

Ioannis Phokianos

THE «GRANDFATHER» OF GREEK PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE 1ST MODERN OLYMPICS

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Many people played an important part in successfully organising the first modern Olympic Games. Amongst the key individuals were COUBERTIN, the Greek Royal Family, VIKELAS, Georgios AVEROV (who bankrolled the restoration of the Panathenaic Stadium) etc. Behind them there were others who played a lesser role, such as Timoleon PHILIMON, the Secretary General of the Games, Constantinos MANOS, the official technical instructor of the organization of games, the General Leonidas PARASCEVOPOULOS, the man who inspired Spyros LOUES the marathon race winner, and others. The whole Greek people, as well as the royal family, joyously greeted the prospect of the Olympic Games being held in Athens in the spring of 1896.¹

The aim of this article is to describe the contribution of Ioannis PHOKIANOS in the preparation of the Olympic Games, since he was the president of the practical committee and member of the Greek athletes' preparation committee.² PHOKIANOS has been considered as the "father of gymnastics in Greece"³ (like JAHN in Germany); he was also called, "the oak tree of gymnastics"⁴, "the giant of the Greek Sport"⁵, or "the grandfather of Greek gymnastics"⁶. Furthermore, we discuss the important role of PHOKIANOS: 1) in the establishment Greek Physical Education, 2) in the Zappeia Olympia (third and fourth) and 3) in preparation for the Olympic Games.

PHOKIANOS had received COUBERTIN'S letter of invitation as president of the Panhellenic Gymnastic Club. This he passed on to VIKELAS who became the first president of the *International Olympic Committee* (1894-1899) who lived in Paris at this time (1894). We shall also investigate his relation with VIKELAS, the person who represented PHOKIANOS'S ideas at the International Conference held in Paris in 1894, where Athens was chosen as the host city of the 1st modern Olympic Games.⁷ The thorough study of the correspondence between these two men will help us clarify aspects of the Athenian commitment to of the 1st Olympic Games.⁸

Both PHOKIANOS and his student Ioannis CHRYSAFIS (1873-1932) were opposed to C. MANOS, the right hand man of the Royal Family, who suggested all the Greek athletes should be excluded from the Olympic Games, because they were trained at their clubs (Panhellenic and Ethnikos-National) by Professionals (PHOKIANOS and CHRYSAFIS).

A brief biography

PHOKIANOS was born in Athens in 1845. His father was originally from Nea Phokaia, in Asia Minor, and thus he was renamed "Phokianos" - his previous surname being ORPHANOGLOU. His mother was from the island of Andros.⁹

Ioannis completed high school and then registered in the School of Mathematics at the University of Athens. However, he abandoned this discipline in order to dedicate himself to gymnastics. While still a student, he founded a club, aiming at the reestablishment of the ancient Olympic Games. PHOKIANOS, as the pioneer of Evangelos ZAPPAS'S ideas and visions, actively participated in the organization of the Olympia games, in 1875 and 1889 (this year he was the only organizer).

From 1868 to 1875 and from 1879 until his death, he was the instructor of the Public-Central Gymnasium, nowadays bearing his name "Ioannis Phokianos". From 1876 to 1879 he taught gymnastics, mathematics and physics at the three-class teacher's college, established by the *Association for the communication of Greek language* at Thessaloniki, directed by the pedagogue Ch. PAPAMARKOS.¹⁰

In 1891 the *Panellinios Gymnastic Club* was established and PHOKIANOS took the chair, which he retained until his death in 1896. He did not know that he suffered from diabetes and, as a result of an incorrect diagnosis and an operation on a benign anthrax condition, he died on 5 May 1896, a few weeks after the end of the Olympic Games.¹¹

PHOKIANOS had been the author of the *Gymnastics Handbook* (1883), which was one of the few aids to the Greek gymnasts until late 19th century. The official report of the games does not mention him at all.

