



The International Olympic Truce Centre  
1A, Likavittou Street  
10672 Athens, Greece

International Olympic Academy

2013-14 Master's Program

**The History of Olympic Truce in the Modern Era:  
From 1894 to 1936**

Brooke Lenser  
Troy Venechanos

Spring 2014

**Introduction**

The International Olympic Truce Centre's (IOTC) "Truce Timeline" (International Olympic Truce Centre 2013) provides a chronology of highlights in the history of the Olympic Truce. Following the inception of the Truce in ancient times in 776 B.C.E. (a date still debated by scholars), the timeline jumps to modern times with establishment of the International Olympic Committee in 1894 C.E. This gap, of course, exists because the Games ceased to exist after the 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E. (International Olympic Committee 2013).

#### IOTC Truce Timeline

- 776 B.C.** Truce is established, allowing the first Olympic Games to take place in Olympia.
- 1894** The International Olympic Committee is established, with the goal of placing sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.
- 1896** Athens organizes the first Olympic Games of the modern era.
- 1992** The International Olympic Committee launches an appeal for the observance of the Olympic Truce and negotiates with the United Nations to allow athletes of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia to participate in the Games of the XXIII Olympiad in Barcelona.

*Figure 1.1: The Truce Timeline* (International Olympic Truce Centre, 2013)

However, the gap between 1896 and 1992 is more difficult to rationalize. The texts of Pierre de Coubertin and contemporary historians show that, although the idea of worldwide peace is present throughout the development of the Olympic Movement, substantive discussion of the Truce is almost non-existent until the Interwar Period. While it's logical to conclude that an idea such as truce or armistice would become more relevant during times of war, the absence of almost any pre-war mention of Olympic Truce in modern times is especially surprising given its ancient and Internationalist roots.

As one of a group of organizations formed at the turn of the century with the aim of worldwide peace (through common practice), the Olympic Movement's position at the intersection of international sport, physical education and Philhellenic spirit set ideal conditions for peacemaking efforts at the time. However, the turbulence of pre-, inter- and post-War Europe threatened the Movement's existence altogether. History has shown that Games were cancelled

due to war, countries threatened boycott and threatening political ideologies emerged during times of economic crisis. Sources will show that the Truce, a minor presence during these years, could not be adopted in a movement whose survival as a viable sports enterprise was put into question.

Departing from its ancient roots, this discussion will provide a foundation on the minimal role of Truce as an Olympic goal during its formative years. An external analysis of the political climate of the time and an internal, game-by-game history of the Olympic Movement will provide further insight as to why this concept remained inactive for until the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

## **Part One: 1894 - 1914**

*Troy Venechanos*

The short span from 1892-1896 sees the genesis of the Olympic Movement during the Sorbonne Congresses and the first modern Olympic Games in Athens. The values of peace, physical education and international sport are all common themes during the Movement's constitution, but sources show a distinct void in any mention of an Olympic Truce.

The following years also reveal a disconnect between the growing movement and the Truce, a concept which failed to emerge alongside the Games during the war-marked first half of the twentieth century. While our discussion will focus on the role that the Truce played during these formative years, it will also venture to describe the Olympic Movement as a part of a larger Internationalist movement at the turn of the century.

### **Coubertin's Peace and the Olympic Truce**

As an Internationalist initiative, much of the rhetoric that helped Pierre de Coubertin launch the Olympic Movement aims for worldwide peace. In relation to his mentions of peace, he does not call for the observance of a truce during this period of proposing and establishing the Olympic Games.

Although the Truce is a method for achieving the goal of peace, and the two concepts are closely related, it is still important to make a clear distinction between them. In the Olympic context,

peace is the end result of international reconciliation, cooperation and understanding – a product of “Olympism,” an idea that would not be fully conceptualized until 1918. Truce, as explained by Georgiadis and Syrigos, is a “tool for peace” (Georgiadis and Syrigos 2009, 17), which uses the athletic medium provided by the Games as a platform. They write: “Sport, particularly in societies just emerging from crisis, can provide, when allied to the Truce, a basis for rapprochement and dialogue between warring sides” (Georgiadis and Syrigos 2009, 17). Even in their description of the Truce’s revival in modern times, they do not directly link it with Coubertin, progenitor of the Olympic Movement. Rather, they link him with peace in a more general sense, noting that he “preached the power of the Olympic Movement to promote peace-loving relations between the peoples of our planet” (Georgiadis and Syrigos 2009, 18).

Coubertin’s writing on the topic of peace is prolific. He writes of peace as a necessity in modern society and of sport as another method of achieving it. However, it is interesting to see how Coubertin sometimes shifts peace from a central goal to a peripheral one in his passages.

