

WHY WE FIGHT

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The work the International Committee Pierre de Coubertin, through brief educational activities, inauguration of busts and stadiums may appear futile to the eyes of the unformed observer. To believe this would be a mistake.

Our struggle is much more dense, much more important, much more serious. It is located far beyond conventional customs, we at the service of the education of humanity by spreading the thoughts of Pierre de Coubertin, a thinking which as we know is always open and, we believe, is critical.

Our reason for being is, above all, philosophical and humanist. We believe that Modern Olympism, in the way it was contrived at the beginning of the century by Coubertin and his friends is opportunity for humanity. Our duty, when facing the unknown and the misunderstandings which may occur, is to show and very often to reveal the fact that Olympism can not be simply reduced to the single four-yearly celebration of the Olympic Games, rather that it is a way of life which responds to the needs and demands of our societies, be they industrial, post-industrial, modern or post-modern.

What is Olympism?

Olympism as it is defined in the fundamental principles of the Olympic Charter (a contribution which Professor Norbert Müller and I are proud to have given the International Olympic Committee) as “a philosophy far life” which extols in a balanced whole, duality of body, will and spirit.

Olympism is “a style of life” an existential way of considering man’s place in time and space, in history and in society. Founded on the basis of respect for individual life, of tolerance and the recognition of equal rights for all cultures, Olympism is humanism.

Thus here in modern times we find the fundamental contribution of Pierre de Coubertin, this humanism is based on the recognition of sport for its educational value. Olympism is certainly the union “in a harmonious flash” of all the intellectual and artistic disciplines with sport, but at the root of the Olympic system, sport occupies the highest place, <<the heart>>, which is to say moral.

Olympism rests on the concept of moral elevation, achieved thanks to sports training, subject to the laws of universal morals.

Why we fight

We struggle so that sport can have its place, but only its place, in the education system dedicated to children, adolescents and every day more to men and women.

We mean that we fight against the derivations which the Olympic Games have become victims because of money, agents, and the media. Because the Games should not be a kind of spectacular world championship held every four years even though they are accompanied by magnificent cultural events. The Olympic Games should be a sacred demonstration of the union of men on the planet and their specific character.

That is the reason why, for us, Olympism should blend everyday life with an education based on very simple moral principles:

- Respect for the psychosomatic integrity of the child, the adolescent and man in general.
- Fight against the xenophobic and racist deviations brought to the Games and sport by over-coverage by the media.
- Respect for the opponent and the referees, we consider that respect for moral rules begin with learning the rules of sport.
- Respect, from infancy, for other cultures and the customs of different civilisations.
- An education towards peace between nations.

We fight:

- So that Olympism, a social fact, is integrated into the education system in Primary, Secondary and Higher.
- So that the Olympic system (I.O.C., Olympic Commissions) are as clear and open-minded as possible.

We are steadfastly in favour of Olympism and the I.O.C. hand in hand in the crisis (understandable and normal) which it is going through, it is a fact of life that Olympism cannot stand aside from the struggles faced by humanity and cannot turn away from man’s weaknesses.

We fight:

So that, in the Twenty-First Century, Olympism will be in concordance with everyday life.