Phokianos's Involvement in the Third (1875) and Fourth (1888-1889) Olympia of Zappas¹²

The success of the games of 1870 encouraged the Olympia games Committee to repeat the Zappeia games in 1875, and having been involved with organizing the two previous games in 1859 and 1870, the organization of the games was assigned to PHOKIANOS. He had excellent scientific knowledge but was also well respected by the students and others who attended the public gymnasium. He was therefore the best equipped to do the job. The previous organizer Daniel TZIOTIS had been excellent in acrobatic gymnastics but was completely illiterate.¹³ PHOKIANOS be-

lieved that gymnastics could develop in society only if the gymnasiums and the games were frequented by literate youths, students and pupils, instead of the workers who participated in the two previous organizations - probably because of the money prize - receiving criticism by the contemporary men of letters and the press.¹⁴ So PHOKIANOS took over as head of this organization with great enthusiasm, believing that this way he would be able to impose his ideas on the mode of gymnastics promotion in Greece. At his proposal, the programme of the games would include modern gymnastics, high jump over parallel bars, horizontal bar, grasshopper-like moves on parallel bars, etc. According to CHRYSAFIS, this competition programme based on the German model gymnastics was completely unusual from a technical point of view, and far removed from the international standard programmes of similar competitions using this model. CHRYSAFIS, as his student, stated that he was well aware of PHOKIANOS'S points of view on this matter, and he asserts that by keeping gymnastics within these limits, PHOKIANOS wanted to exclude acrobatics from that first public show in Greece, as well as to avoid the eventual fall of an athlete, something that would destroy the whole spectacle. This is why he included in the programme only the very common and safe exercises on the parallel bars and the horizontal bar as well.¹⁵ At this point we can pinpoint an early divergence from the German model; something probably which is due to his brother's tragic death.

Under the supervision of the *Special Gymnastics Committee*¹⁶ PHOKIANOS started training the students and pupils who were to participate in the games, with his assistants Aristides NIKOLAOU or IOANNIDES and Daniel TZIOTIS. However, despite PHOKIANOS'S willingness, preparation and effort, the games were regarded as a failure. He paid for other's faults and was considered responsible for the unsuccessful outcome. This was despite the fact that the athletic contests he had organised had been considered a success. The failings were due to the poor preparation of the athletic fields in the Panathinaic Stadium, unsatisfactory arrangements for spectators, and the non attendance of the royal family. Thus the "decorative" part of the games failed, sweeping down the entire organization. PHOKIANOS could not tolerate this undeserved criti-

cism, and at the end of 1875 he resigned from the position of the teacher of the public gymnasium, and went to Thessaloniki to teach gymnastics and mathematics in the newly established teachers' college founded by the *Association for the communication of Greek language*.¹⁷

During his four-year stay in Thessaloniki, PHOKIANOS was initiated in the Turnreigen method (group of exercises), by the German teacher of that college, GEBAUER. When he returned to Athens, influenced by his friend and principle of the School, VOULGARIS, he applied this method heart and soul, not only in his teaching but also to restrict the growth of acrobatics (a discipline he continued to dislike) in the development of gymnastics.¹⁸

The 4th Zappeia Games were announced by the Royal Decree of January 11th 1888, and there was a provision for the conduct of "Popular Games Festival".¹⁹ The programme of the Games was drafted by a special committee, nominated for that purpose, and was initially accepted by the Olympic Committee in March 1888. The programme included athletic and gymnastic games in the Panathinaic Stadium, as well as shooting contests in the National Shooting Ground. PHOKIANOS started training the athletes for the athletic and gymnastic games



Ioannis Phokianos (from: Georgiadis, Konstantinos, *Olympic Revival, Athens 2004*, p. 88)

in the public gymnasium. However, although the committee had initially approved the games, later on the idea was abandoned, as they concentrated their energies on a trade fair.²⁰ Thus, PHOKIANOS decided to organize the games on his own expense, using his sister's dowry, and his private gymnasium. The games were held in May 1889, whereas the Trade Fair took place in the autumn of 1888.²¹ The Games took place in the yard of the gymnasium and, although the size of the crowd made it uncomfortable to spectate, and the interruption of the games during the first day, the Games were well staged and considered to be a great success, too. At the end of the Games, after Minister THEOTOKIS awarded the prizes to the winners, professor Stefanos KOUMANOUDIS praised PHOKIANOS, presenting him a victor's wreath too.²²

