

# SPORT AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN THE GLOBAL POST-COLD WAR ERA (1989 - NOWADAYS)



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## Introduction

The aim of this article is to examine the phenomenon of globalization and the ways that sport and the Olympic Games are influenced by it during the post-Cold War (1989-1991 up to nowadays). There were used two sorts of evidence: General bibliography concerning globalization and specific literature on the interactions either between sport and globalization or globalization and the Olympic Games.<sup>1</sup>

Almost a decade before the end of the 19th century, sports and physical education were part of cultural life of the developing countries in the world. The industrial Revolution of the 19th century assisted the development and the spreading of sports. When Pierre de COUBERTIN succeeded in establishing the *International Olympic Committee* (IOC) during the International Congress of Paris – June 1894 – there were about 750-800 sport clubs in the world.<sup>2</sup> The Olympic Games since their first international appearance (1894-1896) were influenced by the international political life and most of the hosting countries used the Games as an instrument for their internal and international policy.<sup>3</sup> Greeks for example, before, during and after the First Olympic Games of Athens (1893-1899) used the Games for political purposes. Ironically, only Charilaos TRICOUPIS, the "Dragon" of Olympic Games did not accept to play in that political "game".<sup>4</sup> Berlin's Olympic Games in 1936 seemed to be the greatest example of a political Olympiad, since Adolf HITLER and the Nazis Regime of the 3rd Reich used them for their imperialistic and catastrophic geopolitical purposes.<sup>5</sup> After the end of World War II, NATO allies and those of the Pact of Warsaw (1945-1989) functioned as fanatic enemies and not as friends who defeated the Nazism-Fascist axon. In that paradox international balance the Olympic Games and sport were also a part of that War.<sup>6</sup> The conflict of the two enemies in sport reached its peak during the Olympic Games of 1980 and 1984. In the first case, the USA and all NATO allies (except Greece and Britain) did not participate in Moscow's Olympic Games. In return, the Soviet Union and its allies athletes (except the Rumanians and Yugoslavians) did not travel to Los Angeles for the Games in 1984.<sup>7</sup>

## The context of the Global World

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Pact of Warsaw (1989-1991) brought serious global changes in the world's geopolitical conditions (economy, military, political and cultural systems).<sup>8</sup> The superiority of Western economy and technology to that of East compelled the leader of Soviet Union's allies and Russia itself to follow a more open policy, known as *Perestroika* (1985-1991). The new era was symbolized by the fall of Berlin's Wall and the unification of two Germanies without a warm episode.<sup>9</sup> The major shifts are mainly explained in terms of a move from modernist to post-modern, from industrial to post-industrial society, from organized to disorganized capitalism, from mass production to flexible accumulation, from industrial to consumer capitalism and from Fordist to Post-Fordist economies.<sup>10</sup> The theorists of global politics can be divided into three categories. In the first category belong the proponents of globalization like LAFONTAINE;<sup>11</sup> these optimist authors describe the global system as a positive factor for the present and the future of world economy. CHOMSKY<sup>12</sup> on the other hand is the most famous and vigorous antagonist of globalization. CHOMSKY'S opposing view is supported by the idea that globalization furthers the gap between poor and rich countries and that it will lead to negative reactions in many aspects of the international life. The authors of the third category consisted of analysts like BECK, STIGLITZ, KONDILIS and others who represent a more skeptical, moderate and perhaps coherent category; they rather accept the global phenomenon as a reality and try to make positive critique and suggestions for the future. KONDILIS<sup>13</sup> wrote that the serious problem in the new global situation is how the pre-communist countries will establish democracy and the development of their economy in the pattern of Western socio-economic system. The case of China, a country which works for the Olympiad of 2008 is a good example. BECK<sup>14</sup> says that the reconstruction from the nationality to globality caused a great shock since globalization created more unemployment, immigration and poverty in many areas of the world. STIGLITZ<sup>15</sup> discusses the discontents that exist in the world's economy in order the positive aspects of globalization to be applied. According to GIBBINS and REIMER<sup>16</sup> the main structures and processes that

