at the youth camp was Ms Csilla Komosnik in 1966. Ever since, we have continuously sent young people to these camps.

Since 1988, the HOA has been present in Olympia at the International Sessions for Directors of National Olympic Academies by altogether 23 delegates.

In addition, the Hungarian Olympic Academy is a regular participant by its representatives in each type of sessions or seminars hosted by the IOA.

We have organized altogether 16 study tours to Olympia for our Olympic champions and the members of the Olympic Friends' Circle.

Let me mention the result of one of the recent

researches of Professor Ferenc Takács, Vice-President of the HOA. He found the first poem about the modern Olympic Games, written by Anastasia Hadziarapi in 1896 in the Greek language. The young lady expresses her love towards the Hungarian Olympians, pronouncing a eulogy of their wonderful participation at the first modern Olympics. Anastasia sent her poem to Dr Ferenc Kemény, one of the founders of the IOC, Hungarian IOC member, with an accompanying letter. These pages, turned yellow with age, found by accident in a second-hand bookshop, are proof that Greek-Hungarian Olympic relations in fact have a more than a hundred-year-old history.

In my capacity as the President of the Hungarian Olympic Academy I travelled to Olympia for the first time in 1978. I was elated and thrilled by the mere fact that I could walk on those famous stones, engulfed in the atmosphere of the ancient Olympic Games and spirits, but I was all the more fortunate to visit these venues in the company of the participants of the IOC Session, among them Lord Killanin, then IOC President, and H.E. J. A. Samaranch, next IOC President.

These wonderful memories, which I always associated with the values and ideals represented by the IOA, remained with me in the years to come. Nevertheless, it was only in 1991 when I returned to Olympia – at the time representing the IOC, being a member of the IOC Sport for All Commission. My emotions were by no means weaker the second time.

Ten years ago Nikos Filaretos had a great idea to establish an Olympic Sculpture Park in Olympia, in a beautiful area belonging to the IOA. The NOAs were invited to donate items to the park.

In 2009, during the study tour of the HOA delegation, the bronze statue *Olympic Allegory* by the Hungarian sculptor Mr Ferenc Németh was erected in the beautiful area of the IOA, near the venue of the ancient Olympic Games. In fact, the sculpture was delivered to its place twice. We originally donated it in 2005, but, owing to an accident, the sculpture and its foundation fell apart before it reached its destination. This is why it had to be remade and transported to Olympia again. This piece of art reflects the close connection between sports and art; the grace of five gymnasts and the five Olympic rings describe the Olympic idea and symbolize the five continents. Mr Isidoros Kouvelos, the IOA

President, inaugurated the sculpture and in his speech warmly thanked the HOA President Dr Tamás Aján and Ms Mária Jakabházy Mező, General Secretary, for the precious gift.

Finally, allow me a few personal reflections: to me the IOA (apart from the IOC, of course) is the most important organization in the Olympic Movement. It is the connection, the bridge between the past and the future; between history that must be discovered, documented and duly honoured, and the next generations that must learn about these Olympic values and cherish its treasures. That is why I am especially honoured and proud to be the awardee of the IOA Prize 'Athina' (2010). Congratulations to the IOA on the 50 years and best wishes for a continued glorious history in the next 50 years!





Awarding of the IOA prize 'Athina' to T. Aján by the Minister of Culture and Tourism P. Yeroulanos and the Olympic Gold Medallist in weightlifting P. Dimas during the opening ceremony of the 50th International Session for Young Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 2010.



The Hungarian Olympic Academy's delegation at the stele of Pierre de Coubertin in Olympia, 2009.

1962



S.A.S. le Prince Albert II de Monaco

Membre du CIO ♦ Président du Comité Olympique Monégasque



L'Académie est le gardien de l'éducation à l'olympisme



POUR AVOIR PARTICIPÉ moi-même, en tant que membre du CIO, aux sessions organisées par l'Académie Internationale Olympique, j'ai pu mesurer l'extraordinaire atmosphère d'amitié qui y régnait ainsi que l'esprit de partage très particulier qui animait ses participants.

L'Académie est le gardien de l'éducation à l'olympisme à travers le monde. Elle débat des grandes questions liées au sport et, en cela, s'adresse à la jeunesse de l'ensemble des pays.

Il est en effet captivant pour les jeunes filles et les jeunes gens de tous horizons, désignés par leur Comité National Olympique, athlètes, étudiants dans le do-

maine du sport, de se retrouver sur des sites chargés de l'histoire olympique et d'échanger sur un thème commun, porteur d'idéal sportif.

Ces rassemblements permettent de mieux mesurer ce qui unit la jeunesse de notre monde, au delà de ses apparentes différences. Et si, à l'occasion des ces séminaires, les participants, au cours de soirées conviviales, réalisent des spectacles pour présenter leur folklore national, c'est bien autour des valeurs de l'olympisme qu'ils se retrouvent.

Ces valeurs prônées en son temps par le Baron de Coubertin conservent plus que jamais leur pertinence : le dépassement de soi, le respect de l'autre et le sentiment d'appartenance à une même famille olympique.

Ces principes de vie et d'éducation contribuent à l'épanouissement de chacun d'entre nous, de l'adolescence à l'âge adulte, toute sa vie durant.

C'est encore particulièrement vrai aujourd'hui, même si le monde du sport a évolué. En définitive, le sport a encore plus d'importance de nos jours qu'il n'en avait à l'époque de Pierre de Coubertin.

C'est pourquoi il nous faut saluer la vision qui était la sienne et son rôle précurseur : l'admiration qu'il éprouvait pour la Grèce antique et pour les jeux olympiques des temps anciens lui a permis de développer une vision moderne et fondatrice : non seulement le sport et les valeurs qu'il véhicule est indispensable à l'épanouissement de chacun d'entre nous, mais de plus

il est facteur de paix entre les hommes. Cette paix olympique est aujourd'hui une notion reprise par l'Organisation des Nations Unies elle-même qui prône l'idée d'une trêve olympique pendant le déroulement des jeux.

Facteurs de développement personnel et éléments de rapprochement entre les hommes, le sport et l'idéal olympique véhiculent, aujourd'hui comme hier, des valeurs fortes qui nous sont communes.

En veillant à maintenir la flamme de cet idéal commun, l'Académie Internationale Olympique exerce un rôle majeur auprès des jeunes générations. Qu'elle en soit ici remerciée.





*Photo commémorative
sur le grand escalier de l'AIO,
Session de la Fédération
Hellénique de Patinage, 1996.*



*28e Session de l'AIO, 1988,
S.A.S. le Prince Albert II de Monaco (à gauche)
et O. Szymiczek (Doyen de l'AIO).*

1963



Héctor Argüelles

President of the IOAPA



'It will change your life'



T WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE' I was told before travelling to Greece for the first time to attend the IOA Young Participants Session in 2002.

Indeed.

Little did I know that for the next ten consecutive summers – and hopefully counting – I would be coming back to the inspirational place that for all of us is Olympia. During those years I have had the enormous privilege of attending several YP Sessions, Postgraduate Seminars and IOAPA Sessions; either as a participant or as a volunteer coordinator.

Not only did it change my life, it became part of my life. Indeed.

Fortunately, chances are that the IOA will have an impact on your life from the very first visit. What makes this place so special? There is a unique combination of the people and the setting. You live in a parallel reality while at the Academy; it is an intense and fascinating experience. More importantly, the impact of the Academy reaches well beyond your days in Olympia. Everything that you learn there has enormous applicability in your life when you return to your home country.

The experience has a huge empowerment effect, brings you energy and drive to achieve more, makes you think bigger and broader, connects you strongly with others and, as a result, you become more under-

standing and empathetic with everyone. It is a boost of positive energy that might help you avoid ill feelings, overcome setbacks and guide you through your next challenges.

It is up to you how you would like to apply all the IOA lessons. IOA participants have been active in all spheres and at all levels, from volunteering in small communities to leading the organization of the Olympic Games. The impact can be very significant. And it is also important to note: there is no downside to IOA participation.

There are actually countless of positives at any given day at the Academy. At the Young Participants Session you can start the day learning capoeira from a Brazilian friend, go for breakfast with a New Zealander and understand what jet lag really means, listen to a lecture from a world-class academic, engage with your discussion group in a real multicultural conversation, learn some Japanese greetings over lunch, develop your artistic side with some of your new African friends, play volleyball with someone who is in his national team in the afternoon – all that, before you realize that only half a day has passed.

Everything happens in a great atmosphere of camaraderie that makes the personal connection just natural. How many great conversations, jokes and stories at the marble stairs?

Coubertin used to say that anyone wanting to live an Olympic life should have first of all joy of living.

That is what you see everywhere at the IOA; the enthusiasm permeates everything. If you take a picture of any group at any IOA session, there is no need to say ‘smile’ or ‘cheese’: everyone is smiling already.

Having the chance to experience all this at the IOA gave me the energy and motivation to be involved in many other activities where I could use, apply and spread what I have learned in Olympia; from volunteering at the Olympic Games or at the Spanish Olympic Academy to giving talks at different arenas or organizations I am involved with.

I am in my second term as IOAPA President and in my fourth as IOAPA Executive Committee member; I hope that the time and dedication of all of us that have served the organization over the years have helped IOA participants to keep engaged with and to help the Olympic world in different capacities. For all of us that have had the privilege to be at the IOA, IOAPA is a great way to give back to the institution and the ideals that it serves.

Over this last decade it has been very interesting to observe different trends on the IOA participants. Generally, they arrive to Olympia more and more prepared from their countries and more aware of the world around them. They observe and absorb the concepts very quickly. Specific selection processes in more NOCs, a more interconnected world through Internet, and

access to rich and varied educational experiences at an early age are probably behind these slow but steady shifts. For the same reasons, participants from years back showed probably more spontaneity, creativity and heterogeneity. There is no better or worse in this observation. There is definitely a trade-off in the general traits of the groups coming to Olympia over time. Nevertheless, the most important aspects have not changed: motivation, enthusiasm and energy have always been outstanding.

Not only can the experience at the Academy have a significant impact on the outside world, the outside world trends can be well reflected in the IOA sessions too. As the IOA moves forward, it will be catering to a more connected and more globalized world and it will become an even closer reflection of the global village.

The IOA has influenced thousands of participants over the last 50 years. It is fantastic that the current IOA leadership is extending the programmes organized at the Academy with the intention to reach more groups, in a more targeted way, and get the most of the outstanding facilities.

These are just the first 50 years; even catastrophes as the fires in 2007 have not had any significant impact on the running of the sessions – none of the good spirits burnt.

Years will go by and the IOA will continue fulfilling its educational and inspiring purpose: returning better human beings to the real world after a stay in Olympia.



*Sports activities,
42nd International Session
for Young Participants, 2002.*



*Discussion group under
the guidance of H. Argüelles,
46th International Session
for Young Participants, 2006.*





The Olympic Rings and the ancient stadium in Olympia, 2005.

1964



Fernando Lima Bello

Honorary Member of the IOC



The International Olympic Academy



BEGAN APPRECIATING sport very young, taking interest in the athletics during the Berlin's Olympic Games (1936), and as I was learning more about each sport, I liked all of them, but my choice was sailing.

I competed during 30 years and was twice Olympian, Mexico 1968 and Munich 1972, and by the fact that our Olympic Village was in a different location each time, I had the chance to appreciate the prestigious competitions and the meeting of a lot of friends from other countries. However, I never felt the true universality of the Games before being Team Leader in Moscow, living in the Olympic Village and, after that, going, in different functions, to all the Summer and Winter Games.

By chance I was chosen to integrate the Executive Board of our NOC and started to understand that Olympism was not only the Games, but an educational tool, mainly through meeting the Portuguese that had been in previous sessions of the IOA.

When I was elected President, one of my aims was to develop the potential of Olympism for Education and Culture.

What better way to do it than pursue to send every year young people, if possible more than one, to the IOA?

After that, the logical step was to create a National Olympic Academy, as we would have the possibility, with less pedagogic baggage and means, to reach many

more people, taking advantage that all over the country many municipalities were interested and gave a substantial financial help to have our sessions there, and so we attained decentralization.

We also take advantage to choose the future participants not only with a written formality, but with appreciating personally their real interest.

Later, after becoming an IOC member, I personally had the chance to go to Olympia for short times, to appreciate the ruins, to take part in meetings originally of the IOC Commission for the IOA and then of the IOC Commission for Culture and Olympic Education or to attend the Sessions for Young Participants.

I was always impressed by the Greek tradition in Olympia and the simple but efficient installations of the IOA.

My best memories were my presence in the opening ceremony at the Pnyx in 1990 and, after going to Olympia, the first round table consisting of nine IOC members. The participants were very interested to meet so many of us and expressed their questions and doubts. We were choosing who would give the answer each time and later we formed smaller groups and continued the discussions.

I know that it would be very expensive, but, if a possibility arrives, I recommend that you take that advantage, doing similar meetings, mainly with the younger members.

Now my main concern is the future work of the IOA and the renovation of the installations, with the financial problems of your country, but, considering that the IOA is the true arm for Olympic education, the IOC feels the problem and can give a more substantial aid, until we have better times.

Another wish I would like to express was the perseverance in leadership of the IOA in the work of the National Academies; they could collect the documentation of the different Academies and give them guidelines to their work.

A possible option would be to organize a booklet with the best pedagogic concepts, possibly taking advantage of some of the illustrations and make a text for it; then, you could offer the publication for the several NOAs, that would look after the translation, possibly with some adaptations, in the main languages, getting a better price for bigger editions and, evidently, you would be reimbursed of the expenses by the NOCs or the Olympic Solidarity.

My only pity is not to be younger and go to a session (we are always learning) and feel the eagerness of the pupils and the confraternization among all of them, from all parts of the world.

I wish the IOA at least another 50 years of the good education that it provides.



*In the lecture hall, 30th IOA Session, 1990,
(from left to right) the IOC Members: D. S. Sibanze, V. Černušák, M. Mzali, I. Dibós, F. L. Bello.*

1965



Dr Fernando Beltranena

Director of the Guatemalan Olympic Academy



My Olympic baptism



AFTER MY ELECTION as a member of the Executive Guatemalan Committee, the President invited and designated me as Director of the National Olympic Academy. I had been an athlete all my life, and member of the executive boards of sport organizations – the Autonomous Sport Confederation and the Equestrian Federation – but I do confess that I did know very little, if nothing, about Olympism.

The convocation to attend the Session for Directors of National Olympic Academies in 1990 was a surprise to me. I read whatever I had at hand about the IOA, but I only learnt about its location in Greece, its objectives and origin and that its Board of Directors

had the name of Ephoria, which gave me the idea that they were a very happy bunch because they should be ‘euphoric’ most of the time.

When I arrived in Athens, at the hotel I found a group of the participants, mostly men, talking about a place that they had been to, called ‘Plaka’. It seemed to me the place to have fun. In Spanish that name sounds as ‘plaque’. Is it possible to have fun at a ‘plaque’? But my information, instruction and knowledge had just started. Next morning, the trip by bus to Olympia. We did a stop just after crossing over the Corinth Canal – a marvellous view to the gulf and of course to the bottom of the canyon – to watch the ships crossing through. The trip by bus and the stopover became a good be-

ginning to know the other participants, some neophytes as myself, but others people that had been involved in Olympism, in the Olympic Movement, university professors in physical education, history, sociology, and so forth. They were a fantastic source of knowledge, but besides their academic merits they were very nice and friendly people. Among a small group of Directors of Academies of Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries we had just founded the Association of Ibero-American Olympic Academies, under the presidency of Dr Conrado Durántez, President of the Spanish Olympic Academy. The Association's objectives were to spread in the continent the principles and philosophy of Olympism. The experience of our gathering in the IOA promised to be a unique one.

In the afternoon of our arrival we visited the monument dedicated to Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the man that had restored the Olympic Games from the lethargy of more than 27 centuries. While his body was buried in Switzerland, his embalmed heart lies in a special urn inside the stele in this monument. It would not have been any other way. His believes and love for the idea that through sport the youth of the world could be educated in body, mind and spirit, were right there as a symbol of his presence in the very centre where the ancient Olympic Games took place.

Yes, when I came close to the stele I could hear the beat of Coubertin's heart telling everybody willing to listen, that the spirit of the ancient Olympic Games

was alive and that the universal ethical values could be part of the life of the athletes called to compete at the every four years meeting of the modern Games. Feeling and hearing that those heartbeats were giving such a message sent shivers along my spine. It was a very deep emotion, even though we had not visited the ruins of Ancient Olympia where the athletes and artists gathered to compete in the Olympic Games!

The voice of Mr Conrado Durántez guided us, step by step, in the visit to the sanctuary. He told us about the myths that get lost in time, and the history that accounts for more real facts. We learnt about important names, gods, goddesses, athletes, heroes, sculptures and sculptors, cities, wars, and all kind of events related to the Games. We heard about Kronos and Rhea, Gaia, Hercules, Hera, Oinomaos, Hippodamia. We walked through the ruins of the temple dedicated to Zeus imagining the colossal statue of him, one of the Seven Wonders of the World; the Palaistra, the Treasuries, the Stoa of the Echo, the Nymphaion, the Leoni-daion. We heard about the two rivers, the Kladeos and the Alpheios, that flow through Olympia. When we visited the stadium we knew about Koroivos, the athlete from Elis that won the footrace in the stadium, being the very first historical record of the Games in 776 BC. Our enthusiasm was growing. We got at the starting line and ran the almost two hundred metres of the length of the stadium. When I was running I could still hear the beats of Coubertin's heart, which made me

understand more and more the reason that he had to restore the Olympic Games.

The lectures that we attended at the old conference room, the lecturers and the discussion groups gave their contribution to reinforce our decision to spread the knowledge and practice of the true values of Olympism to all levels of society, but more importantly to the athletes that should be formed as role models to youngsters.

My first participation in the session at the International Olympic Academy, more than 20 years ago,

left a permanent mark in my spirit. After these 20 years I am aware that there are more Olympic Academies in America: PASO, the Pan-American Sport Organization, organizes under the leadership of Mr Mario Vásquez Raña seminars for Olympic Academies. The fight against doping is a war, and it seems that it is being won. Olympic education is common practice. I see in these advancements a common factor: the influence of the International Olympic Academy, through which many of its participants have received, as myself, the Olympic baptism that left on us its permanent mark.



*Awarding of participation diploma
to F. Beltranena by K. Georgiadis,
9th Joint International Session
for Presidents or Directors of NOAs
and Officials of NOCs, 2008.*



*At the commemorative
monument of John Ketseas
and Carl Diem.*





*Commemorative photo at the ancient stadium in Olympia, 9th Joint International Session
for Presidents or Directors of NOAs and Officials of NOCs, 2008.*

1966



Lautel Brassey Iversen

Olympic athlete ♦ Former President of the IOAPA



Night class at the marble steps



AS A PARTICIPANT IN 1986, I was inspired to rekindle the Olympic flame that was extinguished by the 1980 boycott and ultimately competed in the Seoul Olympic Games. This pivotal point in my life was the beginning of a great love affair with the IOA. As an elite athlete I felt a deep connection to the birthplace of the noble ideals of Olympism. During that first session, Professor Nissiotis encouraged us to form an alumni organization for the IOA. I was a founding member and the first President of the IOAPA, which has kept participants until today.

I returned to Olympia 18 times in 23 years as a coordinator and IOAPA member, each time easily transitioning from my normal life into the idyllic sur-

roundings of the Academy. Olympia is like a second skin, with her perfect fit. Wrapped in her embrace, we shared unforgettable experiences and formed enduring friendships.

Many of my best memories took place on the marble steps. A 'great cultural exchange' took place there every night. It was Facebook LIVE! The atmosphere was stunning with stars so thick and close you could reach up and grab a handful. Initially bonded only by sport, we grew together in respect and tolerance for each other. We shared our emotions and culture in our life's stories. Laughing, singing, talking, we stayed until the wee hours of the morning, savouring every moment.

Our passions were exposed and we began to real-

ize that we had more commonality, than differences. We began to live within the spirit of Olympism; not only discuss it, argue its merits and shortcomings, but really embrace its philosophy. To really know and understand people whom you thought so completely different from yourself, to empathize with them, to exchange your thoughts and feelings freely, to agree or disagree, and ultimately accept them as equals, is a powerful and life-changing experience.

Tolerance: There was a Korean boy in my group, who had such a hard time to speak English. At the end of the session, he asked to share something. He struggled to speak and everyone leaned in closer to hear every halting word. He said he was terrified to come to Greece, his first time away from his homeland. There were no other Korean participants. He was afraid no one would talk to him and he would be so lonely and unhappy. BUT, he felt like he was part of a family in the group and he was so happy that everyone tried so hard to help him understand and included him in the group. He was so motivated to return home to study and share his experience. We all cried.

Joy in effort: There was a sweet young boy from Zambia, whose face was dark as the night and his smile as bright as the stars. He was always happy and overflowed with confidence. He showed me pictures of his country and told me that his parents were dead. He was raising his younger siblings while working as a policeman and training in judo. He told me he felt so blessed,

and indeed he was. There was joy in everything he did and it radiated through him.

Understanding: There used to be a fair amount of grumbling about the breakfast at the IOA. One of our young friends told us how he loved the breakfast so much every morning. He told us that normally he only had some sugar water and maybe a piece of bread for breakfast. No one complained about breakfast anymore after that.

Respect: Through these years, it was a great pleasure for me to develop a close relationship with the IOA President Nikos Filaretos. He made me so mad at times and yet I could see how much he loved the Olympic ideal and all of us. It did give me some pleasure to know that I, in turn, made him crazy and so he gave me the name of 'Mrs Impossible', as I was always asking for something for the Young Participants or for the IOAPA. I did not take 'no' for an answer very often and so we appreciated each other's stubbornness and a great respect developed between us.

I took the very best from each one of them. I only hope I gave them as much as I received. I came home each time with more precious treasures for my memory box, renewed in spirit, empowered, joyous, yet with so much nostalgia. I am reminded so often in my daily life of these profound lessons I learned at the IOA.

Volunteering as a coordinator, it was very rewarding for me to watch these young people change in just two-weeks' time: to have helped facilitate their Olym-

pic education; to see them 'Get it'! Nothing is better than encouraging people to be their very best! We coaxed them to discuss everything, try all the sports, arts, dances, games and foods. We told them to eat in Miraka, dance at 'Zorbas', then walk home down the pitch-black road to the Academy, and hear the frogs under the bridge. Our mantra was 'Learn and play now, sleep later, and be in the lecture hall at 8.30 a.m.'.

Recently, I sat atop the marble steps and for the first time I could see the Kronion Hill, the west hill, the east hill and all the way to the road below, because fires had burned so many of the beautiful trees. The landscape had changed, but the spirituality of the place remained, untouched. Tiny new pines were beginning

to emerge on the west hill where my favourite hut had burned to the ground. The human values of Olympism continue to thrive, nurtured by exceptional people from every corner of the world. The marble steps await the next generation.

My friends in Olympism deserve my deepest gratitude for they have had a profound impact on my life. I would be remiss not to mention them. The memories of them are the inspiration for this short paper and made its writing a pure joy: Professor Nissiotis, Jim Parry, Kostas Georgiadis, Professor Yalouris, Nikos Filaretos, Panos Vassilaras, Jan Paterson, Lamartine Da-Costa, Youla Pipilis, Maha Zaoui, Carlos Manzur, and Naghmeh Kariminezhad.





Coordinators at the 41st International Session for Young Participants, 2001.



First IOAPA meeting in Olympia, 1989.



Torch relay for the Atlanta Olympic Games, 1996. IOAPA members carry the Olympic flame through Mt Taygetos in the Peloponnese.

1967



Theo Breuers

Responsible for the live streaming of the IOA sessions on the Internet



The live streaming of the IOA sessions



EARLY IN 2000, the President of the IOA Dr Nikos Filaretos met the President of the German Olympic Committee Mr Walter Tröger to discuss the influence of the Internet on sport, especially the relationship between Internet and the Olympic Games.

After this discussion we were invited by Dr Nikos Filaretos to do as a test a streaming of the Sessions for Young Participants of 2000. The success of this first event, a live streaming of these sessions on the Internet, was the basis of the long-term relation between the IOA and DBI.

Streaming media was one of the first projects, but since then this has expanded with Chat, Facebook,

linkID, and Twitter, to name a few. These new media bring people with the same interests together and create the possibility to communicate and discuss various topics in relation to the Olympic Movement. It also opens doors for the rest of the world to see what happens during the sessions in Olympia, therefore widening participation to those unable to travel to the centre of action.

Streaming media is very different from television: it is a video stream of a whole session without cuts, special effects, or external content. It allows the viewer to see, hear and relate to what is actually happening at that very moment, which creates an opportunity to pick up the buzz of the lecture in its pure form.

Since 2003 there is also a group of participants who follow the lectures through the Internet. They are from all over the world and they have group discussions, ask questions to the lecturers and deliver input for the final conclusions of the sessions. All of this is organized by a chatting forum which is only available for the online students. Within the last years an English- and a French-speaking group of Internet participants have been formed and their discussions and contribution have added to the overall development of the sessions, which is exciting to see and it spurs us on to continue our support for this development.

Since 2010 there are also groups of participants who are active on Facebook: they stay in touch with each other after the sessions and develop ideas and communication lines.

With the successes of previously launched network and communication media, we now feel the time is right to introduce Twitter in 2011. This will further expand the opportunities for people to respond to each other in a very immediate way and we are excited at the

prospect of seeing how this medium will strengthen the bond between students and the sessions in Olympia in general.

These media have the ability to turn a 50-year-old organization into a cutting-edge project which makes maximum use of the available media. Our aim is to make it a young and accessible organization which is ready for the challenges ahead and we hope to add to the magic of the Olympic sessions by giving people the tools to connect and improve this wonderful project.

There is no doubt in our minds that the IOA will continue to build on its success from the past and we hope that it will go from strength to strength within the years to come, keeping its spirit fresh and its eyes set on a bright future for the Olympic Movement.

We would like to thank the Ephoria and the members of the staff of the IOA for their support to us in the past eleven years and we have strong hopes to continue a long and successful cooperation within this exciting Olympic arena!





*Working for the live streaming
on the Internet, 48th International
Session for Young Participants, 2008.*



*Opening ceremony of the 42nd
International Session for Young
Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 2002.*

1968



Sergey Bubka

Olympic champion ♦ Member of the IOC

♦ President of the NOC of Ukraine



The 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy



HAVE A GREAT HONOUR to send you my sincere greetings on the occasion of this wonderful Olympic jubilee.

I always have particular feelings while remembering my stay in Olympia – the birthplace of the Olympic Games and the homeland of the International Olympic Academy.

In 2004 it was an inexpressible pleasure for me as an athlete and the IOC Athletes' Commission Chairman to visit Olympia and be a witness of the great victory of the Ukrainian shot putter Yuriy Bilonog at the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad.

And in 2010 I had again a lucky chance to feel the unique spirit of this place, when the first flame of the

Youth Olympic Games in Singapore was lit in Olympia.

Olympia is a sacred place for all of us who devote their life to sports and the Olympic Movement. And it is quite reasonable that just this ancient town has been a home for the International Olympic Academy for already 50 years, as the powerful means for the development of Olympism, which constantly enriches the world with its creative and educational ideas.

The International Olympic Academy's activity is of great importance for Ukraine, as it supports the implementation of efficiently innovative educational Olympic projects in our country. For 20 years, since our NOC's foundation, more than a hundred Ukrainians – athletes and coaches, educators and scientists, journalists – were

honoured to visit Olympia and to connect with the IOA activities, participating in its forums and programmes.

Thanks to the significant support of the IOA, the Olympic Academy of Ukraine has published the unique manual *Olympic Sport* for higher education institutes, which was presented at the XII Olympic Congress in Paris in 1994 on the occasion of the first centenary of the modern Olympism. The wonderful Olympic literature for Ukrainian secondary school pupils also appeared with the IOA considerable assistance.

It is a pleasure for me to mention that mostly all sports scientific and educational forums in Ukraine were held under direct participation and support of the International Olympic Academy.

On behalf of the Ukrainian Olympic family I am happy to extend my warmest congratulations on the 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy and send my best wishes of new success and enthusiasm, new creative ideas and prosperity.





*Press conference in Ancient Olympia for the lighting ceremony for the Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games.
From left to right: S. Bubka, S. M. Ng (SYOGOC Chairman), J. Rogge (IOC President)
and Yelena Isinbayeva (Olympic Gold Medallist).*



*43rd International Session
for Young Participants, 2003.
From left to right: M. Bolly (Coordinator),
L. Palenfo (IOC Member), K. Keino (IOC Member),
A. Boukhtouche (Algerian NOC 1st Vice-President),
S. Bubka (IOC Member).*

1969



Prof. Maria Bulatova

President of the Olympic Academy of Ukraine



My Olympia



MY FIRST RECOLLECTIONS of legendary mysterious Olympia bring me back to the year of 1997 when my long-term cherished dreams at last have come true. That long-desired visit was like some kind of a reward to me, the impressions of which strongly affected my further professional activities.

Being a Ph.D. and D.Sc. in Pedagogy and Exercise Physiology as many scientists with academic background from the former USSR, I always connected my scientific interests with physiological studies in the system of Olympic preparation. For a lot of years I was focused on research and publication activities relating to various biomedical aspects of the ath-

letes' functional preparation for the Olympic Games.

I would like to admit that, in the period of my professional progressing, in our country a great political importance was given to the Olympic Games and the value of Olympic medals stood fabulously high. So we, the scientists, did our best to enhance athletes' performance. But for all those years we seldom thought about the spiritual, ethical and educational values of Olympism which were generously gifted to the whole mankind by ancient Greeks and further developed by Pierre de Coubertin and his colleagues, among whom there was our outstanding compatriot General Alexei Butovsky, the name of whom had been intentionally ignored up to the 1980s.

My visit to Olympia and a meeting with the IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch have completely changed my mindset and become a watershed in the sphere of my professional interests.

Since that time I devote all my energy and passion to the development and reinforcement of the Olympic education system in my country.

Now the Olympic Academy of the 46 million Ukrainians enjoys its membership in a truly friendly family of NOAs under the paternal umbrella of the International Olympic Academy. At present the OAU designs educational programmes, publishes books and posters, issues films, and holds numerous various events, including international congresses devoted to the Olympic ideas. The OAU performs all its activities in accordance with the recommendations of the IOA.

The noble mission of human perfection by means of Olympic education has been put on the International Olympic Academy by the International Olympic Committee through the courtesy of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, in order for the IOA to disseminate and implement the precious Olympic ideas all over the world.