In 1890, PHOKIANOS organized the Games in the Central Gymnasium, naming them "Annual games of the trainees of this Gymnasium".²³ In these Games, which were attended by the Ministers of

Phokianos and his athletes in 1889 (Salomou-Prokopiou, Alikei (ed.), Athens 1896. I International Olympic Games, Athens 2004, p. 37)



Education and Justice, THEOTOKIS and VOULPIOTIS respectively, the organization was sound. Most of the athletes had already participated in the 4th Zappeia Games. The success of the event, as well as PHOKIANOS'S influence on the Minister of Education regarding the gymnastics, was outstanding. The following incident bears testament to this As in 1889, Apostolos PIKIOS - an athlete of the *Omonoia club* - was proclaimed as a multiple winner, leaving everybody astonished. The Press praised him, presenting a whole-page picture of him (*Asty* newspaper), unanimously urging the Ministry of Education to send him to Europe to take up specialized gymnastics studies. PHOKIANOS, though, believed that PIKIOS was already an efficient gymnastics instructor and that he did not need any further education, as he was already capable of undertaking the duty of teaching. He provided him with a degree of gymnastics, and suggested that the Ministry to appoint him. The Ministry took PHOKIANOS'S suggestion into consideration and indeed appointed PIKIOS as a gymnast.²⁴

In our opinion this incident proves two things: The first is the prestige that PHOKIANOS held at that period of time, and the second an imperceptible fear of how things would go on in Europe regarding gymnastics. This very same fear had been detected by CHRYSAFIS as well, mostly in relation to acrobatic gymnastics in Germany This anxiety becomes clearer in 1892. That summer 360 German

gymnasts, both men and women, arrived in Athens from the *Saxon Gymnastic Clubs Association*. They had initially disembarked in Patras, where they visited the *Panachaikos Gymnasium*, and after watching the demonstration of Panachaikos' athletes, they performed their programme too. But although the Germans had gone to Athens, for the gymnastics demonstration in the Central Gymnasium, "not only Panellinios, but also the official State representatives were absent"²⁵, as CHRYSAFIS characteristically notes. CHRYSAFIS himself and PIKIOS were present, as well as the first president of the *Panellinios Gymnastics Club*, PHOKIANOS himself; the latter being asked to suggest a meeting between the Greek and German gymnasts; but all in vain. PHOKIANOS was uncompromising. This fact came as a surprise to CHRYSAFIS too, as it does to us, bringing to mind the strange fears we mentioned before. CHRYSAFIS sees it as a lost opportunity for the Greeks to acquire technical knowledge. They had been following a German model which they had never actually seen performed in full and in addition they knew little about how gymnastic competitions took place. We believe this was because PHOKIANOS was too attached to the exercise model he had been teaching so far. The reasons could be more than this. Was he afraid that the Greek gymnasts would be exposed? But the gymnasts in Patras were applauded. Was he trying to create a unified model for the Greeks taking some elements from the German model,

or did he in fact despise that system? We can also mention the differences among the athletes. The German athletes came from all classes and ages, whereas PHOKIANOS trained almost exclusively pupils and students. It is possible that these elements may offer some explanation, but the fact is that the official absence of the Panellinios Club and the State, was obviously because of the attitude held by PHOKIANOS who, at that time, had considerable influence on gymnastic issues in Greece.

1875 - 1896 School Gymnastics

The communication of PHOKIANOS'S ideals and knowledge was accepted by the students at the teachers' colleges in Thessaloniki (1876 - 1879) and Athens (1880), and by the students of the gymnastics academies, that temporarily and unofficially operated for the first time (1882 and 1884).²⁶

The outcome of these activities was the successful organization of the gymnastics demonstration in May 15th 1883. The Prime Minister, the Minister of Education, and many other officials showed great interest and attended the performance of the First and Second Grade pupils of the 1st Hellenic School and College, with PHOKIANOS being the leading contributor.