For instance, just after the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, he writes:

Wars break out because nations misunderstand each other. We shall not have peace until the prejudices that now separate the different races around the world are outlived. To attain this end, what better means is there than to bring the youth of all countries periodically together for amicable trials of muscular strength and ability? (de Coubertin 2000, 360).

Though in his memoirs, peace is just one of many ends to be attained:

Now, nobility of sentiments, high regard for the virtues of unselfishness and honor, a spirit of chivalry, virile energy and peace are the prime needs of modern democracies (de Coubertin 2000, 322).

Admittedly, there is bound to be some variation in a concept’s importance throughout the history of one’s work. Whether peace was Coubertin’s sole, central or supplemental goal is less important than the fact that it was a persistent one. Alongside physical education and athletic excellence, efforts in peacemaking would eventually become a driving force in the Olympic Movement.

## **Internationalist Roots**

The revival of the Olympic Games was also influenced by the wave of Philhellenism that pervaded Europe during the mid-to-late nineteenth century and buoyed by contemporaneous Internationalist movements (including the establishment of the Red Cross, Boy Scouts and World's Fairs). Such movements sought to go beyond politics and better the world through cooperation at the international level. While each group used their own specific approach to peacemaking, they all focused on the commonalities of different peoples in practice. The Boy Scouts, for example, focused on outdoor activity as a common, unifying practice for youth. In the same category of 'youth development' or 'education,' the Olympic Games centered on athletics as a common practice.

At the national level, a new rational, social imperative guided European politics. More than ever before, there was a broad emphasis on improving both education and healthcare (Koulouri 2006, 69). The physical health of a nation, both inside and outside of the contexts of war, was very important. Given the climate of the time, the Olympic Movement was uniquely positioned as a tool for peace. Not only was it a part of this Internationalist wave, but it also benefited from a deep Western appreciation of Ancient Greece and a time of sweeping social reform. With sport as its social entrée, the Olympic Games fit in well with all of these areas.

These associations, in conjunction with Olympism as its moral code, established Coubertin's vision for the Olympic Movement as "a politically neutral, internationalist movement, with the promotion of world peace as its aim" (Koulouri 2006, 69).

## **Sorbonne Congresses of 1892 and 1894**

Against this Internationalist backdrop, Coubertin brought his ideas forward at the Sorbonne Congresses of 1892 and 1894. These congresses would be the first testing grounds for Coubertin's ideology. As already mentioned, appreciation of Ancient Greece, emphasis on physical education and Internationalist thought were all popular concepts in Europe at the time. Coubertin sought to intersect all three in his initial proposal.

Lucas sheds light on Coubertin's efforts on this front, reporting mixed success at the Sorbonne. In 1892, an event that he characterizes a "flop" for Coubertin, he describes how the young Frenchman attempted to meld sport and peace in his ambitious speeches, specifically citing this famous passage:

Let us export oarsmen, runners, fencers; there is the free trade of the future—and on the day when it takes place among the customs of Europe, the course of peace will have received a new and powerful support (J. A. Lucas 1974, 608).

Despite his passionate plea for the revival of the Olympic Games, Coubertin's vision would not gain traction until the 1894 Congress. His success here was due in large part to his pre-Congress politicking. By successfully lobbying relevant European aristocrats, addressing the “thorny” issue of amateurism (J. A. Lucas 1974, 609) and re-establishing the ideals of his vision, he finally saw success. Lucas points out the observations of a journalist who confirmed that, in 1894, “the Olympic dream of Baron de Coubertin took definite shape for the first time” (1974, 610).

### **Games and Peace**

To this very day, the IOC and its Olympic Games claim to be apolitical entities. This absolution from political activity has, in theory, allowed Coubertin's IOC to remain above partisan politics and wartime tensions. By not endorsing boycotts of the Games and refusing to intervene in international politics, the IOC has adhered to the Internationalist dogma of “coming together” as one world to prevent conflict.

After 1894, Coubertin was charged with mission of bringing his this vision to life. This included establishing the Games and, because of his lofty aspirations, bringing the world closer to peace. As we will see, the first installments of the Games at the turn of century would see different means towards this end, each presenting different levels of success on the peacemaking front.

#### *Athens 1896*

The first modern Olympic Games in Athens set precedence for almost all aspects of Olympic tradition. They laid the groundwork for the competitive program and provided a benchmark for the Games' ceremonial aspects. More importantly, they set a stage for peace at the international level, as posited by Randall – who calls the 1896 Games the biggest “peace-time gathering ever assembled in one place for one event until that time” (Randall 2012).