transform contemporary societies into postmodern societies are disorganized capitalism, globalization and mediatization. The common factor of the above characteristics is the rapid progress of technology serving the commercial rationale and the conjunction of information, technology, tele-communications and television. The implications of this revolution are obvious for both the economic and social sectors. RAMONET<sup>17</sup> states that the communication industries have a major role in expanding the gap between the info-rich hyper-equipped countries and the info-poor under-equipped countries. Within this context a power shift takes place in international relations as well as within society. It is perceptible at the level of the State, since the capacity for intervention of the State is reduced as well as at the family, school and company levels. The same author<sup>18</sup> points out that the hegemonic role of the international regulatory authorities like the UN, G7 [recently G8], OECD and the World Organization of Commerce (WTO), as well as the continuously increased power of the Mass Media, of pressure groups (lobby) and of non-governmental organizations illustrates that the power is shifting from authoritative, hierarchical, vertical forms to negotiating, intricate, horizontal forms, which are more flexible. It can be added that the modern system is more complex aiming in one result. The gain comes to one center. This is the most serious weakness of global economy.

The idea that globalization involves a form of interdependence between the local and the global is interesting. GIDDENS defines the concept of globalization as *"the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distinct localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles and miles away and vice-versa"*<sup>19</sup>. For LAIDI globalization is *"a historical moment of long width, in which societies have the deep concept that they should discuss again their relations in the time and the place"*<sup>20</sup>. He also distinguishes in globalization three major features: the compression of time exchanges, the rapid development of science and technology in a time where boundaries and limitations have disappeared and the lack of a vision. In a similar way APPADURAI<sup>21</sup> discerns the flow of globalization from local to multi structural levels and processes in which take place in economy, technology, media and culture. It is rather acceptable that the overall context of globalization causes an unusual competition among people and even among societies; sometimes it creates antagonism without boundaries, violence and even conflicts. Concerning the strong antagonism BECK notes:

*'globalization means the break of the unity between the national country and the*

*international society and the creation of new forms of power and competition with constant conflicts between the national state and the international concentration of economic and political power.'*<sup>22</sup>

DAMTSAS<sup>23</sup> sees as a major problem of globalization the concentration of political and economic power in new uncontrolled centres, while LAFONTAINE and MÜLLER<sup>24</sup> support that globalization needs a *"regulatory system"* in order the wages and taxations to be controlled and this would be the key of prevention of anti-productive competitions. To conclude on the above sort ideas it can be said that the new version of globalization faces a lot of positive and negative structural changes. The protagonists of globalization are not, as in Cold War era the countries but the multinational companies either of the greatest Mass Media organizations or the financial giant groups. For KONDILIS<sup>25</sup> the new conditions can further the gap between rich and poor countries and this is a kind of lack of democracy in the world.

## **Sport and the Olympic Games in global World**

### **1. Sport and Globalization**

As the ecumenical and international life becomes global, as mentioned above, it was impossible sport and Olympic Games not to be influenced by this new phenomenon. There are certain interactions, interrelations and influences in various aspects. There is, firstly, a satisfactory literature concerning the relationships between sport and globalization in the last 20 years. Some of the bibliography discusses the interdependence of sport and globalization, while other concerns the relationships between Olympic Games and globalization.<sup>27</sup> In both situations exists a problem of similar terms and definitions. Even the term globalization is given in different way. Someone sees it as something having a universal-ecumenical appeal while the others say that globalization is just an international movement. The term hegemonism (in Greek "hegemonismos") is referred to a very complex and amphisimic-ambivalent way. For some authors "hegemonic" is applied to the USA's domination in global sport, since some others describe hegemonism as it described by Antonio GRAMSCI (1891-1937). For him hegemonic is what is referred to all people in plural and democratic terms. Some authors indented to express the new global conditions using the Greek word "neo-n" (new) before of usual economic terms such as: Capitalism, Marxism, liberal, modernism and Fordist. On the other hand the Latin word "post" (after) is used where is given the posterior situation (post quem rerum), such as

post-modernism. Other terms as Americanization, Japanization, Europeanization, and Canadiazion are used in order to show the influence from local to general place or character, while others show main characteristics such as: pluralism, homogenization, hegemonization and synchronization. From all the above terms the most dubious is the definition of the term "Americanization". For some authors globalization is equal to Americanization because of the model of free-market economy. WRIGHT<sup>28</sup> distinguishes that this term is a narrow position made by "American" cultural hegemony. Globalization in sport seems to be the overall flow of all that concerns sport: industry, commercialization in big multinational places communication and flowing from the local to foreign and vice versa. HARVEY and HOULE<sup>29</sup> see globalization as a new phenomenon, which influences the world economy more clearly and provide useful examples of the ways that globalization functioned from the level of state (England, Canada etc) to the global (universal) one. The authors think that the domination of America in sport does not apply only to one "hegemonic=dominant" state. For MORGAN<sup>30</sup> the hegemony in sport lies on how sport is a commonly right for all people in the world. He describes in detail the Gramscian Hegemonic Theory in sport, mentioned above.<sup>31</sup> MORGAN suggests a new left theory, which is opposite (partly) to the Marxist model and the Neo-Marxist model or to the New-liberal theories of sport. For MORGAN "[...]the material affairs of society, pluralism and democratic socialism make for a good marriage".<sup>32</sup> It is interesting to note here that before the decade of '90 sport analysts approached what is for us global as something international. TAYLOR<sup>33</sup> in 1986 wrote:

*"Sport is a significant element in world society, a major consideration for those who believe international relations ought to be concerned with more than inter-governmental politics"*<sup>34</sup> and *"Sport is operated by a substantive network of private international organizations worthy of investigation as part of the overall study of international and transnational organizations"*.<sup>35</sup>

TAYLOR set the interrelations of sport in a context of "[...]as a part of the environment of the anarchic inter-state political system, may influence behavior in that system[...]"<sup>36</sup> ALLISON at the same book outlines with the same way the early stages of globalization in sport in two dimensions: a) the growth of participants in some sports and b) on the development of new ones. For the first point he says that *"There is a reversion to an individualistic emphasis on participation and a new diversity of sports"*.<sup>37</sup> For the second version he

points out that there is a spreading of sports, in particular of the "rich" ones, as the English-American football, skiing and yachting, from the upper class to the poor one during the last 20 years. He also says that the new sports as squash, judo, powerboat racing, hang-gliding, surfboarding, started to be familiar due to the exploitation of new technological possibilities.

The authors of global world, that is after 1991 see things in a different way. MAGUIRE<sup>38</sup> for example affirms that sport is structured by a political economy in which multinational companies have a decisive part (*Adidas, Coca Cola* etc.). WRIGHT states that all the *"changes occurring in sport are an aspect of globalization"* and *"that sport is integral to the globalization process, but is not significant to overall revenues."*<sup>39</sup> Therefore he mentions some contradictions that follow the implementation of globalization in sport life. To him the core of the contradictions lie not on the problems of the connection between local and international but "[...]because sport is inextricably linked to capitalist firms, which have an imperative to maximize profit; and the new global political economy provides the terrain for that to occur".<sup>40</sup> Regarding the problem of hegemonization WRIGHT thinks that there is a USA's domination in sport identifying the gigantic economic power with the USA's hegemonism in sport and that sport life is dominated by USA, since this country controls the total life of the World.<sup>41</sup> The above version is only half-true in the total sport story. The domination of the USA in sport does not indicate that this country has the domination of sport in any level and anywhere in the world. Sport in its overall sense is an important factor for the life of all human beings. Sport is not only in North America a strong social factor. Sport during the second half of the 20th century was spread in Asia (Japan, China, Korea), in South America, in European countries (West and East Russia including), in Australia and in some of the African countries. The crucial problem is that sport has not been spread in the Third World, in particular in India, Africa, South America and other Asian poor countries. Sport is strongly connected with the use of leisure in any society.<sup>42</sup> In some poor countries sport is functioned as a strong local cultural element, providing health, leisure and physical education. Sport, nevertheless became a part of global World and its expansion is mainly depended on the general economic level. Therefore, some countries such the Scandinavian ones have given a great priority in sporting since the middle of the 19th century. That is why these counties give more emphasis on the development of physical education and the spreading of sport in all people than on winning Olympic medals.

## 2. Globalization and the Olympic Games

The reflection of globalization to Olympic Games is not so much clear as that in sport itself. Nevertheless, the Olympics were always an international (global in many senses) and ecumenical event having the following four main attributes: Planetary, permanent, immediate and immaterial.<sup>43</sup> They are a planetary event in the sense that concerns almost any country (about 200 participate in Olympics). The Games is a permanent institution because they take place every four years for 104 years (The Games cancelled in 1916, 1940, 1944 because of World War I and II). They are an immediate event since 4 to 5 billion of people watch them through the TV screen. Finally the Games are an immaterial sport event in the sense that almost all sports are represented in the Olympic programme. Before describing the real global characteristics of the Olympic Games which took place in Global era, that is the events took place after 1988, we have to discuss some serious ideas and problems concerning the route of Global Olympics to the present era and future:

