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## **The 2004 Athens Olympic Games: Boom or Bust?**

For 1100 years, the antique Olympic Games took place in Hellas – Greece – Olympia. They ended in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A. D. and an interregnum of 1500 years passed before the French aristocrat Baron Pierre de Coubertin, with the full and enthusiastic support of the Greek government, hosted the first modern Olympic Games in 1896. One hundred and eight years later, the summer games will take place in this ancient, beautiful, overcrowded city of Athens. Almost everything has changed since 1896, and it is not altogether sure, as of 2003, exactly a year before the Opening Ceremonies that the games will be an unvarnished success. If they are, it will be to Greece's credit and "glory." If far too many things "go wrong" in Athens, Greece, the origins of these quadrennial festivals, then Greece will have been "injured," and the Olympic Movement leadership will be the recipient of heavy criticism. None of this is news. All host cities face the "unknown," but for historic reasons the praise for Athenian success will be higher than usual as will be the criticism if these games are a "bust."

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