In his descriptions of the Games, he mentions their ability to neutralize conflicts:

It was an international [festival], held on the closest to neutral territory that the pre-First World War world could provide. The ancient idea that Olympia was a place above and beyond wars and the festering disputes of states held good (Randall 2012).

This passage provides an important link back to the ideals of the ancient Olympic Truce, which

allowed for the safe passage of travelling athletes to and from ancient Olympia (see also Appendix). Through this truce, both the ancient and modern Olympic Games were able to become a space in which peace could be achieved in a controlled environment, amongst athletes with common goals. This ‘Olympic peace,’ albeit temporary, would be a first step towards the worldwide peace originally envisioned by Coubertin in his proposals.

#### *Paris 1900 & St. Louis 1904*

The 1900 and 1904 Games both took place during International Expositions (or World’s Fairs). Despite the common, Internationalist lineage of these two movements, the relationship between World’s Fairs and the athletic contests that took place within them proved to be far from harmonious. During both these Games, sport was relegated to the sidelines of international exhibitions. Their role was so minimal that Howell and Howell assert: “it can successfully be argued that no Olympics were held in Paris in 1900. The movement that showed so much promise in 1896 seemed to have collapsed by 1900 (Howell and Howell 1996, 17).

Even under the auspices of Coubertin, both of these competitions failed to become transformative symbols of Internationalism alongside World’s Fairs. Instead, the two phenomena were at odds. Under such conditions, Coubertin and his fledgling IOC barely had the means to meet even the Games’ most basic requirements, much less highlight their ability make peace.

#### *Athens 1906*

The 1906 “interim games,” in contrast, were more successful than the previous two Olympiads. They surpassed the Athens Games of a decade earlier as the largest “peace-time gathering” of the time, and included an athlete base that was “truly international, with many foreign teams and many of the top athletes in the world” (Lennartz 1996, 32).

Although Athens as an Olympic site most closely links the Games and the Truce with their ancient roots, it is war that moved them away from Greece at the turn of the century. As Lennartz explains, plans to return to Athens in 1910 and 1914 were abandoned due to ongoing crises in the Balkans (1996, 33).

#### *London 1908 & Stockholm 1912*

The Games’ host site would again be rotated and, despite relatively minor controversies, the Games in London in 1908 were “helpful for the future of the Games,” as Coates puts it: “They served as a vehicle for ways in which future Games could be structured” (1996, 39).

With the Games' improved structure and unprecedented prominence on the international scene, Stockholm 1912 saw the Olympic Movement in an important position as Europe headed closer to World War I (WWI). Europe had been "split into two armed camps" with Sweden, as modern equivalent to ancient Olympia, acting as a neutral site that could "bridge the growing political gap and bring a hope of political peace" (Ueberhorst 1996, 45).

Perhaps even more revealing than these descriptions by Ueberhorst, are the 1912 writings of James Edward Sullivan, who wrote of the implications of the Truce and Olympic host selection at this point:

In ancient Greece there was only one Olympia to which at first all the little nationalities, and eventually the greater ones, repaired without question, and during the contests there was a general truce in order that all might be safe in their going and coming. The modern Olympiads so far have been favored by peace, but should there be war between the nations, the idea of rotating in meeting-places would have of necessity to be abandoned, at least temporarily. What then? (1912, 21).

Such a passage reveals awareness about the ancient truce and application in modern times by scholars during the pre-war period. This awareness speaks to the political significance of the Olympic Games on the brink of World War I. Sullivan brings up the implications of host site rotation, but what are the implications of Games themselves at this point in history? If up until that point they were "favored *by* peace," it still unclear whether the Games had been dutifully working in favor *of* peace.

The Games' newfound prominence had given it not only the opportunity, but the also the responsibility, to facilitate peacemaking at this important juncture. The coming decades would test the effectiveness of the Olympic Movement and its truce as "tools of peace."

### **Time of Transition**

Before discussing the World War I/Interwar period in Olympic history (1914 – 1936), it will be useful to re-establish the orientation of the Olympic Movement during this time of transition. From the 1892 through 1912, the IOC and its Olympic Games had experienced change that brought them a long way from their inception as Coubertin's "amicable trials of muscular strength" and much closer to his original Internationalist vision as a vehicle for peace.



