

Danish Women Gymnasts: An Olympic Success Story

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The Danish ladies have taken the town by storm. We were, all of us, Danes in our welcome of them. I mean, of course those charming gymnasts at the Stadium.

This is what *The Gentlewoman* wrote on August 1, 1908 in an article in connection with the Olympic Games in London. The English papers were enthusiastic, and the Danish gymnasts from the Kvindeligt Idrætsforening (the Female Sports Association) were among the most photographed in connection with the British newspaper reports of the Games.

Danish women's gymnastics teams gave displays at the Olympic festival in 1906, at the Olympic Games in 1908, 1912 and 1920. When people write the Olympic Games history of women, there is little mention of these women who participated "on the sidelines" of the "proper Olympic Games." The purpose of the display by the women's teams was to present Danish women's gymnastics at a time when the gymnastics struggle in Denmark was particularly concerned with German gymnastics contra Swedish gymnastics, as well as the ideological struggle between gymnastics and sport. The collective and health-oriented ideas of gymnastics were in opposition to Coubertin's ideas about the Olympic Games and sport.¹

Sport was a better means of developing character, because, unlike gymnastics, it developed individuality, and one of the aims of sport was to transcend barriers. As articulated by Coubertin:

Sport cannot be made timid and cautious without its vitality being compromised. It needs the freedom of excess. That is its essence, its object, and the secret of its moral worth.²

Coubertin opposed women's participation in the Olympic Games competitions until his death in 1937.

In his vision of the Olympic Games, there was no room for women. In many ways, he felt that competitive sport was against the *Laws of Nature* and used as an argument that women would never be able to participate in all disciplines. He feared that women's participation would bring with it a feminisation of the noble art, and this would lead to its ruin.³ Sport and competitions could be considered a sort of rite of passage from childhood to manhood, and the meaning of the ritual would change if females were involved. Now - in the Modern society - where human power was less important after the rapid introduction of other kinds of energy, men wanted to differentiate themselves from women by excluding them from their playing fields.

The choice of sporting disciplines at the Olympic Games was prompted marked by such masculine virtues as strength, speed and vigour, as well as the development of a steely character, self-discipline and self-denial, endurance and courage. Such qualities were just as much linked to mental as to physical development, but were mainly regarded as crucial to the development of a proper man - a man on his way ahead in society. The view of the time of a "proper" woman, on the other hand, was linked to purity, piety, discipline and thrift⁴

Since the middle of the last century women have participated in gymnastics and sport. But in that area of sport where competition and achievement were involved, women had to fight against cultural norms and medical scientists.⁵ In spite of this, women have participated in every Olympic Games since 1900. But things went slowly. Up to and including the Olympic Games in Antwerp in 1920, only a total of 202 women had participated in the Olympic competitions, exactly the same number as the Danish women gymnasts in the displays in 1906, 1908, 1912 and 1920.⁶ Danish women gymnasts hereby demonstrated a way forward for women in modern society and in sport. They balanced between the cultural norms of the time for what was acceptable for women, and at the same time they introduced new challenges that transcended barriers and thereby extended the acceptable "space" for women.

It should be noted that the gymnastics displays at the Olympic Games were completely different from the

later demonstration sport disciplines. The gymnastics displays were formal presentations and, in addition, represented a kind of competition between “the systems of different nations” for the purpose of documenting the superiority of any one system, especially with regard to aesthetics and precision. The goal was never to have display gymnastics admitted to the Olympics programme as a competitive discipline - on the contrary, display gymnastics, at least in the Swedish vein, tried to appear as an alternative to sport. The demonstration sport aim was different. “At most Olympics several demonstration sports have been contested. Typically, these included a sport attempting to gain admission to the Olympic Program, and sport indigenous to the host country.”⁷

This paper contains an analysis of the significance of the participation of Danish women gymnasts in the displays at the Olympic festival in 1906 and at the Olympic Games in 1908, 1912 and 1920. On the basis of the media coverage of them, I will focus in particular on the Olympic festival in 1906 and the Olympic Games in 1908.