The first rhetoric question is when the Olympic Games began to be a global event. The IOC since its establishment in 1894 was considered as a great independent international institution controlling the Olympic Games in all their aspects and dimensions. It seems, therefore, that since the Olympic Games of London in 1948, decade-by-decade, the Games were functioned as world global event. Nevertheless the Games are global only after the Seoul Olympics in 1988. A second similar question is in what degree the Olympic Games were always a political event. The argument of the IOC to declare for many decades that the Olympics are an apolitical international cultural event and nothing more sounds very weak. The argument of the apolitical movement is rather a weapon in the hands of the anti-Olympic theorists and not a strong weapon for the ideologists of Olympism. Plenty of paradigms prove that in most cases the members of the IOC, in order to support the "apolitical" idea acted in an ambiguous political base. The Olympic Games of Berlin in 1936, for instance, should have never happened. The perfect organization of the Games assured the international position and perhaps the prestige of HITLER and Nazi regime. However, the IOC ignored it despite the fact that 2-3 years before the democratic countries understood that sport was used by Fascist and Nazi regimes only for political purposes. In political terms this was a chicanery. A good paradigm of a correct political decision of IOC was to permit the organization of the Olympics of 1980 and 1984. TAYLOR explains that the Olympics are a political event and that "[...]

*the values which the Olympic movement seeks to promote [...] the struggles for power within the Olympics and the interaction of the Olympic movement with the world outside all tend to contribute to the politics of Olympism".<sup>44</sup> HOBEBMAN<sup>45</sup> supported that during the Cold War many countries used the Olympic Games as an advertisement of their political system. Today nobody can support that the protagonists of the Cold War, USA and USSR did not use the Olympics for political purposes. The case of East Germany is the greatest example that shows how sport and Olympics were used as a political task. Even Russia as an individual country was skeptical for such use of sporting.*

Another philosophical question is whether the Olympic Games still remain today the "umbrella" of World sport life (in the sense of overall identity: sport, physical education and professional sports). It seems in real terms that the IOC controls completely only the NOC and not all the sport federations. Some federations, as those of soccer (FIFA), because of their economic growth, try to form an independent policy in the World.<sup>46</sup> *Manchester United* is the club having both a huge economic presentation and an "independent" policy. However, there is a different interconnection between the IOC and the sub-institutional regimes of sports than 20 years ago.<sup>47</sup> The growth of some Federations and clubs in the future will make the impression that the Olympic Games are, as Taylor states 'a part of sport' and "[...] *reflect the strengths and weaknesses of sport as a whole.*"<sup>48</sup>

There are some great problem connected directly with the Olympic movement and the Games. The greatest, to begin with is the involvement of commercialization in sport life.<sup>49</sup> In fact commercialization seems to be the "Achilles Hell" of Olympic idealism in any aspect and practical sense. Since 1980 the domination of television in sport and Olympic life, the role of sponsors and the advertisement have created great ethical problems in which nobody can answer satisfactory. The ancient Greek Olympic spirit had such problems after the occupation of Greek states by Romans during the middle of the 2nd century BC. Here it is necessary to discuss the role of television (TV) and the way the IOC used it. From the beginning of the decade of '80s, the IOC started to rely on the media, in particular on TV in order to earn money for the promotion of the Olympic movement. It was rather a realistic open policy which helped the increase of audience stadiums and other sport fields and grounds around the World. Taylor states that the American television has proved to be the first willing to pay large sums of money to obtain Olympic coverage but on occa-

sions it wants things in return.<sup>50</sup> It seems then that the IOC did an economic shift towards commercialization. The sale of TV rights was followed by sponsoring and great advertisement in any aspect of the Olympics. This seems to be an ambivalence or even a dual policy, introduced in a low profile in any aspect of sport life. For athletes was not of course a new phenomenon; professionalism was unofficially introduced in both sport and Olympic Games about three or four decades earlier. But the official acceptance and usage by the IOC was new. It is important to note here that the entry of commercialization to the Olympic movement forced even supporters of the movement, as John LUCAS to be skeptical for the future of the Olympics and sport movement.<sup>51</sup> BARNEY<sup>52</sup> spoke for a "gold egg or fool egg". The golden egg was the "American television"; the second one the "Marketing a symbol". In fact, the invasion of TV in the Olympic Games makes the IOC a sponsor of a spectacle and not the keeper of Olympism. The utopia of the symbols is in front of the doors. Hill mentions that Television is the greatest part of the total marketing effort, which has taken the form of a scheme named *The Olympic Programme* whereby certain companies acquire extensive rights to use the Olympic marks on products and packaging, and in advertisements.<sup>53</sup> He states that:

*'The growing commercialisation of the Games has inevitably bred close relationships between the Olympic movement and certain companies and none has been closer than the one with Adidas.'*<sup>54</sup>

At the same time the IOC tried the first successful economic investment by selling the rights of TV in large companies. Some examples are *Coca Cola*, *Adidas*, *Nike* and others around the World. It is known that the above sport business system started to be marketed in 1984, when the Olympic emblem provided to the IOC with an enormous amount of money, which was partially distributed among the federations, that is the National Olympic Committees. Consequently, the invasion of advertisement in Olympic life started with those of Los Angeles in 1984, which were sponsored on a much greater scale than ever before. Marketing and advertisement, exclusivity, was the key word that provided the 1984 Olympics with a big surplus, which was invested into the improvement of amateur sport in southern California.<sup>55</sup> In the following years the growth of commercialization aroused the budgets of advertisements. Hill states about it that:

*'The Olympics provide one of the best imaginable vehicles for worldwide advertising' and 'they also provide a unique opportunity to*

*promote feelings of security in potential customers and to entertain important associates.'*<sup>56</sup>

It was also used into the Olympic solidarity programme with which the IOC tried to raise the standard of sport in young and developing countries.<sup>57</sup> This new situation, however, has led to conflict between the proponents of commercialization and the romantic and ideal vision of Olympism.<sup>58</sup> HILL summed up the two completely opposite arguments about the post-modern Olympic Games as follows:

*"On the one hand, a purity of intention which does not readily accommodate itself to the world of commerce. On the other hand, enterprising capitalism which sees the fears and doubts of the purists as merely anachronistic."*<sup>59</sup>

Gigadism is another problem for the future of the Olympic Games. Olympiad-by-Olympiad the cost of the organization of the Games becomes huge in such a way that only rich countries can host the global event. According to the present system only 20 or 30 countries can host the Olympic Games.<sup>60</sup> The case of Greece (Athens 2004) is a good example since this country poses the 25th place of the development countries in the World. Mexico in 1968 was the only poor but big country that hosted the Games. The small countries that hosted the Games are the following: Greece (1896) for only historic reasons, Sweden (1912), Belgium (1920), Holland (1928) and Finland (1952). The big and rich countries hosted the rest of the Olympics. USA hosted the Games four times (1904, 1932, 1984, 1996), while Great Britain (1908, 1948), France (1900, 1924), Germany (1936, 1972) and Australia (1956, 2000) organized the Games twice. Finally, Japan (1964), Italy (1960), Russia-USSR (1980) hosted the Olympics once. The conditions for hosting the Games were different before the Second War era. They are also different to the present global conditions. The main question is whether USA or the G8 countries in current global conditions will use their geo-political power to take the Games repeatedly. It is a common secret that Germany, Canada, Britain, Japan, Italy, Russia, France are always ready to set a candidate for the hosting. It is interesting for the future of the Olympic Games that China, a poor but a huge country will host the Olympic Games in 2008. Generally, the preparation requires large amounts of money and high technology. Even the big general works in the city of Athens for the forthcoming Olympics of 2004 were mainly done by the State's support.<sup>61</sup> The Games in Greece come to be a test of national capability and not a cultural and educational international event in which the IOC is the co-organizer. Regarding the

solution of the problem of the Olympics hosting there are two possibilities. The first is for IOC to set a list of 50 countries that want to host the Games in alphabetic order for the next 50 to 60 years. Meanwhile the richest countries, at least the 25 ones to help the cover of the cost of the Games. That system will develop the democratic prestige of the Games. The second possibility is the case of a permanent hosting of the Games in a neutral political place.

Doping is always a very big problem for sport. Firstly it is a disaster for the user's health. Secondly it destroys any sense of equal terms for the participants. KRÜGER wrote:

*"[...] An extensive international fair play campaign has tried to improve the image of the product, and anti-doping measures aim to make the product cleaner,"<sup>62</sup> and "[...] Coaches, doctors, and biochemists should step back to leave the spotlight to athletes alone. The athlete who is not just a dumb clown, but can speak up for him- or herself, can gain the best sponsors, since in these postmodern days it is individuality that is required, the athlete who in all areas of life is sufficiently spontaneous to 'just do it.'"<sup>63</sup>*

KRÜGER's arguments for an *"Olympic revival"* are based on the decisions of the Olympic Congress of Paris 1994 in which was discussed for the first time seriously the role of the persons involved directly in sports.