The Games were beginning to reach a level where it could become influential in international politics. However, up until that point efforts to use one of the IOC's major peacemaking tools – the Olympic Truce – had been non-existent. As former Director of the International Olympic Truce Centre, Angelos Syrigos, acknowledged: “The Games were revived in 1896, but the Truce remained dormant for almost a century. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) reinstated the Truce in 1992, and it has been invoked at every Olympic Games since” (2009, 21)

The IOTC's acknowledgement of the Truce's dormancy is significant. This century-long period is not only remarkable for its absence of an Olympic Truce, but of its need for one.

During the Interwar Period, Coubertin offers his view of a truce and its role within the Olympic Movement:

A truce must be called regarding exclusively nationalistic feelings, which must be put “on temporary leave,” so to speak.

The idea of the truce is another element of Olympism. It is closely related to the notion of rhythm. The Olympic Games must be held on a strictly astronomical rhythm, because they are the quadrennial celebration of human springtime (PDC/Muller, *Olympism*, 581),

He greatly marginalizes the Truce here, by applying it only to the “nationalistic feelings” of the participating NOCs, rather than the conflicting nations they represent. Further, he relegates it to a secondary role that will help keep the entire Movement in step.

Although, as Holderman puts it, the “promise of a Sacred Truce between the nations affect us still” (1995, 14), it is perhaps unfair to judge the efficacy of the Olympic Movement in upholding the Truce during its first twenty years. A more accurate assessment of the IOC as an Internationalist actor is whether or not it created the opportunity for peace, or at least peaceful dialogue. In applying the concept of the ancient truce (*ekecheiria*) to modern Games, Parry asserts that “this *ekecheiria* must have generated the conditions for peace, given that it brought people together and enabled supra- tribal contest to be held according to common rules” (2009, 45). By this standard, the Olympic Games provided proper conditions for peace and laid the groundwork for future dialogue as it transitioned into its role during the World War era.

## Part Two: 1915 – 1936

*Brooke Lenser*

The latter half of this paper focuses on the difficulties of implementing the Olympic Truce due to World Wars I and II. Heavy political activity surrounding the Olympic Games negatively impacted sport, thus, minimizing any opportunity to adopt the Truce. The Interwar Period plays a significant role because it harvests the transition of the two wars via the introduction of the League of Nations and Treaty of Versailles, which will be expanded on later in this section.

As described in the Appendix, the role of the Truce in Coubertin's modern Games differs almost completely from their ancient predecessors, in which the Truce and the Games were co-dependent. In modernity, successful Games do not depend on the upholding of the Truce, a concept that was not adopted for the first 100 years of their history.

After Stockholm 1912, there would be no Olympic Games for nearly eight years. Although the 1916 Games were scheduled to be held in Berlin, World War I brought any such competition to a complete halt, interrupting Coubertin's "astronomical rhythm" for the Olympic Movement and further delaying its prospects as an agent for peace.

### **Games and Peace**

In continuing our game-by-game analysis, we can see how war affected the Games from 1916 – 1936. These two decades fostered "inter-state wars" and "high-risk tensions" at the international level, conditions that were highly unfavorable for the Truce (Briggs, McCarthy and Zorbas 2004).

#### *Berlin 1916 (Cancelled)*

The Games of 1916 were scheduled to be hosted in Berlin, but were cancelled due to the conflicts of World War I. This is the first time since the Modern revival that the Games were directly affected by a major war. This demonstrates how international politics affected the Games, when in theory Coubertin had envisioned the opposite (Wamsley & Young, 2005).

### *Antwerp 1920*

After an interruption of 8 years, the Olympics returned to Europe. These Games were awarded to Antwerp to help reconcile Belgium suffering post-WWI. The Belgians seized Coubertin's festival as an opportunity to rebuild their nation and restore peace by releasing of hundreds of doves during the Opening Ceremony. The peace-dove symbol represents the IOC ideal, "to build a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic idea", and is a tradition still practiced today (International Olympic Committee 2012). The IOC exercised the Games as an instrument for diplomacy by declining to send invitations to Germany and its allies: Austria, Bulgaria, Turkey and Hungary (International Olympic Committee, 2013).

### *Paris 1924*

During the Interwar Period, the IOC continued to use the Olympics as a tool for political demonstration by excluding Germany from participating in the Games of the VIII Olympiad. Opportunely, the German allies were invited to participate in the Games and the number of National Olympic Committee's (NOCs) grew from 29 to 44, demonstrating the major appeal of the Olympic Movement as part of 20<sup>th</sup> century culture. These Games were also notable for raising of the three flags in the closing ceremony: the flag of the International Olympic Committee, the flag of the host nation and the flag of the next host nation (International Olympic Committee 2013).