Since 1961, in the site of Ancient Olympia the IOA has been fruitfully functioning and disseminating the Olympic spirit among all those who are eager to bring the eternal values of justice, honesty, nobleness and fair play to the people.

The IOA has become the horn of plenty (Cornucopia) in Olympic education for all of us, especially for those young countries as Ukraine is. For those 20 years of the OAU's existence more than 150 members could join the Olympic educators' family at the IOA seminars and sessions in order to get valuable experience, much necessary for the development of Olympism in Ukraine – the country that has got both rich athletic legacy (more than 600 athletes climbed the victorious Olympic podiums) and dreams to put it ahead by means of Olympic education.

There is one more unique event to link us, the Ukrainians, with Olympia. The only athlete of the modern era who has become the Olympic champion at the ancient stadium in Olympia is our Ukrainian Yuriy Bilonog at the 2004 Games of the XXVIII Olympiad – this is really a subject of our national pride and glory.

The Olympic Academy of Ukraine would like to express its sincere gratitude to the IOA Ephoria and its President Mr Isidoros Kouvelos for their distinguished role in inducing our inspiration to develop Olympic education in a global scale.

Long live the International Olympic Academy on the eve of its 50th anniversary! Many happy returns of this glorious day!



*Laying of wreath by Maria Bulatova
and I. Kouvelos at the stele of Pierre de Coubertin,
10th International Session for Directors of NOAs, 2008.*



*Awarding of participation diploma by F. Serpieris
(IOA President) and K. Georgiadis to Maria Bulatova,
3rd Joint International Session for Presidents or Directors
of NOAs and Officials of NOCs, 1996.*

1970



Prof. Dr Lamartine P. Da Costa

*University Gama Filho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil ♦ University of
East London, UK*



In search of a historical and philosophical meaning for IOA at Ancient Olympia



WAS A LECTURER for the first time at the International Olympic Academy in 1991 and throughout two decades I have visited Ancient Olympia as a collaborator, as well as for the first Postgraduate Seminar in 1993. My theme for the 1991 Young Session referred to a philosophical review of the Olympic Games as a rationale for sport for all. Since then I was also attracted to the philosophical meaning of Ancient Olympia as illuminated by the IOA in earlier times.

By the year 2000, my working hypothesis focused on the role of Ancient Olympia as a *lieu de mémoire* (place of memory) of the Olympic Games and more recently of sports in general. As such, that historical site

would be potentially able to constitute a central reference to sport, one of today's main stems of globalization. This presupposed need holds particular true in the case of IOA by its pedagogical potentialities and impacts on its participants from different parts of the world without cultural and ethnic prejudices.

This approach might be integrated within theoretical accounts that frame Ancient Olympia - IOA composition into a micro representation of the world which is basically concerned to humanity, and to man and woman roles. In this context, the Olympic Games would also play the role of a macro representation of the world when transformed to a media event. In retrospect, this account of world's views was constructed by

pre-Socratic philosophers and it has been nowadays representing the globalization direction in which the world is heading.

As the impact of these and further interpretations from the first philosophers of ancient Greece cannot be told here in its full complexity, I intend to capture merely some of the more fascinating aspects of that successive construction of world's views. Socrates, himself, in his lifetime was in conscious rebellion against the prevailing cosmogonies. Living in the fifth century BC already, Socrates maintained that men must know how they themselves ought to live, not how nature works. Therefore, what should be needed to consider first and foremost were moral questions.

Such accomplishment of making order from pre-Socratic thinking combined with the search of perfection should have as a symptomatic example the Olympic Games, which notably congregated the ancient Hellenic world located in different parts of the Mediterranean for more than one thousand years. But the communal pledge of the Olympiads was firstly headed to Hellenic ethnic groups for their need of contemplating themselves in a glorified and ordered ritual. Foreigners, i.e. barbarians, belonged to the chaos and the hostile variety of the world's parts.

Later, foreigners were accepted as participants of the Games but still peace control was exerted by levelling down differences while Greeks continued to praise similarities as a means for their own unification. Suggestively,

both approaches remain today as modes of promoting cultural identity in international perspective.

Philosophically speaking, the observation of the Greeks as order seekers is just an evidence of their overall reflection on nature and man as common grounds of the universal knowledge (*logos*), as early proposed by Herakleitos.

Unsurprisingly, the notion of world's views made also appearance in old Greek culture as a theatrical vision of the world with the sense of transforming citizens into spectators of themselves, when bringing city centres' spaces to their measures and perspectives. It is equally remarkable that the expression *theatrum mundi* appeared among Renaissance thinkers – mainly architects – as a legacy from ancient Greece.

The theatrical vision of the world was additionally a conception from the first-century AD Greece as a Stoic proposal of education. In the *Enchiridion*, Epictetus introduces another role for the traditional theatre, giving opportunity to spectators to discuss moral-political arguments. This proposal may be initially approached by reading Plato's *Politeia* (The Republic) when he calls for a prudent use of the theatre as a pedagogic tool. In opposition to Epictetus, Plato detected a paradoxical effect in the *theatrum mundi* which could also teach vicious and unjust deeds to youth.

The ambiguity of the theatrical view of the world has been shared by the mass media in present days. As yet, the emphasis in the spectacle is not a deviation but

a limitation of mimetic learning, as already depicted by Plato in his time. As a result, the dramatic revelation of the world should not be rejected as Plato did, or emphasized as Epictetus did, but recommended with additional examples from history.

To conclude, from all these standpoints let me forward the issue of *lieux de mémoire* in more specific terms as following:

- Should the celebration of humanity constitute historically the unchanged implicit and primordial element of the Olympic Games, following there is a synthesis of previous conclusive interpretations: the vision of the world is a Greek cultural invention which presents historical continuity as observed in today's globalization.
- Ancient Greece, Ancient Olympia, Olympic Games and IOA have close historical intersections that may jointly represent a vision of the

world in terms of one place with universal meanings.

- Ancient Olympia as the sanctuary of the Games was a fixed stage in a fixed location, creating a place of memory in Greek and Western cultures.
- The form of this vision is a philosophical, historical and scientific foundational knowledge, focusing men and women, i.e. the humanity, in their insertion in the world from pre-Socratic Greece until today's globalized society.

Ultimately, the IOA as portrayed by Ancient Olympia became part of that place of memory along with its fifty years of existence and so far it has turned out to be more a symbol than an institution. This meaning brings light to the rare interplay among different people from all parts of the world inside at the IOA, as mostly connected by shared expectations for sports.

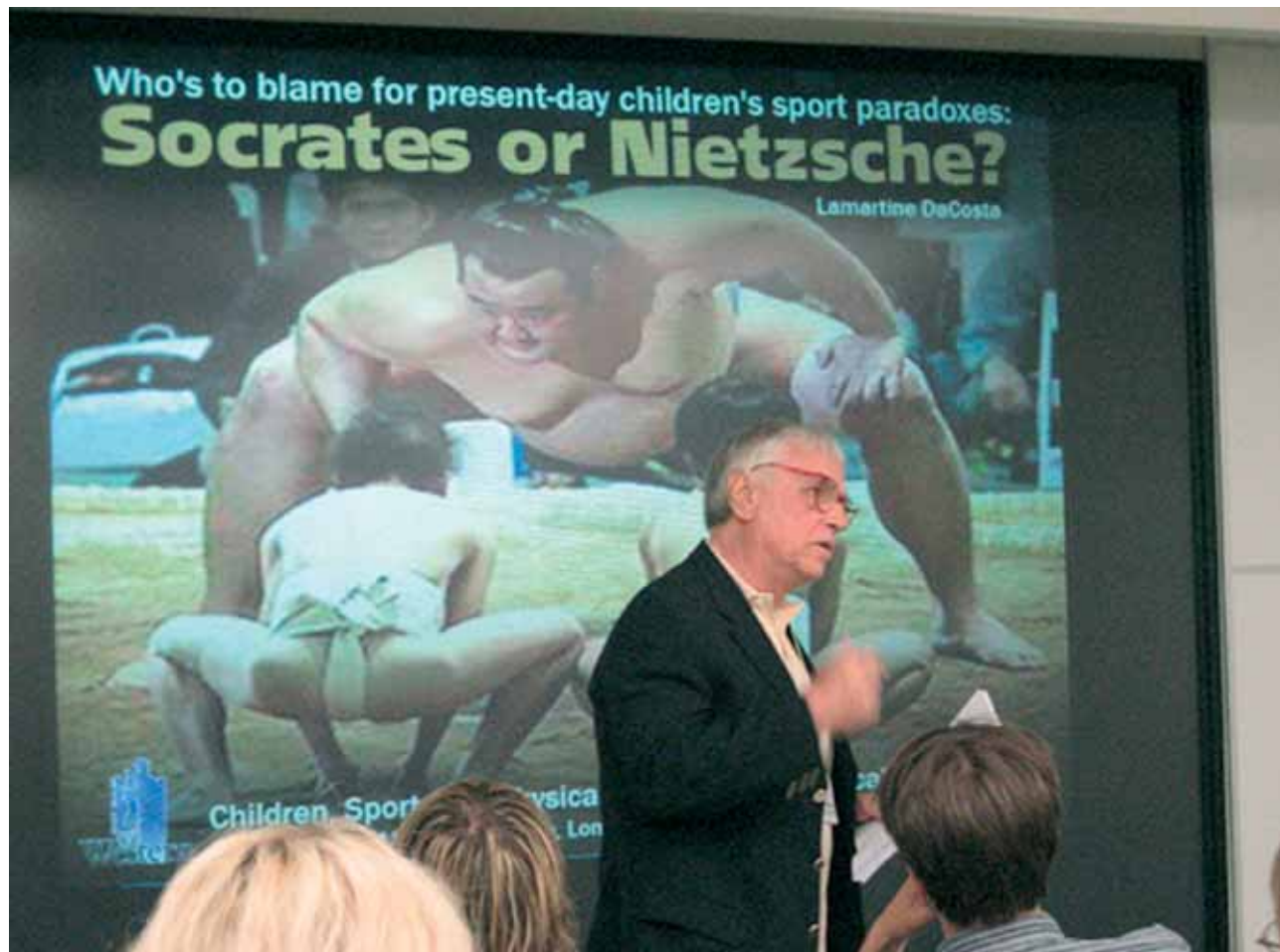




*Commemorative photo,
6th International Postgraduate Seminar
on Olympic Studies, 1998.
First row, from left to right,
the professors K. Georgiadis,
F. Landry and L. DaCosta.*



*Guided tour at the archaeological site
in Ancient Olympia, 1994, L. DaCosta
and L. Chalip.*



*Lecture by L. DaCosta, 14th International Seminar on Olympic Studies
for Postgraduate Students, 2006.*

1971



Anita L. DeFrantz

Member of the IOC ♦ Olympic Bronze Medallist



The long road to the International Olympic Academy



IN THE WORLD of the Olympic Games, the first experience generally makes the most lasting impression. I was selected a member of the United States Olympic Rowing Team for the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games. My memories of the opening ceremony, of living in the Olympic Village and competing at the Games are still crystal clear. After that first experience, I decided that I wanted to compete for another quadrennial to capture a gold medal.

The year 1980 was both very difficult and yet a year of enlightenment for me. My plan for the year was to finish my rowing career at the 1980 Moscow Olym-

pic Games with a gold medal and then focus all my efforts on my legal career.

I was successful in being selected to the US Olympic Team. But a completely unanticipated event, the refusal of the US Olympic Committee to enter a team at those Games, completely destroyed my goal of ending my rowing career with competition at those Games. I worked very hard to change that outcome. I sued the US Olympic Committee for the right to compete in Moscow. The Solicitor General of the United States joined the law supporting the USOC as the US administration sought to enforce its boycott of those Olympic Games.

Our lawsuit failed. During the months leading up to the Games, rowers throughout the world had been working together to find ways to help as many athletes as possible get to the Moscow Games. It was both exhilarating and sad to work for others and share strategies that made it possible for some to survive their governments wish to keep them home.

After the final international regatta before the Olympic Games, two of my rowing friends and I decided to go to the place where this all began, Ancient Olympia. We were in search of the inspiration that had created the Olympic Movement thousands of years ago and had inspired us to fight for the right to compete.

Our band of three had many adventures along the road to Ancient Olympia, but finally we were there. The all-encompassing heat that creates a special silence covered us. We walked into the stadium and pretended that we were in Moscow. We visited the museum and read the literature. We learned about the stele, where laid the heart of Baron Pierre de Coubertin. The information indicated that the stele was adjacent to the International Olympic Academy. I had learned about the IOA during my studies of the Olympic Movement. We had a new destination; we needed to find the International Olympic Academy.

It is still astonishing to me that we were so close yet no one could tell us where it was. We found the pathway to the stele, but the path had a locked gate, so we could only look toward the opening. We walked

past the gate away from Olympia for nearly an hour and realized that we must have passed the IOA.

We trudged back and reached the museums, so again we missed the IOA. My friends began to doubt that such an institution existed. As dusk fell, we realized that we would need to continue our journey and bid farewell to Ancient Olympia.

Much to my delight, I had the opportunity to give back to the Olympic Movement as I joined the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee (LAOOC) in August of 1981. The LAOOC had fewer than 30 people on staff when I joined. The small number made it possible for us to work together well. We were determined to do the best possible job for the athletes of the world. I was given the responsibility for planning the Olympic Villages and ultimately for ensuring that the NOCs from Africa attended the Olympic Games.

It seemed impossible that the athletes of the world would be threatened again by government forces keeping them away from the Games. The LAOOC staff worked very hard in 1984 to get every National Olympic Committee to bring their athletes to the Games. It breaks my heart that athletes were used as pawns for nothing in particular, since the absence of athletes only hurt the athletes. But it did happen twice in a row and if one considers the actions by several National Olympic Committees from Africa, three times in a row.

The Games of the XXIII Olympiad were a great success and even changed the face of the IOC as a check

for 20 million dollars was given to the IOC in 1980 as payment for the television rights for the 1984 Olympic Games. No longer would the IOC be made up only by those who could afford to be members.

In 1985, one year after the Games, I received an invitation to visit the IOA. I was invited to lecture about the Los Angeles Olympic Games. This opportunity changed my life again. I was finally going to the place where it all began, but this time I would most certainly be allowed to enter the Olympic Academy!

I had the opportunity to speak about how the 1984 Olympic Games were organized. It was a great responsibility and a wonderful chance to learn from the students who attended. During the 1985 Academy, people from the 1980 Moscow Olympic Organizing Committee also were invited to speak. This provided the possibility of anger over the way the two governments used their athletes. But this time in the peaceful setting of the Olympic Academy, the story of why first the US and then the USSR chose to use their athletes as pawns was discussed. The conclusion was again that the only outcome of the boycotts was to deny athletes of the opportunity to experience the Olympic Games. The world lost generations of ambassadors for peace.

It is a thrilling experience to be with the students who were using this opportunity to learn about the Olympic Movement so that they would be able to share the Olympic ideals in their classrooms around the globe. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It

was the first of six visits to the Academy for me, at least so far!

Over the years, I was asked to discuss various topics in my lectures. I spoke about the problems of doping and cheating at the Games. The topic of women and sport became a central focus of my work as a member of the IOC, so naturally I was able to share those experiences with the students who came to the Academy. It is true that the founder of the Modern Olympic Movement, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, was not interested in women competing at the Games. Perhaps staying true to his call to the youth of the world, he did nothing to prevent women from competing at the Olympic Games.

The IOA asked me to lecture on ethics and sport, which is another set of ideals that are important to me. The concepts of fair play and mutual respect form the basis of the Olympic ideals which the world has come to appreciate.

Each time I visited the International Olympic Academy I left refreshed with the knowledge that there are young people determined to experience what the ancient people experienced at Olympia. Looking at pictures from the first few editions of the IOA, it is impressive to see that the students stayed in tents and had the most rudimentary classrooms and lecture halls. Today's students have air-conditioned lecture halls and a wonderful library for study. From what was essentially a campground to the Academy of today, a long road has been travelled.

It is tremendous to have a wonderful institution across from the fields and ruins of gymnasia where the notion of sport and the tradition of excellence have been honoured for millennia. It has been a great privilege to take part at so many sessions and I truly hope that I will have opportunities to share with students from around the world again.

I wish to express my thanks to the citizens of Greece and the City of Ancient Olympia who have

steadfastly supported this institution. I also wish to thank the loyal staff people who spend their time year in and out making certain that there is a place where serious study on the Olympic Movement can take place. To all of those who in ancient and present time honour the ideals of fair play and mutual respect which form the basis of the Olympic Movement, I offer my heartfelt gratitude.





*Lecture by Anita DeFrantz,
46th International Session
for Young Participants, 2006.*

*Anita DeFrantz at the Montreal
Olympic Games, 1976.*



1972



Prof. Dr. Gudrun Doll-Tepper

Freie Universität Berlin ♦ Vice-President for Education / Olympic Education of the German Olympic Sports Confederation ♦ Chairperson of the German Olympic Academy Willi Daume



Inspiring the world with Olympism



ANYONE WHO HAS had the opportunity to attend courses at the International Olympic Academy in Ancient Olympia would never forget its unique atmosphere and compelling spirit. Entering the Academy for the first time was an overwhelming moment for me because I have been following the IOA's activities for many years through its publications and participants' reports. I hope that as many people as possible who wish to share their knowledge and interest in the Olympic Movement can come to the IOA and experience this international gathering in a truly historical setting.

CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

Since its foundation in 1961, the IOA has made tremendous contributions to the Olympic Movement by offering open forums for discussions and debates on topics related to Olympism and the development of sport in a globalized world. Today, global networks and new technologies connect us all as witnesses and participants in the economic, political and cultural changes happening at international, national and local levels. All these developments influence the world of sport just as it influences our lives.

For over five decades, the IOA has been providing various forums in which global change and its impact

on the Olympic Movement are analysed and discussed. It brings together people from different generations, who have diverse cultural backgrounds, professional education and training. It is common to see students, teachers, coaches, administrators and officials exchanging ideas and experiences with each other at IOA forums. The IOA has created a wide-ranging professional atmosphere by facilitating interdisciplinary exchanges and contributions from experts across the scientific, economic, cultural and political spheres. The IOA should continue to follow this avenue.

The IOA makes dialogue possible – even through political obstacles and language barriers – by addressing global visions of education, ethics, peace and fair play, along with international concerns relating to doping, racism and other forms of discrimination. The challenge is to discuss areas of conflict and identify new approaches and solutions. This must remain central to the future of the IOA.

The scope of the IOA's achievements is so large that it exceeds the limits of my reflections, but its focus on events for athletes must at least be mentioned. In addition to the Olympic Games, growing sport movements have received increased public and media attention in the past few decades, which makes them prime issues to be studied and discussed at the IOA. This includes events for athletes with disabilities, especially the Deaflympics, Special Olympics and Paralympics. The IOC's inaugural 2010 Youth Olympic Games

(YOG) in Singapore also promoted the growth of Olympism. Athletes aged 14 to 18 had the opportunity to compete in 26 sports and were offered a multidimensional 'Culture and Education Programme'. This innovation is an exciting challenge for future YOG to consider its connection to the Olympic Games, and also to examine the relationship between competition, education and culture.

Societal change around the world is an often-discussed topic within the IOA, especially concerning physical education and sport since Pierre de Coubertin's inception of the modern Olympic Games. Among the challenges to the world of sport, I would like to highlight the IOA's efforts to address the issue of gender equality. The roles of the Olympic Movement and the IOC in promoting gender equality regarding both participation and leadership positions in sport have received special attention in many sessions. These efforts need to be not only continued, but also intensified.

LINKING THE IOA TO NATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMIES

On behalf of the German Olympic Sports Confederation and of the German Olympic Academy Willi Daume I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the IOA for their outstanding cooperation.

Our main focus as a National Olympic Academy is to promote Olympism and Olympic education with-

in Germany. We thereby aim to introduce the global Olympic vision into local contexts through various approaches. We publish and distribute educational materials about the Olympic Movement, Olympic Games and Paralympics to primary and secondary schools. We offer a German translation of the Olympic Charter and publications on the past, present and future of the Olympic Movement, very often connected to symposia and conferences organized by us. We organize symposia and conferences on issues related to the Olympic Movement. Although the main activities take place in our home country, the various global opportunities that the IOA offers are greatly appreciated. Teachers, researchers and students alike take tremendous pleasure in attending the IOA sessions. The inspiration gathered from their stay at the IOA is palpable; it clearly affects and stimulates others. The German Olympic Academy prepares all of our carefully chosen participants for the IOA sessions and keeps contact with them after their return. Among other ways of staying in touch, we regularly invite them to follow-up sessions every two years.

The network of National Olympic Academies has enormous potential and should be further developed in close cooperation with the IOA. These networks have proven to foster mutual understanding and respect. It is an important task to stay on this course for the future.

MANY THANKS AND BEST WISHES FOR FUTURE CHALLENGES

The IOA has come a long way during the past 50 years. Everyone who is or has been involved with its development deserves sincere congratulations for the contributions that this unique institution has made to the Olympic Movement and the worldwide promotion of Olympism.

However, we must realize that challenging questions about the Olympic Movement will be asked while our world continues to grow: What are traditional Olympic values, and how will they endure or adapt to global change? What is the role of Olympic education in the age of electronic social networks and decreased physical activities among young people? How can the Youth Olympic Games succeed in combining sport competition, culture and education? How can the Olympic Games contribute to a peaceful world? The IOA will surely address these questions.

May the IOA enjoy continued success in offering open debates and discussions about the Olympic Movement while inspiring the world with Olympism.

Congratulations on your 50th anniversary, and the best of luck for years to come!



*Olympic Anthem in the amphitheatre,
7th International Session for Educators
and Officials of Higher Institutes of PE, 2006.*

*Laying of wreath at the stele
of Pierre de Coubertin by Gudrun Doll-Teppe
(on the left) and Maria Bulatova,
7th International Session for Educators
and Officials of Higher Institutes of PE, 2006.*



*Commemorative photo, 7th International Session for Educators and Officials
of Higher Institutes of Physical Education, 2006.*

1973



Conrado Duránte

Président de l'Académie Olympique Espagnole



Olympie et son légat historique et culturel



LE 24 AVRIL 1961, le Comité Olympique Espagnol reçut, au sein de ses locaux, une lettre envoyée par Carl Diem, directeur de la Haute Ecole de Sport de Cologne. Cette lettre en rappelait une précédente et annonçait que pour le mois de juin suivant était prévue l'inauguration de l'Académie Olympique Internationale à Olympie (en Grèce). De même, elle priait le Comité de choisir et d'envoyer un représentant à cet acte. La décision de sélection fut confiée à la Fédération Espagnole d'Athlétisme, qui, en séance plénière et à l'issue de longues délibérations sur les candidats proposés, me choisit.

Je suis donc arrivé à Olympie par le train de nuit,

le 14 juin, après un voyage accidenté, perte de bagages comprise. Je fus logé dans l'une des tentes aménagées en pension pour l'événement, dans laquelle et parmi les autres représentants invités, se trouvait également Gerhardus Porgieter, classé quatrième pour l'épreuve des 400 m plat aux jeux de Rome précédents.

Lorsque le lendemain, sous la lumière aveuglante et ardente du matin, je pus contempler les ruines représentatives et évocatrices du sanctuaire d'Olympie, je reçus un impact profond et saisissant dû à ma double condition d'athlète de haute compétition et d'universitaire avec certaines connaissances du légat historique de la culture grecque, intérêt qui évolua en une fascination éblouissante à mesure que, grâce à la bibliographie

obtenue sur place, je pus apprécier peu à peu *in situ* le sens et la portée des ruines vénérables et mythiques : Palestre, Gymnase, Temple de Zeus, Temple d'Héra, Stade, Leonidaion... L'émotion était plus grande par ce qu'on devinait et ce qu'on imaginait, que par ce qu'on voyait et qui restait... Ci et là, commença mon travail passionnant sur le thème d'Olympie et de son légat historique et culturel. Depuis lors, j'ai travaillé et je travaille toujours sur ce thème si riche du point de vue historique, humanistique, culturel et sportif.

C'est la raison pour laquelle, à mon avis, de nos jours, l'Académie d'Olympie réunit une double qualité déterminante qui produit chez les assistants un impact émotionnel impérissable sur la séquence de leurs expériences vitales et, ainsi, à la rigoureuse dimension scientifique des conférences et séminaires qui y sont organisés s'allie la forte attraction évocatrice de son enclave idyllique, puissante fascination tellurique qui a fait de cette zone millénaire une destination de pèlerinage et de culte. Se laisser imprégner par le calme idyllique d'Olympie, c'est recevoir une sorte de *baptême olympique* qui captera à jamais l'âme de l'assistant pour l'œuvre de la grande cause olympique qui y eut son envol désormais trimillénaire.

Au cours de ce demi-siècle de vie, la tâche et les résultats obtenus par l'Académie Olympique Internationale ont justifié une position et une valeur exceptionnelles. Déjà à ses tous débuts, le professeur autrichien Josef Recla qualifia l'Académie d'*école d'été du*

mouvement olympique ou de *centre spirituel mondial de l'olympisme*. Tout au long de son parcours, l'Académie, émergeant de la phase initiale spartiate, d'hébergement sous tente et dans une précarité généralisée, s'est transformée peu à peu pour acquérir des installations confortables qui de nos jours lui octroient une qualité maximale en raison du milieu où elle se trouve.

Olympie, comme symbole et légat, a atteint une notoriété mondiale grâce à l'intervention de l'Académie qui tous les ans, imprègne de l'idéologie olympique les centaines de participants du monde entier qui prennent part à ses différents programmes. Cela renforce, de façon permanente, la notoriété de l'enclave qui, depuis 1936 n'était évidente que lors de la cérémonie de l'allumage de la flamme pour l'inauguration des jeux, tous les quatre ans.

Je crois qu'Olympie aujourd'hui, ainsi que son Académie, sont les dépositaires de la spiritualité et du savoir olympiques, reflétés dans les ruines évocatrices et les musées, témoins de la gloire et de l'exemple du passé, alliés aux fonds bibliographiques de l'Académie et au précieux contenu scientifique des procès-verbaux de ses programmes, procès-verbaux qui recueillent tous les courants du savoir sur l'olympisme.

Le Comité Olympique Espagnol a toujours été un fidèle collaborateur de l'Académie Olympique en envoyant systématiquement des représentants à tous les cours programmés; en créant en 1968 la première Académie Olympique Nationale comme collaboratrice

de celle d'Olympie; en fondant de même en 1990 la première Association des Académies Olympiques composée de 27 pays. Le but de cette Association est de propager en une langue commune les principes olympiques, en encourageant la diffusion de l'olympisme et de son enseignement par la voie de la création et de l'impulsion des Centres d'Etudes Olympiques au sein des universités, à l'heure actuelle au nombre de 28.

Si j'établis le bilan de l'Académie d'Olympie et que j'en évoque le demi-siècle d'histoire, je ne peux me dérober au souvenir émouvant des pionniers admi-

rables et admirés que j'ai eu le privilège de connaître et de fréquenter durant toute cette période d'espoirs olympiques, ni de ceux qui par leur enthousiasme et leur savoir rendirent possible le succès de cette ambitieuse entreprise, entre autres Carl Diem, Jean Ketseas, Georges de Hanovre, Otto Szymiczek, Nicolaos Nisiotis, Cléanthis Paleologos, Otto Misangyi, Josef Recla et Paul Vialar, personnes qui serviront d'exemple et de guide à nous tous qui militons dans le sens du grand mouvement olympique.





Couverture et première page du cahier du 1er cours de l'AIO. Dans la première page, le cachet philatélique spécial pour l'occasion et la signature de Carl Diem, pionnier de l'AIO.



Le 16 juin de 1961. Première réunion des représentants du 1er cours de l'AIO. De gauche à droite, debout : F. Lotz (Allemagne), chef d'étude, C. Durántez (Espagne), G. Tower (Etats-Unis), D. Lyon (Kenya), G. Mariner (Canada), D. de Groot (Hollande), S. Mazzi (Italie), A. Miri (Argentine), W. Boomer (Etats-Unis), J. de Hegedius (Uruguay), M. Gesto (Uruguay), S. Badr (Egypte), M. Kranz (Israël), P. Mills (Grande-Bretagne), G. Willmann (Allemagne), T. Avgidis (Grèce) et G. Porgieter (Afrique du Sud). Assis : C. Romero (Argentine), R. Friederichs (Chili), N. Nasser (UAR), H. Knosels (Mexique), N. Mansur (UAR), M. Obal (Ouganda), H. Donner (Autriche), R. Moutquin (Belgique), I. Varasteh (Iran), A. Omo-Osagie (Nigéria), G. Fabrizio (Congo) et R. Kamoshita (Japon).

J. Ketseas (à droite), pionnier de l'AIO, parle avec C. Durántez.

1974



Jean Dury

Historien du sport ♦ Fondateur du Musée National du Sport, France



De décennie en décennie une incessante évolution



AIR EST D'UNE FINESSE exquise, l'odeur des pins, celle du laurier et du thym le parfument. Dans la sérénité de la nuit, le clair de lune entoure les vignes et les peupliers de la plus douce des lumières. Sur la route qui mène au village, on s'arrête, on se tait. Silence gonflé d'émotion, mais silence plein de joie et d'attente. Voici qu'apparaît, en contrebas de la route, le stade : le stade d'Olympie.

C'est donc vers les pentes légères encadrant cette large ligne droite de sable blanc que durant plus de dix siècles se dirigea, toutes les quatre années, le monde antique. C'est là que la Grèce entière se réunissait – pendant la Trêve sacrée – pour vibrer de passion devant

un spectacle à la mesure des hommes ; pour voir et acclamer : celui qui court le plus vite, celui qui saute le plus loin, celui qui force tous les adversaires à toucher le sol.

Est-ce possible qu'il y ait de cela deux millénaires ? Non, ce n'est pas vrai, puisque nous voici dans la tendre nuit d'Olympie et que le temps « disparu ».

De ces lignes enthousiastes, de cette émotion à fleur d'âme, début d'un article intitulé « Aux sources du sport » et inspiré par la 5e Session de l'Académie Internationale Olympique, alors que nous fêtons ensemble le cinquantième anniversaire, je n'ai aujourd'hui pas un mot à changer.

C'était donc en... 1965. A l'instant de cette découverte émerveillée, de ce bonheur, je me trouvais

dans une position intermédiaire en quelque sorte entre les jeunes participants, l'Ephoria et les conférenciers.