These gymnastic demonstrations made many men of letters reconsider their prejudice against gymnastics. At the same time, PHOKIANOS, through his work in gymnastics, was given the opportunity to conquer the world of elementary education as well: *"gymnastics was instituted in elementary schools and has been part of the curriculum ever since, and Phokianos's efforts were fruitful"*.¹⁷ The acknowledgement and acceptance of the role of pedagogic gymnastics in elementary education, created a positive climate which led to a shift from military exercise in schools. PHOKIANOS and his associates, Aristeides IOANNIDES and Spyros ATHANASOPOULOS, submitted a memorandum to the Minister of Education, Athanasios EFTAXIAS, and thus, on September 20th 1893, a statute came into force banning all military exercise in schools.²⁸ Pedagogic gymnastics and sports on the playing fields took its place. Ten days after the abolition of military exercise from schools, the Minister himself added a Royal Decree of September 29th 1893, *"about the regulation of the central Gymnasium and the Special Gymnastics Academy"*.²⁹

1879 - 1894 Phokianos Flourishes

In the fifteen years following his return from Thessaloniki in 1879 that PHOKIANOS was a dominant force in gymnastic matters in Greece, and his reputation spread in the rest of Europe too. In 1879, he was urgently asked to undertake the supervision of the newly built Central Gymnasium, taking the position previously held by the Swiss,

BOREL who had died. In the same year, the first congress of the Greek educational associations took place in Athens. The subject of the introduction of gymnastics in education was brought up for discussion. Indeed, in 1880, gymnastics became an obligatory course. In 1882 he taught in the first State Gymnastics Academy, and he was also made supervisor of all state gymnasiums. In the same year, he published his work *Handbook of Gymnastics*. In 1883, thanks to his memorandum to Minister EFTAXIAS, and also because of the successful school demonstrations he had organized, he managed to have military exercises banned from schools, and introduced pedagogic gymnastics and sports on playing fields. He became the prime influence in gymnastic sports, as we shall see in the case of 4th Olympia Games, and the first games of the *Panellinios Gymnastic Club*, over which he presided from its establishment in 1891, to his sudden death in 1896. Pierre de COUBERTIN invited him to attend the International Athletic Congress in Paris as a representative of Greece, and he was also appointed a delegate. At the same time, he introduced new sports, and created the regulations that would be applied at the 1st Modern Olympic Games. Maybe in this intense period of activity he did not pay sufficient attention to the consequences of his actions and words and he found himself isolated in the final year of his life the year of the First Olympic Games. CHRYSAFIS, as we shall see below, provides his explanation for that, while we shall try to give our assessment at the end.

President of the Panellinios Gymnastic Club

The inspiration for the creation of *Panellinios Gymnastics Club* came from Nikolaos KOUTSELOPOULOS, a lawyer and also a graduate gymnast, who was the first secretary general of the Club. PHOKIANOS, the greatest personality in Greek sport at the time, was the first President. The first thing that followed the foundation of *Panellinios*, was the creation of Gymnastics Schools for both sexes. That was a real milestone of great social significance, and undoubtedly PHOKIANOS deserves the credit for that stirring idea.³⁰

In the year the club was founded, its first games were organized at the Central Gymnasium. PHOKIANOS already had all the experience and willingness needed. Besides, the purpose of the Club, as stated in Article 2 of the Articles of Association was the following:

"The aim of the Club is to promote gymnastics to all social classes and to improve the latter by means of the former. This aim is sought through the foundation of the ancient Olympic Games, the establishment of gymnasiums and the promotion of books on gymnastics".³¹

Actually, it was a repetition of the games held at the central gymnasium (in which the club was housed until it had its own gymnasium). The games were held on 30-31 May 1891. They were successful and everybody including King GEORGE and the Prime Minister at that time Th. DELIGIANNIS took great pleasure from them. In fact the Prime Minister then invited PHOKIANOS to suggest ways in which the government could support *Panellinios*.³² It was mentioned that because the expenses were too heavy for the organizing club, PHOKIANOS was obliged to spend 2.240 drachmas - a very big amount at that time - which he took from his sister's dowry. This amount was equal to a third of the annual budget of the club³³.