### *Amsterdam 1928*

New events were added to the Games of 1928, where female competition was introduced for the first time in history. The first symbolic fire was also lit during these games, adding a new dimension to Olympic symbolism (International Olympic Committee 2013).

### *Los Angeles 1932*

In 1932, the United States used the Games to improve its façade after the economy crash of 1929. These Games were held in the middle of the Great Depression and, as a result, participation in the Games decreased to half of what it was in Amsterdam. Popularity and cost of the Olympics were directly correlated which raised concerns leading up to the LA Games. US politicians were more concerned with their collapsing economy than staging a Games; however, Olympic leaders remained optimistic that the Games were "more of a peaceful enterprise than a source of conflict or negativity". They defied criticism associated the Games by reinforcing

“symbolic meanings that supposedly transcended the everyday political and economic, even military, realities of the world” (Wamsley and Young 2005).

### *Berlin 1936*

Commonly referred to as the ‘Nazi Olympics’, the 1936 Olympic Games were remembered for the Germans utilizing the stage to propagate racism and the superiority of the Aryan race. According to IOC President of the time, Avery Brundage, the Games were in a vulnerable position due to Hitler’s campaign which raised concerns of another cancellation or boycott (Kruger, 2005). This challenged the potential for peace and reconciliation and demonstrates how the Olympics can act as a platform for political demonstration. The 1936 Games also introduced the first torch relay, travelling from the site in Ancient Olympic to the city hosting the Games (International Olympic Committee 2013).

### **Olympism & Truce**

It is essential to understand that the Olympic Movement was growing tremendously on a global scale in this time period. The integration of female athletes and increased participation of NOCs demonstrates the evolution of Coubertin’s Games. In the passage below, the Baron himself welcomes the idea of a Truce and rather than stating that its adoption is a specific goal, he shows a rather haphazard vision for the Truce:

Men are not angels, and I do not believe it would benefit humanity if the majority of them were angels. But that man is truly strong whose will is powerful enough to impose upon himself and upon the community a truce in the pursuit of interests and passions of domination and possession, however legitimate they may be. I should for my part welcome it if in the middle of war the opposing armies were to interrupt their struggles for a moment in order to celebrate loyal and courteous muscular Games (Coubertin, 1935).

This is the first time we hear Coubertin speaking to the public about the possibility of a Truce and acknowledges its potential to cease warfare (Coubertin, 1935).

### **Sport and Political Movement**

Beginning after the First World War, socialist groups and political parties made efforts to merge themselves within the sports sector. The concept of sport and “free-time” gave way to spectacles and celebrations that had the power to transform the image and success of an organization (Matsaridis & Kaimakamas, 2012). As seen during the Internationalist movement, people recognized that sport could bring together communities, and if applied on a broader scale,

contribute toward peace. However, the Interwar Period fostered financial and political instabilities which was seized by political leaders as an opportunity to promote ideologies. Mussolini, and his political regime, utilized the 1934 FIFA World Cup to propagate Italy's new Fascist dogma (Matsaridis & Kaimakamas, 2012). Fascism, being defined as: "the political movement, doctrine, system or regime of Benito Mussolini in Italy, which encouraged militarism and nationalism" is antagonistic to peace-efforts. (Collins English Dictionary, 2014). Rather than using sport to implicitly impose peace, Mussolini took advantage of the "decade during which the sport became the tool of diplomatic pressure for each government of the era" (Matsaridis & Kaimakamas, 2012). The Interwar Period demonstrates how sports and politics intersect and how political parties utilized the power of sport in a negative way instead of using it for peaceful measures, as was intended (Matsaridis & Kaimakamas, 2012).

### **Failure of the League of Nations**

Following the First World War, the League of Nations (succeeded by the UN) formed an international assembly to resolve disputes between countries through peaceful negotiations. The League established a peace treaty, called the Treaty of Versailles, to prevent the outbreak of a second world war. The objective of the Treaty mimics the aims of the Olympic Truce, as both were designed by international bodies to ensure a lasting peace through the settlement of political tensions (Briggs, McCarthy, & Zorbas, 2004). The Treaty of Versailles must be adopted by the world's political leaders in order to achieve its pacifistic role. However, not all countries adhered to the sanctions imposed by the Treaty, as exemplified below:

Everyone is talking now of the future of the League... People who rely on them for safety will be let down as Abyssinia was let down. (Beck 1995).

This passage examines the exploitation of smaller nations bound by members of the League of Nations. Not all members complied with the rules of the covenant, thus, expediting the dissolution of the League post-WWII. Since the objectives of the Olympic Truce complement the objectives the Treaty of Versailles, it can be argued that the Truce, too, would have been unsuccessful in mediating international cooperation (Beck, 1995).