Finally, we have to discuss briefly in what degree sport and the Olympics can promote a peaceful spirit in the world. ARISTOTLE<sup>64</sup> wrote about the idea that play, recreation, physical education and sport is important and good habit = ethos for any human life. The modern idea is that sport includes a peaceful meaning by its character since they provide beauty, grace, health and social recreation. It also provides important ethical and moral values as self-control, friendship, solidarity and social tolerance. Therefore, there are instances for the opposite. In Roman, Byzantine, Middle Ages and even during the 20th century sport and Olympics were used for many purposes than the educational ones.<sup>65</sup> EICHBERG<sup>66</sup> says that Olympism is a social pattern that reflects the everyday culture of western industrial society and it is a kind of colonization, similar to that of Great Britain's during the 19th century. But the Great Britain used sport as one of the political tasks in order to control the colonies. It has been mentioned also earlier that sport and Olympics were used for catastrophic purposes by Fascism and Nazism. Nevertheless the *Olympic Charter* expresses the peaceful meaning of Olympic movement in a different way. We read in its Fundamental Principles that one of the aims of the Olympic movement is:

*"to educate young people through sport in a spirit of better understanding between each other and of friendships, thereby helping to build a better and more peaceful world."*

There, unfortunately, are even here some serious problems. Let see the Olympic motto *"Citius, Altius, Fortius"* and the way that it was used either by the protagonists of the Cold War or of those of the global World. For the protagonists of the Cold War the above motto was used in an ambivalent way. By a semiotical point of view the above motto mirrored in sport and the Olympic Games as it was happening in the different economic and political systems. The methods were different. In socialistic countries the control of political sport was accomplished directly through centralization, while, in capitalistic countries the control was achieved indirectly through the economic features. Both tried to develop more the Sport competition than the basic sport and physical education. In serious situations the masks were taken off. In Helsinki's Games, for example, there were functioned two Olympic villages.<sup>67</sup> Four years later in Melbourne the case of two athletes (H. CONNOLLY-USA and O. FICOTOVA-THC.) to be married became an important international event.<sup>68</sup> However, the above events in the total context were like simple Games. The great antagonism of the big powers in Olympics reached its pick in the Olympics of 1980 and 1984, few years before the tremendous events of 1989-1992.<sup>69</sup>

The dissolution of the USSR and the establishment year by year of the democracy gave the sense that the peaceful meaning of the Olympics would be more drastic, since the costs for military supplies were reduced from both sides.<sup>70</sup> Unfortunately the new conditions revealed one Super-Power, the USA.<sup>71</sup> The world situation comes to be difficult since after of plenty of local wars (In Balkans, Afganistan and Iraq) the terrorism has increased. Today the Greek government has a programme for an Olympic truce for the Games of Athens 2004. The idea is good but nobody can predict the result of this movement. The only hope we have is the peaceful meaning of sport, which can help the reduction of the international tensions.<sup>72</sup>

Two interesting old theories can be related with this subject. The first one is the traditional Marxist theory that sport plays the role of opium; that is sport can advert people from reactions and social claims. DUMAZEDIER<sup>73</sup> claimed that the opium policy could be used at the beginning of the 21st century but ALLISON<sup>74</sup> thinks that the theory of Opium may work occasionally. The second theory is that of catharsis, supporting that some multi-national sport events like the Olympic Games and

the World Football Cup are harmless substitutes for social conflict and so they function like a catharting means as in ancient Greek tragedy.<sup>75</sup> Today neither of the above theories can play a positive role for the World peace. Taylor wrote that since there is not a central system of protection "... it is recognised that states have to devote much care to the protection of their own interests".<sup>76</sup> However the only good policy for the IOC is to keep as, almost, always a neutral policy for any international conflict. The Olympic truce is just a way to understand, as in ancient Olympics, that sport is not a kind of war. Sport and Olympics never were a panacea for political contradictions. At the same time sport is an utopia for them who think that they can use it for no honest political purposes.