In 1892, the year when the German gymnasts came to Greece, no games were held, probably because of lack of money.

In 1893, after the necessary amount of money was collected, the second games of the *Panellinios Gymnastic Club* were held at the Central Gymnasium. There, the hymn of the club - written by the young MANOS and composed by Spyros SAMARAS - was heard for the first time.³⁴

CHRYSAPHIS criticized the Club because it failed to take account of how sport was being organised in the rest of Europe and indeed in much of Greece. He concluded that despite all the efforts of the club's board, gymnastics and other sports were secondary in importance to the festivities.³⁵ Our story now returns to the actions of PHOKIANOS once more.

After such criticism by CHRYSAPHIS, it is not surprising he left the *Panellinios Gymnastic Club* with some other members and founded the *Ethnikos Gymnastic Club*, with the acquisition of a privately owned gymnasium as a priority. This was achieved within a month of the new club's foundation. Furthermore they decided not to hold costly games as had been the case with *Panellinios*.³⁶

Athens Undertakes the Organization of the 1st Modern Olympic Games

At the Sorbonne, on November 25th 1892, COUBERTIN made a speech on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the foundation of the *Association of the French Sport Clubs*. He said:

*"Let us export sprinters, oarsmen, fencers. This is the free exchange and the free trade of the future; and the day in which there will be an introduction in the mores of old Europe, peace will find in it a new and strong support".*³⁷

This speech is COUBERTIN'S first Olympic pronouncement. After that, he posed the issue of the organization of the international congress in Paris, for the study of issues of sporting and the re-establishment

of the Olympic Games. The association decided in 1893 to hold this conference in June 1894.

Then, COUBERTIN toured the USA (New York, November 27th 1893) and England (London, February 7th 1894), but he encountered indifference concerning the idea of the Olympic Games. He envisaged Olympic Games every four years, as during antiquity, and planned the first host city as Paris in 1900 - along with an International Trade Fair. However, he thought that the time until then was rather long. The USA and England seemed indifferent; Germany seemed even hostile. Then it is possible that he came up with the idea of holding the first games in Athens. The first celebration would therefore take place at the cradle of sport, the first home of the games. In order to realize his idea COUBERTIN sought the approval of the Greek state and its sporting establishment. So he set about enthusing the Royal family. COUBERTIN wrote to WALDSTEIN, the head of the *American School of Archaeology*, who was at that time at Argos leading the excavations there, to get him to persuade the Royal family to become interested in this matter and to "lend a hand".³⁸ By coincidence, in early April 1894, King GEORGE and the princes visited the excavation site and WALDSTEIN was presented with an opportunity to discuss extensively the suggestion concerning the Olympic Games with the Crown Prince KONSTANTINOS and to inform him of COUBERTIN'S plans; at the same time, he asked him if he would agree to be included amongst the honorary members of the Conference, something that the Crown Prince accepted gladly. WALDSTEIN communicated this agreeable news to COUBERTIN by means of a letter on April 3rd 1894.³⁹



Phokianos's commemorative diploma from the Paris Congress 1894 (Private Archives Karl Lennartz)

Then, we have COUBERTIN'S letter to PHOKIANOS. He was already known by WALDSTEIN as the most influential man in gymnastics in Greece, as chairman of his club and effectively the representative of all the athletic clubs in Greece. This was hinted at by PHOKIANOS himself in his answering letter, when he says:

"Mr. Commissioner General, we hope that you will be so kind to inform us on the decisions you are to take at the conference, in order for us to agree on them and to send them to the Greek Gymnastic Clubs, which have been founded under the shield of our Club".⁴⁰

Thus, COUBERTIN invited PHOKIANOS to the conference and offered him the honorary title of Vice President. Maybe this is not coincidental. There was Charles HERBERT, the Secretary General of the *Amateur Athletic Association* on behalf of Great Britain and professor William Milligan SLOANE, from the University of Princeton, representing the USA; both co-commissioners at the conference along with COUBERTIN. They are not invited to be Vice Presidents as their countries were not yet sufficiently interested in this Olympic movement and the Vice President would lead the meeting regarding the reestablishment of the Olympic Games.