### **Economy Crash**

The mood of the 1930s became pessimistic, characterized by hostility, rearmament and the destruction of international order. The Great Depression, a result of World War I debt, hindered

the prospect of a truce. Technological advances in the 1920s, paired with easy access to credit, enabled the rapid growth of broker loans that fuelled the market boom and ultimately disrupted the international economy (White 1990). Budgetary difficulties caused problems with peace-keeping which gave the Germans momentum to re-emerge as a major threat (Beck 1995). While Hitler was rebuilding the German economy, he was also opposing sanctions in the Treaty of Versailles. The Treaty stated that Germany was to reduce its military, and the country was forbidden to have air force tanks or submarines (White 1990). These sanctions were dismissed entirely and by 1938, the League of Nations had failed.

### Feasibility of a Truce

Although the Truce provides a window of opportunity for conflict resolution and peace-building, international conflict dominated the 21st century. The Olympic Truce did not stand a chance of flourishing during a period of "armed conflict" until after the Cold War. The characteristics of the 1990s enabled more "humanitarian wars" because issues became more regional, as opposed to global affairs (Briggs, McCarthy, & Zorbas, 2004). Consequently, the adoption of the Olympic Truce existed during a culture of less-intense conflict and human rights issues, as opposed to "inter-state war", as demonstrated by the figure below (Briggs, McCarthy, & Zorbas, 2004):



*Figure 2.1. 'The Pyramid of Conflict'.*

Intense conflict occupy narrow space at top; followed by high-profile acts of violence; sub-state and local conflict underneath; socially embedded cultures of violence occupy broad base at bottom of pyramid (Briggs, McCarthy & Zorbas, 2004).

In Briggs, McCarthy and Zorbas (2004), they explain how difficult it is to achieve peace during the inter-state war phase. They state, “The actual military phase of conflict is relatively short in duration, although the peace is much more difficult to win” (Briggs, McCarthy & Zorbas, 2004). Naturally, the Olympic Truce would not have stood a chance during the two periods harvesting World War I and II.

In figure 2.2 (below), there is a distinct shift in the culture of conflict and violence from 1896 to 2012. The threats of the Olympic Games are represented by the curve line, showing the progression of political intervention to the Olympic Movement by Governments or ideological groups in the first half of the twenty-first century. The trend line progresses upward, peaks, and is followed by a decline in political threats to the Games, indicating the possibility of an era for peace and understanding (Gangas, 2013).

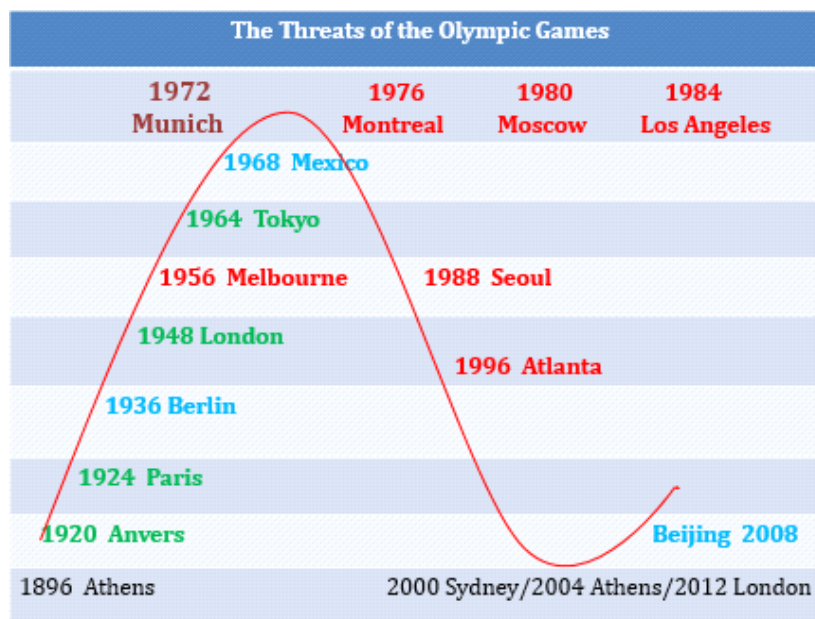


Figure 2.2: 'Threats of the Olympic Games'.