### **The Global Olympics (Seoul 1988-Sydney 2000)**

The Seoul Olympic Games can be considered as transitional ones since they connect the Games held during the Cold War period and those of the Post Cold War era. There were a lot of worries about the realization of the Olympic Games in Seoul, since the nation was divided after the Korean War (1950-1953) in two countries. The government of South Korea overcame the worries by taking two decisions. On the one hand it showed a good will to discuss the possibility that the Games to be coorganised with the North Korea. The latter showed a good political tolerance for the Games.<sup>77</sup> Another important characteristic in these Games was that South Korea followed the potential of Free-market and Capitalism applied within a peculiar Asiatic environment in which the USA invested for its development. The security operation was impressive and massive.<sup>78</sup> The Olympics revealed the open and great interest of USA to support the hosting country without any hesitation. During the Games, for example, the American navy was present in the Korean Gulf for security reasons. The Games took place without serious political problems in spite of the fact that a part of the students of the University of Seoul organized some demonstrations. According to HILL *"the Seoul Olympic Games of 1988 were a political exercise for the South Korean government from the beginning, and swiftly became a major political preoccupation internationally"*.<sup>79</sup> At least the Games improved the South Korea's standing in Asia and worldwide, and increased both the international and national prestige of the nation. KIM clearly states that the development of television has made TV as the main organizer of the Olympic Games.<sup>80</sup> The Olympics of Seoul revealed the serious problem of

doping in its catastrophic dimension. About ten athletes were positive in Doping test control. KRÜGER wrote that the rise of the doping was a result of the

*"commercialisation of the Olympic Games and the "hunting" of records...Hence, athletically, the Games will probably best be remembered for the stunning 100-metre sprint victory of Ben Johnson and his disqualification soon afterwards for taking anabolic steroids"*.<sup>81</sup>

The Barcelona Olympic Games of 1992 were the first ones that took place in the post-Cold War era. Samaranch said that the tremendous success was for the whole Olympic family and not only for Spain and organizers.<sup>82</sup> There was a climate full of joy and hopes linked with the theory of the *End of History* by Francis FUKUYAMA.<sup>83</sup> Despite the political-ethnic problems the country was united behind the idea that a very important international event would take place in Spain. In the Games was included, for the first time, the Cultural Olympiad (after 1928 prizes). It was also for the first time that the central stadium was filled during the Paralympics, which were held after the main Games.<sup>84</sup> It is worthy to note here that the influence of the USA was clear in most aspects of the Games. The USA television rights, for example, fetched \$ 401m.<sup>85</sup> The Olympics of Barcelona is a paradigm of those countries that thought the Olympics planned for further development. New hotels were built and the seafront of the city was opened since the old railway was diverted allowing a space for the Olympic Village. In parallel a new ring road was constructed and the city was cleaned up.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand the planetary prevalence of the USA was a reality with the Gulf War and the attempts of the American diplomacy were focused on how to penetrate into the European Union anticipating the unification of an economical giant and a possible opponent on the planet. The commercialization and industrialization of the Olympic Games was realised to a degree, which indicated the free market foundations that the new World Order is constructed in parallel with the world confusion of economies, the dissolution of country nations and the loss of ideologies. The success of the Barcelona Olympic Games was undoubted and it gave the sense of a better quality of life for its residents, more employment opportunities and greater accrued capital.<sup>87</sup> For the above reasons the city had attracted more visitors and conferences than ever.<sup>88</sup>

Atlanta had been criticized vigorously because it was believed by many people that Greece had the priority for 1996 to host the Games for historical reasons.<sup>89</sup> Meanwhile there was the problem of

bat relationships either between Atlanta's organizers and the IOC or between the city's organizers and the USOC. The IOC gave all its best diplomatic interventions in order the task to be aside.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, there was not a central stadium and the organizers made it using a procat material. Atlanta's Olympics revealed the problem of gigantism of the Games. The IOC increased the number of NOCs and added new sports to the Olympic program.<sup>91</sup> The slogan was that the excessive commercialization of the Games is the democratization of sport.<sup>92</sup> The planetary policy of the USA for more solidarity was culminated during the Olympic Games of Atlanta in 1996. Nevertheless, the huge commercialization of the Games indicated clearly that the USA, as the one Super-Power wanted to control the future of the world by the one-way of Neo-liberalism. Therefore, the Neo-liberalism brought apportioned national conflicts and the exaltation of them is difficult to be managed by only of one power. Unfortunately for the optimists of globalization the theory of the clash of civilizations supported by HUNTINGTON became opportune.<sup>93</sup> The economic conflict brings clashes in all levels. The 11th of September 2001 was the beginning of a new difficult world era. It seems that the nowadays human civilization must start to find new principles of cooperation among nations, cultures and religions.