The conflict about gymnastics systems

In the 1880s, one of the most critical confrontations in Danish sport occurred. It started in the conflict between Danish/German⁸ and Swedish gymnastics, but it was part of many other issues as well, among them: the struggle about who should have the patent on the state gymnastics system, the conflict between gymnastics and sport, between town and country, and between the political right and left. Enjoyment and coercion were two terms that rose many times in the conflict. The Danish/German supporters spoke about a renewal in the direction of “national enjoyment gymnastics,” which was a mixture of the best German, Danish and Swedish gymnastics, opposed to what they called the Swedish “Coercive Gymnastics.”⁹ The result of the conflict was, among other things, that Swedish gymnastics became the official state system in schools beginning in 1899, and in the armed forces from 1905. From the middle of the 1880s rural associations chose Swedish gymnastics.

A quick glance at articles from 1906 and 1908 newspapers gives the impression that the gymnastics feud of the 1880s had flared up again, not between the

participants, but between the male owners of the systems. In gymnastics, the competition was not in the sports arena, but in the columns of the newspapers and magazines. The fight about men’s gymnastics was the fiercest, but women’s gymnastics also was involved.

In the magazine, *Ungdom og Idræt* (Youth and Sport) of April 27, 1906, N.H. Rasmussen, one of the most zealous Danish advocates of Swedish gymnastics, deplored the fact that the Danish Festival Committee had selected Paul Petersen’s¹⁰ women’s team to exhibit at the Intercalory Games celebrated in Athens in 1906. The team from the Dansk Kvinde Gymnastikforening (the Danish Women Gymnastics Association) (DKG) represented a combination system called Den Danske Gvindegymnastik, (The Danish Women’s Gymnastics). The system was introduced by Paul Petersen in the 1880s. N.H. Rasmussen believed that it would have been a better idea to send to Athens a team from Københavns Kvindelige Gymnastik-forening (Copenhagen Female Gymnastics Association), which represented the state gymnastics¹¹, especially when it was taken into consideration that “*the Danish Government and Parliament have contributed to the Athens trip...* ”

The criticism of Paul Petersen’s women’s gymnastics that had raged in the 1880s was now taken up again. In a newspaper article, N.H. Rasmussen quoted a Swedish newspaper that reviewed the Danish gymnastics display in Berlin on the team’s way to Athens. The newspaper commented on “the Peterson school” as follows:

“To the strains of an out-of-tune piano, and to the counting of the Leader (which sometimes went up to 20), something was now shown that was meant to be gymnastics and seemingly claims to be gracious and lithe, but which was a more or less peculiar wriggle. The young ladies were also up swinging on a bar and then ended with some movements in so-called aesthetic gymnastics, which were quite good; but the whole thing seemed like a parody of sensation-seeking.”¹²

The selection of the DKG women re-awakened the former sharp tone of debate, with particular ridicule reserved for Paul Petersen’s Danish women’s gymnastics.

In 1908 there was again lively discussion about who should represent Danish gymnastics at the Olympic Games in London. In the case of the ladies, the choice of the committee was a team from the Kvindeligt Idrætsforening (Female Sports Association) (KI).¹³ The team exercises were based on Swedish gymnastics, but in a less strict form, one that did not "... regard it as a stiff carapace, hampering every free movement, but as a skeleton that forms the core, the conscience, in the daily work, and which can conform to the given conditions and the needs of the moment."¹⁴ The girls in KI also took part in athletics, swimming and ball games. The choice of KI did not lead to a new discussion about systems - as was the case with the choice of the men's team. I interpret the choice of KI as a direct continuation of the line taken when the DKG team was chosen in 1906. Both, in slightly different ways, represented the distinctively Danish women's gymnastics characterised by the acceptance of the numerous possibilities of expression in gymnastics liberated from the attempts of the system to limit movements of the body.

At the Olympic Games in Stockholm in 1912, Denmark took part with no fewer than 500 gymnasts, 350 men and 150 women from all parts of Denmark. The idea with the two large teams was to "say thank you to Sweden for the value that Ling's gymnastics had brought to the popular upbringing of children and young people in Denmark."¹⁵ The decision should be seen in relation to the previous conflict about systems in Denmark, where, among others, the principal of the Gymnastics Central Institute, Professor L.M. Tørngren, had supported the Danes who had wanted Swedish gymnastics introduced into Denmark.¹⁶ Professor Tørngren, was not enthusiastic about the Olympic Games, their pursuit of records and their tendency towards uniformity in the use of exercises. The Danish team should thus be seen both as a thanks to Sweden and as the Danish popular gymnastics protest against the worship of elite performers at the Olympic Games. The arguments for sending such a large team was that one wanted to show the Swedes that Swedish gymnastics in Denmark had reached "every district, (and) had become the heritage of many."¹⁷