**Dark red:** Considered to be the most problematic Games. **Red:** Acts of terrorism. **Blue:** Political demonstration. **Green:** Games posed mild threats. **Black:** No threats on the Games. (Gangas, 2013)

Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 contrast a similar relationship in terms of how feasible, or unfeasible, it was to implement peace in the 21st century. The higher risks displayed by the upper half of the

pyramid (Figure 2.1) are directly correlated to the growing tensions displayed by the curved line (Figure 2.2). It wasn't until after the Cold War that conflicts subdued and peace-building could finally be presented in the form of an Olympic Truce.:

The Olympic Truce re-emerges at a time when the 'international community' is emerging as the key site for progressive change. The idea of 'international community, symbolized by a commitment to social values that transcend national interests and cooperation over isolationism, sits easily with the Olympic ideals' (Briggs, McCarthy & Zorbas, 2004).

An Olympic Revolution during the Juan Antonio Samaranch Period (1980-2001) gave way to the promise of a new era of human rights and decreased violence. During Samaranch's Presidency the political interventions into the Games were radically minimized, encouraging the proposal of a truce.

## Conclusion

Referring back to the IOTC's Truce Timeline, we can observe its first three key points: 1) the establishment of the Truce in ancient times; 2) Coubertin's formation of the IOC with an emphasis on sport as a vehicle for peace; and 3) the staging of the first modern Olympic Games. Beyond this, we can stare down the vast expanse from 1896 to 1992. This span of almost a century covered a time where peace in politics was rarely attained, making peace at the Olympics a near impossibility.

Prior to World War II, we see very little movement of the resurrection of the ancient truce because its roots were not a priority. Coubertin focused primarily on the culture of sport and physical activity, where peace became a by-product of his philosophy. In later years, smaller attempts were taken to initiate peace through the inauguration of torch relays, bird-releases, and other traditional protocols that are still used in the Olympic ceremonies today.

The popularity of Olympic Games flourished throughout the Interwar Period until the crash of Wall Street. This led to a global economic crisis, negatively impacting participation in sport. Political regimes utilized this unstable climate to cultivate a second world war that nearly cancelled the 1936 Games. These were turbulent times for the Olympic Games, where interest for Coubertin's four-year festival was barely sustained. The face of the Games were constantly changing throughout the period of 1896 to 1936, a fact that had a direct effect on how much or



how little the Truce, or any peacemaking effort for that matter, could be enacted.

## Appendix

### A Brief History of the Olympic Truce (Ekecheira) in Ancient Times

*Brooke Lenser*

The intention of the Olympic Truce, having been misaligned with the revival of the Modern Olympic Games, will be interpreted in this segment. One must look at the history and politics surrounding the birth of the Ancient Games versus the Modern revival in order to understand the reason that the Truce remained dormant for almost a century. As mentioned in part one of this paper, Coubertin did not revive the Olympic Games bearing truce in mind, unlike the prerogative of the Ancient Games.

In antiquity, athletic contests were created as an intermediary for peace when King Iphitos of the Peloponnese approached the oracle at Delphi for advice on how to stop the wars that were approaching his kingdom (Syrigos, 2009). The imposition of a temporary halt, known as *Ekecheira*, allowed for the safe passage of athletes, spectators, judges and officials to and from the sanctuary in Olympia; the site of the Ancient Games (Briggs, McCarthy & Zorbas, 2004).

Therefore, the Games of antiquity were heavily influenced by geo-politics as a resolution to end warfare among Greek city-states, where the announcement of the Truce signaled the commencement of the Games. In contemporary times, the order is reversed and the Olympic Games call for peace among participants (Syrigos, 2009). Although peace was included in the principles of the Olympic Movement as early as the 1920s, the exploration of historical and political significance of the interwar period provide vital understanding as to why Olympic Truce was not implemented until the 1990s. Conclusively, the revival of the Modern Olympic Movement was aimed at progressing humanity via sport, with no connection to the *Ekecheira*.