Mais l'année suivante, j'avais la joie d'être invité à donner à mon tour, sous les arbres, car il n'y avait encore aucun bâtiment-amphithéâtre permanent, ma première conférence : « L'Écrivain et le thème sportif ». Les conférenciers étaient alors logés sur la colline au-dessus du Musée existant à l'époque, à l'hôtel SPAR, ce même hôtel de la terrasse duquel Pierre de Coubertin, fin novembre (ou tout début décembre) 1894 et en avril 1927, avait contemplé l'Altis dans « la nuit étoilée », puis au matin s'était « hâté seul vers les ruines ». A cette Session de 1966, j'eus notamment le grand plaisir d'être dans le serein décor du même théâtre le guide privilégié du charmant Emil Zátopek – l'un des plus grands athlètes de l'histoire –, et je le revois plaçant son pied au creux de la ligne de départ du stade sous le regard et les applaudissements des touristes massés là-haut contre le grillage protecteur.

L'Académie. Ce fut un honneur que d'y revenir souvent et de pouvoir apprécier de décennie en décennie son incessante évolution, tout en poursuivant ma quête et en creusant différents sujets. Par exemple en 1971 : « L'Écrivain et l'inspiration olympique », 1986 : « Les Musées du Sport face à l'olympisme » (Session des Educateurs sportifs) et « Le sport, l'olympisme et les Beaux-Arts ». Que de rencontres, que d'heureux moments, avec les étudiants d'abord, mais aussi avec Nikolaos Yalouris le grand archéologue et chef des anti-

quités grecques, ou Mohamed Mzali membre du CIO et Premier Ministre de Tunisie avec lequel le premier dialogue se noua plateau à la main dans la queue du « self » alors qu'il s'apprêtait à choisir une salade de tomates, Nicolaos Nissiotis, philosophe de haut vol et d'une fraternelle simplicité, ou Juan Antonio Samaranch repartant bientôt dans son hélicoptère. Et tant d'autres devenus des amis.

En 1998, moment particulièrement fort dans la lumière nimbant la Pnyx, dos au Parthénon, lorsqu'il me fut donné de délivrer au nom des conférenciers le message de la cérémonie d'ouverture de la 38e Session, en vibration partagée avec un auditoire combien réceptif ; et conférence sur « Les événements culturels aux jeux olympiques et la pensée de Pierre de Coubertin ». En 1999 : « Des manifestations culturelles durant l'olympiade. Pourquoi ? ».

Olympie et l'Académie sont à jamais dans mon cœur.

Bouclant la boucle, j'ai de nouveau sous les yeux les quelques lignes par lesquelles se terminait cet article de 1965 – il n'était pas encore question d'une piscine et l'on se douchait en plein air – que presque par hasard j'ai retrouvé il y a peu : « Vous viendrez à Olympie. Vous nagerez dans les eaux de l'Alphée, atteint à travers les vignes, vous vous promènerez parmi les ruines sacrées, vous courrez le long des berges du fleuve dans le crépuscule. Vous retrouverez là-bas le sens du sport, les sens de la vie : le soleil, les arbres, la beauté. Le miracle grec ».



*Un joyeux footing. De gauche à droite: J. Durry, Prince Georges de Hanovre (Président de l'AIO),
E. Zátopek (médaillé olympique d'or), 6e Session de l'AIO, 1966.*



Culture physique matinale, 6e Session de l'AIO, 1966.



*Conférence par J. Durry, 11e Session de l'AIO, 1971.
A gauche O. Szymiczek et E. Petralias (Président de l'AIO), et à droite E. Panas.*

1975



Marius Francisco

Président du CNOS du Bénin ♦ Président de l'ANO du Bénin



Un merci à l'AIO du fond de mon cœur



UEL HONNEUR, quel plaisir que de se voir non seulement cité, mais retenu au nombre des personnalités marquantes dans l'édification de l'histoire d'une aussi célèbre institution qu'est l'Académie Internationale Olympique.

Merci à vous tous, autorités actuelles des lieux.

Pour la petite histoire, je dois avouer que jusqu'en 1982 où l'ensemble des fédérations nationales sportives de mon pays décidait de me porter à la tête du Comité National Olympique à l'occasion de l'assemblée générale de renouvellement de ce dernier, je n'avais que quelques idées vagues de l'olympisme. Je savais qu'il

s'organisait des jeux olympiques dont depuis toujours personne n'a de cesse de chanter la célébrité. Mais on n'entendait presque pas parler de l'olympisme.

Et pourtant, quelle importance ne lui accordait pas le Comité International Olympique à travers ses colloques, forums et congrès!

Bref, me voici désormais Président du Comité National Olympique de mon pays, CNO qui a pour toute première disposition juridique de référence la charte olympique.

Des principes fondamentaux édictés par la charte olympique, l'olympisme en est le point de mire.

Dans mon pays, le régime politique à l'époque était un régime dictatorial régentant tous les secteurs

de la vie y compris l'animation du sport national. Au point à asseoir parallèlement au CNO, un Conseil National des Sports (CNS) dont le Président était le Ministre des Sports seul habilité à assurer du point de vue des activités sportives la coordination des fédérations sportives.

Le leitmotiv de l'équipe que je dirigeais étant d'éviter toute logique d'affrontement avec le pouvoir en place et de mener pacifiquement des actions qui relèvent des attributions et de la mission du CNO, nous avons décidé de contribuer, autant que les dispositions nationales légales nous le permettaient, au développement du sport et à la préparation des athlètes de notre pays pour prendre part aux jeux olympiques, mais également travailler à la propagation de l'idéal olympique.

En 1984, nous inscrivons un béninois à la session de l'AIO pour jeunes. S'inspirant des conclusions du rapport produit dès le retour du participant à ladite session, et à ma requête auprès du Ministre des Sports, une communication, en Conseil des Ministres, autorise officiellement la création de l'Académie Nationale Olympique Béninoise (ANOB) avec pour instruction, l'introduction de l'éducation olympique dans les programmes scolaires.

En 1985, le Président du CIO Juan Antonio Samaranch a été en visite officielle au Bénin. A l'occasion, non seulement il a inauguré le siège du CNO Bénin, mais il a également procédé au lancement des travaux de la première session de l'Académie Nationale Olym-

pique Béninoise. Ce fut à la fois un acte déterminant et un acte de très haute portée historique. Ce fut la toute première ANO en Afrique au Sud du Sahara, la seconde pour toute l'Afrique après celle de l'Egypte. La propagation de l'olympisme en Afrique fut ainsi mise sur orbite avec pour base stratégique le Bénin. Puisque, pour les besoins de la cause, et à ma sollicitation, le CIO a fait dépêcher au chevet de mon CNO, l'un de ses intrépides combattants, l'inaltérable adepte de l'olympisme, Maître Conrado Duránte de nationalité espagnole que je n'ai plus besoin de présenter aux férus de l'AIO.

Maître Conrado Duránte, assisté du jeune participant de la session internationale 1984 de l'AIO, a conduit de bout en bout la première session de l'Académie Nationale Olympique Béninoise à laquelle j'ai présenté une communication inaugurale intitulée « Olympisme et valeurs humaines », fruit de mes nombreuses lectures de Mzali, des rapports de sessions de l'AIO et des *Mémoires* de Coubertin ajoutés à mes réflexions personnelles.

En 1986, toujours avec le jeune participant de la session 1984 de l'AIO et quelques autres cadres du sport, l'ANOB, a organisé sa deuxième session. Les communications ont fait l'objet de publications dans les organes de presse du CIO et auprès de figures marquantes du mouvement olympique international. Des observations et autres mots d'encouragement me sont parvenus de partout.

En 1988, le Président de l'AIO me fit l'honneur de m'inviter à me rendre à la deuxième session internationale pour directeurs des Académies Nationales Olympiques pour y présenter une communication sur le thème « Contribution des valeurs olympiques à l'éducation ». Cela me fit énormément plaisir, vous l'imaginez.

Ce fut pour moi l'occasion en or de découvrir une bonne partie des nombreux sites historiques de la Grèce, que peut-être je n'aurais jamais pu voir, notamment le splendide, somptueux cadre de l'AIO et l'Altis sacré d'Olympie, berceau des jeux antiques et base de tous ces récits mythiques qui les accompagnent.

Les sessions pour directeurs des ANO étaient programmées, me semble-t-il, de manière à faire coïncider la clôture avec la cérémonie d'inauguration de la principale session, celle des jeunes, sur la colline de la Pnyx au pied de la célèbre Acropole d'Athènes, véritable cadre de recueillement et source inouïe d'inspiration. Je n'oublierai jamais cette fabuleuse traversée sur fond de débordement qui s'offrait à tous les délégués sans distinction pour passer d'une berge à l'autre au cours du voyage d'Athènes à Olympie à l'époque.

Plus que jamais galvanisé face à un auditoire composé pour une grande partie des délégués des CNO au devant desquels on notait une impressionnante présence du collège des éminences grises de l'AIO et des dignitaires du Comité Olympique Hellénique, toutes les présentations que j'ai eu l'honneur de faire, notamment en 1990, 1993 et plus tard en 2000 puis en 2005,

me donnaient l'impression de me retrouver dans un monde complètement transfiguré, tant l'esprit olympique à chaque fois m'habitait. Rares sont les sessions destinées aux présidents et directeurs des ANO auxquelles je n'ai pas été présent, même sans y être convié en qualité de conférencier mais en tant que simple participant.

Qu'il me soit ici permis de saluer la mémoire de certains de mes collègues conférenciers à savoir : feu le Professeur Pierre-Yves Boulogne de l'Université Paris-Val-de Marne (France), feu le Dr Otto Szymiczek, ex Doyen de l'AIO, feu Mme Nadia Lekarska de Bulgarie, feu le Professeur Marc Maes de Belgique, et bien d'autres dont la densité dans les analyses m'a particulièrement frappé, mais dont je n'ai plus malheureusement jamais entendu parler lors de mes nombreuses autres présences aux sessions de l'AIO après les années quatre-vingt-dix. Il s'agit du Professeur Fernand Landry du Canada, de Me Luc Silance de Belgique, du Dr John Talbot Powell du Canada, du Dr Norbert Müller de l'ex-RFA pour ne citer que ceux-là.

Il me fallait donc l'occasion et les conditions pour faire répandre à ma manière tout ce charme intellectuel et spirituel à travers le monde qui m'entoure. Une fois les bases d'un bon fonctionnement de l'Académie Nationale Olympique Béninoise mises en route, ma préoccupation a été de tenter de semer au sein des autres CNO de l'Afrique de l'ouest avec lesquels mon CNO a le français en partage, l'esprit olympique. Je m'y suis attelé

et finis par réunir à Cotonou une douzaine de délégués des différents CNO de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. Et là encore avec l'engagement, la générosité de Maître Conrado et l'appui financier de la Solidarité Olympique, une session de vulgarisation des idées olympiques a été tenue par l'ANO Béninoise et permit à tous les participants de retourner dans leur CNO respectif pour non seulement mettre en place les structures d'animation d'une Académie Nationale Olympique pour leur pays, mais jouer pleinement le rôle de pionnier qui devrait être désormais le leur. Mais avant, ne m'était-il pas aussi arrivé de me rendre à mes propres frais dans certains CNO juste pour prêcher la bonne nouvelle ? De quelle occasion de regroupement des CNO d'Afrique n'ai-je pas profité pour tenter d'éveiller les attentions des dirigeants sur la nécessité pour chacun de nos CNO de faire la différence par rapport aux autres structures de gestion du sport, en se consacrant effectivement à l'éducation olympique aux côtés de la recherche des performances sportives.

Aujourd'hui, selon les statistiques, l'Afrique compte 38 ANO, alors que l'Amérique dispose de 32, l'Asie 28, l'Océanie 3 et l'Europe 42 ANO. La dernière action à laquelle je me suis essayé et à laquelle je croyais, mais qui malheureusement a été dévoyée en me laissant un arrière goût de travail inachevé, est mon souci de voir toute cette flopée d'ANO des CNO africains se fédérer pour s'obliger à rester en état de veille permanent afin de s'éviter le danger de sclérose qui pourrait les guetter au cours de la longue et périlleuse marche induite par toute action d'éducation.

Mon optimisme en l'avenir me couvre tout de même in fine d'une certaine fierté que, jetant un regard rétrospectif sur la trajectoire arrière de mon parcours olympique, je n'hésite pas un seul instant à présenter à l'AIO un merci du fond de mon cœur.





*Photo commémorative, 10e Session
Internationale pour Directeurs des ANO,
2009.*



*Les conférenciers de la 33e Session
de l'AIO, 1993, (de gauche à droite)
Y.-K. Yuen, G. Dellamary, S.-P. Kang,
M. Francisco, W. Lipoński et B. Lalaoui.*

1976



Prof. Dionyssis Gargas

Director of the IOA



My four seasons at the IOA



IT IS SAID that one's most wonderful memories from a place of enchantment stem from one's first visit.

This is not true or rather does not apply in the case of the International Olympic Academy at Ancient Olympia! The uncanny thing about this place is that each visit conveys a different picture, without any change having occurred in the elements that compose it. Again and again, one finds oneself admiring things afresh, following the same routes, listening to the same birdsong, marvelling at the same environment, treading the same paths, sensing the same influences, remembering the same things and wondering when one will be returning to this place full

of symbolisms and historical and philosophical quests.

My relationship with the International Olympic Academy has been a long one and can be divided into four different periods, each under different conditions, but always with the same emotions and feelings.

I first visited the IOA's facilities in 1980 as a member of the Ethics Commission participating with its President Dimitris Leontidis in the 20th Session for Young Participants. As observers, we were able to study the strong personality of Otto Szymiczek, Dean of the Academy, as he guided, firmly but methodically, the small team of volunteers handling administrative matters. We also observed the gentle character of the IOA President Nicos Nissiotis, whose simple words inspired

serenity and optimism. The Academy's surroundings had never been disturbed by a human hand; the vegetation was wild but tranquil, reminding one of better days, far from the current reality. This was a period when the IOA's role within the Olympic Movement was strongly being called into question.

That year coincided with a change of IOC President, beginning a new era for the IOA. Juan Antonio Samaranch had been a leading figure in the Olympic Movement and, in particular, in the IOC. Nikos Filaretos, who took the helm of the IOA in 1986, after Nicos Nissiotis' untimely death, often referred to Samaranch's huge support for this international institution. The introversion of the IOA up until the beginning of the 1980s ended and its work quickly expanded on many levels, contributing to the establishment of a large number of National Olympic Academies. As a member of the HOC, I followed these changes closely through my frequent visits to the constantly expanding facilities. During the presidency of Lambis Nikolaou, the HOC completed the facilities one sees today, with the Conference Centre at its core.

In 1993, I was honoured to be elected the HOC's Secretary General and ex officio member of the Ephoria of the IOA, and I regularly visited the facilities. In 1994 and in 1995, two Seminars for the Secretaries General of the European Olympic Committees were held at the IOA, an unforgettable experience for all participants. The burgeoning trees all around the facil-

ities cradled the nests of numerous nightingales and other rare birds that accompanied visitors on their early morning walks! The setting was a unique source of inspiration to both teachers and students.

We tried to make the Academy more accessible to various sports and other organizations, wishing to make Olympia the cradle of Olympic education. Antonis Tzikas, President of the HOC at that time and a fervent admirer of Olympism, supported our efforts. Here, I must also mention the active and steady presence at Olympia of Otto's son, Marton Simitsek, Vice-President of the HOC, with whom the Ephoria had entrusted the running of the facilities during the presidency of Freddy Serpieri.

From 1997 until 2009 I visited the facilities occasionally, always happy to relive, albeit for a short while, the magic of the place. In 2001, in spite of his conservatism and understandable dependence on the IOC, Nikos Filaretos managed to make the IOA an independent organization, operating as a private legal entity. What did this mean? At that time, the IOA's formal status was not of great importance, since its administrative structure had not changed. The HOC had the final word on the composition of the Ephoria, its activities were dependent on the IOC's objectives. And this could not have been otherwise, since the purpose of the IOA, as the only institution recognized by the Olympic Charter, is to disseminate the Olympic ideals and support the development of Olympic education. It

appears, however, that the legal form adopted in 2001 will henceforth be playing an important role in determining the future activity of the IOA.

The devastating fires of 2007 in Olympia also left their inevitable mark on the IOA's facilities. The lush vegetation that we, older visitors, were familiar with had disappeared and the Kronion Hill, once covered with pine trees, had been reduced to ashes within hours by the flames! The trees that gave shelter to our gatherings were no more, the birds that accompanied us during our walks had gone, and the evenings were no longer as cool! What could not be destroyed, however, were our memories of the magical atmosphere that permeated this place, harmoniously blending its rich past with today's reality!

When Isidoros Kouvelos, the new President of the IOA, asked me in February 2009 to help him 'build a new Academy', with a stronger international presence and open to any institution wishing to promote the development of Olympic education, I was overjoyed! The new administration's first concern was to give the IOA's activities a higher profile and establish closer co-operation between the HOC and the IOC. The Academy's grounds were replanted after the fire and once more began to attract visitors and Olympic Family institutions. To this end, the HOC, on the recommendation of its President Spyros Capralos, reduced accommodation and boarding costs, while the IOC covered the financial losses we had incurred as a result of

the reduced state subsidy. The academic year 2009/2010 heralded a new approach to Olympic education, the creation of the Master's Degree Programme in Olympic Studies, led by IOA Dean Kostas Georgiadis. This new level of education, which Isidoros Kouvelos introduced as an idea, came to life through cooperation with the University of the Peloponnese and a generous grant from the John Latsis Foundation.

Today, fifty years after its inauguration, the IOA is ready to begin a new course. National Olympic Academies have multiplied and now number 143. The IOA is committed to supporting their development and providing guidance. Its commitment is to act as a model while propagating the Olympic principles and enhancing Olympic education. The IOA must move ahead independently, on the course set by the Olympic Movement, in order to become an independent discussion forum exploring the ideas that led to its establishment. The Olympic Movement needs an active and dynamic International Olympic Academy that will support its educational goals.

Today, these words of Pierre de Coubertin seem to be more timely than ever: *'I could not finish what I wanted to achieve. I believe that a centre of Olympic Studies would contribute, more than anything else, to the preservation and continuation of my work and would protect it from the deviations, which I am afraid will happen'.*

*Awarding of participation diploma
to D. Gangas (on the right)
by I. Kouvelos, 10th Joint International
Session for Presidents or Directors
of NOAs and Officials of NOCs, 2010.*



*From left to right: D. Gangas,
K. Georgiadis, HRH Princess Sarah
Al-Feisal, HRH Prince of Jordan
Feisal bin Al-Hussein and I. Kouvelos,
50th International Session for Young
Participants, 2010.*





2nd Symposium of EOCs' Secretaries General, 1995. From left to right: V. Mota, D. Michaelides, S. Capralos, Gunilla Lindberg, D. Gangas, T. Jagodic, D. Sherlock.



2nd Joint International Session for Presidents or Directors of NOAs and Members and Staff of NOCs, 1994. From left to right: N. Yalouris (IOA Honorary Vice-President), A. Tzikas (HOC President) and D. Gangas.

1977



Nicole Girard-Savoy

Cheffe de section et des finances de la Solidarité Olympique du CIO



Un voyage à Olympie



TÉ 1999. Dès ma sortie de l'avion, la chaleur est omniprésente. La traversée d'Athènes prend plus d'une heure, l'autoroute de contournement de la ville ne sera construite que quelques années plus tard pour les jeux olympiques de 2004. La route se poursuit entre oliviers, bord de mer et canal de Corinthe...

Quelques heures plus tard, je traverse le site de l'ancienne Olympie avec ses musées, son site archéologique et son stade antique. Me voilà à présent devant le siège de l'Académie. Le gardien ouvre la grille du portail, à gauche les terrains de tennis, à droite la piscine, puis les autres installations bordées d'orangers et d'une végétation luxuriante. Je fais peu à peu connaissance

des lieux. Je découvre mon logement, la cafétéria, l'auditorium et la bibliothèque, les espaces extérieurs où les groupes de travail se réunissent dans de petites cabanes, le réveil chaque matin en musique. La magie opère immédiatement. Mais pour quelles raisons ?

Tout d'abord, l'endroit même, protégé et calme, propice à la réflexion et où le temps semble suspendu. Mais paradoxalement, celui-ci reste animé et vivant, car c'est avant tout un lieu culturel et sportif, un lieu de rencontres entre personnes de tout horizon et de cultures différentes. Et cet environnement répond parfaitement à ce que le fondateur du mouvement olympique moderne espérait comme centre d'études, de recherches et d'éducation olympique pour les générations

à venir d'hommes et de femmes. D'ailleurs son cœur repose sur cette terre.

Depuis cet été 1999, je suis retournée régulièrement à Olympie où j'ai eu le plaisir d'intervenir sur le thème de la Solidarité Olympique lors des sessions pour les jeunes participants ou celles pour les dirigeants des Académies Nationales Olympiques et des Comités Nationaux Olympiques.

Année après année, experts, passionnés, futurs dirigeants sportifs, enseignants et jeunes gens se réunissent à Olympie pour débattre des aspects philosophiques et pédagogiques de l'olympisme. Ce thème étant si vaste, ce qui m'a frappée depuis le début, ce sont les différences d'interprétation et les points de vue convergents qui en ressortent lorsqu'il s'agit de parler de principes éthiques universels ou des valeurs intrinsèques du sport pour soutenir les actions des collectivités. Non seulement les définitions varient selon le contexte culturel de chacun, mais la diversité se trouve dans les moyens d'appliquer ces idées et concepts selon son environnement et ses possibilités. Unies dans un même idéal, les valeurs se traduisent de mille façons et c'est certainement cette diversité d'expression qui en fait la richesse et l'intérêt.

Le dialogue qui s'instaure très rapidement est constant. Il commence lors des présentations et de la séance de questions qui s'ensuit, et se poursuit pendant les discussions de groupes où les débats sont parfois animés, mais toujours empreints de respect. Puis le dialo-

gue continue de manière plus informelle à l'occasion des repas en commun ou à la croisée d'un chemin.

Toutes ces rencontres et ces échanges m'ont permis de mieux comprendre les structures organisationnelles, ainsi que la complexité et les difficultés de fonctionnement de ces organisations dans lesquelles les participants œuvrent souvent à titre bénévole.

Cette expérience unique, que j'ai eu la joie de vivre à plusieurs reprises à Olympie, je la souhaite à tous ceux qui se passionnent ou qui travaillent pour le mouvement olympique. Mais bon nombre d'entre eux n'auront peut-être pas la chance de participer à une édition des jeux olympiques. C'est là qu'intervient l'Académie. De par son rôle, elle permet à des milliers de personnes de s'imprégner de manière différente de l'esprit olympique, de pouvoir partager et vivre des moments uniques, de lier de belles amitiés et de transmettre à leur tour leurs nouvelles connaissances de retour chez eux.

Le 50e anniversaire de l'Académie nous offre un héritage remarquable s'agissant des travaux d'études et de recherches sur l'olympisme ainsi que sur les jeux olympiques antiques et modernes. L'enseignement dispensé permet de mieux comprendre les origines de ses principes fondamentaux et de nous rappeler que l'engagement de l'Académie se fait avant tout sur un plan social où la diversité culturelle, de par sa complémentarité, doit être maintenue bien au-delà des jeux olympiques. La création d'Académies Nationales, qui ont la responsabilité d'élaborer des programmes éducatifs et

culturels ou encore des actions spécifiques mettant le sport au service du développement, sont les fruits de son travail depuis maintenant un demi-siècle.

Je souhaite à l'Académie que son engagement et

son action éducative se poursuivent pendant de nombreuses années afin d'apporter une contribution positive au développement de la jeunesse et à une connaissance approfondie de l'olympisme.



*Nicole Girard-Savoy à la salle
des conférences, 10e Session Internationale
Commune pour Présidents ou Directeurs
des ANO et Cadres des CNO, 2010.*





*Participants de groupe de discussion avec Nicole Girard-Savoy sur le grand escalier,
9e Session Internationale Commune pour Présidents ou Directeurs des ANO et Cadres des CNO, 2008.*

1978



Prof. Cl. A. Guiyama-Massogo

Président de l'ANO Centrafricaine ♦ Président de l'Association Francophone des Académies Olympiques (AFAO) ♦ Secrétaire Général Adjoint du CNO de Centrafrique



L'Académie Internationale Olympique depuis 50 ans : Une richesse intellectuelle et culturelle mondiale exceptionnelle



EST EN 1995 que j'ai participé pour la première fois à une session de l'Académie Internationale Olympique à Olympie. Je n'étais pas le premier de mon pays à effectuer ce pèlerinage au berceau de l'olympisme puisque j'eus l'agréable surprise d'y découvrir les photos de deux de mes compatriotes fixées aux murs du restaurant. Et c'était dans une Grèce qui ne connaissait pas encore son développement socioéconomique actuel. Aussi, lors de cette première visite de la Grèce et d'Olympie, trois choses me frappèrent et marquèrent en même temps mon esprit.

En premier lieu, le faible développement du pays

comparativement à celui d'autres pays d'Europe que j'avais visités auparavant. Non seulement Athènes était une ville où la pollution était élevée, mais la monnaie nationale, la drachme, était faible.

En deuxième lieu et en contraste avec la situation du pays, les superbes installations de l'AIO à Olympie qui fascinaient par leur splendeur et le calme qui y régnait.

En troisième lieu, l'ambiance très conviviale entre les participants à la session venus d'horizons divers mais qui semblaient se connaître depuis toujours et qui manifestaient surtout un grand intérêt pour la formation dispensée par des conférenciers éminents.

Je compris alors que j'avais eu une chance exceptionnelle de venir à cette session qui était d'abord l'occasion d'acquérir des connaissances solides sur l'olympisme que je connaissais sommairement à travers mes cours de philosophie ; que cette session était ensuite le moment d'échanges avec des personnes de tous les coins du monde, y compris après la formation et qu'enfin l'olympisme était d'un grand intérêt scientifique pour moi. Pour toutes ces raisons, je pris la résolution d'approfondir mes connaissances en matière de philosophie olympique, ce que je commençai à faire dès mon retour au pays, parallèlement au travail de vulgarisation et de sensibilisation aux idéaux olympiques qui m'incombait au sein de notre Académie Nationale Olympique.

Comme récompense du travail accompli, de Vice-Président de notre ANO que j'étais, je fus promu Président en 2001 lorsque ce poste fut laissé vacant dans des circonstances tragiques. Je mesurai alors l'ampleur et l'importance de la mission qui m'était ainsi dévolue et m'investis davantage dans le rayonnement de mon Académie à l'échelle sous-régionale et ensuite à l'échelle de l'Afrique. Lorsque je fus invité comme conférencier à Olympie en 2004, cela m'ouvrit la voie d'une plus grande reconnaissance en sein de l'AIO dont j'éprouvais une légitime fierté. A propos, je ne pourrai oublier le souvenir déférent de l'ancien Premier Ministre tunisien Mohamed Mzali par ailleurs membre du CIO et auteur de l'ouvrage « L'olympisme en Afrique aujourd'hui »

qui me fit le grand honneur et l'immense plaisir de retarder son retour sur Athènes pour assister à ma présentation. Depuis lors, je suis revenu presque régulièrement à Olympie et à chaque fois j'ai eu le privilège d'être désigné coordonnateur d'un groupe francophone, tâche dont je m'acquitte chaque fois avec beaucoup de sérieux et de responsabilité.

En outre, Olympie a été le lieu de lancement de l'Association des Académies Nationales Olympiques d'Afrique qui a été créée en décembre 2008 à Tunis après un laborieux travail accompli en marge des sessions de l'AIO et dont j'ai été élu 2e Vice-Président. Il en est de même pour l'Association Francophone des Académies Olympiques (AFAO) créée à Beyrouth en septembre 2009 et dont j'ai été élu Président. Sans fausse modestie, je puis donc affirmer qu'au cours de ces 50 ans de l'AIO j'y ai acquis une place et peut-être même une notoriété qui font que je figure parmi les personnalités respectables de cette institution. La preuve : l'invitation qui m'a été adressée parmi tant d'autres de contribuer à l'album commémoratif dont je suis profondément reconnaissant au Président Isidoros Kouvelos et à la direction de l'AIO.

Au-delà de mon itinéraire personnel, je crois pouvoir dire que mon statut de chercheur et de dirigeant d'une ANO depuis une décennie m'ont conduit à devenir un observateur averti de l'évolution de l'AIO et, à ce titre, m'autorisent à mettre en exergue, à l'occasion de ce cinquantenaire, les aspects essentiels de cette évolution.

Sortie du rêve du Baron Pierre de Coubertin pour être réalisée par ses amis Jean Ketseas et Carl Diem, l'AIO a traversé une époque au cours de laquelle malgré des difficultés en tout genre, elle s'est affirmée comme la gardienne fidèle de la tradition de l'olympisme. Depuis sa création jusqu'à ce jour, elle est incontestablement le plus grand centre mondial d'éducation olympique et, partant, une source exceptionnelle de connaissance et de diffusion de cette éducation. Elle est le conservatoire des valeurs fondamentales du sport qu'elle a réussi à propager aux quatre coins du monde sous la forme d'une religion d'un nouveau style de vie fondée sur la combinaison du sport, des arts, de la culture et de l'éducation. A Olympie, cette fidélité à la tradition est toujours fortement ressentie à travers le rituel du déroulement des sessions mais surtout à travers la dévotion des participants pour les personnalités qui ont contribué à asseoir celle-ci. Si bien que toute attitude iconoclaste est toujours mal accueillie, comme lors de cette session de 2009 où un conférencier certes brillant, mais audacieux, a visiblement heurté la sensibilité des participants en défendant des idées peut-être avérées, mais qui sortent de la tradition.

Cependant, ce statut de gardien impénitent de la tradition n'a pas empêché l'AIO de s'adapter aux situations nouvelles et aux mutations dans le monde des idées et du sport. En tout cas, tous les dirigeants de l'AIO, de Ketseas à Kouvelos en passant par Filaretos, ont su intégrer à la marche de cette institution la per-

ception des problèmes qui n'existaient pas au départ et qui étaient susceptibles d'impacter sur l'histoire du sport ou du mouvement olympique. Ainsi, à côté du thème général quasi invariable des sessions de formation, tous les sujets touchant à l'actualité ont été abordés sous la forme de sujets spécifiques. Progressivement, d'autres programmes de formation sont venus s'ajouter aux programmes initiaux, comme le master ou la session des médaillés olympiques. En plus de l'aspect qualitatif de cette adaptation, l'aspect quantitatif n'a pas été perdu de vue. Pour preuves : la construction d'une nouvelle salle de conférences tout en marbre avec des moyens techniques de communication plus performants ; la construction d'une nouvelle bibliothèque et de nouveaux bureaux ; la réhabilitation progressive des chambres à coucher, mais aussi des infrastructures de distraction. Tout cela témoigne d'une capacité d'adaptation exceptionnelle qui a fait que chaque année on a l'impression de découvrir une nouvelle AIO mais qui n'est pas fondamentalement différente du temple initial.

