

*The Olympic Games - Die Olympischen Spiele* (originally published in English [Athens: Charles Beck, 1896] and in German [Leipzig: F. Volkmar, 1896], republished in English and German [Kassel: Agon, 1996]; and *Die Olympischen Spiele 1896 in Athens* by Karl Lennartz (ed.), (published in German [Kassel: Agon, 1996]). Reviewed by Jürgen Buschmann, Deutsche Sporthochschule-Köln, Germany.

Among the most authoritative sources of information for Olympic historians are the official reports of the Olympic Games. What nowadays is listed in the *Olympic Charter* as an obligatory duty of an Olympic Games host city, in times gone by such official report initiatives were voluntary undertakings by the host cities. Such was the case with respect to the first volume noted above. The Greek organizing committee of the 1896 Games in Athens published a two volume work which has since become referred to as the *Official Report of the First Modern Olympic Games*. There have been several republished editions produced (altogether, twenty-five), one being a German-English volume, another being a French-Greek volume. The original editions of the publication are now very rare and valuable. Not one has appeared in an auction in the last several years. In 1996, commemorating the Jubilee Anniversary of the Modern Olympic Games, publisher Wolfgang Fuhr in Kassel, Germany, ventured to reprint still another copy of the original.

The volume is separated into two parts. Part I, written by S. P. Lambros and N. G. Polites, treats the legacy of the ancient Olympic Games celebrated in Greece some 2000 years ago. Timoleon Philemon, active in helping to organize the 1896 Games, wrote a prologue for Part I. There is little new to sport historians and classical studies professors in this part of the book. Part II offers much more. Even though Pierre de Coubertin and Timoleon Philemon get top billing on the title page, it is the exposition of N.G. Polites and Charalambos Anninos which is most interesting and enlightening. Coubertin tells of the Sorbonne Congress and the initiative to give the Olympic Games idea a rebirth. Polites details the organization efforts by the Greeks to prepare for the great festival. Anninos describes the events, themselves, including the celebratory functions that surrounded the great inaugural festival as it unfolded in Athens over 100 years ago. The text of these original authors superbly enriches the volume. So, too, does the introduction of attractive drawings and the publication of many photographs, many of them never before seen in published form. They were not a part of the original printing. The entire result is an impressive description rendered by individuals who were personally present at the inaugural Games. For this reason alone, it is a valuable work for historians to consult.

A companion volume, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1896 in Athens*, was produced by Karl Lennartz and a group of colleagues from around the world. Lennartz, head of the Carl Diem Archives at the Deutsche Sporthochschule in Köln, was the driving force behind the publication. Since carrying out the task by himself would have been virtually impossible, Lennartz invited 37 scholars from various parts of the world to contribute their knowledge and photographic material to the volume.

For instance, the famous Greek collector, Georgios Dolianitis, the sport historian from Köln, Joachim K. Ruhl, the French sport scientist, Otto Schanz, and Karl Lennartz himself, write about the forerunners of the Modern Games, those pioneer

events that occurred in Greece, England, France, and Germany before the historic events of April 1896 occurred in Athens. Hans Joachim Schönknecht and Jürgen Buschmann (Germany) wrote on Pierre de Coubertin and the Olympic founding congress in Paris in June 1894. Short survey biographies of the IOC members present in Athens for the Games were written by the German scholars, Albert Krayer (Mainz) and Walter Borgers (Köln), and by two Czech Republic historians, Sieghard Below and Jiri Kössl of Prague. The sport scientist from Köln, Mirjam Jasse, adds a critical commentary on the protocol of the IOC session conducted in Athens. The sport educationalist from Köln, Dietrich R. Quanz, writes about the connection between the evolution of the Olympic Movement and the International Peace Movement at the turn of the century. This is complemented by a contribution from Andreas Hofer (Köln) on the "Hellas Plan" to permanently stage the Games in Greece, despite the protests of Coubertin to the contrary. The renowned Olympic journalist and statistician, Volker Kluge, treats the subject of Olympic medals, diplomas, and stamps, each genre experiencing initiation in Athens a hundred years ago. The architect from Berlin, Thomas Schmidt, who has edited several articles and books on Olympic sports complexes, examines the subject of the sports-grounds present in Athens in 1896. This is followed by a number of short vignettes that examine the contributions of the nations that participated in the First Games: Ian Jobling (Australia), Erich Kamper (Austria), Albert Krayer (Germany), Losan Mitev (Bulgaria), Karl Lennartz (Germany), Guy Bonhomme (France), Ian Buchanan (Great Britain), Andres Morbach (Germany), Katalin Szikora (Hungary), Guiseppe Odello (Italy), Walter Wehrle (Switzerland), Wolf Lyberg (Sweden), and Bill Mallon (USA). The aforementioned contribution of Erich Kamper was his last publication. He died shortly before the printing of the book, which was fittingly dedicated to him: the "Nestor" of Olympic statistics and history.

The book features a large section detailing the results of the sports events, written by Ture Widlund (Sweden) and Karl Lennartz, assisted ably by Bill Mallon, Volker Kluge, Heiner Gilmeister (Germany), and Walter Teutenberg. This section is complemented by an analysis concerning the marathon, written by Lennartz. A contribution on the question of female participation was composed by Edeltraud Odenkirchen (Germany), while the role of Jewish participants was examined by Volker Kluge. A section on the biographies of 1896 Olympic event winners, as well as details about a large number of other participants, is the work of Walter Teutenberg, Don Anthony, Heiner Gilmeister, Volker Kluge, and Karl Lennartz. The volume is concluded by a calendar of events for the 1896 Games, several charts of statistics, and an appropriate bibliography. It should also be mentioned that numerous photographs and copies of rare documents are displayed in the text, many of them never before published.

Without exaggerating, it can be stated that this unparalleled book is for the first time ever an attempt to compile complete knowledge with regard to the Games of 1896. Furthermore, the book underscores an effort to encompass the numerous stories and legends surrounding the Games by using critical interpretations of sources of information. This book is fundamental for examiners of the history of the Modern Olympic Games. The price of 198 DM is not too high for this beautifully-produced edition.

The volume does, however, reflect two negative points, neither of which can be traced to Lennartz and his impressive team of contributors. The first focuses on print

size. The volume is comprised of 170 large-sized pages. In normal-sized print the book would have numbered over 550 pages. Financial considerations prompted the publisher to use a small print size. The result is similar to reading a book while gazing at a print size normally restricted to footnote material.

The last criticism is more important and has greater implications for prospective readers. The book is produced in German; therefore, with the exception of some well-known bilingual sport scholars/historians, the book's impressive material will be all but lost to those who are members of the English-speaking (reading) world. An English-language version is absolutely necessary. Who has the necessary interest and means? A university press? A popular sport press? The IOC publications bureau? We shall have to wait and see. . . and hope.