The Sydney Olympic Games of 2000 seem to be the best Olympics since their beginning for plenty of reasons.<sup>94</sup> Firstly, there was the positive feeling of Australian people for volunteering and its confidence of the Australians that their athletes would have gained plenty of metals. That important factor happened because sport and physical education are in a very good level in Australia.<sup>95</sup> Another positive factor was the city itself. The organizers had to do few development works since the city is modern and rich, located in a wealthy and wonderful site. The key factor was the perfect organization. The Australians Politicians and people understood that the Olympic Games is a rare opportunity to advertise their own civilization. For all the above positive conditions and excellent expectations the Games were not much shocked with some scandals of briberies, which caused troubles in the International Olympic Committee.<sup>96</sup> For all the above reasons the former president of the IOC H. A. SAMARANCH was proud for the Sydney Olympics.<sup>97</sup>

Greece showed in 1987 the political will to host the Olympic Games of 1996. The Greek Parliament and the majority of Greek people and Mass Media saw the effort as a chance for modernization and further development of the country.<sup>98</sup> Greeks thought that all the members of the IOC wanted

the first 100 years of the Olympics to be celebrated (held) in the country from where the Games started either in ancient Greek times (Olympia) or in Athens in 1896. In spite of a very well designed Draft for Athens, made by the World famous architect G. KANDILIS, the Games were given to Atlanta (Tokyo 1990). Seven years (1997) later, IOC gave the Games to Athens for the Olympics of 2004. The USA Olympic Committee helped Athens as nobody other factor. Without the assistance of the USA, Athens would not stand the pressure from other candidates such as that of Rome. The reason that droved the USA to help Greece is rather that this country wanted to restore the unfairness of Tokyo in 1990. The prestige of the USOC and that of the USA was reduced since even plenty of intellectuals, as J. LUCAS, in the USA spoke for the unfair historical decision.<sup>99</sup> According of one survey of *Economist* (1992), Greece in spite of some financial problems for the development of the general figure of Athens, through a modernization is ready for the Games.<sup>100</sup> Fortunately there was a satisfactory cooperation between the IOC, Greek Government and the Organized Committee Athens 2004. The main invisible problem is the World political context and the fear of safety of the Games. If the international conditions in the World will peaceful it seems that the Games will run normally.<sup>101</sup> It is obvious that the nowadays Olympics are different of those 30 years ago and as BARNEY<sup>102</sup> wrote in 1993 *"If the good Baron Pierre de Coubertin could gaze down on the Olympic scene today [...] he would indeed be shocked by what has to pass"*. BARNEY did have in his mind rather the problem of commercialization and not the global problems that the Olympics and the World democracy approach today.

## Summary and Conclusions

In the last 25 years there has been a great change in the World.<sup>103</sup> The collapse of the USSR led the world economy and plenty of its aspects to new geopolitical conditions called the Era of Globalization. Sport and the Olympic Games were influenced by the new global conditions. The aim of this work was to discuss the way that sport and the Olympics are connected with globalization. The text is consisted by five parts. In the introduction there is a brief outline of the political side of sport and the Olympics since their begging up to the end of the Cold War. In the second part there is a description of the different theories of globalization and the way some analysts approached the new phenomenon. The next (main) part analyses two features. The first is the way that globalization influences the basic sport and the second how the

Olympic Games faction into the global context. They were discussed the main problems that this great cultural institution approaches. There is also a consideration for the main problems that the Olympic Games face today. The greatest problem of globalization seems to be the hegomonization of the Global economy by almost one country (USA). Some other problems are the gigadism (connected with the hosting problem), the extravagant commercialization, doping and the success of safety (terrorism's fear). Finally in the last part of the article there is a specific consideration on the Global Olympiads (1988-2004). It seems that the most optimistic factor for the future of the Olympics is the development of democracy (general sense) in the world and perhaps inside of the IOC.

### Notes

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## A UNIQUE PIECE OF OLYMPIC HISTORY

by Ossi Virtanen



Label issued by the Swiss Football Federation

Postcard cancelled on the 24th of March 1940

Label issued by the Swiss Olympic Committee

An almost unknown piece of olympic history took place at the end of 1939 and beginning of 1940 when the Swiss Olympic Committee issued a label "PRO FINNLAND" to support Finland in her battle against the invasion of the Soviet Union.

This was and still is a unique occasion in the

olympic history; a NATIONAL Olympic Committee collected money to a foreign country and NOT to an olympic or sport purpose.

An identical label was at the same time issued by the *Swiss Football Federation*.