Malgré tout, il reste à l'AIO d'anticiper l'avenir et de conforter son leadership dans le domaine de l'éducation olympique à un moment où émergent d'autres centres, structures ou groupes de structures qui ont aussi l'ambition de porter le message olympique dans le monde entier ou dans certaines parties du monde. Comme cela a été reconnu lors de la session bilan des ANO de 2006, le défi de l'avenir, c'est l'accroissement et l'extension de l'éducation olympique. L'atout majeur

dans ce cas, c'est la force des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication qui vont permettre de réduire certaines disparités et favoriser une plus grande accessibilité aux personnes des coins les plus reculés. En misant sur ce support indispensable, la capacité d'adaptation de l'AIO déjà éprouvée devrait maintenant consister à développer une synergie avec tous ces centres, toutes ces structures ou groupes de structures qui essaient de par le monde afin de faire

de l'éducation olympique plus que jamais le véritable levier d'un monde plus pacifique et meilleur. Fort heureusement, on sait que l'AIO peut compter pour cela sur l'appui du CIO qui, plus qu'auparavant, devrait consentir des moyens plus importants pour soutenir les actions de cette institution qui n'est plus seulement grecque, mais internationale. Bon vent à l'AIO pour les prochaines 50 années.





*Décernement de diplôme
de participation à Cl. A. Guiyama-
Massogo (à gauche) par I. Kouvelos,
10e Session Internationale Commune
pour Présidents ou Directeurs
des ANO et Cadres des CNO, 2010.*



*10e Session Internationale
Commune pour Présidents
ou Directeurs des ANO
et Cadres des CNO, 2010.*



Elizabeth A. Hanley

*Associate Professor Emerita, Department of Kinesiology,
Penn State University, USA*



So we to Olympia's vale have come, And in silent rapture we will go...



OLYMPIA, home to the International Olympic Academy, offers a unique ambience and often changes forever those who have been fortunate to experience an IOA session. My life was one that was changed forever!

In 1977, the USOC selected six of us for the IOA Young Participants (YP) Session. We attended the inaugural United States Olympic Academy in Chicago prior to heading to Greece, received a detailed orientation regarding the history, purpose, and aims of the IOA – we were to become ‘ambassadors’ of Olympism when we returned home –, and we submitted a report as to how we would implement what we learned at the IOA in our respective careers. Inspirational and historical

lectures by IOA President Nicolaos Nissiotis, Dean Otto Szymiczek, and Cleanthis Palaeologos, together with other noted lecturers, laid the foundation for my dedication to the ideals of Olympism: friendship, fair play, understanding, respect... ideals that permeated my 40-year career at Penn State, as artistic director of the Penn State International Dance Ensemble, and as professor of dance, figure skating, and History and Philosophy of the Modern Olympic Games classes.

It was not only the intellectual aspect of the IOA that changed my life; it was the opportunity to interact with others from different countries and exchange information on education, culture, religion, and sport. Social Evenings were often the highlight and brought

us closer together in one common bond. To this day my 1977 IOA friends remain some of my best!

The year 1977 was only the beginning of my 'love affair' with the IOA and Olympism. Through my expertise in dance (modern, folkloric) I was invited to return to the IOA many times thereafter; initially, to help Head Assistant Vassos Constantinou (CYP) with Social Evenings, and later, to direct/teach the Dance Workshop, which became a formal part of the programme under IOA President Nikos Filaretos and Dean Kostas Georgiadis. For many years, artist Kevin Whitney (GBR) organized an 'Arts Happening' toward the end of each session, which included art, poetry, and dance presentations. The marble steps provided the perfect 'theatre' for the audience! Additional opportunities to return to the IOA over the years included being invited as a discussion group coordinator and as a lecturer. It was also a privilege to attend a Session for Directors of NOAs and a Session for Educationists.

In 1986, at the conclusion of the YP Session, a group of us formed the International Olympic Academy Participants Association (IOAPA), the goal of which was to stay in touch, meet every two years at the IOA, and share what we had accomplished for the Olympic Movement in our respective countries. Our first meeting was in 1989 and we have continued to meet biennially since then. July 2011 will be our next meeting to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the IOA.

A rare opportunity to run with the Olympic torch

in Greece was awarded to IOAPA in 1996 prior to the Atlanta Olympic Games; forty members from around the world gathered at the IOA in March to run a leg of the Greek torch relay over Mt Taygetos, thanks to the efforts of Mr Nassos Kritsinelis. It was truly a 'spiritual' experience, and I still recall that time with reverence and gratitude. My torch has been featured in numerous lectures/presentations to classes and to different organizations over the years, and remains a constant reminder that I have an obligation to promote Olympism, even as a retiree. To me, this torch will always be the most beautiful torch ever made!

As a direct result of meeting IOC and NOC members, and IOA participants, during my years at the Academy, I have been fortunate to attend Olympic Games: Lake Placid 1980 (guest of Liechtenstein NOC), Sarajevo 1984 (guest of IOC member Phil Coles), Sydney 2000 (guest of SOCOG member Kristine Toohey), Athens 2004, Torino 2006, and 2008 Beijing (I attended the Hong Kong equestrian events and spent a day with IOA friend Sze Sze Hon). London 2012 is now on my calendar and I look forward to another gathering of IOA friends.

Over the years, from 1977 to the present, I have saved lectures, participant lists, photographs, and all the memorabilia given to me by participants, lecturers, or others: wooden shoes from Holland, slippers from Tunisia, pottery from Cyprus, colourful banners from NOCs, a Sarajevo commemorative medal, an Iranian

(Persian) table scarf, a Greek wall hanging, Olympic books, and so much more. Each gift is not important in itself; it is the person who gave it that makes it an important part of who I am.

Early morning runs to Mt Kronion to catch the sunrise were special each year! In 1996, as we arrived at the top of the hill in silence, Milada Baresova (Czech Republic) serenaded us with flute music as the sun rose quietly in the distance. Eleven years later, the summer fires of 2007 devastated Kronion Hill and the surrounding countryside – and would have destroyed the IOA and the museum if it had not been for the hard work of locals. In November 2007 I joined the ‘Pilgrimage to Olympia’ of 40 scholars from eleven countries to deliver

donated funds of over 12,000 euros in person to those who fought the fires. This was another ‘spiritual’ experience for all of us; the gratitude was palpable and real. We celebrated together in a Linaria taverna with food, drink and dancing. Tiny pink blossoms of wild cyclamen were already bringing a rebirth to the area as we left for home, from Coubertin’s stele to the Academy grounds and beyond – a positive sign for the future.

Congratulations to the International Olympic Academy on being a positive force for Olympism and the Olympic spirit for 50 years!

So we to Olympia’s vale have come, And in silent rapture we will go... (From *Olympia’s Quietness* by Professor John Powell (CAN), IOA lecturer.)



*Sunrise on Mt Kronion. A participant
from the Czech Republic is playing
the violin, 1996.*



*IOA Dance Workshop. Elizabeth Hanley
(on the left) is reading the poem
'Olympia's quietness' by J. Powell,
32nd Session for Young
Participants, 1992.*





*Elizabeth Hanley is planting
a willow tree at the IOA as a gift
from the IOAPA, 1991.*

1980



John Harms

Writer ♦ Broadcaster

A place of great spirit



OMETIMES, when I am feeling a little sad with life, I allow my mind to wander back to Olympia, to the summer of 1994, when I attended the seminar for postgraduate students at the International Olympic Academy.

It was a magic time; I met some wonderful people: professors, scholars, students, villagers. I sat and talked with them, ate and drank with them, and talked some more. My understanding of history, philosophy, sociology, and archaeology was much enhanced. And I was free to enjoy the magnificent surrounds of the ancient site, the International Olympic Academy, and the village of Olympia.

Before coming to the Academy I had a pretty

good knowledge of the modern Olympic Games: I knew of the many Australian Olympic champions whose places are fixed in the public memory in Australia; I knew of many of the great athletes from around the world. As many sports-loving Australians do.

As a young historian, I knew something of the revival of the Olympic Games; I knew something of Pierre de Coubertin; and I had a working knowledge of the ancient Olympic Games.

But it wasn't until I saw Kronion Hill and the site of the ancient Olympic Games, and took up residence among the eucalypts and oleanders of the Academy, that I understood what a remarkable place I had been invited to.



I recall my first visit to the ancient site, on the day that we arrived at the Academy. A few of us, having dumped our worldly possessions in our rooms, headed across the road to see the ruins for the first time, and to run that one stade, and then another, on the track. To feel, for a moment, connected to all those who had competed there all those years ago, and to feel connected to all those who had been drawn to the site in this age of travel and communications.

And then, the following morning, in the warm late-May sunshine, to be taken across by Professor Weiler and Professor Decker, to walk among the pillars which lay there, as they had fallen in 551 AD, like a set of kid's building blocks. To see the various archaeological teams – the Germans led by a man still hippy-ish in appearance with his beard and bandanna and cheese-cloth shirt, and another team led by a man who looked like he was straight from the Royal Society in 1876, smoking a pipe. I liked their scholarship, their enthusiasm, their need to know and understand.

This began our intense study of sport in antiquity, and the ancient Olympic Games. Which became a study of the discovery of the deeply silted site, of sport in the mid nineteenth century, and of the revival of the Games.

This inevitably led to a study of de Coubertin and the philosophy of Olympism. As an idealist myself, I could see the worth of such a hopeful philosophy: that such good could emerge out of an international sporting and cultural festival which celebrated striving and

yearning and hopefulness, in a spirit of fraternity and good will.

There was certainly plenty of good will among us all: professors, scholars, organizers. In the evenings, having tussled with Stepan (the Russian) and Azgan (the Albanian triple jump champion) and Halvard (from Lillehammer) and Soula (the Cypriot volleyballer) and Zenon (the Greek) and Kostas (the Dean and star football player) and many others on the football field amid the athletics track, I would shower and return to the dining room to enjoy a beer and the wonderful Greek food. There was always so much to talk about; so much to ask. Such difference and such similarity among the 30 or so people involved.

And then we would walk to the village of Olympia, along the ancient site, among the fireflies, under the Mediterranean moon and stars, to sit in the 'Kladeos' taverna, and drink retsina and eat bread and octopus and *taramosalata* and *tzatziki* and halva, talking so much, and laughing. Finding links through common understandings and cultural references (I think it was Choi who said 'Just like that time in Ali Barber and the Forty Robbers'), losing things in translation, and me feeling a sham for having one language when others had four and five. Such a free spirit of fraternity had descended that no one noticed the time disappearing.

Which is what this place is about. The time has passed since 776 BC, and yet people continue to gather here in that same spirit. Spirit? Spirit is a word which has copped a fair share of criticism in the contemporary intellectual milieu. Those who have grown up immersed in the postmodern condition will tell you spirit is a mere construction. How can a place have a spirit?

Those people haven't visited Olympia, where collective memory permeates every citrus grove and orchard. It blows through the pines and among the ruins, through the tunnel that leads into the stadium. It resides in the people: when I was at Olympia, in Kostas Georgiadis and Themis (the god of hard work, and librarianship), in Eleni Theodoraki who helped organize the seven-week seminar so well. It could be found in the village: in Nondas (the jeweller) who insisted we go to 'Zorbas' nightclub with him and broke plates and

bottles at our feet, and in the deputy mayor Apostolos who, just before the sun was rising, in one particularly long session of conversation, told me how Greeks live. 'In Greece, if we have tomatoes, we eat tomatoes', he said. 'If we have peaches, we eat peaches. And if we don't have any money, we find someone who does.'

All these experiences I had because of the ancient Olympic Games, which celebrated the body and the mind, the *agon* of the athlete (and the writer), and the pursuit of excellence.

And so, now in 2011, back in Australia, having allowed these memories to come flooding back, my soul is repaired. I look forward to the day when my wife, Susan, and my own children (all under three and a half), Theo, Anna, and Evie, will come back to enjoy the beauty and the stillness, and the peace of Olympia.

It is a place of great spirit.





*During the works of the
2nd International Seminar
for Selected Graduate Students, 1994.*

*Closing address by J. Harms,
2nd Postgraduate Seminar, 1994.
On the right K. Georgiadis.*





*Running at the ancient stadium
in Olympia, 2nd Postgraduate
Seminar, 1994.*

*Commemorative photo of the 2nd
Postgraduate Seminar, 1994.*



1981



Zhenliang He

*Membre honoraire du CIO ♦ Ancien Président de la Commission du CIO
pour la Culture et l'Education Olympique*



Extraordinaire contribution à l'éducation olympique



L'OCCASION du 50e anniversaire de l'Académie Internationale Olympique, je me permets d'adresser mes sincères félicitations et mon hommage à l'AIO pour son extraordinaire contribution à l'éducation olympique dans le monde.

Baron Pierre de Coubertin, fondateur de mouvement olympique moderne, a consacré toute sa vie pour éduquer la jeunesse et inspirer la société. Sous son initiative le mouvement olympique a toujours mis l'éducation au premier plan de ses activités. Alliant sport et culture-éducation, son objectif est de former une jeunesse ayant un développement harmonieux et équilibré des qualités du corps, de la volonté et de l'esprit, d'éta-

blir une société respectant la dignité humaine, et de contribuer à édifier un monde meilleur et pacifique. On peut même dire qu'allier sport et éducation est la raison d'être des jeux olympiques. C'est pour cela que Pierre de Coubertin tout en n'épargnant aucun effort pour assurer la bonne tenue des jeux olympiques en suivant une direction correcte, rêvait toujours à l'expansion de l'éducation des valeurs olympiques. Son rêve a pu être concrétisé par la création de l'Académie Internationale Olympique, grâce à l'effort de plusieurs générations d'adhérents aux idéaux olympiques, surtout au puissant soutien des autorités grecques.

Commençant par de modestes séminaires internationaux des jeunes participants qui duraient chaque

fois deux semaines, l'AIO est devenue une institution authentiquement académique, englobant annuellement de multiples types de conférences, séminaires et activités académiques traitant des sujets très variés. La richesse des programmes, la qualité des lectures, l'opportunité des thèmes étroitement liés au développement du mouvement olympique font de l'AIO la plus importante institution au monde dans le domaine de l'éducation olympique. En plus, l'extraordinaire environnement voisinant Olympie, lieu de naissance des jeux olympiques de l'Antiquité, l'ambiance cordiale et solidaire dans le campus, la vivacité des jeunes participants, tous ces facteurs pour que l'AIO devienne une sorte de lieu de pèlerinage pour tous ceux qui chérissent l'esprit et les idéaux olympiques. Et plus encore, le tombeau où repose éternellement le cœur de Pierre de Coubertin situé dans la forêt qui entoure l'AIO constitue un lien organique entre les jeux olympiques de l'Antiquité et ceux de l'ère moderne.

J'ai eu le plaisir de séjourner plusieurs fois à l'AIO. Bien que tous assez courts, ces séjours m'ont laissé une profonde impression. Chaque fois plus forte est ma conviction qu'il est souhaitable que les membres du CIO, les membres des Commissions du CIO et les collaborateurs de l'Administration du CIO viennent passer

un temps ici à l'AIO, dans cette ambiance imbue de l'esprit olympique, afin de mieux comprendre l'olympisme et l'importance de leur tâche.

J'ai assumé la présidence de la Commission du CIO pour la Culture (1995-1999) et puis de la Commission du CIO pour la Culture et l'Education Olympique (2000-2009). Ce qui m'a permis de mieux connaître les grands efforts qu'a fait l'AIO dans la formation d'une génération après l'autre de jeunes propagateurs de l'olympisme ainsi que les éclatants succès obtenus dans cette noble mission. Dans le but de nous inspirer de l'ambiance exceptionnelle à l'AIO, notre Commission a tenu sa réunion plénière et les réunions des ses groupes de travail à l'AIO en juin 2007. Après la conclusion des ses réunions, tous les membres de la Commission se sont rendus au tombeau de Pierre de Coubertin pour lui rendre hommage. Cette réunion à l'AIO est jusqu'ici la plus mémorable des réunions annuelles de notre Commission.

Au moment où l'AIO célèbre son 50e anniversaire, je voudrais exprimer à l'AIO mes sincères souhaits de plus grands succès, mon hommage à tous ceux qui s'adonnent à la noble mission de l'éducation olympique et notre gratitude aux autorités grecques.



Déposition de couronne à la stèle de Pierre de Coubertin par Z. He (à gauche) et M. Mzali, au nom de la Commission du CIO pour la Culture et l'Éducation Olympique, 2007.



Pendant un intervalle à l'amphithéâtre de l'AIO, 47e Session Internationale des Jeunes Participants, 2007.

1982



Anja Järvinen

Honorary President of the Finnish Olympic Academy



Some personal memories, thoughts and incidents describing the Olympic spirit and feelings in the IOA in Olympia



IT IS WITH A SENSE of responsibility and respect that I write my memories, experiences and feelings as a participant of many sessions of the IOA.

It was 1988 when I first took part in a session of the IOA in Olympia. I was a new member of NOC and our Olympic Academy was founded in 1987. I must admit that my knowledge about Olympism and Olympic education was very poor. When I arrived in Athens everything was new to me; I didn't know any of the other participants. I was like Alice in the Wonderland, that's why I had very exciting feelings when we left Athens for Olympia. In the bus I took the first free

seat. It was next to Juan Carlos Uriburu from Argentina. He was my first friend of the Olympic family. It was always nice to meet him in the IOA.

The first bus stop at the canal of Corinth was a memorable experience to me. I still remember those emotional feelings, when I first saw the IOA's functional and elegant buildings surrounded by beautiful green trees and hilly countryside.

My first opening ceremony of a session was in the Otto Szymiczek Hall with the Olympic Anthem, laying wreaths at the stele of Pierre de Coubertin and at the commemorative monument of John Ketseas and Carl Diem. It was and still is a very emotional tradition

that creates the special atmosphere of the IOA and lights the Olympic spirit.

I lived the history lessons in reality during the guided visit to the archaeological site and the Museum of Ancient Olympia. Our visit to the Museum of Modern Olympic Games was interesting. It is true, if you don't know the history, you cannot understand the present and the future.

It was fascinating to hear lectures and meet new friends in discussion groups and talk about connections between the themes which many of us may not have considered before. The circle of my friends widened very quickly. I soon understood that in the IOA we practise Olympism in many ways daily: to live together and share the room with a person maybe from a totally different culture encourages our interaction with one another. It is astonishing how well we can understand each other though sometimes we don't even have a common language. The only concrete problem has sometimes been the key, where to put it so that both of us can use it. Friendship, understanding and tolerance emerge in various other ways daily: when we discuss, debate or evaluate in formal discussion groups, but especially in informal discussion groups; sometimes by walking to Olympia and back or by enjoying a siesta at the pool or by waking up with morning music or during the walking to see the sunrise on Kronion.

From my first session I remember well one incident in Olympia. A big group of people from different

countries and different continents walked together to Olympia. We were sitting in a restaurant round a big table, when someone of us suggested that each one of us could sing a folk song. I said that I am not a good singer, and then my friend Valdemar from Iceland said that we could sing together, because he knew some Finnish songs. And so we did. It was a wonderful evening, a lot of beautiful songs from different parts of the world. We travelled through different cultures with music. It was real, warm friendship in the spirit of Olympism.

My first visit to the IOA was exceptional because, among other reasons, we drove from the IOA to Athens via Delphi. It was interesting to see those places I had studied during history lessons at school. In Athens we took part in the opening ceremony of the International Session for Young Participants on the sacred Hill of the Pnyx. There was Juan Antonio Samaranch, President of the IOC, other members of the IOC and the IOA, and Melina Mercouri representing the Greek government. Next time I was there was in 2007, when we had the opening ceremony of the common session of the Estonian and the Finnish Olympic Academies.

Dr Otto Szymiczek, Dean of the IOA, who had experienced the IOA since its birth, said: 'I wish that all you participants in the sessions of the IOA become true apostles of Olympism, confident that you serve a humanistic idea which contributes to friendship, cooperation and understanding among peoples'. These

words have been in my mind ever since and they have conducted my personal activities in the NOA.

During my first session in the IOA I gained more knowledge about the mission of the IOA. It is to preserve and spread the Olympic spirit, study and implement the educational and social principles of Olympism. After participating in a lot of Sessions for Directors of NOAs I have seen that the IOA really is an international cultural centre which brings together people from all over the world in the spirit of friendship and cooperation. It is a place where people from the Olympic family can express and exchange their ideas and experiences face to face. It also motivates us to use the experiences and knowledge gained in the IOA through lectures, group discussions and presentations of other NOAs. Every time we can learn something new.

It has been a great honour for me to be a coordinator several times in discussion groups. The task is very interesting, but sometimes difficult, too. We have discussed, debated and sometimes criticized, but always in the spirit of Olympism. Once we talked about the Olympic Day Run: how do NOAs organize it? One participant of the group told us that they organize it for boys and girls at the same time, but at separate places. The question was spontaneous: Where is equality, one of the Olympic values? Why they cannot run together? We had a long discussion about equality and what it means in different countries. The other possibility would be girls not running at all? We came to the

conclusion that it is better that girls, too, run. We also understood that when we promote Olympism and Olympic education with Olympic values we have to do it through our own history, culture, religion and political situation in the country.

The IOA also motivates us to strengthen and develop educational cooperation between NOAs. It gives us the possibility to meet people of the Olympic family and create lasting personal human relationships of friendship. They lead to new forms of cooperation between NOAs. The Finnish Olympic Academy has had many kinds of cooperation. We were participants in so-called Central-European NOAs' meetings in Berlin, where Robert Marxen and Norbert Müller were the organizers. They have a long tradition in the field of Olympic education and they gave good advice for educational materials, how to teach Olympic values at different levels through different subjects and using different kinds of methods. Every NOA should develop its educational activities so that they support its national curriculum. Next time we had an excellent meeting in Prague. Every time we deepened our friendships and cooperation. During some years we had active cooperation with Scandinavian NOAs, and a very keen and interesting cooperation with the Estonian OA. We organized so-called 'School Olympic Games' for many years, every second year, in Helsinki and Tartu. We had a common session in the IOA in 2002. We wanted to share the atmosphere of the IOA and the Olympic spirit

with those teachers who had organized Olympic weeks in their schools. Through Olympic education, children and youngsters can personally realize the meaning of fair play, tolerance and community spirit in their daily lives. For schools, Olympic education is a means of attaining their educational objectives, which are similar to the objectives of the Olympic Movement.

I want to thank the IOA for the privilege the Olympic family has, when every year people can come to the sessions of the IOA. Thanks to the Deans Otto Szymiczek and Professor Kostas Georgiadis and the Presidents of the IOA Dr Nikos Filaretos and Mr Isidoros Kouvelos for the excellent sessions of the IOA and for their encouraging attitude toward the participants.





*Participants of the Finnish
Olympic Academy in the IOA, 1997.*



Breakfast with friends, 1994.

1983



Prof. Christina Koulouri

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece



Imagination, discovery, experience



FOR VISITORS to Ancient Olympia, the International Olympic Academy comes as a surprise, a well-kept secret. When you pass through the entrance gate, you wonder why you were never aware of this Olympic city. A visit to the IOA is above all a process of discovery – an experiential discovery and a scientific discovery, an emotional discovery and an intellectual discovery. This multifaceted experience is linked to the character of this unique Olympic institution, which has succeeded in integrating modern educational activities into the timeless beauty of the landscape. At the IOA, the ancient memories that cling to the antique stadium, the Greek present as reflected in the small nearby town, and the

planning of the world's future through the education of young people from every corner of the globe blend together.

The natural landscape is the first thing that makes a deep impression: the beauty of the site and its colours, as well as the clarity of the air, the scent of the bitter orange trees and the special stillness of the night. At the first place, the IOA has a visual identity. Aesthetic pleasure is not only derived from the present landscape, but also from historicity that gives symbolic dimensions to the place and to nature. Natural beauty thus operates as the ideal framework for an educational process that goes beyond the goal of conveying knowledge, focusing especially on the transmission of a value system and a

life stance. The organic relationship between the landscape and the Academy's work seals the institution's history with the visitor's experience. This is why the rupture of that relationship during the fire of summer 2007 was such a dramatic turning point. One of the most traumatic memories was when, in November 2007, with an international commission of scientists from all over the world, we visited Ancient Olympia to actively express our support for the efforts at repairing the damage caused by the fire. I shall never forget the dull, grey picture of the facilities, the wounded landscape and the violence of the destruction. I shall also never forget the little trees that survived, the shoots that were springing up here and there, reminding us of the power of life and the wonder of nature's regeneration. The message of hope, a message that the IOA seeks to convey at all times, was still present even in this darkest moment.

The IOA's human landscape has a beauty which resembles while differing from the natural landscape. If we consider that the classical beauty of the Olympic landscape is universal, the multicultural beauty of the human landscape is also characterized by universality. Professors, lecturers, Olympic medallists, students, men and women of all ages from all continents and from the most remote countries on the planet view the IOA as a place for meeting, communication and social contact. Life in its facilities creates a real community where the learning process is associated with the experi-

ential knowledge of others, who are different and unknown, a fascinating lesson in universal consciousness.

I have known the IOA in a number of capacities, the result being that those experiences have accumulated and become entwined: as a student, a researcher, a co-worker, a lecturer and a professor. My personal research on the history of sports and the Olympic Games has led eventually to a standing collaboration with the Academy that has brought rich results. As a result, I did not come to know the IOA only from 'outside', but also from 'inside', through long-term archival and historical research. Thanks to meeting people at the IOA with enthusiasm, passion and love for the institution itself, I was entrusted with the classifying and recording of its historical archives (as well as the Archives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee). Greek Olympic history, combined with the history of the Academy, is now fully documented and preserved for posterity – for the benefit of researchers from Greece and the rest of the world.

The book on the history of the IOA was the culmination of this activity; through teamwork, we could explore many aspects of the Academy's historical progress from its establishment in 1961 until the present day, all recorded in an impressive publication. The 'History of the IOA' is a compendium, the result of a study of Olympism and its institutions (International Olympic Committee, National Olympic Committees, etc.), Olympic education worldwide, the content of the

education programme of the IOA itself (lectures and lecturers), the discovery of Ancient Olympia through archaeological excavations, Olympia's modern history and, finally, the Academy's relationship with its place of establishment.

The IOA is therefore both History and Education. In fact, its history is not restricted to its years of operation but goes back to the time of the revival of the Olympic Games and the birth of Olympism. The moral and educational dimension of Olympism is the cornerstone of an educational institution like the IOA. The Academy unquestionably reflects the modern Olympic Games and their evolution to this day. It gives expression to all those who have militated for the Olympic ideal since the nineteenth century, the period when the revival of the Olympic Games materialized. The monuments to Pierre de Coubertin, John Ketseas and Carl Diem in its facilities are testament to this.

At the same time, moreover, this Olympic educational institution is located next to the site of the an-

cient Olympic Games, which have been a source of inspiration to their modern revivers. As you walk in the area where the ancient Games were celebrated, in mind you travel through time in order to listen to the noisy crowd that camped in the valley every four years, to admire the athletes and relive a past that you never experienced. The choice of Ancient Olympia for the establishment of the IOA was not intended simply to confirm the symbolic bond that exists between the modern Olympic Movement and its ancient Greek roots, but also to serve as a constant reminder of this symbolism. In a sense, the IOA together with the site of the ancient Games define and represent the boundaries of Olympism on the map.

A stay in this 'topos' of Olympism is in itself a unique experience that combines aesthetic enjoyment with physical exercise, intellectual stimulation and inspiration. All who come here leave their mark on the imagined continuity of Olympism. When they leave, it is with Olympia and its spirit in their hearts.





*Students of the Master's Degree Programme (academic year 2009/2010) with Christina Koulouri
at the steps of the Conference Centre.*



Students of the University of the Peloponnese at the IOA with Christina Koulouri and K. Georgiadis, 2008.

1984



Stavros Lambrinidis

Vice-President of the European Parliament ♦ Former Director General of the International Olympic Truce Centre



The IOA inspires and promotes Olympic Truce



WE KNOW that in ancient times the Olympic Games represented a period of real peace. To be precise, the main purpose of the Olympic Games, from their inception, was to ensure that hostilities would cease for a period before, during and after the Games, thus creating a window of opportunity for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Since the end of the 1990s, Greece and the IOC have worked hard in order to revive the institution of the Olympic Truce. The aim has been the difficult task of achieving a cessation of hostilities during all future Olympic Games, and after their closing, with a view to arriving at a peaceful resolution to conflicts.

These efforts were able to rely, from the very beginning, on the decisive support and partnership of the International Olympic Academy. The whole philosophy of the IOA, that education, culture and peaceful coexistence are the core values of Olympism, has inspired the Truce movement. Nikos Filaretos, the President of the IOA at the time, together with the Academy's outstanding contributors, organized numerous events and symposia, at which the Truce movement was debated, analyzed and enriched; in addition, participants in the IOA's programmes, young people and teachers from all over the world, contributed their own experiences and ideas, which were subsequently disseminated.

Understandably, for some people the idea of reviving the Truce nowadays may appear utopian. But in 1896, when Pierre de Coubertin and Dimitrios Vikelas revived the ancient Olympic Games in Athens, that must have appeared equally utopian. Over just a few decades, however, the Games developed into the greatest world celebration of Humanity.

Just like the revival of the Olympic Games more than a hundred years ago, the revival of the Olympic Truce today combines romanticism with hard realism. It is neither a panacea nor utopian. The Olympic Movement is fundamentally a non-political movement. It does not therefore have the power to 'impose' the Truce, nor does it pretend to possess a magic wand that could bring peace where governments, international organizations or even religious leaders have failed.

The IOA, however, and all of us who have worked for the revival of the Truce, sent a strong symbolic appeal from its serene surroundings, to stop, albeit

for a few days, the cycle of violence during the Olympic Games and beyond. Our appeal aimed at utilizing the Olympic Games and the power of their worldwide impact to give the United Nations, individual states, and the belligerents themselves a tried and tested instrument for peace. And it is perhaps not a coincidence that a few years later, in 2003, the UN adopted unanimously, for the first time in the Organization's recent history, a Resolution in favour of the Olympic Truce.