PHOKIANOS replied immediately indicating that he had been honoured by the invitation but send his apologies for absence, because his club was inaugurating its new gymnasium. However, he stated that the Club was to be represented by one of its members resident in Paris. In addition he sent a memorandum on how the games were held in antiquity along with suggestions on how elements of these games could be maintained or revived.⁴¹ VIKELAS was asked to represent the club in Paris at the suggestion of Alexandros RAGAVIS.⁴² VIKELAS was a man of letters and a very important person in both Greece and Europe. He was appointed president of the Conference Committee for the reestablishment of the Olympic Games and suggested Athens as the place where the 1st Modern Olympic Games would be held.

A few days after the crucial conference, VIKELAS informed PHOKIANOS that he would propose Athens. Of course it had been COUBERTIN'S original idea and he supported the suggestion made by VIKELAS. COUBERTIN himself wrote:

"Six years of preparation is far too long. As Paris said it would host the games in 1900, why should not another city be chosen in 1896? In this case, this city should be Athens. After Vikelas and I having evaluated what was offered by the Greek capital, we both decided to suggest Athens as the place where the Modern Olympiads should start.

On a postcard dated June 19th the Greek representative writes to me: I did not see you after the conference to tell you how touched I am by your proposal to have the Olympiads started at Athens. I only regret that at that moment I could not support it with more enthusiasm. This way the die is cast; we have two years to move Greece and make it accept and realize a plan for which it was unprepared as far as both action and draft was concerned".⁴³

Phokianos's Contribution to the Preparation of the Games

As far as the sporting element is concerned, his contribution was undoubted, as the *Panellinios Gymnastic Club* has ever since called "The Olympic Winners' Club", because of the seven medals (2 gold and 5 silver ones) without taking into account the members who finished at the games. The principal gymnast of the *Panellinios Gymnastic Club* was PHOKIANOS.

As for the technical rules of the Olympic Games PHOKIANOS drafted the regulations for the discus throwing and at the same time he determined the shape, the weight and method by which it could be thrown. He also drafted the regulations for the gymnastics. However, as CHRYSAPHIS mentions, although he had the opportunity and the obligation to include pentathlon in the games as well, he did not do it because of his prejudice towards wrestling and javelin throwing.⁴⁴

The first meeting of the organisation for the "for the holding of the 1st International Olympic Games in Athens" took place on January 13th 1895, in a room at Zappeion.⁴⁵ From this point PHOKIANOS was not involved and although he still sat on the athletes' preparation Committee and chaired the "committee of athletic exercises and gymnastics" his influence was waning. Undoubtedly, PHOKIANOS should have been entitled to a prominent seat on the 12-member council. The President was then the Crown Prince KONSTANTINOS and members N. and L. DELIGIANNIS, A. ZAIMIS, K. KARAPANOS, Thr. MANOS, N. METAXAS, K. MAVROMICHALIS, A. SKOUZES, G. TYPALDOS, G. ROMAS, A. SOUTSOS and Th. RETSINAS, Timoleon PHILIMON and treasurer Pavlos SKOUZES also had a vote. One of the five young secretaries was K. Th. MANOS, who quickly became extremely influential and was appointed as umpire during the games, a position that could well have been filled by PHOKIANOS.

Participants in the committee included MANOS'S father, THRASIVOULOS (a General) and his uncles MAVROMICHALIS, SKOUZES and ROMAS. It was almost a family matter and maybe also a "patriotic" one, as almost all the members of this committee were also members of the parastate organization "Ethniki Etairia" (i.e. National Company), which aimed at the

realization of the "Megali Idea" (i.e. the Great Idea). Maybe this was one of the reasons why the individuals who did not agree with the involvement of athleticism in such issues were pushed to one side.