In 1920 Denmark sent a smaller team, some 20 women, gymnasts from 4 different associations. Niels Illeris, teacher and later inspector at the State Gymnastics

Institute, mentions in the article *The VII Olympiad* that Paul Petersen would have been happy to see the programme of both the Danish and Swedish women's teams, as both teams in their exercises "expressed what was the best in Paul Petersen's women's gymnastics: the sense for the plastic positions and the rhythmic movements."¹⁸ The emphasis on the plastic and rhythmic elements, together with the acceptance of women's right to play with the numerous possibilities of expression in gymnastics, were what made Danish women's gymnastics into something special. In spite of the conflict about systems, women's gymnastics had managed to find its own identity, embedded as it often was, in the men's discussions about systems. In fact, Danish women's gymnastics developed without the constraints of the systems. The Olympic Games helped perhaps to move the focus - at least about Danish women's gymnastics - from the discussion about "the right system" to discussion and cooperation on developing the qualities and aesthetic expression of gymnastics.

Women in the Olympic stadium: Paul Petersen's and DKG's "princesses" in Athens in 1906

On April 13, 1906, twelve Danish women gymnasts from DKG, led by Miss Magdalene Petersen, daughter of Paul Petersen, travelled from Berlin by train to Athens. During their stay in Athens, the women gymnasts were guests of the royal family and they stayed in the palace. As such guests, they were called princesses.

"... "The whole female world of Athens, indeed the men too, talked all day yesterday about the Danish ladies. They talked about the grace, nobility and suppleness of their movements. They displayed all the athletic good points, but primarily, the health of body and soul. One noticed that all their movements without exception were beautifully done, that they were absolutely deliberate and seemly. The Attic women admit all this and acknowledge it. But it is not enough to acknowledge a beautiful fact, it is also necessary to imitate it in such a way that our beautiful sex can take part in the competition at the next Olympic Games."¹⁹

Olympic Perspectives

The Greek newspapers suggested “that the Danish women gymnasts’ performance will possibly be the beginning of a revolution in the Greek people’s idea of what a woman can and should be occupied with.”²⁰ DKG’s team did a number of displays at girls’ schools in Athens, which, according to the Greek newspapers, could give hope for the future of Greek women. This is not the only place where there is *talk of a break* with former times. The Danish newspaper, *Politiken*, quoted the following from a Greek newspaper:

... the beautiful, well-built, noble, fair-haired girls, who have come to us to take part in the games in the Stadium, demonstrate the progress of which the civilisation of our times can rightly boast compared with classical antiquity. Women on an equal footing with men in athletic competitions, that is the only unassailable area of emancipation about which Aristophanes’ Satire would remain silent. When the ethical aim of gymnastics is the ennobling of the soul, then woman as human beings should set their sights high and be wise. Women’s bodies need strength and beauty for the continuance of the race.²¹

The newspapers were generally effusive about the Danish gymnasts. It was written, for example: “There were 12 ladies, all fair and dressed in white dresses; they all look well, two are even beautiful.” The team leader, Magdalene Petersen, was very popular and was called *Mama*, which in Greece is a pet name. Likewise, admiring comments were made about “the amazon - Miss Petersen’s - tall, beautiful figure.”²²

Paul Petersen’s women’s gymnastics had impressed many people for many years, but for just as many years had been subjected to harsh criticism for the flaws in the system. In particular, Paul Petersen had been criticised for his belief that public performance was a natural part of the development of gymnastics.²³

Kvindelig Idrætsforening (Female sports Association) - “strong women” in London 1908.

The journey, to the London Olympic Games of 1908 for 20 female gymnasts and two women leaders from Kvindelige Idrætsforening began on July 8, at the main railway station in Copenhagen, to be met finally at

Centre for Olympic Studies

Parkston station, in London by the city’s “*Danish colony*.” During their stay, the team were the guests of Consul-Gemal Faber. They were billeted at the Kingsley Hotel.²⁴

At the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games on July 15, 1908, the Danish women were the only female team. Among other things, the *Daily Mail* wrote:

The very appearance of the young ladies as they stepped into the arena in their neat cream costumes and golden-brown stockings captivated every eye. In their physique there was nothing of the Amazonian. They were really under medium stature. No one of their number could have established even the remotest pretensions to ‘massiveness’.²⁵