I am deeply grateful to the IOA for its valuable support during the first steps of this major undertaking. Sport cannot impose peace, but it can inspire it. And if we can have peace for 16 days then maybe, just maybe, we can have it forever.

In this and other such initiatives, the IOA is and will remain for decades to come an unrivalled source of inspiration for all those who have had the good fortune to come to its facilities and participate in its life and activities.





*Lecture by S. Lambrinidis,
41st International Session for Young
Participants, 2001.*



*In the lecture hall, 41st International
Session for Young Participants, 2001.
First row, from left to right: L. Silance,
K. Kartalis and S. Lambrinidis.*

1985



Prof. Karl Lennartz

President of ISOH ♦ Former Director of the Carl and Liselott Diem-Archives, German Sport University, Cologne



Twenty-eight times in Greece



GLADLY ACCEPT the invitation to write something about my experiences in the International Olympic Academy, which will be celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Since 1969, until today, I visited Greece no less than twenty-eight times and attended sessions in the Academy at least twenty times.

It did not start so well in 1974. I had been invited as a lecturer. On Saturday morning, one day before the departure to Olympia, the traditional visit took place to the National Historical Museum in Athens. During the return trip by bus, the music which was played on the loudspeakers suddenly changed from light to very melancholic. Then suddenly the bus stopped and the

driver announced: 'We are at war. I have to report back. You have to continue on foot'. That evening the session at the Academy was cancelled.

We had to remain in Greece as guests; could, however, move freely. A few days later, all over the streets we heard the call: 'Freedom!' – and everyone, including ourselves, streamed to the Syntagma Place. The 'Colonels' regime' had been dumped and we experienced the return of democracy. In the night of July 24, we listened to the speech by Konstantinos Karamanlis, who had returned from exile in Paris. Two days later, during our departure there was another delay. The airport was full of people, because the actress Melina Mercouri had just returned.

One year later, I could finally give my lecture, and at the Academy I met for the first time the then IOC President Lord Killanin. I presented him with my latest book, which, on his request, I signed for him.

In 1976, I attended the Academy again. My wife and our two children came by plane and I took them to the camping in Olympia, where they stayed in a tent. In some way, the Dean of the Academy, Otto Szymiczek, must have heard about this. He called me up and then berated me, 'If I had no idea what Greek hospitality was'. At least four times, he told me to get my wife and children to the Academy. These were wonderful days for my children, who could swim in the swimming pool with the young participants and truly enjoy themselves. At the departure, my wife and both children also received participation diplomas, which still take an honoured place in their homes today.

I have always had great admiration for Otto Szymiczek. We experienced his hospitality for the last time in 1989, when he invited us for a chicken dinner at Linaria. He was already very weak then.

The year 1989 was an important year for the history of sport. At the Academy, the ICOSH and the West-oriented organization HISPA held a meeting where they decided to merge into the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport (ISHPES). This occurred three years before the collapse of the Communist world. During this session, I also

personally met Melina Mercouri – at the time Minister for Culture in Greece.

In 1994, I was once again invited as a lecturer. On the evening before the departure to Olympia, we sat in the cellar of a hotel in Athens, watching the final of the Football World Cup. Brazil won from Italy in the penalties. I sat between two Italian participants and had a hard time drying their tears.

In the stands of the stadium in Los Angeles, we saw Juan Antonio Samaranch. Twenty-four hours later, he opened the Session of the Academy on the Pnyx Hill in Athens. One day later, the new Congress building was officially inaugurated.

Together with the inauguration, an exhibition was opened about the Zappas Games and the Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 and 1906. Here I met the collector Georgios Dolianitis for the first time, with whom I formed a long-lasting friendship which endures to this day.

In 1998, Wolfgang Decker, Georgios Dolianitis and I organized a big exposition in Cologne about '100 Years Olympic Games: The Greek Origin', which was later also organized in Thessaloniki – at the time cultural capital of Europe.

Dolianitis has invited me time and time again to come to Greece for Olympic expositions and manifestations.

Lecturing about Olympic history at the Academy in Olympia has always brought me great pleasure.

Three times I was asked to lecture at the Postgraduate Course in Olympia. It is wonderful to discuss the newest information about the research into Olympic history with 35 young graduates from 35 different countries.

In the past two years, I was involved twice in lecturing at the newly established Master's Degree Programme. It is a privilege to teach young men and women from many countries about Olympic knowledge.

The newly established Foundation makes it possible that the participants are guests of the University of the Peloponnese from the moment of their arrival in Athens. The driving power behind the Foundation is my friend Kostas Georgiadis, as Dean of the International Olympic Academy, the successor of Otto Szymiczek, and also Professor and Vice-Rector of the University of the Peloponnese. I came to know him when he was still a student at the University of Mainz.

In 2006, Kostas Georgiadis invited the Executive Committee of the International Society of Olympic Historians (ISOH) to organize a meeting in the Academy. This meeting was a big success. During that meeting it was decided to implement a new ISOH Award: the Vikelas Plaque.

In 2007, we returned to Greece; first to present this Vikelas Plaque for the first time to three Greek ISOH members: Athanassios Tarassouleas, Georgios Dolianitis and Kostas Georgiadis. The presentation took place in the beautiful theatre in Syros, birthplace

of Dimitrios Vikelas, the first President of the International Olympic Committee.

A few weeks later, during the opening ceremony of the Session for Young Participants on the Hill of the Pnyx, I had the honour to present the ISOH Award for 2007 to the two 'grand old men' of Olympic history in the United States: David Young and John Apostol Lucas. This award consists of a bronze bust of Pierre de Coubertin.

At the same time, we attended a meeting of the IOC Commission for Culture and Olympic Education in the wonderful green surroundings of the park of the Academy.

Only a few weeks later, the terrible bushfires which swept across Greece and in particular over the Peloponnese during a period of several weeks destroyed great parts of the Academy grounds and its surroundings. Of course, we all felt very sad and concerned. The International Society of Olympic Historians, supported by several other organizations, started an initiative to accumulate funds to replant the area around the Academy grounds. At the end of November 2007, I again travelled to the Academy and was able to present the President of the IOA and the Hellenic Olympic Committee Mr Minos Kyriakou with a cheque. It was not a great amount of money, but it showed our close relations with the International Olympic Academy. We also symbolically planted a new tree.

I visited the Academy since the terrible fires three

more times. Like other friends of the Academy with whom I spoke, we all still experience a feeling of sadness when we see the Kronos Mountain and its surroundings. It is a real comfort to know that new trees

have been planted, which will grow a little every year. And even while it might take several more years: '*It will be green again in Olympia*'!





K. Lennartz on the top of the IOA premises after the fire, 2007.



The IOC President Lord Killanin (on the right) and K. Lennartz.

1986



Petros Linardos

Journalist ♦ Sport Historian

A long, nostalgic journey through time



THE 50th ANNIVERSARY of the International Olympic Academy invites us, or rather challenges us, to a long, nostalgic journey through time. The summer of 1961 was well under way; it was the last week of June. I happened to be in Pyrgos, in the region of Eleia, for a local survey of the region's problems and issues on behalf of the magazine *Tachydromos*, under the management of the late Christos Lambrakis. As I was leaving he told me 'Please pay special attention to Olympia and anything related to it'.

So, accompanied by the late Georgios Koumbatis, the correspondent for the Lambrakis Media Organization and an unforgettable friend, I found myself near



the stadium; with excavation work complete, it was ready to bask in the world's admiration. (The great triple event of 1961 was the unveiling of the stadium, the establishment of the IOA and the creation of the Olympic Museum, thanks to the generosity of G. Papastefanou.)

I remembered the words of Dimitrios Vikelas, the first President of the IOC, that the site of Olympia '...resembles a large amphitheatre, more magnificent than any other archaeological site in the world' (*From Nicopolis to Olympia-1885-Letters to a friend*). On the lush, green slopes we could see large tents. Our journalistic curiosity led us there. We were told that this was the site where the Academy would be established. This

was my first contact with the Academy, which was inaugurated a few days later. I could not of course imagine that this picture of the tent-dweller would remain forever engraved on my memory when, about twenty years later, I saw the IOA evolving into the universal centre of Olympism. I would be given accommodation in the lecturers' quarters and would speak in the hall that bears the name of Dimitrios Vikelas, the initiator of Olympism. I would be granted the ultimate honour of receiving the 'Olympia' award, and so many other, unforgettable, awesome things.

My visits to Olympia may be condensed into one, unique picture. It was after 1985, when the annual Seminar for Young Sports Journalists from all over the world – from Australia to Brazil, from Europe to the Far East and Central Africa – was added to the Academy's programme. This project was initiated thanks to the tireless efforts of our cherished colleague Elias Spolidis (who sadly left us far too soon for the other hemisphere of life as Giavas the seafarer, the beloved storyteller of Fotis Kontoglou would say), who at the time was Vice-President of the European Sports Press Union (UEPS), the financial support of Olympic Solidarity and the generous hospitality of

the IOA, particularly under its President, the late Nikos Filaretos. During one seminar on behalf of the Hellenic Sports Journalists Association, I took a group of young colleagues to the ancient stadium. We came out of the Crypt and wandered through the sacred temple of Olympism. I realized that a young journalist from Belgium had stayed behind. I turned and saw him kneel and kiss the Olympic earth. What other recollection do I need?

"I visited Olympia today/28 April 1884/Believe me, for that alone it is worth coming to Greece. Here, antiquity lies before you, more splendid, more grandiose than the Acropolis itself... Olympia is something completely different, but also much greater... The site of Olympia resembles a huge amphitheatre.

The whole of ancient Greece is concentrated, so to speak, and reflected in this small valley".

DIMITRIOS VIKELAS

(From Nicopolis to Olympia. Letters to a friend,
ed. Paul Ollendorf, Paris 1885)





36th International Session for Young Participants, 1996. From left to right: P. Linardos (Honorary President of the Hellenic Sports Journalists Association), G. Deves (Mayor of Olympia), A. Lunzenfichter (AIS EC Member) and E. Sporides (AIPS Vice-President).

A rare example from the philatelic and postal history of the International Olympic Academy: its first (22-6-1961) commemorative postmark. Since then, over the following fifty years, commemorative postmarks have been used not only for each IOA session, but also for all the other important events that have been part of its manifold activities, with a view to creating a specialized thematic collection.



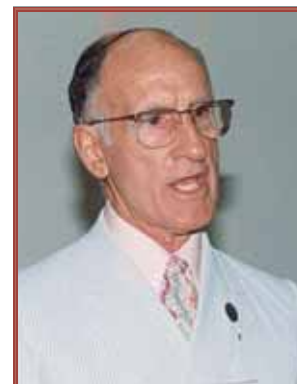
1987



John Apostol Lucas

Professor Emeritus, Pennsylvania State University, USA

◆ Recipient of the IOC's Olympic Order, 1975



Marvellously fond memories



OUR LETTER brought back marvellously fond memories of my IOA participation eight times as lecturer, chief of mission (USA) and honoured special guest of President Samaranch, the USOC and the IOA.

The experience was so profound that I started a full 3-credit course on the ancient and modern Olympic Games at the Pennsylvania State University in 1975 – possibly one of the earliest to leave the IOA and start a bona fide course at one of America's greatest universities – the Pennsylvania State University. For the next

35 years I started a course on the Games and 6,600 students passed through my class, until my retirement last year. It was another great experience, rivalling my official presence at all Summer OG 1960-1980!

'My trips to the IOA [1975-2007] were high in my list of life's greatest events.'

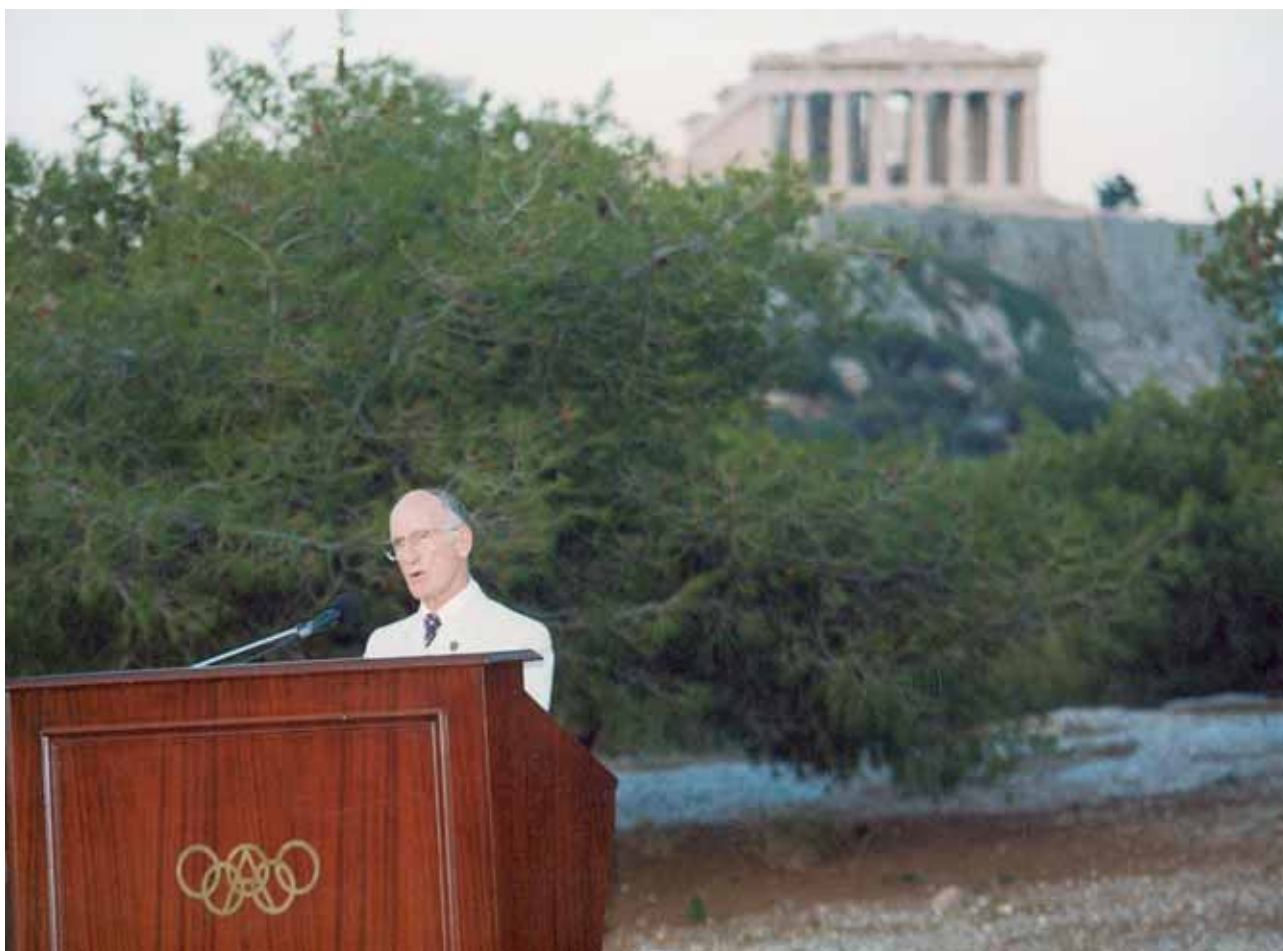
From a letter to the IOA Honorary Dean,
Kostas Georgiadis, dated 22 January 2011
(Kostas Georgiadis' personal archive).

*Awarding of the ISOH Prize
to J. A. Lucas (on the right)
by K. Lennartz (in the middle)
and E. Katsiadakis (HOC Secretary
General) during the opening ceremony
of the 47th International Session for
Young Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 2007.*



*Laying of wreath at the stele of Pierre
de Coubertin by J. A. Lucas (on the left)
and A. Bijkerk (ISOH Secretary General),
47th International Session
for Young Participants, 2007.*





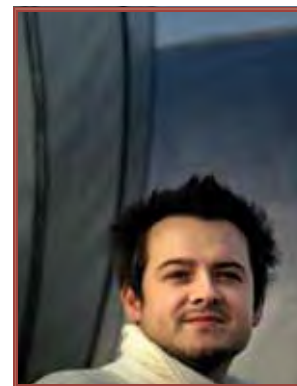
Address on behalf of the lecturers of the Session by J. A. Lucas at the opening ceremony of the 34th International Session for Young Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 1994.

1988



Prof. Andy Miah

*Director of the Creative Futures Research Centre ♦ University
of the West of Scotland, UK*



The worth of the International Olympic Academy



ESIDES HAVING WATCHED the Olympic Games as a child, my first encounter with the Olympic Movement was through my university education at De Montfort University, which led me to the British Olympic Foundation's National Olympic Academy. However, my formative experience was at the International Olympic Academy International Postgraduate Seminar in 2000. Having since returned to the Academy numerous times, I have often wondered how the Movement would be different, if only everybody involved had the chance to experience it through the Academy first.

The IOA is a place that changes peoples' lives and mine was no exception. I met my wife Dr Beatriz

Garcia during the Postgraduate Seminar, who has been my constant companion in all Olympic matters. Our first child Ethan was born ten years later, almost to the day we met.

Since then, I have been fortunate enough to return to Olympia on numerous occasions, as coordinator of the Postgraduate Seminar, lecturer at the Session for Educators and Officials of Higher Institutions of Physical Education, spectator at the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, supporter of Scholars for Olympia, and twice professor of the Postgraduate Seminar.

It is my honour to have the chance to write for its 50th anniversary book, and this task is unlike any other writing opportunity I have had. As a philosopher, I am

inclined to think about my contribution in philosophical terms and I would like to consider how we should value the worth of the IOA, while enriching these ideas with my own experiences.

My memories of the Academy are replete with extraordinary experiences. For instance, in 2000, my fellow postgraduate students and I attended the lighting ceremony for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and shared the Academy with some of its performers. Further, watching an actual Olympic competition in the ancient stadium during the Athens 2004 Games was profound, as it was the first time an Olympic competition had taken place there since ancient times. Indeed, the intimate geographical connection between the stadium and the Academy reinforces the worth of each.

Yet it is often in the most familiar, everyday experiences that the value of the Academy is most persuasively articulated. This is largely because what makes it special is the *people*. First, there is the Academy's staff, from the President to the cleaners, all of whom create a sense of family that is felt by all visitors. Second, there are the supervising lecturers, whose generous interventions exceed expectations. Finally, the interactions between students define life at the IOA. From debates about the ethics of doping, to ideas about what it must have been like to run naked in the ancient stadium – some more vivid than others – the everyday interactions at the IOA is where the life-changing experience begins.

These elements create the unique *programme* that the IOA delivers. Beyond the formal lecture schedule, the space allocated to free time is an essential part of its worth. Most of the people who attend are of an age where they are highly motivated, capable people and the Academy's recognition that they can be given freedom to create experiences for themselves represents the best pedagogic principles that any educational institution would be proud to implement. In each session, student committees are formed to develop social and sports programmes, which neatly complement the formal learning that takes place through lectures and seminars. The additional tours through Greece to ancient sites make the IOA experience unlike any other. I was lucky enough to take part as an athlete in the Nemean Games of 2000, overseen by archaeologist Professor Stephen Miller, and the experience united the theory and practice of learning in a way that is beyond compare.

The *location* of the Academy in Olympia adds further worth, apart from being a beautiful, inspiring setting. This secluded and remote location creates a distinct learning experience and a commonly shared willingness to retreat to serving just fundamental human needs. This insulation from the outside world also promotes opportunities for rich international encounters among the Academy's uniquely diverse community. The importance of this was brought into sharp focus in recent years, when the rise of the Internet

meant that the Academy could become part of a global community. When I was a student at the Academy, this period was just beginning. I recall that there was one computer with Internet access, where now there is an entire room and WiFi across the campus. Opinions vary about whether this has enriched the IOA experience, or whether it has risked endangering the value of the Academy's remoteness. In any case, the realization that having Internet access provides a valuable insight into the world for students coming from countries with limited Internet access seems to be a further contribution that the Academy now makes to education.

In addition to the digital revolution, the IOA has lived through many eras and its *history* is also what gives it legitimacy as the ultimate authority of Olympic education. When the fires of 2007 struck Greece, I joined the 'Scholars for Olympia' initiative, which gathered academics from around the world to visit the Academy and demonstrate our ongoing appreciation and support for its contribution to Olympism. During this visit, we spent time with the local villagers to acknowledge their brave acts, thanks to whom the Academy was saved from certain ruin. The fires devastated Olympia, but the buildings of the Academy remained largely unscathed, as if to suggest that the historical significance of the IOA could not be extinguished by even the greatest natural threat. As well, the fact that the memorials dedicated to Pierre de Coubertin, John Ketseas and Carl Diem remained standing, conveyed an op-

portunity to remember the past and consider the possibility of renewal, as indeed forest fires often are.

Each of these elements lead me towards concluding that the Academy's primary value is found in the way that it *inspires* people towards participating in the Olympic Movement. Since my first visit in 2000, I have also been fortunate enough to attend six Olympic Games – Winter and Summer – at which I always am surrounded by people within the extended Olympic family. The International Olympic Academy Participants Association always manages to reunite us during Games time, providing a welcome respite from the chaos of the Olympic city and a reminder of Academy life.

While the tangible impacts of the Academy are salient, its intrinsic value should not be overlooked. In the most beautiful way, the Academy is a small part of ancient Greece and a reminder of the origin of Olympic values that is inextricable from Pierre de Coubertin's vision. The fact that his heart lays here within the Academy walls is the ultimate testament to this fact.

The generosity of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, the presidents and deans of the Academy who have developed such an enduring commitment to the programme over 50 years is second to none. I began my experience under the Deanship of Dr Kostas Georgiadis and his support over the years has been unwavering, and I would like to add a note of personal thanks to him for bringing me – and now my students – through the Academy.

During the IOA's Postgraduate Seminar, all students make a presentation about their research and, as I was the last, I invited everyone out of the classroom to gather by the swimming pool, a crucial agora of the Academy. This singular experience captures the entirety

of what the Olympic experience should entail – the fusion of sport, culture and education – and it remains one of my fondest memories of time there making lifelong friends.





Wedding rings made in Olympia.



*'Scholars for Olympia' planting a tree
after the fire, 2007.*

1989



Stephen G. Miller

Professor Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley, USA

♦ *Emeritus Director of the excavations in Nemea*



The IOA and Nemea



HERE ARE SO MANY MEMORIES of the International Olympic Academy and its people, staff and students, many of whom have become dear friends, that it is hard to choose a single example. I must also confess that some of my most vivid memories of the IOA have come from its participation in the Revival of the Nemean Games, held every four years since 1996 in the ancient stadium which I discovered in 1974.

The Ancient Nemean Games were in the cycle of Pan-Hellenic games together with the Olympics, the Games at Delphi, and those at Isthmia. These four games shared many things, including a sacred truce,

but especially a victory prize that consisted of a crown: olive at Olympia, wild celery at Nemea.

In 1996 those ancient games were revived at Nemea with two basic principles. They should be as authentically ancient as possible, and they should be open for the participation of everyone from anywhere. Their success over the years has been due to the level of international participation that we have enjoyed, and that has been due – in turn – to the support of the IOA.

Thus, for example, already in 1996 there were several runners, and several winners, from the IOA. Their faces at the closing ceremonies where they were presented with their crowns of wild celery radiated with

joy – the joy of winning, and of participating. These are faces that I shall never forget.

At the Second Nemead in 2000 there were again many members of the IOA who ran barefooted down the ancient Nemea track, and the winner received her preliminary tokens of victory as in antiquity: a ribbon around her head and a palm branch. But she shared the palm branch with her fellow IOA students. Another IOA winner carried the palm of victory into the tunnel on the way back to the ancient locker room, but she had an honour guard of two other IOA students.

Four years later there was once more a memorable moment when the then Dean of the IOA ran out of the ancient tunnel unto the track to participate in the Nemean Games. It is not recorded if he won.

While all these IOA members were running down the track, someone had to do the dirty work. In ancient Greece that was left to slaves and so much of my

experience of the ancient spirit of the games has come from a rather low perspective as I have learned how much work went into the games then. But there have been real thrills. I like to think that our Nemean Games are adding something to the Olympic Movement, perhaps supplementing the today's Olympic Games in a small way. Occasionally I am certain that we are making a contribution.

At the closing ceremonies of the 2000 Nemead, where volunteer ambassadors who are representing their countries in Greece come to award the crown of wild celery to the new Nemean winners, a wonderful coincidence occurred – one that made an Olympic goal come to life. A young winner from Istanbul came forward to receive her crown. By complete chance the ambassador of Armenia took his turn to present the wild celery. And so, on the soil of ancient Greece, Armenian crowned Turk.





A red-headed Canadian (Amanda Schweinbenz) wins her race, beating competitors from Austria, Colombia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Moldova, Russia, Spain, and the USA; all except the last two on the left were from the IOA. Second Nemead 2000.



IOA runners at the Second Nemead in 2000 return to the tunnel after their race, including a winner from Thailand (Somkid Pinthong) accompanied by Catherine Monnin (France) and Marianne Tjørnholm (Norway).



S. Miller, in the yellow tunic of a slave, works at the starting line of the Nemea track during the Second Nemead in 2000.

1990



Pere Miró

Directeur de la Solidarité Olympique du CIO



La Solidarité Olympique et l'Académie Internationale Olympique



ORSQUE J'ETAIS ENFANT, la mythologie grecque, ses dieux, ses héros me fascinaient. C'est ainsi que j'ai découvert dans mes livres d'histoire le site d'Olympie et les jeux olympiques de l'Antiquité comme beaucoup d'écoliers de mon âge. Mais ce n'est que bien plus tard que j'ai pu saisir l'ampleur de ce que représentaient réellement les jeux olympiques modernes et toute la philosophie qui entoure cet événement. La portée concrète des valeurs olympiques sur la vie de tous les jours fondées sur le respect de l'autre, le dépassement de soi, l'équilibre entre le corps et l'esprit, et bien plus encore. J'ai été happé très tôt par ces valeurs. Depuis lors, j'ai mis toute mon énergie et mon enthousiasme à les servir.

Ma formation et mon parcours professionnel se sont donc tournés tout naturellement vers le sport. Après plusieurs années passées à l'Institut National d'Education Physique de Catalogne, j'ai eu la chance extraordinaire de travailler pour le comité d'organisation des jeux de la XXVe olympiade de Barcelone. Je me retrouvais ainsi au cœur de l'action, sur le terrain même des jeux qui, pour la première fois, allaient se dérouler en terre espagnole.

L'organisation des jeux est un véritable challenge en soi. Lorsqu'on arrive enfin à l'ultime étape, on n'attend plus que le moment de voir briller la flamme dans le stade olympique afin que la grande fête du sport commence et que les athlètes de tous les pays se rejoignent.

gnent. Quelques mois avant l'ouverture des jeux, je me suis donc rendu pour la première fois à Olympie pour assister à la cérémonie d'allumage de la flamme olympique avant qu'elle ne parte pour son périple, portée par des milliers de relayeurs qui l'amèneraient jusqu'à la ville hôte de Barcelone.

A mon arrivée à Olympie, j'ai découvert les magnifiques installations de l'Académie Internationale Olympique et ai tout de suite ressenti l'atmosphère particulière qui baignait les lieux, mélange de sérénité et de paix. Mais ce qui m'a profondément marqué, c'est le fait de me retrouver sur le site antique même d'Olympie, si chargé d'histoire. L'émotion était vive. J'ai été rapidement envahi par le sentiment très fort d'être au cœur de l'action, dans le berceau même des jeux olympiques. Lorsque la flamme s'est allumée grâce aux rayons du soleil recueillis dans le miroir parabolique, j'ai soudain compris que j'étais en train de vivre un moment exceptionnel. Cette cérémonie restera pour moi un souvenir inoubliable.

Ma seconde visite à Olympie s'est déroulée de manière très différente, car je n'y venais pas comme membre d'un comité d'organisation, mais en ma qualité de directeur technique du Comité International Olympique, fonction que j'ai eu le privilège d'occuper tout de suite après les jeux de Barcelone. J'étais donc passé de l'autre côté, ce qui m'offrait un point de vue totalement différent. J'avais l'honneur d'avoir été invité en tant qu'intervenant pour assister à la session pour les jeunes

participants. A cette occasion, j'ai pu côtoyer des jeunes de tous les pays, envoyés par leurs Comités Nationaux Olympiques respectifs pour participer à des conférences et à des échanges sur l'olympisme. J'ai pu ainsi mieux découvrir le site et son environnement propice aux échanges interculturels. Mais j'ai surtout saisi l'ampleur du travail fourni par l'Académie Internationale Olympique, formidable centre pluridisciplinaire international dédié à l'enseignement des valeurs olympiques, et l'importance de son savoir-faire en matière d'organisation de débats et conférences autour de ce thème fédérateur.

Lors de la session des jeunes participants, j'ai été amené à travailler avec des jeunes très motivés. J'ai été frappé par leur enthousiasme, leur engagement et leur curiosité. J'étais dans le vif du sujet et j'ai rapidement été confronté à la réalité par certaines de leurs questions plus critiques en rapport avec le mouvement olympique. Nous avons échangé ouvertement nos points de vue. J'ai essayé de les convaincre du bien-fondé de nos institutions et espère avoir su corriger leurs impressions. Dans tous les cas, ce fut un échange très enrichissant de part et d'autre.

Depuis, je suis retourné à Olympie une dizaine de fois, soit pour assister à la cérémonie d'allumage de la flamme olympique, soit dans le cadre de la session pour les jeunes participants. Chaque fois, j'ai ressenti la même exaltation. Pour rien au monde je n'échangerai ma place et je continuerai à apporter ma contribution à la diffusion de l'idéal olympique.

L'Académie Internationale Olympique fête son 50e anniversaire et je tiens à lui rendre hommage. Grâce à elle, nous bénéficions maintenant d'un patrimoine exceptionnel voué à l'olympisme et à la sauvegarde de ses valeurs. Elle a accueilli des milliers de participants qui ont partagé ces valeurs et les ont transmises à leur

tour. Elle a essaimé de nombreuses Académies Nationales Olympiques à travers le monde qui servent de relais. Elle a réussi à mettre l'esprit olympique à la portée de chacun. Mais de nouveaux défis attendent l'Académie. Elle saura, j'en suis sûr, les relever avec brio afin de poursuivre la mission qu'elle s'est fixée.