The actions of MANOS were appropriate and they took advantage of the weaknesses of PHOKIANOS. CHRYSAPHIS had also highlighted PHOKIANOS'S inadequate knowledge of matters relating to modern sport, as well as in contemporary methods of Greek athletes' training, and of the technical organization of such an international athletic event, helped MANOS - without much effort to take over the whole organization and the general administration of the games. In addition, MANOS had sent 10,000 drachmas - a very significant amount of money for that time - from England for the preparation of the Games. He took advantage of his aristocratic background to gain the favour of Crown Prince KONSTANTINOS and the princes GEORGIOS and NIKOLAOS, who were working with the Committee.⁴⁶

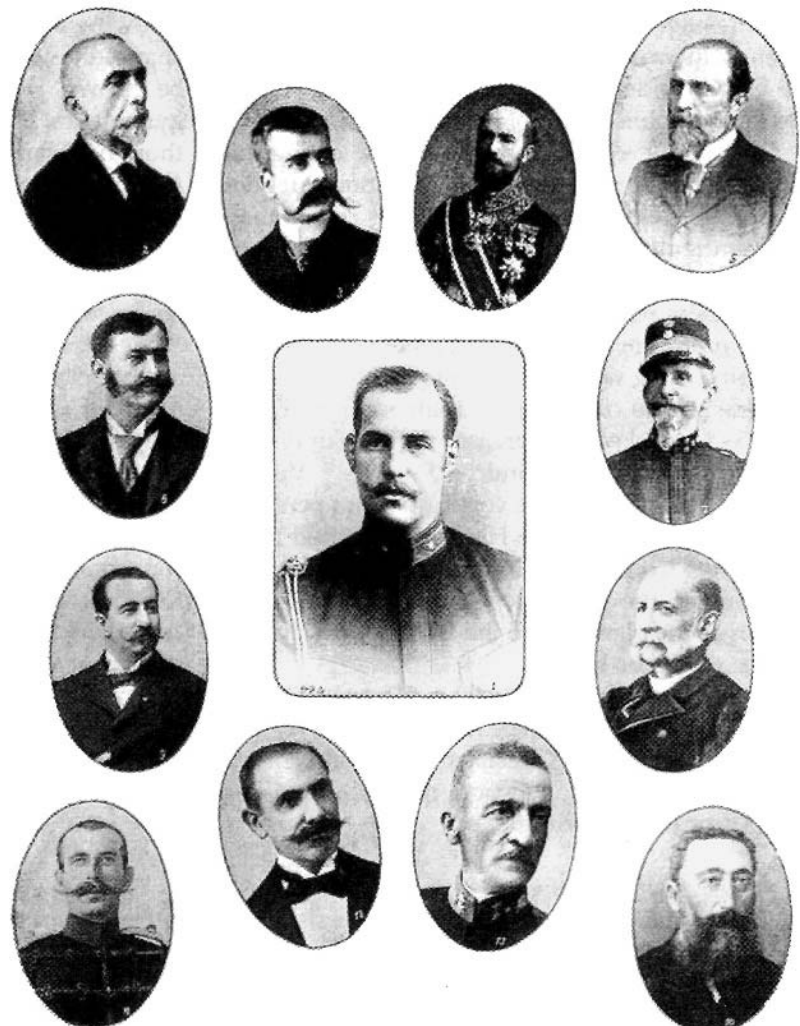
From this point, MANOS'S struggle against PHOKIANOS and the rest of the gymnasts was ruthless. In order to demonstrate his expertise in athletes' training, he translated SAINT CLAIR'S *Off-hand guide for athletes' training*, a manual of some 620 pages. However, as his technical and scientific knowledge on athletics was inadequate, despite his thorough knowledge of the French language, many of the things he wrote were incomprehensible.⁴⁷ He founded the *Athens Athletic Society* and was put in charge of the Central Gymnasium, in place of the previous chairman PHOKIANOS. He tried to exclude the athletes of *Panellinios* and *Ethnikos* from the games, on the pretext that they were considered professionals. There was then a conflict conducted through the press between MANOS and PHOKIANOS and CHRYSAPHIS. The solution came from COUBERTIN, who said that "no such an issue had arisen".⁴⁸

The significant thing is that the leading Greek gymnast of the 19th century found himself ostracized from his natural environment on the field of play and was forced to attend the

games only as a spectator. There were many reasons for this and perhaps in another paper we shall be able to discover further evidence for some of the theories advanced here.