Mention was made that the like has not been seen in England before. Even in their difficult exercises, the women never lost their gracefulness.” Female teams from Norway, Sweden and Denmark gave displays of what they called their national system, each with its characteristic features. Much reference was made to the fact that the exercises were influenced by the Ling system, the so-called Swedish gymnastics. In addition, it was emphasised that the girls performed apparatus exercises, and that on these difficult apparatus still managed to combine “*grace and activity*.”²⁶ It was precisely this combination of different systems and tolerance for strenuous exercise for women that labelled the tradition of Danish women’s gymnastics, a tradition that can be attributed to Paul Petersen’s women’s gymnastics. A London *Daily Mail* article, *Plan to make a stronger Nation*, related the significance of gymnastics and especially school gymnastics for Danish children and young people.²⁷

Competition was not the goal, but the exercises of the Danish girls’ gymnasts were done for the sake of health and with the aim of cultivating the whole body. Wrote the *Daily Mail*,

For that reason, the competitive element being eliminated, this physical training is not carried to excess among the rising womanhood in Denmark.²⁸

The periodical, *Lady Pictorial* mentioned the

Olympic Perspectives

Centre for Olympic Studies

importance of the fact that the Danish team was led by a woman.

We women felt very proud to see a lady at the head of this superb body of trained gymnasts, directing their display, and to know that the feminine skills were the origin of the exhibition of strength and of rhythmic harmony that deserved well the volleys of applause with which it was greeted.”²⁹

The huge team in Stockholm 1912

As previously mentioned, the 500 Danish gymnasts at the Stockholm Games, of whom the 150 were women, paid a tribute to Swedish gymnastics, which the Swedes greatly appreciated. As one Swedish newspaper put it, “Nordic countries have yet again shown themselves to be pioneers in gymnastics, the proper foundation for all sports.”³⁰ In one review of the women’s exhibitions, the Swedish, Danish and Finnish women’s exhibitions, the displays were compared. The reviewer commented on the teams’ exercises as more stringent, happier, and as saga-inspired poetry.³¹ The saga-inspired poetry was produced by Elli Bjørkesten’s Finnish women gymnasts, who fascinated everyone, and later had great influence on the development of women’s gymnastics, especially in the Scandinavian countries.

At the games in Stockholm, a Danish woman not only won the first medal of the games, but also the first medal for a Danish woman in Olympic competitions. Thora Gerda Sophy Castenschield won a silver medal at the indoor tennis championships, which were held in the first week of May.”³²

The mixed team in Antwerp 1920

Danish women’s gymnastics produced an exciting experiment for the Antwerp Games in 1920. Namely, to put together a team of 20 gymnasts from 4 different associations - 3 from Copenhagen and 1 from Aarhus - whose gymnastics traditions were linked to different systems. A joint programme had to be prepared which showed Danish women’s gymnastics in the best way. The fact that someone had assumed the project and that someone had believed in a good result must be interpreted as a reflection of the fact that Danish women’s gymnastics at that time had established a

solid niche. Before the journey to Antwerp, a display of all the Danish gymnasts was held on the lawn in the Tivoli Gardens. The Danish newspaper, *Berlingske Tidende*, commented:

There is a clear effort and quest to achieve plastic beauty in all the exercises. These are old Paul Petersen’s principles, so heretical in his time, which a new era has allowed to be restored to favour. And Miss Elli Bjørkesten has obviously also affected these gymnastics, precisely so feminine they have become. There are many clever exercises that look splendid. Our ladies will surely be successful in Antwerp and Miss Dalberg deserves credit for her work.”³³

That the team was successful in Antwerp can be seen for example in an article from the Danish newspaper, *Holbæk Amtstidende*, 10 September 1920, in which Johan Brydegaard mentioned that the Danish ladies’ team resembled the Swedish ladies’ team in several points, particular with regard to costumes and certain exercises. However, it was emphasized that the Danish girls’ otherwise lovely costumes suffered from the problem that in some “movements such as fall hanging or during several jumps where the wind could catch it and blow it out, the costume did not appear to advantage.” The actual exercises, though, were praised for their quality and sureness.

At the games in 1920, a Danish woman won a gold medal for the first time. Diver Stefani Fryland-Clausen won it in a dive from the tower. She was a busy lady during the games, as she also took part in the gymnastics team exercises.