*Conférenciers et participants assistent
à une soirée sociale, 41e Session
Internationale pour Jeunes
Participants, 2001.*





*Conférence de P. Miró,
41e Session Internationale
pour Jeunes Participants, 2001.*

1991



Prof. Ioannis Mouratidis

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece



International Olympic Academy: Significance – Memories



THE PAN-HELLENIC GAMES, particularly the Olympic Games, were able to bring together the rival Greek cities and remind them of their common interests. Olympia occupied an especially prominent position among Greek cities as a centre of reconciliation and the promotion of joint pursuits. Olympia was the place where representatives from every corner of the Greek world could meet, compete, exchange views, and listen to orators, poets and philosophers, who reminded them of the many things that united them.

The ideals which Olympia symbolizes are all-human, eternal and indestructible ideals. Genuine athletic competition, the love of fair play, concern and respect

for the opponent, harmonious development of body and mind, modesty in victory, honesty in competition, and the building of noble character were cultivated and developed at Olympia. What made Olympia immortal was the fact that in this sacred place, rival Greeks who fought one another on the battlefields would meet to take part in friendly contests.

The ancient Olympic Games were able to withstand the hard tests of innumerable centuries but finally, as happens with all human inventions, they could not avoid the destructive effects of time. They were, however, more successful in avoiding the damage caused by the normal blurring of human memory and the ungrateful laws of oblivion. Modern man

was thus able to revive the Olympic Games with the aim of promoting fair play, love, peace and reconciliation between peoples and men. In 1896, man remembered the philosophy behind those Games and put all his hopes in them leading to a better world. At the same time, the objective was not simply to revive the ancient Olympic Games but to create an international centre in Olympia that would nurture and disseminate the philosophy of Olympism and Olympic education. And thus the International Olympic Academy, dreamed up by Coubertin, was founded by two enthusiastic proponents of the Olympic philosophy, Carl Diem and John Ketseas.

The IOA is now an institution recognized by almost all countries of the world, whose representatives attend special seminars in the sacred precinct of Ancient Olympia. Students, journalists, educationists, sports officials, etc. attend these seminars, and most also take part in various sports activities, team games in particular.

I was lucky enough to participate in many of these seminars, mainly as a lecturer, and to make the acquaintance of many colleagues and other participants. I must confess that my feelings are hard to put into words adequately. I noted that at Olympia the philosophy of Olympism was generally accepted by all, irrespective of origin, political beliefs, religion or colour. I tried many times to explain the phenomenon of the adoption of this philosophy by all participants and I

arrived at the conclusion that this philosophy has a unique power and ability to look beyond national borders and obstacles, thus recognizing the importance of comradeship between peoples and individuals.

Few events have made as strong and lasting an impression on me as my stay and collaboration with fellow participants at the facilities of the IOA; perhaps because no other site has the sanctity of Olympia, where the morality of the ancient world predominates. Moreover, I realized that all participants were convinced that the subject of Olympia is man himself, his history as well as his dramatic quest for humanism and fraternity. It was easy to see how the conciliatory and pacifying impact of Olympia's sacred precinct was ever-present. No one could therefore imagine another site that could contribute more to the development of relations of friendship, mutual understanding and respect. Judging by participants' psychology and behaviour, one could see that no one felt a stranger in this sacred place. People who had attended the IOA's seminars for a second or third time, in particular, felt completely at home.

Looking back, I can recall how deeply impressed all participants, young and old, men and women, were by their visit to the archaeological site of Olympia. Their visit to the stadium was a unique experience. Without exception, they all tried to walk or run the stadium's classic course. I remember, in particular, that, in one of the working groups I was attending, some participants

described the race along the ancient stadium's track as a unique experience and a life's dream, since they had been given the opportunity to run on the same track as the athletes of the ancient Olympic Games.

The involvement of the IOA's participants in team games was sheer fun, a fun that arises from the fundamental ethical values of games. Through their participation in team games and swimming in the river Alpheios, their singing and dancing, ties of friendship, understanding, tolerance, respect, non-discrimination

and, above all, communication developed. One saw how, when entering the IOA, participants from countries with bad relations forgot all their differences, focusing instead on their common interests.

Through the IOA's activities, Olympia as an eternal and indestructible symbol continues to light men's souls, showing them a world that is different from the world in which we live, a brighter world, a unique philosophy that contributes to man's effort to compete in amicable competition with all men.





32nd International Session for Young Participants, 1992. From left to right: K. Whitney, N. Filaretos, K. Georgiadis and I. Mouratidis.



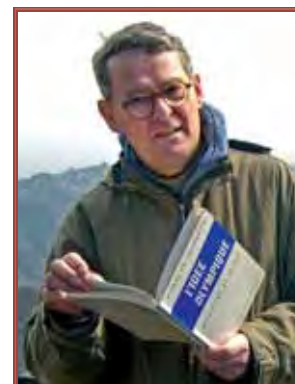
Laying a wreath at the stele of Pierre de Coubertin at the opening ceremony of the 32nd International Session for Young Participants, 1992. From left to right: I. Mouratidis, Benita Fitzgerald (Olympic Gold Medallist) and L. DaCosta.

1992



Prof. Norbert Müller

*Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany ♦ President of the
International Pierre de Coubertin Committee*



‘Learning in Olympia for Olympia.’ The International Olympic Academy – A success story



PARTICIPATED in the 8th Session of the IOA for the first time in 1968. I did not know then that the participation was to influence and form my life decisively. In the winter of 1968 I wrote my Master's thesis about the genesis of the IOA and the first eight years of its work, in which the Dean Otto Szymiczek and the IOA President HRH George of Hanover gave me as a young student plenty of support and encouragement.

The Session of 1968 with the encounters of 100 students from the whole world, all enthusiastic about Olympia, has always been vivid in my mind's eye. I enjoy recollecting the meetings with Jesse Owens, who

was spending two weeks in the IOA with us and who enthusiastically talked about his Olympic experiences. But I also remember our ‘rebellion’ against the IOA direction. We, the young participants, felt uneasy because we had been listening to eighteen lectures about the difficult main topic of the Session ‘Competitive Sport and Education’. Only a few questions were admitted so that we had no chance of playing a part with our juvenile impetuosity in discussion groups. When the President of the IOA and member of the IOC George of Hanover wanted to know our opinions about their petition forwarded to the IOC Session in Mexico City 1968, in which they pleaded for an

abolition of national flags and anthems from the Olympic victory ceremonies, I finally saw together with other participants of the Session the chance of openly discussing a specific Olympic topic. But we were expected only to write down our opinions on a piece of paper, nothing else. Our request to the Dean of the IOA to allow the organization and realization of discussion groups, in order to deal with that topic, was refused. The official answer was that there was no time within the programme. As a reaction to the refusal we decided to invite the participants to take part privately in a discussion forum in a taverna of the village of Olympia. All the participants appeared, just like the President and the Dean of the IOA.

After three further meetings we presented the results, which were distributed as a resolution on the final day of the Session. Nevertheless our ideas were not published in the official report of the 8th Session. But I was generously given the permission to ask the participants in a questionnaire about their opinions about Olympic values and the pedagogical success of the 8th Session. The evaluation of the forms became the basis for the first empirical survey of the work of the IOA and in the years to follow. In the IOA I met a wonderful man, the Nestor of sports informatics, Professor Josef Recla from Graz (Austria). It was he who offered me during the 10th Session in the IOA in 1970 the chance of writing a doctoral thesis about the idea of establishing the IOA and its success in the following

years. This doctoral thesis was the first one about the IOA, it comprises an analysis of the complete 239 lectures held up to this time in the IOA and the results of a poll of altogether 500 IOA participants of the sessions between 1968 and 1973, and it has become the basis of all my further Olympic studies and research.

I was able to propagate the IOA as the 'Summer University of Olympism' and define the manifold Olympic topics with a new notion: 'Olympic education'. Incredible, which meaning this notion should reach in the future.

'Learning in Olympia for Olympia', this could be the paraphrase of the yearly sessions considering its effects. Without the *genius loci* of the ancient site of Olympia, without the intensive encounters of hundreds of like-minded people with the maximum readiness for international understanding under the symbol of the five Olympic rings, this process would not be possible.

In Olympia a new young generation was formed and became the leaven of the Olympic family, thus creating a new atmosphere of reflecting the Olympic values in their respective countries. One could even maintain that the IOA participants have started spreading the Olympic ideals and the necessity for an ethics of sport in many countries. Their enthusiasm and engagement led to the foundation of numerous National Olympic Academies. As a model the first National Olympic Academy came about in the USA in 1976.

And today the Olympic principles of the IOC Charter are kept alive almost in all countries, especially by the NOAs. The IOA is a success story. It was from the IOA where a new reflection has started and the IOC can count itself lucky to be the owner of such a university with so many highly motivated young protagonists of the Olympic ideals – every year a new young generation. At the same time the yearly seminars for the responsible persons of the NOAs and the seminars for educators, carried out every other year, offer the unique opportunity of exchanging ideas and promoting the international network of the reflection and discussion of Olympic topics and issues. The Olympic internationalism is practiced in the IOA, the ancient *stadion* in the vicinity and the ancient excavations cover millennia. The Greek heritage is kept alive by the efforts of Greece, both in financial and organizational respect.

I am very grateful to the IOA that as a young man I was offered the opportunity of feeling and experiencing

this heritage so intensely that I was carried away by the Olympic idea as it can be conveyed and realized only in Olympia. Thus I felt obliged as a university professor to bring many generations of students to take part in students' seminars in Olympia. In 1993 we succeeded in founding the Postgraduate Seminar at the IOA together with my former student at the University of Mainz/Germany, the Dean of the IOA Dr Kostas Georgiadis. Gratefully I also recall the wonderful and great Greek personalities who determined, promoted and influenced me and my complete life in Olympia: Dean Otto Szymiczek, Professor Cleanthis Palaeologos and IOA President Professor Nicos Nissiotis.

The 50th birthday of the IOA in 2011 should not only express the Olympic family's gratitude for this present towards Greece, but should also underline the necessity for a successful continued existence of the IOA in order to secure the future of a vivid Olympism.



N. Müller was honoured in 1981 on the occasion of the 20th IOA anniversary by N. Nissiotis (IOA President), for his doctoral thesis on the IOA history.



N. Müller educating participants in the 1st International Seminar for Selected Graduate Students of Physical Education and History, 1993.





J. Owens, Olympic Gold Medallist of the Berlin 1936 Games (in the middle), with N. Müller (on the left) at the IOA, 1969.

As a participant in the 8th IOA Session, 1968, N. Müller explains the questionnaire for a first evaluation. On the right Prince George of Hanover.



1993



Lambis Nikolaou

*Président de la Commission du CIO pour la Culture
et l'Education Olympique*



Cinquante ans Académie Internationale Olympique



EN TANT QUE PRÉSIDENT de la Commission pour la Culture et l'Education Olympique du Comité International Olympique, je suis également chargé de contribuer à bâtir un monde pacifique et meilleur en éduquant la jeunesse par le moyen du sport, qui constitue l'un des piliers sur lesquels repose le mouvement olympique.

Il s'agit d'un objectif élevé, mais d'un objectif que notre commission considère comme très important, en travaillant assidûment pour sa mise en œuvre. Plusieurs moyens sont utilisés pour la réalisation de notre mission et plusieurs institutions travaillent avec nous en vue de la promotion de l'éducation olympique et de la

culture. L'Académie Internationale Olympique en est incontestablement l'une des plus importantes. Depuis sa fondation en 1961, l'Académie a fait œuvre de pionnière en matière d'éducation olympique et de culture.

En tant que membre de l'Ephoria de l'Académie Internationale Olympique depuis 1989 et ancien président de celle-ci, je connais très bien tout ce que l'Académie a réalisé jusqu'à présent.

A ce point, permettez-moi de mentionner certaines personnes qui ne sont plus en vie, avec lesquelles j'ai eu l'honneur de travailler. Ces personnes ont rendu des services précieux à l'Académie Internationale Olympique. Il s'agit de :

- Nicolaos Nissiotis (président de l'AIO 1977-1986), professeur à la Faculté de Théologie de Genève, professeur de philosophie de la religion à la Faculté de Théologie d'Athènes, personne éclairée, pédagogue inspiré, connaisseur du sport et membre du CIO, ancien athlète et entraîneur de l'équipe de basket-ball de la Ligue grecque de basket-ball.
- Nikos Filaretos (membre du CIO, président de l'AIO 1986-1992, 1997-2005), qui a œuvré inlassablement pour assurer la réputation mondiale et le développement de l'Académie Internationale Olympique.
- Otto Szymiczek (doyen de l'AIO 1962-1990), passionné et connaisseur du sport. L'héritage qu'il a laissé à l'AIO est unique et il est difficile de trouver un remplaçant de son envergure.

Pendant 50 ans, l'Académie Internationale Olympique a été une institution suprême de culture qui protège et promeut les valeurs olympiques par le moyen de l'éducation. Des jeunes, des enseignants, des journalistes, des athlètes, des cadres administratifs, des chercheurs et d'autres ont franchi le seuil de l'Académie. Et surtout, ils ont tous partagé leurs connaissances avec des individus du monde entier. Bien que l'Académie Internationale Olympique siège dans l'espace précis et symbolique d'ancienne Olympie, sa mission s'étend dans toutes les régions du monde.

Des programmes et des événements spécialement conçus, comme le Programme d'Education aux Valeurs Olympiques (PEVO) ou les jeux olympiques de la jeunesse, trouveraient leur origine auprès de l'Académie.

L'Académie continue à attirer – à ses sessions, à ses conférences et à ses séminaires postuniversitaires – d'éminents scientifiques et enseignants. Chaque année, l'Académie Internationale Olympique organise des sessions extrêmement importantes à l'intention notamment de cinq groupes : jeunes participants, cadres enseignants, « Comités Nationaux Olympiques et Académies Nationales Olympiques », journalistes sportifs et étudiants postuniversitaires.

Dans l'Antiquité grecque, les jeux olympiques proclamaient la paix et la culture humaine aux quatre coins du monde connu de l'époque, en tant qu'idéaux immuables. Il s'agit de principes fondamentaux inscrits dans la charte olympique qui s'étendent bien au delà de l'organisation des jeux olympiques.

Pourtant, le mouvement sportif ne peut pas gérer à lui seul ces principes. Il doit unir ses forces avec celles des institutions qui assument la principale responsabilité de promouvoir la paix et le développement de l'humanité. L'Académie Internationale Olympique en est une. Le mouvement olympique est redevable à l'Académie Internationale Olympique de tout ce qu'elle a accompli pendant les cinq dernières décennies et de

tout ce qu'elle continuera de faire pendant les années à venir. Nous pouvons être fiers de tout ce que nous avons réalisé entre 1961 et aujourd'hui.

Je ne dois pas oublier de dire qu'en 1985, après mon discours à la 25e Session Internationale de l'AIO sur la trêve, la Session avait accepté à l'unanimité de demander aux Nations Unies, par l'intermédiaire du Comité International Olympique et de son président Juan Antonio Samaranch, de prendre l'initiative de proclamer la trêve dans tous ses États membres pendant la durée ou tout au moins pendant une journée des

XXIVes jeux olympiques de Séoul et des XVes jeux d'hiver de Calgary. Il importe dès lors de souligner que c'est une session de l'Académie qui se trouve à l'origine de l'effort de mise en œuvre de la trêve pendant les jeux olympiques.

En terminant, j'aimerais exprimer ma profonde reconnaissance et mes remerciements à tous ceux qui ont contribué à faire de l'Académie ce qu'elle représente aujourd'hui : le couronnement des principes et des valeurs de l'olympisme.





*Le Président du COH L. Nikolaou
(à droite) et le Secrétaire d'Etat
aux Sports A. Fouras (à gauche)
escortent le Président du CIO
J. A. Samaranch à la cérémonie
d'ouverture de la 38e Session
Internationale pour Jeunes Participants,
colline de la Pnyx, 1998.*



*Conférence de L. Nikolaou,
25e Session Internationale
pour Jeunes Participants, 1985.*



Allocution de L. Nikolaou lors de la cérémonie d'ouverture de la 43e Session Internationale pour Jeunes Participants, colline de la Pnyx, 2003.

I994



Marina Nissiotis



Memories of the IOA during the presidency of Professor Nissiotis (1977-1986)



FIRST HEARD of the IOA's existence when we definitely returned to Greece in 1974, my husband Nicolaos Nissiotis and myself, who – a year later – became member of the IOA and of the Hellenic Olympic Committee and in 1978 was elected member of the International Olympic Committee.

The Olympic Movement was lucky. During more or less the same period, it had as presidents of the International Olympic Committee and of the IOA two men completely different in character and ambition but both fanatic believers in sport and Olympism. They had ideas, visions, knowledge, experience, determination, and physical strength, and very often left

their families to travel for their ideas. These two brought sport and Olympism into the lives of ordinary people, to a greater or lesser extent.

Nissiotis was internationally known due to his positions abroad. So during his presidency in the IOA there started coming to the opening sessions of the main courses at the Pnyx the President of the Hellenic Republic Konstantinos Karamanlis with several ministers, as well as the Presidents of the IOC with several IOC members and officials, most of whom would later on lecture at the Olympic Academy in Olympia. The impressive ceremony under the Acropolis was therefore shown on television and many people started taking an interest in the Olympic Movement.

Through the choice of lecturers, Nissiotis changed the character of the Academy. I remember the lecture of a Russian Olympic gold medallist, of a cardinal from Venice dressed in red, foreign and Greek university professors as well as foreign artists, who all combined their profession with the aims of the Academy.

Every morning after two lectures all participants met in groups of six to eight people, led by a professor or lawyer etc., to give their views about them and finally agree on a common text to be read at the plenary. Thus, no participant could be absent from the lectures or his group.

In addition to the academic work there were also artistic activities (painting and dance), whilst during the free time the participant would swim in our pool, play basketball, football and – with great passion – table tennis. Everybody knew that Nissiotis was a good sportsman, so the goal was always to beat him in one of these sports, something inevitably rather difficult. Especially in table tennis no one ever succeeded to beat him, neither at the Academy nor abroad.

On their way to Olympia the participants were always taken on a guided tour to Delphi and then to the museums of Ancient Olympia, while during the warm summer evenings we would all go down to the village for a delicious *galaktoboureko* (Greek sweet), an ice cream, and a stroll around the shops for a souvenir

or a T-shirt. One Sunday we all went to the village church after Nissiotis had explained the ritual of the service. The kind old village priest, with his white beard and a permanent smile, gave to all a piece of blessed bread, with a nice word, although he didn't know a word in a foreign language. On another Sunday we went to a beach to swim. They all looked amazed at the endless sand beach with the calm dark blue sea. But some would also go secretly swimming in the Alpheios River in an evening.

We also had social evenings with sketches, games, and a lot of jokes mostly about Nissiotis, because he always laughed and never got angry. They always ended with everybody wanting to learn to dance *syrtaki* and *kalamatianos*.

With all this, Nissiotis succeeded to intensify the love for athleticism, but also for arts, and to get young people from different counties, very different cultures, and political backgrounds, to become real friends and to respect the 'particularity' of the other person. This 'getting to know each other' was something he always wanted for his students, also during the many years he was professor or director abroad. More people knew Nicos Nissiotis in Europe, America, Australia, Asia, and Africa than in his own country because he studied and worked abroad for 25 years. Now all of them know what Olympism is all about.



Nicolaos Nissiotis, IOA President (1977-1986).



*25th International Session for Young Participants, 1985.
From left to right: Cl. Palaeologos, Monique Landry, L. Silance, Aglaia Palaeologos,
J. Powell, N. Nissiotis, O. Szymiczek, F. Landry.*



*Meeting of the lecturers and the discussion groups coordinators,
19th IOA Session, 1979.*

1995



Fani Palli-Petralia

Vice-President of the International Olympic Truce Foundation



An Olympic 'journey'



MY FIRST CHILDHOOD MEMORY of Olympia was of a trip with my father and a few of his foreign friends and colleagues from the International Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Academy, whom he was accompanying. I remember that it was a brilliantly sunny spring day, nature was wearing its Easter attire, and there was a light breeze... History, names like Altis, Crypti, Kronion, Olympian, Zeus, Hera, the whole site that was impressive and imposing, made this trip an unforgettable experience...

Then came school, my involvement in sport, studying the history of the Olympic ideals, my acquaintance with Olympic family members who paid us a visit quite often as if they were our relatives, the experience of

Olympic events worldwide, contacts with Olympic medallists, athletes, IOC members, people who influenced and/or shaped sport all over the world... It was an almost natural identification with Olympism.

And, of course, there was my participation in the opening and closing sessions of the International Olympic Academy, occasions on which I would accompany my father, who served as President of the Academy at the time.

I remember we used to stay in tents in the summers. Imagine being twelve years old, with the high temperature reaching 40 degrees centigrade, knowing that friends are swimming at some beautiful beach, and that I was learning that Solon taught Scythian Anacharsis the meaning of competition with just an olive

branch as a reward and how this olive branch embodied the values of democracy, emulation and fair play... And that this olive tree is still blooming behind the temple of Olympian Zeus...

Later on, when Petralias passed away, I remember Samaranch saying that Nondas had taught him this: 'Olympism is not just sport but also philosophy, a way of thinking, a life attitude, timeless values and principles that are always relevant'.

And that is the way I was brought up. Everything I heard and experienced has shaped my character and progress, and has proved extremely useful not only in my personal life but also in my public role. For fate, Olympian Zeus and the conjunction of events have conspired to link my public life with Olympism to such an extent that at times I have found myself serving it from highly responsible positions. This was so during the greatest challenge of my political career, the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, which were organized in such a way that were described as 'the best Olympic Games ever' by President Rogge at the closing ceremony...

In the course of this Olympic 'journey', I have also served as a member of the Olympic Committee and many relevant commissions and Olympic delegations and as Vice-President of the International Olympic Truce Centre.

And, of course, I have attended almost all the International Olympic Academy sessions, from the time when, as guests, we lived in tents, till today's

Academy with its modern facilities; from the time when participants simply listened to a few lectures to today's modern postgraduate specialization programs.

And now what? After having served the Olympic cause for such a long time and, as the baton is about to be handed over to a new generation, what can someone like me say?

I remember my father, during a lecture at the International Olympic Academy, quoting Plutarch: 'We are here now. Before us, were others, and others will follow after us. However, we should not concentrate on how to live well or on how we shall die but on how future generations will be able to think of us with gratitude...'

Indeed, times and people change, conditions vary. But, as long as there is mankind, there will also be principles and values. Friendship, emulation, the passion to compete, to create, to run faster, to go higher and to progress represent timeless human demands and pursuits.

When what we call globalization, with its economics and economic mumbo-jumbo, now reigns supreme, offering man more pain than happiness, we need those human values which are part of the Olympic ideals more than ever. They can provide solutions to gridlocked situations. In what way? Three thousand years ago, during a period of similar worldwide instability, when Iphitos asked Pythia how he should deal with the situation, she replied: 'Revive the Olympic Games'. So this is the challenge for the future... This is the challenge for the International Olympic Academy!



*The IOA President E. Petralias
at the 11th IOA Session, 1971.*



*International Olympic Truce Forum,
Ancient Olympia, 2005.*

1996



Prof. Jim Parry

Department of Philosophy, University of Leeds, UK



Olympia 'as the sun rose'



WITH THIS 50th ANNIVERSARY, I also celebrate 25 years of involvement with the IOA. Since first attending the Main Session as a participant in 1985, and having been invited by President Nissiotis to return as a speaker in 1986, I am proud to have contributed to a wide range of IOA sessions, including the Sessions for Directors of Higher Education Institutes, Olympic Medalists, NOA Directors and NOC Officials, the Main Session for Young Participants, the Postgraduate Seminar, and the MA Degree Programme in Olympic Studies in conjunction with the University of the Peloponnese. I also attended (and co-facilitated) a session of IOAPA (the alumni association), having been a member since its

inception over 20 years ago. Such a variety of sessions held and constituencies addressed at the IOA testify to the extent of its reach and impact, in terms of promoting study, teaching and research in Olympic issues. Reflecting on the activity of the IOA provokes thoughts about people, places and atmosphere.

When I try to bring to mind all the people I have worked with over the years at the IOA, my mental list reads like a Who's Who? of Olympic educators and researchers. One very important function of the IOA is to bring together people who otherwise might never meet. It promotes mutual enrichment and fruitful collaboration through a network of disparate academics who share an interest in Olympic matters.

The same applies to the students, of course, who make lifelong friends and collaborators. Working at a university offers the great benefit of meeting a fresh cohort of gifted young people each year, which stimulates academics as teachers to respond to their challenge, and I always feel the same at the IOA. You can never know who is going to appear as members of your group – what rich backgrounds and varied talents they will bring to the interaction, and to what interesting and elevated positions they will sometimes climb.

Memories of the people one meets are inseparable from the experiences shared with them, and especially when this is in the context of some of the beautiful and significant places often visited by participants, such as the Hill of the Pnyx and Delphi, as well as all of those places in and around Olympia: the banks of the Alpheios, the museums, the ancient site itself, Pierre de Coubertin grove, the Kronion Hill, and so on. But, above all, everyone responds to the inspirational setting of the Academy itself, sculpted into the hillside, with its carefully tended grounds, trees of palm, orange, eucalyptus, oleander, and the rest; and lush vegetation, the swimming pool, the tennis, volleyball and basketball courts, the athletics track and the football pitch – all alongside the residential accommodation and academic facilities.

Such a setting, ideal for work, play and rest, puts sport and education right at the centre of daily experience, providing an ideal context in which the spirit of

Olympism can develop. I have heard many former Olympians say that the IOA is rather like being back in the Olympic Village, minus the stress of competition.

And it is this atmosphere, this spirit, generated by and in the IOA that remains at the forefront of my own experiences and memories over the years: the sense in each group of participants that they are in a special place, considering important matters in the company of like-minded others, during a privileged few days of seclusion, in the cradle of sporting history. Standing at the top of the marble steps and looking out across the Academy grounds, the eye is taken across the valley to the mountains beyond. It compels the viewer to bring to mind what happened in that valley, in which lies the ancient site and through which flows the Alpheios, and to be humbled and uplifted by it.

Some years ago I joined some other early risers, including the Dean K. Georgiadis, some staff and students, and took the pre-dawn jog to the top of Mount Kronion, overlooking the archaeological site of Ancient Olympia, to wait for the sunrise. I read out this passage from Pierre de Coubertin's essay *Olympia* as the sun rose. For me, it captures the spirit of the place.

I therefore invite you [...] to come and sit on the wooded slopes of Mount Kronion at the hour when beyond the Alpheus the rising sun begins to touch the swelling hills with gold and to lighten the green meadows at their feet.

I have drunk in this spectacle twice at an interval of thirty-three years. On a morning in November 1894 I became aware in this sacred place of the enormity of the task which I had undertaken in proclaiming five months earlier the restoration of the Olympic Games after an interruption of fifteen hundred years; [...] On a morning in April 1927 I waited there in a kind of devout contemplation for the hour when the hand of the minister of education would draw back the Greek and French flags veiling the dazzling marble erected to attest success.

From this lovely pine forest which climbs Mount Kronion [...] it is possible to recreate in imagination the long avenues of plane trees along which there once came the athletes and pilgrims, the embassies and the commerce, all the traffic and all

the ambition, all the appetites and all the vainglories of a civilisation both more complex and more strictly defined than any which have followed it.

Altis – the sacred precinct – immediately reveals itself as a religious focus, the centre of a cult. Among this people and above all at this time it is difficult to imagine a religion not based upon a positive philosophical conception.

Let us therefore look for this basis. And if there really was a religion of athletics [...] let us find out why it is in Greece that it took shape, and whether the Greek ideal [...] is still suited to the rest of humanity.

(Pierre de Coubertin, *Olympia*, 1929.)





5th Postgraduate Seminar, 1997.



Laying of wreath at the commemorative monument of J. Ketseas and C. Diem by J. Parry, 3rd Joint International Session for Educators and Directors of Higher Institutes of PE, 1997.

1997



Jane Paterson

Director of International Relations / CEO of the British Olympic Foundation



No explanation is necessary...



IN 1988 AT THE Calgary Olympic Winter Games my life took a turn which completely changed my path forever. I volunteered and was allocated a role with the Great Britain Team. Nine months later I was employed by the British Ski Federation having relocated to the UK and I am now fully employed by the British Olympic Association (BOA). Following the Games each of the volunteers were sent a commemorative video. At the very end of the video a black screen appeared with the following quote:

For those who have had the experience
no explanation is necessary,
for those who have not none is possible.

When I received the invitation to contribute to this book that quote rang loudly in my ears. How could I possibly describe the impact the International Olympic Academy had had on both my professional and personal life and on those who I had been able to nominate to attend in my role at the BOA? Surely only those who had attended the IOA could relate to my experiences and the impact the IOA has had on the Olympic Movement, and to endeavour to put it into words would be impossible. Yet, the honour of the invitation was too great. To be able to share with others the huge affect that both the IOA and those who have contributed to it over the years have had on so many people is unique and a great privilege.

In 1991, I was selected to attend the IOA's Young

Participants Session, to 'enrich my understanding of the Olympic Movement'. Not only did my first exposure to the IOA and my visit to Ancient Olympia do that, but it started a deep-rooted passion and respect for the values which sit behind the Movement. The IOA does not only study, enrich and promote Olympism, it offers every participant, coordinator, lecturer and staff member the opportunity to grow as an individual and enables them to choose to contribute to the development of the Olympic Movement within their own country. It ensures that worldwide networks are built to strengthen and widen the respect for and engagement with the Olympic values.

Over the past 50 years, the British Olympic Movement has both contributed to and benefitted from the unique work of the IOA. We have been able to support the myriad of sessions which the IOA offers and those, from a plethora of sporting and education backgrounds, whom the BOA has selected to attend have brought back with them an enthusiasm and dedication to Olympism which they have embedded in their own lives and their professional environments. Comments from these participants have ranged from a PE teacher who said 'it has changed my life', to a coach 'I cannot put into words how much the experience has meant to me' and an Olympian who said 'I feel so privileged to have been able to experience two Olympic Villages; one when I competed at the Games and the other at the International Olympic Academy'.

Whilst these statements may seem dramatic to those who have not attended the IOA, they ring true with those of us that have. I do not feel the impact the IOA has on both the Olympic Movement and its participants can ever truly be measured, however if one attempted to articulate its influence the single word would be: colossal.

Participants from Britain have changed careers, become leaders within the sport and the academic sectors, become ambassadors for Olympic education and some have even found their husbands and wives through the IOA.

My own experience started as a participant, then as a coordinator and then as an NOA Director, and for me the three most significant elements of the IOA are its location, the knowledge gained and the lifelong friendships made.