Conclusion

PHOKIANOS'S role in the first Olympic Games was a very important one, since he was the person who first established Physical Education as well as athletics itself in Greece. He was the first to organise a modern Gymnasium and was the president of the first and greatest athletic club, the Panellinios (Panhellenic). Perhaps his most important contribution was to provide a link between COUBERTIN and VIKELAS by passing on the letter and his work in organization of the Third and Fourth Zappeia Olympia in 1875 and 1889 gave credence to the idea of holding a restored Olympic Games in Athens.⁴⁹ His role was very important for the organization of the first modern Olympic Games but as YOUNG



The Greek Olympic Games Committee (de Coubertin, Pierre et al., *The Olympic Games in 1896, Athens/London 1897*, p. 9)

and CHRYSAFIS have noted he was not involved with the official organising committee because of disagreements with MANOS and the Greek royal family. Thus, PHOKIANOS watched the Games from the ordinary spectator seating. That is why he was not among the VIPs during the closing ceremony; even the official report of the games does not mention anything about him. The final twist to the story is that PHOKIANOS died a few weeks after the first modern Olympic Games had been held.

Notes

- 1 MANTEL, R., *The First Modern Olympics*, 1976, p. 95.
- 2 ANNINOS, X *The Olympic Games*, Karl Beck (ed.), Athens 1896, p. 14.
- 3 PAVLINIS E., *History of Gymnastic*, Athens 1927, p. 399; MOURATIDIS J., *History of Physical Education*, Thessaloniki 1992, p. 478, 580; GIATSI, S./KANTZIDIS, D./LINARDOS, P., *KE' Panellinion Historical Congress*, Thessaloniki 2004, p. 287.
- 4 KOULOURI, Chr., *Athletics and Aspects of Urban Sociability. Gymnastic and Athletic Associations 1870-1922*, Athens 1997, p. 213
- 5 LINARDOS, P., *Athlon*, Athens 2004, pp. 54-55.
- 6 GIATSI/KANTZIDIS/LINARDOS, *Congress*, p. 287
- 7 GIATSI, S., *Historical Review of Physical Education and Sports in the Greek World*, Thessaloniki 2006, p. 279,
- 8 LINARDOS, P., *The Contribution of Bikelas*, Athens 1996, pp. 74-76.
- 9 PAVLINIS, *History*, p. 398.
- 10 PAVLINIS, *History*, p. 399.
- 11 PAVLINIS, *History*, p. 399; LINARDOS, *Athlon*, p. 54.
- 12 With the games of 1859 and 1870 these (Olympia of ZAPPAS) were described as the "Lost Olympics" by David YOUNG. In the same article YOUNG claims that the first modern Olympics were not Athens 1896, but Athens 1859. YOUNG, D., "The Origin of the Modern Olympics: A New Version", in: *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 4(1987), p. 273.
- 13 CHRYSAFIS, J., *The modern international Olympic Games*, Athens 1930, pp. 89-90.
- 14 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, p. 37-43; YOUNG, D., *The Modern Olympics. A Struggle for Revival*, 1996, pp. 46-47.
- 15 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, pp. 90-91.
- 16 GEORGIADIS, K., *Olympic Revival. The Revival of the Olympic Games in Modern Times*, Athens 2003, p. 44.
- 17 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, pp. 109-111; YOUNG, *Olympics*, pp. 47-48; GEORGIADIS, *Revival*, p. 46.
- 18 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, p. 118.
- 19 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, p. 113.
- 20 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, p. 117.
- 21 YOUNG, *Olympics*, p. 64.
- 22 "... Phokianos was the inspiration of the successful Olympic event in 1889 ..." in: Newspaper *Akropolis*, year Θ'(6 May 1889)2505; CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, pp. 118-125.
- 23 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, p. 131.
- 24 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, p. 133.
- 25 CHRYSAFIS, *Games*, pp. 140-143.
- 26 GIANNAKIS, Th., *Physical Education from 394 a.C*, Athens 1981, pp. 20-21.
- 27 GIANNAKIS, *Education*, p. 21.
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