Danish gymnastics women - enthusiasm and pride

When one reads the many newspaper clippings commenting on the participation of the women at the festival in 1906, and the Olympic Games in 1908, 1912 and 1920, there is one point that overshadows all - *the pride and the enthusiasm* surrounding the women’s performances. The women of that time expressed enthusiasm about what they saw their own sex achieving, and my interpretation is that the participating women must have experienced a pride and happiness by achieving and experiencing things that

were reserved for only a few. Like the “proper” performance stars, they received front page notice from newspapers; they were applauded on their homecoming, etc. Women’s gymnastics, like sport for men, had qualities that were useful in helping to build modern society. In Denmark, women received the right to vote and be elected in municipal elections in 1908, and in parliamentary elections in 1915. The aim of sport was formation of character through overstepping personal and bodily limitations - many men did this, and gradually, too, a number of women. The limits for what was allowed for men and women were different, but for both sexes, the access to bodily experience was of great, but different, meaning.³⁴

Sensitivity is needed to approach an understanding of the meaning of the phenomenon, which I will illustrate with the following quotation:

Meaning is not a thing; it involves what is meaningful to us. Nothing is meaningful in itself. Meaningfulness derives from the experience of functioning as a being of a certain sort in an environment of a certain sort.³⁵

After surveying the use of specific language in the media, I would assert that the women in gymnastics transcended many barriers. A group of words describe the cultural norms for how a “proper” woman should look and behave: for example, plastic beauty, feminine skill, graceful, noble, lithe, seemly well-built, medium stature, etc. Correspondingly, the description of what the women did not resemble contains the barrier-transcending element. For example, “nothing of the Amazonian”, massiveness, activity, “this physical training is not carried to excess among the rising womanhood in Denmark,” etc. That they could successfully combine in a good way the acceptable with something that could be feared was perhaps exactly what aroused enthusiasm - and it is here that success is to be found.

The significance of the Danish women gymnasts should be seen, for example, in the way they constituted models for other women in what they did and the way they did it. They extended the context of daily life with its emotional attachments and ventured out in the world and displayed themselves. The women

rejected the myths about women and built up a belief in their own power - all through the use of the resources of the body.³⁶ The pride and pleasure in their own bodies could be used to enhance the quality of life for many women.

The men and women who were behind the development of the Danish women’s gymnastics possessed the ability to move in the border area and break through the narrow limits for what was acceptable at the time regarding women’s activity and how to act in public. They possessed the ability to take up the bodily challenges, reject the constraints of the systems and consciously work with the aesthetic staging, so that one could arouse enthusiasm in one’s self and the spectators. The qualities given priority by Danish women’s gymnastics were in the space between the “limiting” systems of gymnastics and the “barrier-transcending” freedom of sport. In this space, the Danish women gymnasts developed a platform from which both the women of gymnastics and sport could set off. The Olympic Games were the jumping-off platform. Collective effort helped to strengthen the identity of the individual woman and extend in her the belief that modern society could be enhanced by women too.

Endnotes

1. Coubertin was afraid that the ideas of gymnastics with the focus on health and lack of specialization would make the idea of sport disappear. From the end of the 1890’s, until the First World War, the German ‘turn’ movement discussed the relationship between competition and non-competition, and the degree of specialization. Two journals were particularly engaged in this: *Der Deutsche Turnzeitung* (against competition) og *Der Turner* (for competition). Coubertin regarded the focus on health in Swedish gymnastics as against the idea of sport.
2. Coubertin, Pierre de. Address delivered at the Opening of the Olympic Congress in the town hall of Prague, 29 May 1925, published by Imprimerie d’Etat á Prague, here quoted from: Coubertin, Pierre de, *The Olympic Idea, Discourses and Essays*, Carl Diem Institute-Köln, 1967, p. 96.
3. Simiri, Uriel, *Women at the Olympic Games*, Israel 1979, pp. 12-13 and 26-30.
4. See Hargreaves, Jennifer, *Sporting Females: Critical*

Issues in the Story and Sociology of Women's Sports, 4, London, 1994, p. 67.

5. See Hargreaves, Jennifer, *Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the Story and Sociology of Women's Sports*, 4, London, 1994, p. 210, etc.

6. In the Olympic Games competitions, the following numbers of women took part in the competitions: 1900 (19) 1904 (6), 1908 (36), 1912 (57), and 1920 (77). At the gymnastic displays, the following number of Danish women took part: 1906 (12), 1908 (20), 1912 (150), and 1920 (20).