The knowledge I have gained is immense and the complete affect it will have on my life is yet to be realized. The knowledge has been shared by eminent leaders of the Olympic Movement and the academic world, and to be able to create an environment where the positive and productive exchange of ideas between a very diverse group of individuals from many different nationalities and backgrounds is possible, is living proof that an Olympic family exists. I feel hugely fortunate to have been given the honour to assist in the works of the IOA as a coordinator, as much as I feel privileged to have been selected to represent Great Britain as a participant.

To walk on the track at Ancient Olympia engenders feelings of awe and drawing on the inspiration of those Olympians who preceded encourages people to strive to live the Olympic value of excellence. To sit at dawn and watch the sunrise across the valley and the Olympic ruins creates considerable humility and respect for the history of the Olympic Movement. This appreciation for something which began in antiquity and is now explored within the tranquil setting of the IOA cannot be recreated anywhere in the world.

To those that have made my and so many others' experiences complete, thank you. Whilst it is impossible to acknowledge everyone, two individuals made my initial introduction to Olympic education and the IOA possible: Dr Don Anthony and Dr Jim Parry, and for that I will be eternally grateful. And two others, responsible for steering the IOA's development over the years, Nikos Filaretos and Dr Kostas Georgiadis, without

whom my own experiences would have been so much less significant, thank you. Their combined vision for what the IOA has and will continue to achieve gave the IOA its well-earned reputation of a true Olympic education.

Finally, and on a personal note, this tribute to the International Olympic Academy would not be complete without my sincere and deep-felt gratitude to those exceptional friends I have made and who continue to influence my life. Each memory I have of you and each experience we shared will remain with me for a lifetime, thank you very much!

I hope that within this text I have been able to prove that the quote above is erroneous and 'for those who have not had the experience' this explanation has made it possible to truly appreciate, understand and respect the extraordinary influence of the International Olympic Academy.



*Works of the 47th International Session
for Young Participants, 2007.
Jan Paterson giving information
about the workshops.*



*Coordinators holding hands
during the closing ceremony,
39th International Session
for Young Participants, 1999.*



Discussion group in the shade of the eucalypts, 46th International Session for Young Participants, 2006.

1998



Sam Ramsamy

Member of the IOC Executive Board ♦ Vice-President of FINA



Olympic Academy, Olympia – My memories



WHEN ANY SCHOLAR of the Olympic Games makes his or her first visit to Olympia there is always excitement attached well prior to the arrival in this ancient city. Various levels of expectation enter in the mind – expectations ranging from the present physical features of the precinct to personnel one would meet.

Having been a scholar of the Olympic Games since my school days, my excitement immediately preceding the visit was similar, if not identical, to that of a schoolboy who has just realized that his dream had turned to reality.

I recollect when I first visited London. I had read excessively of this ancient/wonderful city. My expecta-

tions on Olympia and the Academy were not dissimilar to that of fairy-tale character of Dick Whittington who believed that the streets of London were paved with gold.

My first arrival at the Academy was late in the evening. Somewhat drained by the long road journey from Athens airport and having been met only by someone who ushered me to my room, I retired immediately to bed. The next morning I was awoken by a streak of sunlight peering through a section of the half-drawn curtain.

I immediately jumped out of bed and stepped outside. As I had not oriented myself the night before and not knowing which was east or west, I found the sun rising in the west.

Then someone approached me.

‘Good morning Mr Ramsamy. I am Kostas Georgiadis, the Dean of the Academy. I will return after you have showered and dressed and we can have breakfast together.’

Kostas, as I got to know him and who thereafter became a very close friend of mine, briefed me about the set-up.

‘The accommodation is basic but functional. All the lecturers and student participants have similar accommodation. All dine together and a friendly interaction develops between lecturers and students’, said Kostas.

This reminded me about the Olympic Village. But unlike the Olympic Village, where some athletes, especially the high-profile ones, choose to live outside, at the Olympic Academy everyone stays together – high-profile or ordinary, rich or poor. I recollect at a later visit to the Academy when one very wealthy individual said to me that he got bored after the first day. He was not used to only the basic facilities provided in his room. The air-conditioning unit kept humming all night. There was no television he could watch. But after a few days all was well. At the end of the course he told me how wonderful his stay was.

Students and researchers from all walks of life like to visit and stay at the Academy. I met historians, archaeologists, active and retired athletes and young participants from all parts of the world, and people

with various levels of knowledge sharing their experiences at the Academy. Everybody is eager to learn about ancient Olympia and the Games of antiquity.

I have lectured to young participants and post-graduate students at the Academy. Although it was always interesting and inspiring to impart knowledge to young participants, one encounters the odd one or two who show no interest whatsoever. On the other hand, all the postgrads, without exception, are all eager to learn of my experiences. Maybe it was a bit different in me. Having been involved in the South African liberation struggle, and now being deeply involved in international sport as an IOC member, I am constantly ‘interrogated’ on various aspects of past and present episodes.

The visit to the Olympic Museum and the site of the ancient Games, including the exact spot where the Olympic torch is lit before being taken on its long and exacting journey to the Olympic City, brings back memories of great wonders, previously only read about or witnessed on television. Personally being at the site from where television cameras have transmitted images to billions of homes around the world is an extraordinary privilege.

My visits to the Academy offered me opportunities for a wide range of activities. The opening ceremony for the commencement of lectures to young participants actually begins in Athens, at one of Greece’s most historic sites – the Pnyx. It is recorded

that Pnyx was the venue for ancient Athens' first democratic legislative assembly. It is undoubtedly the ideal venue to initiate young Olympic participants to the values of Olympism. The journey then takes us to Delphi. Facts and mythology regarding the Oracle of Delphi become so mixed that every statement takes on a true meaning.

The Olympics fascinated even the Persian king, Xerxes. He apparently told his military commander, Mardonius, that he could not understand how the Greeks could be so absorbed with the Olympic Games that they even compete in them for no monetary reward. How inspiring it is to know that the modern Olympic Games still maintain this highly admired principle. No rewards whatsoever, except being awarded medals and having the honour of competing in the world's greatest sports festival.

In July 2002 the Greek government invited Nelson Mandela to publicize the campaign for the Olympic

Truce. I was honoured to be a member of Nelson Mandela's delegation. Nelson Mandela thereafter received the Freedom of Olympia. The Shot Put Events of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games were held at the site of the original stadium area of the ancient Games. These are indelible memories that are imprinted in the historical archives.

The afternoon breaks from lectures offered students wonderful opportunities to reconnoitre the town of Olympia and its numerous bookshops. One could spend hours there. It is like jumping onto H. G. Wells' time machine to explore the glories of the past.

For me the connection between the ancient and modern Games is firmly embedded when one visits the stele, situated in the precinct of the Academy, where the heart of Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Games, is housed. Pierre de Coubertin was so inspired by the Olympic Games of antiquity that he was determined to and succeeded in re-establishing the Games. And to this day the whole world looks forward in anticipation once every four years.





Laying of wreath at the commemorative monument of J. Ketseas and C. Diem by the IOC Members S. Ramsamy and Dame Mary Alison Glen-Haig, 41st International Session for Young Participants, 2001.



*Student presentation, 15th International Seminar on Olympic Studies for Postgraduate Students, 2007.
On the right: S. Ramsamy, S. Kretchmar, B. Séguin.*

1999



Prof. Hai Ren

Director of the Centre for Olympic Studies, Beijing Sport University, China



Cradle of Olympic education



AS EARLY AS IN THE 1980s, my interest in Greek culture and Olympic studies was strongly provoked when working on my doctoral dissertation of a comparative research on ancient Chinese and Greek sports. I wondered why Greece, geographically a tiny place, produced so many cultural giants in almost all spheres of human life and created the ancient Olympic Games, which was unthinkable elsewhere around the world given the social conditions at that time. Greece is rightfully referred to as the cradle of Western civilization and we still feel its powerful impacts even today. I was longing to see Greece, the wonderland of ancient sport festival.

The dream finally came true in 1995 when I was

invited by the IOA to lecture in the 35th Session for Young Participants, which forged a close tie between the IOA – and further the Greek culture – and me. I have been to the IOA several times since then and each time a special feeling always accompanied me, which made the visits quite different from the others. At last I realized that there are two things that made the IOA so special to me.

The first is its rich and splendid cultural heritage. Greece has a unique cultural landscape, so full with innumerable cultural inheritances that every piece of stone seems to have some stories to tell. The IOA is located just right at the centre of Greek culture – Olympia. The IOA is fully aware of its speciality and

as a result it skilfully designed and carefully carried out various programmes, which provided lecturers and participants with a unique opportunity to appreciate the healthy and inspiring cultural traits conceived in the era of human beings' childhood. For example, the IOA has its programmes connected to the Parthenon on the Acropolis, Apollo's sacred precinct at Delphi, the archaeological site in Olympia and the high-quality museum nearby. The thoughtful arrangement enables one actually to step 'into' the Greek history and grasp the rich cultural meanings accumulated since the remote time period. Thanks to the thoughtful measures taken to protect the heritages, which kept the original atmosphere so vivid, the ancient Olympics seemed to be 'touchable'. Whenever going to the IOA, I always spent some time sitting alone near the ruined temple of Zeus, meditating. The Chinese traditional philosophy suggests that man is an integral part of nature, and on that occasion I felt myself a part of the Olympia and something like a mental dialogue with those Greek ancient ancestors going on. What a wonderful experience!

The second is the cultural sharing. The IOA was always dynamic with all walks of people, especially the youth. They come together from greatly diversified social and cultural settings over the world, but with the same purpose: to learn and share. Olympism may merely be a hollow concept somewhere else but it appears definitely a reality in the IOA, embodied in all its activities, such as interesting lectures, group dis-

cussions and presentations, researches in the library, paying homage at the Coubertin grove, physical exercises in sport grounds, social activities in the evenings... Global village is a term used widely and frequently nowadays, but never shaped so clearly as in the IOA. It is always emotive to see youngsters in different colours, with different backgrounds, cheering, playing, singing and dancing together harmoniously. I am always wondering why cross-cultural exchange and international understanding are so easy and natural in the IOA but somehow difficult elsewhere. In that sense, the IOA set up an ideal example for the rest of the world to follow.

The cultural heritage endows the IOA with the precious values of Olympism, while the culture sharing provides it with a great network covering the entire world, therefore the Olympic values are disseminated through the network to all five continents. This is why the IOA is able to build up a peaceful and better world, and actually the IOA itself is a part of that world.

China is a new comer in the area of Olympic education but the area has been proved a fast-growing field in this most populous nation. One reason for that is the generous help from the IOA. For all these years Chinese youth participated in all educational programmes of the IOA and the Postgraduate Seminars since 1995. The team of the IOA alumni in China is continuously growing and many of them are playing a very active role in Olympic education of China. With

the IOA's assistance we have also set up extensive relationships with Olympic scholars over the world. The education programme related to the Beijing Olympic Games was quite successful and the IOA also made its contribution to its success. Dr Konstantinos Georgiadis, the Dean of the IOA, visited Beijing in the initiative stage of the educational programme and generously

shared his knowledge and experiences with the BOCOG and other parties concerned. Now the second Youth Olympic Games are on the way and will be hosted in Nanjing, a southern city in China. I am sure that the YOG organizers will also be benefited from the rich experience of the IOA.



*In the classroom with the students,
8th International Postgraduate Seminar
on Olympic Studies, 2000.*



*Lecture by H. Ren
in the IOA amphitheatre.*





*Laying of wreath at the stele
of Pierre de Coubertin by H. Ren,
8th International Session for
Directors of NOAs, 2005.*

2000



Prof. Vladimir Rodichenko

Honorary Life Vice-President of the Russian Olympic Committee



The Academy: The art of the topical choice (the pattern of Russian experience)



FIRST OF ALL, let me thank the Olympic Academy for the kind invitation to take part in this magnificent project, which is very important for the Olympic Movement. I am extremely enthusiastic because of my two capacities, among others – as a many times invited speaker in the Academy, and the Russian Olympic Committee Vice-President responsible for cooperation with the Academy for over twenty years.

I have chosen the creative topic rather than a 'bureaucratic' one to manifest the policy of the Academy in selecting topics for lecturers on the permanently sensitive fields of the Olympic Movement. Among them are the Olympic Games and Olympic education,

which are always up-to-date, and the Olympic Congress, which has to be studied by participants of sessions.

Below are the highlights from my seven papers of 1981-2007.

1981 'The staging of Olympic competitions as an area of international cooperation'

The experience of the Olympic Games becomes a worldwide knowledge. The staging of the Games of the XXII Olympiad in Moscow meant a new stage in the development of this experience.

The international character of efforts to stage the Olympic athletic competitions follows from the fact that, according to the spirit and the letter of the Olympic Charter, a competition in any sport at the Games is staged by a triumvirate consisting of the International Olympic Committee, the International Federation of each sport and the corresponding body of the host country. Positive influence of this cooperation is hard to overestimate.

1994 'Moscow Olympic Games: Outlook that was not changed years after'

My country has undergone fundamental social, political and economic changes several years after staging the Olympic Games. The criticism is being heard in my country about the time which is defined as the period of stagnation – the period prior to the so-called perestroika. Though there are practically no zones beyond criticism, I have not found any evidence in our most progressive media that the Olympic Games in Moscow can be identified with the stagnation period. And there has not been any serious critical remarks related to the Games in our press.

1995 'The XII Olympic Congress in Paris: Outcomes, consequences, comments'

General evaluation by the Congress consists of the considerable contribution of Olympism and the ethical

values it promotes to the development of society; athletes are at the heart of the Olympic Movement; after a century of existence, the Olympic Movement reaffirms its commitment to international understanding and peace; public authorities must provide sport with resources to increase the understanding of the special role of Olympism; the century-old link established between the Olympic Movement and the media has been beneficial for the promotion and development of physical and sport education and has led to the allocation of greater resources to competitive sport.

1996 'The XII Olympic Congress: A point of renovating Olympic education'

If to speak about Olympic education in a wide sense, one can express a paradoxical idea: the main paradigm of the Paris Congress, unlike previous Congresses, is Olympic education of modern society. In this way Olympic education is becoming a long-term programme of the Olympic Movement.

The Congress has worked out an approach to Olympic education that it should involve in future all layers of the population and not only children and youth.

The Congress has become an important stage in working out the system of Olympic ideas and knowledge which should be widely used as the contents of Olympic education.

1999 'Educational aspects of the World Youth Games'

The main educational approach of the World Youth Games of 1998 would be to teach Olympism to both participants and spectators.

The young participants in the Moscow competitions should feel first and foremost fully-fledged members of the world Olympic family. The Games had all the Olympic attributes: the Olympic flame was lit in Greece, the Olympic symbol (five interlaced rings), the Olympic anthem, and the motto *Citius, Altius, Fortius*.

Thus, from the physical and intellectual education point of view, our concept of the World Youth Games was the enrichment of the competitive world system with the multisport contest of the youth, which can make the Olympic Games in the twenty-first century a totally universal system.

2000 'The spectators as a factor in the programme and organization of the Olympic Games'

Top sport competitions may be considered as a form of mass pedagogical influence together with some other functions: recreational, aesthetic, communicative, moral, hedonistic. Television and other media permit top sport competitions to be a form of entertainment for the substantial part of society. Only spectators and TV viewers are able to create the financial basis of the modern sports. However, the Olympic Movement itself does not consider it necessary to regard the specta-

tors as its integral part. There is no such a word as 'spectator' in the Olympic Charter!

2007 'Social volunteerism as part of the school curriculum within the Olympic pedagogy'

At present we must use the notion 'Olympic pedagogy' strictly within the frames of Olympic education, that is only within frames of the theoretical part of the school discipline 'Physical Education'. Social volunteerism is a fundamental basis of both modern society and modern sport. Voluntariness is a moral choice of an individual. This is why the actual material on volunteerism has been included into contents on the Olympic Games of two teaching aids in my country – for pupils and for students.

Finally, I do believe that the effectiveness of the IOA strategy has been confirmed by the Olympic Movement activities: internationalization in the organization of the Olympic Games, examples of Olympic education (30 editions of Olympic textbooks in my country), the IOC decision to hold Youth Olympic Games, wide volunteers' involvement in the Olympic Games, success of the Virtual 2009 Olympic Congress. However, the word 'spectator' is still not mentioned in the Olympic Charter.



Lecture by V. Rodichenko, 9th International Session for Presidents of NOAs, 2007.



Laying of wreath at the stele of Pierre de Coubertin by V. Rodichenko (on the left) and K. Lennartz, 9th International Session for Presidents of NOAs, 2007.

2001



Antonín Rychlíček

President of the Czech Olympic Academy



To the 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy



CONSIDER IT an honour for the Czech Olympic Academy and for myself personally that I have been one of those invited to comment on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the International Olympic Academy. I shall not just share my professional reflections on this subject, but will also give my subjective, emotional impressions.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IOA

Looking back, we can see that founding the IOA was not an easy undertaking. Despite the fact that the IOA was officially established, and its activity began, in

1961, the idea that such an institution was needed came to fruition in Pierre de Coubertin's mind as far back as the 1920s. According to some sources, it had even occurred to him before the First World War.

A WORD OF THANKS TO THE FOUNDERS
OF THE IOA

Naturally, a considerable contribution to the establishment and subsequent prolific activity of the IOA has been made by Greece and its government as well as by the International Olympic Committee and personalities from the Hellenic and the International Olympic Movement and the University of Athens. The mission,

the professional activity of the IOA, as well as the selection of themes and forms of action, have been influenced by its chairmen, deans and managers as well as others who ensure the operation of the IOA.

THE IOA AND THE PRESENT DAY

Today, the IOA is an important centre, oriented towards the study of Olympism and the multicultural foundations of the Olympic Movement. It is the emphasis on culture and the combination of sport and the Olympic spirit which scales down antecedent, but also contemporary, stereotypes in the way in which one observes the reality of an Olympic Movement that is strongly influenced by rational thinking and accustomed to one sole truth. Sometimes, however, this constricted view has misfired in the demanding and critical situations that have also occurred in the evolution of the Olympic Movement. Olympism and art offer a multicultural grasp of reality, which so-called 'modern rationality' cannot proffer. The cultural Greek ideal of *kalokagathia*, as a basic ideal and mediator for the personal development of sportspeople, opens up a space for intercultural dialogue and its universal dissemination. The IOA now brings together 140 NOAs and has its own *raison d'être* and august position within the 'Olympic family'. The mission of the IOA manifests itself in various roles, functions, tasks and activities, which it has successfully fulfilled throughout its fifty-

year history with respect to other Olympic entities as well as beyond the Olympic Movement.

THE INSPIRATIONAL ROLE OF THE IOA

In the eyes of the Czech Olympic Academy, the inspirational role of the IOA is one of its most important functions. The fact that the Olympic spirit was and is interpreted within the framework of multicultural intentions has significantly helped the development of the Olympic Movement as well as its institutions and study centres; both in educational and cultural institutions within the widest social context.

THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF THE IOA

The pedagogical mission of IOA is oriented towards the identification and implementation of Olympic values in the educational programmes of NOAs. Its importance is growing due to the influence of a crisis in current, general concepts of education as well as with the increase in violence and commerce in sport, including doping abuse. The International Sessions for Young Participants in the IOA are particularly impressive. The representatives we have sent to Olympia emphasize the highly professional level of the lectures given, the interesting exchange of opinions and experiences of working groups, and the unique, friendly atmosphere. Some postgraduate students and graduates of the IOA Post-

graduate Course now continue to pursue Olympic subjects in their professional work.

THE RESEARCH ROLE OF THE IOA

The research function of the IOA is indivisibly linked with its educational role. Systematic and methodological interest in the academic study of Olympism at the IOA was concurrently developed in universities, particularly in terms of cooperation with universities and other research, cultural, and promotional institutions. For example, the Olympic Museum in Lausanne has been vividly illustrating the connections between the Olympic spirit, sport and culture since 1993. Concepts for educational and research projects at universities and Olympic centres are supported in tandem with the IOC Commission for Culture and Olympic Education.

OLYMPIA – *GENIUS LOCI*

The choice of Ancient Olympia as the future centre of the IOA was a fortunate one, not only because the millennial traditions of the most important games of antiquity are associated with this place, but also because of its association with the development of Greek and later European culture. We always experience very strange, but pleasant, feelings when visiting Olympia.

It is not just the rich history, and monumental temple buildings of this memorable site, but also other artefacts, which enable visitors to the IOA to obtain a deeper knowledge and understanding of this place, despite the long time that has elapsed since its glorious epoch. The power of the spirit, the strength of will, the sweat that has poured, the effort expended and the endeavours of the athletes of antiquity to give their best performances and taste victory at these celebrated locations help put this historical legacy into a certain perspective. On the other hand, there is also a deep humility associated with accepting one's ranking in a contest in accordance with the principles of fair play. Ancient Olympia is not only an important legacy bequeathed by our ancestors, but also poses a great challenge for the present day. It is an example of the link between Olympic ideals, culture and art, as exemplified by the artistic works of this celebrated epoch.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Czech Olympic Academy and the Czech Olympic Committee, I would like to congratulate the IOA on its important anniversary. At the same time, I wish to express my gratitude for the successful activity it has enjoyed so far. Its anniversary is a red-letter day for us.



Laying of wreath at the commemorative monument of J. Ketseas and C. Diem by the NOAs' representatives: (from left to right) S. Rafael, Keiko Wada and A. Rychtecký, 10th Joint International Session for Presidents or Directors of NOAs and Officials of NOCs, 2010.



*Lecture by A. Rychtecký,
10th Joint International Session
for Presidents or Directors of NOAs
and Officials of NOCs, 2010.*

2002



Assoc. Prof. Supitr Samahito

Director of the Thailand Olympic Academy



Unforgettable memory and experience



HAVE BEEN WORKING as the Director of the Thailand Olympic Academy ever since 2001 and had an opportunity to participate in the Joint International Session for Presidents or Directors of National Olympic Academies and Officials of National Olympic Committees. Admittedly, I found myself thrilled with excitement to be able to travel to the landmark of Olympism, as I knew that I was walking into the home of knowledge of Pierre de Coubertin and that within a minute I was completely surrounded by the entire atmosphere of the Olympic Movement.

It is amazing to learn how much the Olympic Movement can do for effective theoretical and practical

training as well as for daily operation in life, appropriate to bring its Olympic ideologies to disseminate to children, youths and people in every walk of life without any prejudice of sex, race, language and culture worldwide, thus enabling human beings to live in complete peace and happiness.

Another great memory from this place is when I had the opportunity to pay tribute to the monument of Pierre de Coubertin and also to the ancient Olympic competition venues. Besides, it was an absolutely unforgettable memory and experience for me to be chosen to represent 205 nations to lay a wreath at the Pierre de Coubertin monument. In addition, I also had the opportunity to see the altar for lighting the

Olympic torch prior to the start of the Olympic Games. These developments were part of my dream as I was able to see all the sites as desired. All of these sites that I saw inspired me to organize activities related to the work of Pierre de Coubertin.

I was in Olympia only for seven days, but these days were certainly very meaningful to my life as the Director of Thailand Olympic Academy. As the name implies, this Academy has been organizing a number of academic topics for directors. This would include the topics as concerned the history of IOA, its roles and Olympic Solidarity activities. However, the National Olympic Academy has to perform its duties as it has all elements needed to run on behalf of the IOA. On top of that, having listened to a number of comments made by directors of other nations as outlined by the IOA, especially with regard to ethics in sport, fair play, the future of Olympic Education and the Olympic Games as presented by directors with success stories and best practices by bringing in all ideas related to Olympic ideologies and the Olympic Movement. All these have motivated me to think of concepts to be organized in Thailand.

Please allow me to cite another example of my impression while I was in Olympia, in the library where all the visions of Pierre de Coubertin were documented. These visions were intriguing me a great deal, and I used my free time to spend in the library on a few occasions. In so doing, I had the opportunity to read

and write about the Olympic Movement for about four hours daily. I was so concentrated that the librarian had to approach me and said the library was closing at 21.00 hours. This was certainly another significant point that induced me to return if I had a chance to be invited again. Besides, this is the main databank in the Olympic Movement as it has all the necessary documents needed for educational institutes and national sport organizations.

For more than ten years as the Director of the Thailand Olympic Academy, I always adhere to the IOA's goal and the concepts of Pierre de Coubertin by means of disseminating knowledge and understanding of the Olympic Movement through sporting activities, through exercises and through traditional games, especially during the annual Olympic Day activities and during technical courses for teachers, pupils and youths under the topic of 'Olympic Education Decoding for the Development of Thai Youth', which has been organized bi-annually in line with the concepts and experiences of the IOA.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the IOA, enabling to inspire me to expand the network of Olympic Movement further. Meanwhile, I wish to express my greetings to the IOA on its 50th anniversary. Please accept my best wishes to the IOA to maintain its Olympic Institute with sustainable development as to assist human beings with long-lasting peace forever.



*In the IOA amphitheatre,
8th Joint International Session
for Presidents or Directors of NOAs
and Officials of NOCs, 2006.*



*Laying of wreath
at the commemorative monument
of J. Ketseas and C. Diem.*

2003



Assoc. Prof. Benoît Séguin

School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, Canada



Personal reflections on the 50th anniversary of the IOA



AM HONOURED to contribute to the 50th anniversary of the IOA by sharing some of my thoughts about the IOA and its contribution to the Olympic Movement.

Over the past 15 years, I have had the privilege to experience the IOA from a number of perspectives as a participant and coordinator in the Session for Young Participants, a student in the Postgraduate Seminar on Olympic Studies, and in recent years as an Olympic Marketing lecturer and supervising professor in the Postgraduate Seminar and the Master's Degree Programme on Olympic Studies.

Over the years, many participants have referred to the IOA as a life-changing experience. It was certainly

the case for me when I first participated in the Young Participants Session in 1997. I remember the excitement; the exceptional atmosphere that was created in the 'IOA village'. The Academy was buzzing with 200 participants from a variety of backgrounds (educators, sport administrators, athletes, Olympians) and representing more than 100 countries. According to two Olympians there, the mood was comparable to an 'Olympic Village but without the pressure of competing'. The IOA experience, through a number of well planned activities (i.e. ceremonies, lectures, group work, social evenings, sport competitions, free time, visits to archaeological sites, etc.) made it possible for us, participants, to engage in what I respectfully consider an

authentic ‘Olympic’ experience. The authenticity is also the result of the deep connection of the IOA with the roots of ancient Olympic Games and its location in sacred Ancient Olympia. Since 1961, thousands of individuals including sport leaders, educators, athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, staff and lecturers have experienced the IOA. This, I believe, has made a tremendous contribution to the Olympic Movement and in the promotion of Olympism worldwide.

I often begin my first lecture at the IOA by showing the Olympic rings on a screen and asking students to write down, on a piece of paper, words that come to mind when they see the rings. In other words, the associations they make with the Olympic brand. The words that are most often mentioned from year to year are: excellence, sports, international, peace, friendship, unity, pride and celebration. Interestingly, these attributes also reflect what most people around the world associate with the Olympics. They are the essential elements of what constitute the ‘Olympic brand’. In marketing terms, they represent the essence of the brand, which for the IOC consists of three essential pillars: striving for success (striving, excellence, determination, being the best), global festival (global, participation, celebration, unity, festive), and positive human values (universal ideals such as optimism, respectful, inspirational). In looking at these elements, it is obvious to me that the IOA brings authenticity to the Olympic brand through its educational programme, its

promotion of universal values such as mutual understanding, friendship, tolerance, and in its contribution to building a better world. This is, at the very least, what I have experienced in all of the sessions that I have had the privilege to attend and participate.

I believe, however, that finding the proper balance between managing the ‘international product’ (entertainment aspect of the Olympic Games) and the international movement – Olympic Movement – remains a key challenge for the future. There are potential disconnects between the product being consumed where success is measured in terms of bottom line (revenue, ratings, market share, etc.) and the core of its brand – Olympism. This is vital, since failure to live up to its brand promise could lead to problems for the Olympics. It is the ‘Olympic Movement’ itself united under the concept of ‘Olympism’ that provides a unique proposition with its commitment to ‘contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced in accordance with Olympism and its values’. The IOA through its many educational programmes plays an essential role in reaching this ambitious goal.

When I reflect on my experiences at the IOA, there are dozens of memories that race through my mind, emotions that re-surface, and faces of individuals who impacted my life. When I think of the IOA experience, a number of words seem to capture what I feel: *friendship, humanity, understanding, respect, passion, educa-*

tion, inspiring, hope, tradition/history, and magical. Interestingly, while each experience at the IOA is unique, these words still describe what I have felt at each session attended as a participant or a professor. The IOA experience is powerful and emotionally charged. Consequently, close friendships emerge in Olympia as the opportunity to share, learn, respect and appreciate our differences as human beings. The group work provides opportunities to learn from our colleagues, as well as understand and appreciate different points of view about issues. I have great memories of the nights spent on the marble stairs talking with other participants, sharing stories about our respective lives, singing, or just hanging out contemplating the full moon illuminating the stadium of Ancient Olympia. I recall the cultural nights that provide a peek into the different countries and cultures present at the IOA. All these experiences make it possible for us to live together, to appreciate each other and to understand the power of Olympism in our world. But, as a highly respected research and educational institution, the IOA offers individuals (young leaders, sport administrators, students, sport educators, athletes, etc.) with exceptional educational experiences. Through the leadership of the Ephoria of the Academy and its long-serving Dean Dr Konstantinos Georgiadis, the IOA offers an environment that is conducive to learning, sharing and living in the true spirit of Olympism.

The IOA's experience is also about the opportunity

to learn from outstanding scholars representing a variety of academic fields (history, philosophy, pedagogy, sociology, management, etc.). These scholars offer students/participants with new perspectives on Olympic studies that are supported by state-of-the-art research. I believe that their researches offer important contributions (theoretical and practical) and legitimacy to the Olympic Movement. They also inspire future generations of researchers, future leaders of sport and the Olympic Movement. While the late Professor Fernand Landry (Canada) was a great inspiration to me as a student, I remember the many professors of the IOA for their kindness, but also their rigour and their ability to challenge us to be critical while keeping an open mind on various topics. When I think of the IOA, I also think of the professional experts that are invited as lecturers and offer unique insights into some aspects of the Olympic Games or the Olympic Movement. Personally, listening to Michael Payne (former Marketing Director of the IOC) discussing the important role of Olympic Marketing provided the inspiration to complete doctoral studies examining the impact of ambush marketing on the Olympic brand. The IOA is also about the long hours spent in the library reading, studying, or just perusing a few of the thousands of Olympic books and documents from all over the world. I consider the visits of key archaeological sites in various parts of the Peloponnese with experts such as Professor Weiler (archaeologist) and Professor Kyle

(history) as one of my best educational experiences. They taught us important aspects/meanings of ancient games but also had the ability to take us back in time and make us feel as if we were there, thousands of years ago, living in ancient Greece.