## Works Cited

- Coates, J. R. (1996). London 1908: Games of the IVth Olympiad. In J. E. Findling, & K. D. Pelle (Eds.), *Historical Dictionary of the Modern Olympic Movement*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Collins English Dictionary. (2014, June 4). Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition. Retrieved from fascism: <http://dictionary.reference.com/cite.html?qh=fascism&ia=ced>
- Coubertin, P. d. (1935). *The Philosophic Foundation of Modern Olympism*. Berlin, Germany.
- Coubertin, P. d. (2000). *Olympism: Selected Writings, 1863-1937*. (N. Müller, Ed.) Lausanne: International Olympic Committee.
- Drevon, A. (2000). *Les Jeux olympiques oubliés : Paris 1900*. Paris: CNRS Editions.
- Gangas, D. (2013, October). International Relations. *Threats of the Olympic Games*. Olympia, Greece: International Olympic Academy.
- Georgiadis, K., & Syrigos, A. (2009). Introduction. In *Olympic Truce: Sport as a Platform for Peace* (pp. 17-19). Athens: The International Olympic Truce Centre.
- Hoberman, J. (1995). Toward a Theory of Olympic Internationalism. *Journal of Sport History*, 22(1), 1-37.
- Howell, R. A., & Howell, M. L. (1996). Paris 1900. In J. E. Findling, & K. D. Pelle, *Historical Dictionary of the Modern Olympic Movement* (pp. 12-17). Westport: Greenwood Press.
- International Olympic Committee. (2012, May). *Factsheet Olympic Truce*. Retrieved from Official Website of the Olympic Movement.
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, February 10). *Amsterdam 1928 Summer Olympics*. Retrieved from Official Website of the Olympic Movement: <http://www.olympic.org/amsterdam-1928-summer-olympics>
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, December 1). *Ancient Olympic Games*. Retrieved January 15, 2014, from Olympic.org: <http://www.olympic.org/ancient-olympic-games>
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, February 10). *Antwerp 1920 Summer Olympics*. Retrieved from Official Website of the Olympic Movement: <http://www.olympic.org/antwerp-1920-summer-olympics>
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, February 10). *Berlin 1936 Summer Olympics*. Retrieved from Official Website of the Olympic Movement: <http://www.olympic.org/berlin-1936-summer-olympics>
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, February 10). *Los Angeles 1932 Summer Olympics*. Retrieved from Official Website of the Olympic Movement: <http://www.olympic.org/los-angeles-1932-summer-olympics>
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, February 10). *Olympic Charter*. Lausanne: International Olympic Committee.
- International Olympic Committee. (2013, February 10). *Paris 1924 Summer Olympics*. Retrieved from Official Website of the Olympic Movement: <http://www.olympic.org/paris-1924-summer-olympics>
- International Olympic Truce Centre. (2013, December 1). *The Truce timeline*. Retrieved January 15, 2014, from The International Olympic Truce Centre: [http://www.olympictruce.org/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=3&Itemid=268&lang=en](http://www.olympictruce.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=3&Itemid=268&lang=en)
- Koulouri, C. (2006). The First Modern Olympic Games at Athens: 1896 in the European Context. *European Studies*, 5, 59-76.
- Kruger, A. (2005). The Nazi Olympics of 1936. In K. Young, & K. B. Wamsley, *Global Olympics Historical and Sociological Studies of the Modern Games* (pp. 43-55). Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.
- Lennartz, K. (1996). Athens 1906: The Intercalated Games. In J. E. Findling, & K. D. Pelle (Eds.), *Historical Dictionary of the Modern Olympic Movement* (pp. 26-34). Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Lucas, J. A. (1974). "Olympic Genesis: the Sorbonne Conferences of 1892 and 1894. *3rd Canadian Symposium on History and Sport* (pp. 607-630). Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University.

- Matsaridis, A., & Kaimakamas, V. (2012). Sport at Fascism's Disposal: The 1934 Football World Cup as a Case of Ideological Propagation and Political Enforcement. *Studies in Physical Culture and Tourism*, 1-17.
- Parry, J. (2009). The Religio Athletae, Olympism and Peace. In *Olympic Truce: Sport as a Platform for Peace* (pp. 37-48). Athens: The International Olympic Truce Centre.
- Sullivan, J. E. (1912). *The Olympic Games Stockholm 1912*. New York: American Sports Publishing Company.
- Syrgios, A. (2009). Olympic Truce: From Myth to Reality. In *Olympic Truce: Sport as a Platform for Peace* (pp. 21-24). Athens: The International Olympic Truce Centre.
- Ueberhorst, U. (1996). Stockholm 1912: Games of the Vth Olympiad. In J. E. Findling, & K. D. Pelle (Eds.), *Historical Dictionary of the Modern Olympic Movement* (pp. 41-53). Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Wamsley, K. B. (2004). Laying Olympism to Rest. In J. Bale, & C. K. Mette, *Post-Olympism? Questioning Sport in the Twenty-first Century* (pp. 231-240). New York: Berg.
- Wamsley, K. B., & Young, K. (2005). Coubertin's Olympic Games: The Greatest Show on Earth. In K. B. Wamsley, & K. Young, *Global Olympics Historical and Sociological Studies of the Modern Games* (p. xvii). Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.
- White, E. N. (1990). The Stock Market Crash and Boom of 1929. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 67-83.
- Young, D. C. (1984). *The Olympic Myth of Greek Amateur Athletics*. Chicago: Ares Publishers, Inc.