7. For example, in 1904, for the first time a demonstration sport (basketball) took place. In 1936 basketball became a regular Olympic sport. See: Kamper, Eric and Bill Mallon, *Who's Who-Der Olympische Spiele 1896 - 1992*, Sportverlag Agon, 1992, p. 323-324.

8. Danish gymnastics is not a real system, but rather, it is the gymnastics that developed in Denmark through the 19th century, inspired by many sources: Germany, France, Sweden and America. Gymnastics was neither a collective pursuit nor an individual one; it always tried to live up to a 'both/and' context. The acceptance of the individual gymnastics meant that those who championed Swedish gymnastics called it "German."

9. Trangbæk, Else, *Danish Gymnastics: What's so Danish about the Danes?* In *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Aug. 1996), Frank Cass, London 1996, pp. 203-214.

10. Paul Peterson (1845-1908) was trained as a sergeant in the Army. After taking a two-year course at the Army Gymnastics School, he applied for a position as a teacher in a private school. In 1871 he was employed at the "Ny Realskole" in Nørrebro in Copenhagen, and here began to develop gymnastics, to the delight of the boys in the school. It was here that Paul Peterson started a group of boys who came to form the nucleus of the "Hermes" Gymnastics Association in 1874 - one of the first gymnastic associations in Denmark. In 1878 Paul Peterson opened "The Institute for Danish Women's Gymnastics" and he later started both a gymnastic and rowing club for women. Trangbæk, Else, "Discipline and Emancipation Through Sport: The Pioneers of Women's Sport in Denmark," in *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 21, 1996, pp. 121-134.

11. By state gymnastics is meant the gymnastics, which, with the publication of *Håndbogen (The Handbook)* in 1899, became the recognised gymnastics

in schools, and, from 1905, in the army, too.

12. *Dannebrog*, 9 May 1906.

13. KI was a new association started by a group of women who broke away from the Copenhagen Women Gymnastics Association in 1906 in protest against the association's enforcement of its rights to choose the leader of the team. *The Kvindelig Idrætsforening (Women's Sport Association)* was established on May 26, 1906.

14. *Kvindelig Idrætsforening 1906-1916*, København 1906, p. 9.

15. Nielsen, Mads, *Dansk Gymnastik. Træ af dens historie gennem 50 År*, Glamsbjerg 1971, p. 17.

16. Trangbæk, Else, "Danish Gymnastics. What's so ...," p. 209.

17. Nielsen, Mads, *Dansk Gymnastik ...* p. 17. To underline the Danish thanks, gymnastics instructor K.A. Knudsen stepped forward in front of the team after the men's display and shouted towards the stands: "Thanks to Sweden for its gymnastics. Long live Ling's fatherland."

18. Illeris, Niels, "Den VII Olympiade," in *Gymnastik tidsskrift*. 1920, p. 113.

19. *Nationaltidende*, 3 May 1906.

20. Quoted from a Greek newspaper in *Vort Land (Our Country)*, 29 April 1906.

21. Quoted from a Greek newspaper in *Politiken*, 4 May 1906.

22. Quoted from a Greek newspaper in *Politiken*, 4 May 1906.

23. Trangbæk, Else, "Discipline and Emancipation..." in *Scandinavian Journal*, pp. 121- 134.

24. *Kvindelig Idrætsforening 1906-1916*, København 1916, pp. 30-32.

25. *Daily Mail*, 21 July 1908.

26. *The Queen - The Lady's Newspaper*, 18 July 1908.

27. *Daily Mail*, 21 July 1908.

28. *The Queen - The Lady's Newspaper*, 18 July 1908.

29. *Lady Pictorial*, 25 July 1908.

30. *Stockholm Dagblad* 10.7.1912 - article: "Danskemas vackra insats I idrottsveckan" (The Dane's beautiful effort in the sports week).

31. Bergvall, Erik, *Officiell Redogörelse, Olympiska Spelen I Sticksholm 1912*, Stockholm 1913, pp. 537-542.

32. Idom, John, *OL historie. Strejftog gennem myter, legender og danske medaljer*, København, 1996, p. 38.

33. *Berlingske Tidende*, 24 July 1920.

34. Trangbæk, Else, *Gender and skating - about meaningfulness for women, in Winter Games Warm Traditions*, Selected papers from the 2nd international ISHPES-seminar, Lillehammer, 1994, pp. 240-250.
35. Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago, 1980...p. 292.
36. Biological determinism had helped to fix the opinions of what women could bear, that is, why this bodily documented liberation created new perspectives for women's lives.