When reflecting on my experiences in the Academy, I can't help but to be grateful to all those men and women who have invested human, intellectual and financial resources into the IOA. Their legacy to the Olympic Movement and in the promotion of Olympism worldwide is immeasurable. Thousands of men and women have been influenced by the power of Olympism and have learned about various aspects of the Olympic Games. In turn, they most likely touched thousands, if not millions, by being ambassadors of Olympism all over the world. One of the speeches that touched me and I think captures my feelings about the

IOA and its contribution was by the late President Nikos Filaretos when he said in his concluding remarks of the 39th Session for Young Participants: 'We have been here for about 12 days and in this miniature Olympic Village – the lecturers will forgive me – the most important thing we learned is to live together. I have repeatedly said and I will say it once more: that is the biggest lesson we learn – learn to respect one another, to love one another, and to be friendly'. That to me reflects Olympism, and the vision of Pierre de Coubertin of building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport. I sincerely hope that others within the Olympic Movement will step up to the plate and assist the Greeks in preserving this wonderful legacy so that many others can be influenced by its magic for many, many years to come.





*Supervising professors of the
15th International Seminar
on Olympic Studies
for Postgraduate Students, 2007.
From left to right: S. Ramsamy,
J. Abrams, Leigh Robinson,
Eleni Theodoraki, S. Kretchmar,
K. Georgiadis and B. Séguin.*



*Tree planted by the Canadian
professors J. Powell
and F. Landry in the mid 1980s
outside the lecturers' rooms, 2007.*

2004



Marton Simitsek

*Former Vice-President of the IOA and the HOC ♦ Chief Operating Officer
of the ATHENS 2004 Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games*



The International Olympic Academy: The vision, the passion, the love of my father Otto Szymiczek



AS SOON AS I READ the President's letter asking me to contribute with my memories of the Academy, I was swamped by countless recollections from all those years that I had seen my father agonizing and labouring over, as well as being content with, the Academy's progress and development. Often, I felt jealous because I sensed that the IOA was a second family to him.

He was convinced that the pure Olympic ideals, with what they profoundly represent, are worth being appropriated by the world's youth. Because he believed that those adept in this ideology would become better citizens. They would learn to compete – and compete

in accordance with rules and with respect for the others. This was the reason for my father's great love for and devotion to the Academy up to his last day.

From those early times I shall always retain the images of the first sessions held outdoors and of sleeping in tents; and then, the construction of the permanent facilities, equipping them, and setting up the library. I recall participating in the early morning wake by the bell for exercise. This was over forty years ago, and yet I am still friends with the people I spent just a brief fortnight with at that time.

Later, from the period when I served as Vice-President for four years, I shall never forget the par-

ticipants' dedication during the lectures, the partaking of everyone in the cultural and sports events, and the commitment of the officials, staff members and volunteers alike to the success of the sessions, so that they leave an indelible mark on these young men and women from all over the world – which was indeed the case every year, for those times that I had the occasion to confirm for myself.

Olympia's aura is indeed amazing! One wonders if the ancient Greeks chose it purely by chance as the site for the Olympic Games.

I do not know whether the objectives of the IOA, its work and its contribution to the country's image have been sufficiently understood and appreciated. It is a heavy legacy. The Academy must be assisted to broaden its educational work and consolidate its status as the first International Academy, the 'mother' of all

other National Academies. We should also ensure that, through the appropriate representation, we upgrade the relation with the International Olympic Committee, which needs to be convinced by solid arguments to rank the International Olympic Academy where it deserves to be.

I believe, because I witnessed it, that all the people who have come to the Academy over its 50 years of operation are the best advocates of its work. We need to keep them involved, maintaining contact with them through the Academy itself and not only through the alumni association.

Let us all join together for something that is truly valuable. Let us preserve the pure International Olympic Academy as the guardian of the Olympic ideals, ideals that are so frequently abused in our times.





*Opening ceremony of the 36th International Session for Young Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 1996.
From left to right: S. Capralos (Chairman of the Olympic Preparation Commission), D. Gangas (HOC Secretary General), M. Simitsek (HOC 1st Vice-President) and E. Katsiadakis (HOC 2nd Vice-President).*



*Lecture by M. Simitsek,
47th International Session
for Young Participants, 2007.*

2005



Irena Szewińska

Member of the IOC ♦ Olympic Gold Medallist



My Olympic inspirations



WE CELEBRATE a beautiful jubilee of the 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy with its headquarters in Olympia, that plays a very important role in the Olympic Movement through its excellent activity in favour of the Olympic idea promotion. The International Olympic Academy hosts many events, but a very special role should be given to the annual Sessions for Young Participants, which are attended by delegates from many countries in the world.

But I will come back to the beginnings of my sports career.

I can feel a great strength of the Olympic Games from my own experience. When the world celebrated

the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960 I wasn't training, but I followed them very keenly. When a few months later I started my adventure with athletics and my trainings, an American, Wilma Rudolph, the winner of three gold medals in sprint, was my model athlete. I wished to run like her and at that time I didn't even allow myself to dream about competing at the Olympic Games. After four years of trainings my results were improving step by step. And my dream came true. In 1964 I qualified to the Polish Olympic Team for the Olympic Games in Tokyo. I felt extremely happy and though I wasn't a favourite, my dreams were going further to the Olympic podium. I competed in long jump, 200m run, and 4x100m relay. When I entered

the stadium in the morning, I realized that I had participated in the Olympic Games with all its roots in ancient times. I was deeply touched and happy. I will never forget this wonderful atmosphere at the stadium, which gave me wings. I felt so light during my long jumps, and it was fantastic. Finally I qualified to the final event in which I improved my life records. That event brought me my first silver medal. The second, also a silver one, was won in 200m run, and the gold one together with my colleagues in the relay. And in this way, being still a junior, I returned from the Tokyo Games with three Olympic medals and with unforgettable impressions both from the stadium and from the Olympic Village, which has always been the heart of the Games. Here is the place where athletes from all over the world meet and make friends. The Olympic Games is not only about sports and medals. It's about many cultural events, opening and closing ceremonies, presentations and spectacles in the Olympic Village, which allow the athletes to extend their knowledge about the host country, its culture and traditions.

After Tokyo I participated in the Olympic Games four times, winning two medals in Mexico in 1968 (gold in 200m run and bronze in 100m run), one bronze medal in 200m run in Munich in 1972 and a gold medal in 400m run in Montreal in 1976. Now my collection includes seven Olympic medals.

I spent 20 years on the track but the Olympic Games were always the most important events, which

couldn't be compared to the World or European championships in athletics.

The Olympic Games in ancient Greece and the Games of modern era initiated by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in Athens in 1896 were the most outstanding sports events. To be an Olympian has always been a great honour and to be an Olympic medal winner a great happiness. Those are feelings worth hard trainings. I will never forget my most beautiful impressions when I stood on the highest podium listening to the Polish anthem and looking up at the Polish national flag.

When in 1980 I finished my athlete's career, I still stayed with sport working actively in the authorities of the Polish Olympic Committee and the Polish Athletic Association.

In 1998 the IOC Session in Nagano elected me IOC member. And as an IOC member I was invited by the International Olympic Academy President Nikos Filaretos to participate as a guest in the IOA Session for Young Participants. I was very pleased to go to Olympia but when I saw that place it was far beyond my expectations. The place is in a nice location, surrounded by green trees and shrubs, close to ancient walls and a stadium where ancient heroes competed. The Session was attended by almost 200 young participants, two from each represented country. The lectures were presented by outstanding experts, who touched different issues joined with Olympism. They were followed by group discussions arranged in arbours hidden in the trees.

Those serious discussions were accompanied by sports and cultural activities such as theatre, dance, paintings. Our hosts organized social evenings where the participants presented themselves in national costumes encouraging everybody to join them in national dance performances or singing easy national songs.

Participation in the sessions in Olympia allows to extend knowledge about the Olympic idea and then to share and promote that knowledge in mother countries.

When I recall my first stay in Olympia I always remember my great impression when I was visiting the ancient Olympic stadium, which is still the place where an Olympic flame begins its road to the Olympic host city. And of course I couldn't miss the possibility to run 100m on the track which still remembers the touch of ancient heroes' feet.

I have visited Ancient Olympia a few times more, but I will remember for long my last visit in June 2010. During the opening ceremony of the Session for Young Participants, which traditionally took place at the Pnyx Hill near Acropolis, I was honoured by the IOA President and Ephoria with the Award 'Vergina'. The award was presented to me by the Hellenic Olympic Committee President Spyros Capralos in the presence of outstanding guests, representatives of the government,

the Greek Olympic Movement and participants of the IOA Session. I was very honoured and impressed and will keep that ceremony in my heart for long. The Award 'Vergina' belongs to the most important distinctions received in my life.

A few days later, during the plenary session in Olympia, I shared my Olympic memories with the participants and was very pleased to answer many of their questions concerning my sports career and Olympic impressions.

It is very difficult to present in a few words the important role of the International Olympic Academy. However, I would like to stress that it has its stable and important position in the Olympic Movement, having daily contacts and cooperation with the International Olympic Committee and NOC of Greece. Its activities in favour of friendship and tolerance promotion, dealing with ethical and cultural aspects of the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games are invaluable.

I'm deeply convinced that everyone who has been in Olympia would like to come back there.

I wish to congratulate you on this beautiful 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy and extend my best wishes for further successes in promoting the Olympic idea.

*Awarding of the IOA prize 'Vergina'
to Irena Szewińska by the HOC President
S. Capralos, opening ceremony
of the 50th International Session for Young
Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 2010.*



*From left to right: S. Capralos,
Irena Szewińska, Fani Palli-Petralia,
I. Kowelos, 50th International Session
for Young Participants,
Hill of the Pnyx, 2010.*





*Irena Szewińska practising
at the IOA track and field.*

2006



Henry Benny Tandau

President of the Tanzania Olympic Academy



International Olympic Academy, 50 years anniversary



IT IS INDEED a great honour to be afforded the opportunity to participate in the International Olympic Academy anniversary album.

Fifty years is a long enough time to reflect on any institution or individual, but what makes the fifty years of the IOA even more remarkable is the nature of the institution itself.

Though only fifty years old, the IOA represents a compression of knowledge and culture of close to 3,000 years.

The IOA has managed to develop a complex of the ancient Olympic Games and the modern Olympic Movement; preserving the ancient while shaping and

disseminating the modern, and making sure they both flourish in harmony.

THE IOA AS A SOURCE OF OLYMPIC
KNOWLEDGE

Located in historic Olympia, south of Athens on the Peloponnese Peninsula, the International Olympic Academy serves a multinational, multicultural community as an International Academic Centre for Olympic Studies. It is an outstanding academic resource for students and researchers around the globe. The IOA makes available a wide spectrum of educational programmes and studies aimed at disseminating the vision of Olympism. The

IOA is a custodian of close to 3,000 years of knowledge and activities of mankind (making 3,000 years look like yesterday), both documented and undocumented. As President and founder of the Tanzania Olympic Academy, I share the IOA's vision of Olympism.

THE FIRES THAT NEARLY BURNT DOWN THE ACADEMY

Olympia, site of the ancient Olympics and World Heritage Site, was evacuated on August 26, 2007. Fears were expressed for the survival of the ruins of Ancient Olympia lying near the raging fire. The famous statue of Hermes of Praxiteles and nearby antiquities were spared from the fire, but the yard of the museum where the statue is housed was scorched. The fire burnt all the trees on the hilltop above, and an area of brush and open space adjacent to the Olympic Academy. The fire did not damage the archaeological museum nor did it damage the several ancient structures in the area. The sacred Hill of Kronos was totally burnt during the blaze. The hill was left blackened. However, following great efforts, trees were replanted and Kronos is green and beautiful again.

INTRODUCTION OF THE IOA MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME

In 2009 the IOA introduced an Olympic Movement innovation, in collaboration with the Department of

Sports Organization and Management of the University of the Peloponnese, Sparta; the International Olympic Academy started to offer a Master's Degree Programme. The course title is 'Olympic Studies, Olympic Education, Organization and Management of Olympic Events'. The programme's philosophy is consistent with the values of the Olympic Movement aimed at worldwide diffusion of the Olympic ideal, global participation, and promotion of knowledge and research in Olympic issues. Grounded in Olympism and Olympic pedagogy, the academics are based on the three pillars of the Olympic Movement: Education, Sports, and Culture. I am privileged to have been among the first group of 30 students to undertake this course. The programme is an exceptional experience as it is uniquely multicultural, drawing no more than one student per country save for the hosts from Greece.

2009 – LIGHTING OF THE VANOC OLYMPIC FLAME

One of the highlights of my memories of IOA is witnessing the lighting of the flame for the Vancouver Winter Olympics; the flame was lit by the sun's rays in an ancient ceremony, heralding the start of the torch relay for the 2010 Winter Games.

The sun shone just enough over the fallen temples at the birthplace of the ancient Olympics for a Greek actress in a priestess' white gown and sandals to

focus its rays on a silver torch using a concave mirror.

The IOC President Jacques Rogge said the Olympic torch conveyed a global message 'of friendship and respect'. 'The Olympic torch and flame are symbols of the values and ideals which lie at the heart of the Olympic Games', said Rogge as hundreds of spectators, including fellow students of the Master's Degree Programme and myself, looked on from the stadium's grassy banks.

Although cauldrons were lit during the ancient Games, held in Olympia from 776 BC to 394 AD, the torch relay is a modern addition to the Olympics. It began during the 1936 Berlin Games, and debuted at the Winter Games at the 1964 Innsbruck Olympics.

Other highlights of my visits and stays at IOA include visiting the archaeological site and running at the ancient stadium, getting inside the workshop of Phidias, walking through the Crypt to the ancient stadium, walking past the Prytaneion, walking or sitting in the Gymnasium, the Philippeion, being close to the temple

of Zeus, passing by Mount Kronos taking photographs by the statue of Diagoras on the shoulders of his sons.

Definitely the first thing that enters one's mind when visiting Olympia is of course the Olympics. Olympia is where the Games started close to 3,000 years ago, Olympia is so beautiful that visitors to the IOA love taking pictures and taking them home for their friends to see. In Olympia one can do so many things, including posing from behind ruins – it is also great to take photos of one running in the ancient stadium, throwing an imaginary discus or shot put. But most important, IOA in Olympia is where one goes to take 3,000 years of knowledge, knowledge on Olympism.

I would like to acknowledge the great work done by the Presidents of IOA in the past and presently by Isidoros Kouvelos, the Honorary Dean of IOA Professor Kostas Georgiadis, the Director of IOA Professor Dionyssi Gangas, and all the staff past and present.

I look forward to more educational and cultural programmes to be developed and implemented at the IOA.



*The students of the Master's
Degree Programme (academic year
2009/2010) at the marble steps
with the Professors M. Bronikowski
and K. Georgiadis.*



*Photo of postgraduate students in
front of the statue of Diagoras, 2009.*





Students of the Master's Degree Programme (academic year 2009/2010) with the IOC President J. Rogge, after the lighting ceremony for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

2007



Walther Tröger

Honorary Member of the IOC



Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the International Olympic Academy



MY OWN OLYMPIC CAREER is almost exactly in compliance with the existence of the International Olympic Academy. When I started to work for the National Olympic Committee for Germany in the year 1961, this was shortly before the inauguration of the Academy in the summer of the same year.

From the very start of my work the relation to this Academy and the cooperation with its persons in charge belonged to my tasks, having been responsible for the selection of the German participants in its seminars, which – during the first years – took place for larger groups. These seminars contributed to a considerable extent to the activities of the Academy and, in

return, many participants owe their Olympic commitments to their participation in events of the Academy.

It was not before 1969 that I had an opportunity to visit the Academy myself and to take part in a seminar. Later on I very often came back. As a lecturer, as a member of steering and advisory bodies and as counsellor to the management board of the Academy, a close relationship has developed. My contacts to the most important representatives of German sport, who were friendly connected with the Academy, have also contributed to this development. I wish to remind of Carl Diem, who had set up the Academy together with John Ketseas, his wife Liselott Diem, Franz Lotz, Herbert Kaebernick and later on Manfred Lämmer and

Norbert Müller. Due to this cooperation close relations and friendships have grown to the presidents of the Academy. Prince George Wilhelm of Hanover, who, uncle of the former King Constantine, directed the International Academy at first, was at the same time Chairman of the Commission for the National Academy, for which I had been responsible as Director. I fondly recall my cooperation with Epaminondas Petralias and, for example, a visit during which he invited me to a walk and showed me the places planned for the treasure houses.

Even more intensive had been my relationship to Nicos Nissiotis, with whom I shared – besides many interests in different areas – the affinity to basketball. This is why it was an obligation that, when staying both in Olympia, we met in the morning before the beginning of the activities under the basket hoop and played a game of one-on-one together. And, finally, I accompanied for many years the work of my colleague Nikos Filaretos with interest and many recommendations.

During my first visit in 1969 the period of the

tent camps had already been over. The facility, however, reflected some kind of student atmosphere and has developed only over the years, with the important support of the Greek government, in a way which deserves high recognition. The same goes for the connection to the cultural sites in Olympia in the course of their progressing excavations, for example also of the ancient Olympic stadium. One of my fondest memories is my run at the reopening of the ancient stadium together with Prince of Hanover and Jesse Owens.

Due to the increasing intensification of the cooperation with the International Olympic Committee, the Academy has influenced generations of visitors, participants and, above all, young students. This had a positive influence on the Olympic family and has thus generated many important supporters (rooters) and assistants for this institution. Its work represents above all, also, a significant bridge between the beginnings of Olympic history, which even today is part of the basis of the Olympic idea and the Olympic work, and the modern Olympism and its activities.





*Lecture by W. Tröger,
31st International Session
for Young Participants, 1991.*



*The German Olympic Academy
Commission in its early years.
From left to right: F. Lotz,
W. Tröger, N. Müller, Prince
George of Hanover (Chairman),
Liselott Diem, H. Kaebernick,
B. Hunger and K. Zieschang.*

2008



Prof. Ingomar Weiler

Karl-Franzens University, Graz, Austria



The importance of eyewitnesses in Ancient Olympia



ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ancient Greek historians, born in Megalopolis, c. 130 km distant from Olympia, Polybios (c. 200 – after 118 BCE) describes a boxing match between Kleitomachos of Thebes and Aristonikos, an athletic protégé of the Egyptian King Ptolemy IV Philopator in the 141. Olympiad (= 216 BCE). This description offers some insight in the behaviour and psychology of ancient spectators of the Olympics. Is it only a special text concerning some details of an ancient sport event or is it a topic for a general analysis of spectator attitudes, which can be interpreted as a timeless phenomenon in sport? Polybios is the author of 40 books, *Historiai*, a kind of

universal history of antiquity, from which only the books 1-6 and many important fragments have survived. In book 27 he presents the above-mentioned athletic event, which did not happen in his lifetime (27.9.3-13). Polybios, a didactic historian, has developed a new concept of writing history, the so-called pragmatic history (*pragmatike historia*). His main goals are to offer a handbook for politicians and, in the context of this paper, more interesting and important, to teach, like Thucydides, the general reader anthropological patterns. He speaks about the question of the validity of documents and witnesses as a source for historical studies. He is also one of the first historians, or *the* first who discusses methodological questions

about writing history, and he criticizes some of his fore-runners and contemporary historiographers. Among criticism and general postulates, Polybios stresses the necessity of reliable sources and he obviously prefers eyewitnesses. In a famous passage where he criticizes the Sicilian historiographer Timaios of Tauromenion (c. 356-260 BCE) – by the way, Timaios introduced the Olympiads as a general chronology – Polybios quotes Herakleitos (12.27):

Nature has given us two instruments, as it were, by the aid of which we inform ourselves and inquire about everything. These are hearing and sight, and of the two sight is much more veracious according to Herakleitos. ‘The eyes are more accurate witnesses than the ears,’ he says. Now, Timaeus enters on his inquiries by the pleasanter of the two roads, but the inferior one. For he entirely avoids employing his eyes and prefers to employ his ears. Now the knowledge derived from hearing being of two sorts, Timaeus diligently pursued the one, the reading of books, as I have above pointed out, but was very remiss in his use of the other, the interrogation of living witnesses. It is easy enough to perceive what caused him to make this choice. Inquiries from books may be made without any danger or hardship, provided only that one takes care to have access to a town rich in documents or to have a library near at hand. After that one has only to pursue one’s re-

searches in perfect repose and compare the accounts of different writers without exposing oneself to any hardship. Personal inquiry, on the contrary, requires severe labour and great expense, but is exceedingly valuable and is the most important part of history (trans. W. R. Paton).

In his *Historiai* Polybios mentions the importance of the eyewitnesses (*autoptes/autoptai*) for the scholarly research work a second time (20.12.8):

It is not at all the same to judge of things from hearsay and from having actually witnessed them, but there is a great difference. In all matters a certainty founded on the evidence of one’s eyes is of the greatest value. The historian prefers his own eyes instead of the ears, and instead of learning by reading books (trans. W. R. Paton).

Being an eyewitness, being physically and mentally present in Olympia is also important for the participants of the IOA. This is the first major point of my contribution. Since my first staying in Olympia in 1960 and excursions with students of several universities, and especially since many sessions and lectures with postgraduates and participants of the Master’s Degree Programme, organized by the University of the Peloponnese and the IOA, I have learned that teaching in Olympia, visiting the Altis and the other archae-

ological sites, climbing up the Kronos Hill and walking along the Alpheios is the easiest, fastest and most profitable and productive way to study the history of the ancient Olympics. Of course, there is another very helpful didactic possibility to become absorbed in the agonistic and cultural problems of ancient Greece: There are three well-known museums, one of ancient sports, one of the archaeological excavations and one of the modern history of the Olympic Games and of the Olympic Movement conceived by Pierre de Coubertin. All these opportunities together offer for the students the advantages of the *lieu de mémoire*. They enlarge the knowledge, they promote a better understanding of the games, of the sanctuary, of the connections between early sport and religion, and of the ancient sport-architecture like the *stadion*, *gymnasion* and the *palaistra*. Olympia is a place where, in the definition of Pierre Nora, 'cultural memory crystallizes and secretes itself'. Nora's concept of this modern term includes: (a) places such as archives, museums, palaces, cemeteries, and

memorials; (b) commemorations, mottos, and all rituals; (c) objects such as inherited property, commemorative monuments, manuals, emblems, basic texts, and symbols. Every other topic of history, training methods, social background of athletes, ancient literature, about religion, psychology, management, sociology of sport, can be taught in every place in the world, even on the North Pole (if you have the facilities for teaching and a warm seminar room). But for studying ancient Olympic history, the landscape of the Alpheios River, the archaeological remains, the museums, the climate, the quietness – when the tourist buses have left for their next sightseeing tour – Olympia and the IOA are unparalleled unique places, an irreplaceable meeting point for young people who want to learn about the cradle of ancient sport. For many years the IOA has been offering the chance to be an *autoptes* in the meaning of Polybios to hundreds or thousands of participants from all over the world in different sessions and meetings.





Lecture by I. Weiler in front of the statue of Diagoras, 7th International Seminar on Olympic Studies for Postgraduate Students, 1999.



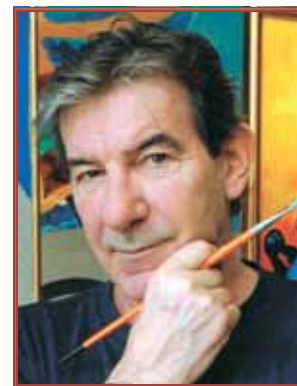
Learning and practising the ancient pentathlon under the guidance of I. Weiler, 7th International Seminar on Olympic Studies for Postgraduate Students, 1999.

2009



Kevin Whitney

Artist



The Fine-Art Workshop at the IOA



N 1982 I HAD A DREAM; this dream came about due to my lifelong appreciation of ancient Hellenistic Greek Art and the fact that the British government had sent in 1982 a flotilla of troops to the Falkland Islands to war with Argentina. They included an official war artist, a tradition that started at the battle of Waterloo. I thought why celebrate death and destruction in a war zone when at the Olympic Games, Life and Beauty at its ultimate could be celebrated by an artist as it was in ancient Greece. After a few meetings the President of the British Olympic Association (BOA), Princess Ann, the Princess Royal, appointed me the first ever official Olympic artist, the first for any country worldwide. I

subsequently attended the Los Angeles Olympic Games in that official capacity.

It wasn't until the BOA sent me to the International Olympic Academy in 1986 that I realized the significance of the Academy as the spiritual and cultural centre of the Olympic Movement, as a peace movement; at the request of the late Dean Otto Szymiczek and President Nissiotis I started the Fine-Art Workshop at the IOA.

Returning year after year the workshop was at first in my quarters, then the room next door was cleared for use, and after eight years the late President Nikos Filaretos built me three studios next to the tennis courts, for painting/sculpture, poetry and dance, which of course are still there today.

For many years Mrs Elizabeth Hanley (USA) would run the Dance Workshop and we would combine all of the workshops in the Happening on the steps of the Academy, one evening during each session.

Panagiota Apostolopoulou (GRE) helped me for many years, as my personal assistant. Her talents in the Arts and enthusiasm for the workshop were outstanding and supportive. The late Dr John Powell (CAN) would read his excellent poems in the Happening, thus illustrating the event was for people of all ages.

These were big multi-arts audio-visual events, attended by everyone. An annual Photo/Art Exhibition would be put on in the studios and at the vernissage the President, the Dean, two lecturers, two participants and two guests would democratically judge the works and award first, second and third positions, respectively. I didn't partake, to avoid favouritism.

In the Painting Department some athletic participants would pose for figure drawing. A lot of participants at the session may not have attempted painting and sculpture and were often surprised by their efforts. The workshops became a large part of the curriculum. There was rarely a low attendance at the workshops. I always tried to have diverse, cross sections of themes in all the workshops. In painting and sculpture, a general theme of landscape and the human body and Olympism. In photography, Beauty, Speed or Nature, and in poetry a variety of themes, which would be printed, exhibited and judged in the Fine-Art Exhibition.

On my first arrival at the IOA in 1986 I remember standing at the top of the steps and saying to myself, 'I'm Home!'





Apollo on the steps of the Academy.

Large painting on the steps of the Academy.





Scene from the Arts Happening.



The Fine-Art Workshop.

2010



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Olympism and the trees of the International Olympic Academy



VEN ON TELEVISION the 2007 fire that devastated Ancient Olympia was horrifying to watch. When the trees of the IOA burned, my memory quickly raced through several past moments there. I knew those trees well. Just a few weeks before they burned, I had walked among those familiar green pines while attending my fifth IOA session. Some of my best memories are tied to the Academy and to its trees. Strong friendships begun during my first session in 1986 endure to this day. I first met Ian Jobling, Australia's prominent spokesman of Olympism, beside the temple of Hera. Lucinda Adams, 1960 Olympic Gold Medallist in the 400m relay, was a fellow member of my USA delegation.

Friends ever since, she and I worked together on an Olympic project just this past year. I fondly recall chatting with the IOA President Nicos Nissiotis just a few weeks before his tragic death. He and I agreed to correspond. We never could, but I knew I was lucky just to have known him. And I clearly remember a very hot afternoon, when our small discussion group took refuge from the scorching sun in the shade of the trees. I felt I now had been befriended even by the pine trees on the IOA grounds. That first IOA experience was remarkably invigorating for me. The authentic internationalism seemed unique and especially attractive.

I returned to the IOA as a lecturer in 1991, 1992 and 1997, and continued to make new, permanent

friends each time, including Georgios Dolianitis and Konstantinos Georgiadis of Greece. Mr Dolianitis and I have recently exchanged guest lectures on the Olympics, I in Athens, he in Florida. For decades Dr Georgiadis and I have collaborated in our research on Olympic beginnings, the one's work complementing the other's, an instance, I think, of true Olympism. Ironically, a reviewer of my book about the Olympic revival (*The Modern Olympics: A Struggle for Revival*, Baltimore, 1996) complained that I had twice used the word 'Olympism', a word which he claimed was 'meaningless' or 'at best fuzzy'. To use 'Olympism' only twice in a 250-page book I thought was rather sparing, and both times I used it advisedly.

I had been especially careful because before 1992 I myself was somewhat suspicious of this term. It seemed to me rather vague, if not meaningless or 'fuzzy'. And I, like some others I knew, had spent a long time at Ancient Olympia – surrounded by great natural beauty and awesome history – agonizing with fellow delegates trying to fulfill our assignment, which was to define 'Olympism'. At my third such session in 1992 my discussion group (which I led) again sat in the shade of the pines. As we sought the meaning of 'Olympism' some of us remembered seeing official definitions, but could not recall the exact wording. In fact the main memory we each had was that the definition that we had seen was rather long, vague and not very memorable. We all agreed that our own should be a simple,

one-sentence definition, one easy to repeat to others without having to read it from a piece of paper.

Yet once more I saw my fellow delegates become truly discomfited because of our difficulty in defining this will-o'-the-wisp. One member of our group had a 'laptop' with her; but the spell-checker immediately declared 'Olympism' a non-word. We talked about Olympics and the world in general. The delegate from Libya gave me a Libyan Olympic Committee pennant (which now proudly decorates my game-room). That seemed a genuine act of Olympism. Then we talked more. Finally Olympia's trees and history – along with the camaraderie of my group of new-found friends from truly diverse national and ethnic backgrounds – worked their magic. Those are/were powerful trees. My group ultimately decided, almost in one voice, that we actually knew what Olympism is. Our definition is not as elegant and comprehensive as the definition given in Point One of the Olympic Charter. But we thought ours concise and easy to remember. Everyone must form his or her own definition, but ours was: 'Olympism is the pursuit of individual human excellence in the context of international brotherhood and good will toward men'. For us, at least, it was no longer meaningless or even fuzzy. At the plenary session I gave my subcommittee's report with conviction – and a final silent sigh of relief. Eventually the trees will grow back, I am sure.



Awarding of the ISOH Prize to D. Young (on the right) by K. Lennartz (on the left) and E. Katsiadakis during the opening ceremony of the 47th International Session for Young Participants, Hill of the Pnyx, 2007.



The US delegation at the 1986 IOA Session; third from left is Lucinda Adams, Olympic Gold Medallist in Rome 1960.