**The Olympic Games: Ancient and Modern**

**Summer 2022**

**MGRK 300/CLCV 319/HIST 242J/WGSS 293**



**INSTRUCTOR**: George Syrimis

george.syrimis@yale.edu, Luce Hall 242, Phone: 203-432-9342

**MEETING TIMES**

TTh 9:00-12:15

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar is an introduction to the history of the Olympic Games from antiquity to the present. The first third of the course will focus on the mythology of athletic events in ancient Greece and the ritual and political and social ramifications of the actual competitions. Specific emphasis will be placed on the artistic representation of athletic culture in epic, lyric poetry, sculpture and vase painting. The rest of the course will trace the revival of the modern Olympic movement in 1896, the political investment of the Greek state at the time and the internationalist argument of Pierre de Coubertin, and subsequently focus on specific games as these illustrate the convergence athletic cultures and sociopolitical transformations in the 20th century. The study of the modern Olympic Games offers a global platform through which students can investigate the evolution of social, political and economic movements and trends which have become definitive of the modern age. Special attention will be paid to questions of social class and economics, gender equality, racism, doping and the issue of “the natural body,” as well as media exploitation and the spectacular representation of the hosting country through a number of opening ceremonies.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

* Discussion responses: Before each session you are required to post a response of 400-500 words to the given topic.

**Deadline**: 12:00 am prior to each class.

* Midterm paper: the topic is open and should be at least party be based on some ancient topics. 5-6 pages.

**Deadline**: TBA

* Final paper: the final paper is a research paper with an original argument and the relevant bibliography. 12-15 pages

**Deadline**: TBA

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the appropriation of someone else's ideas, terminology or arguments, even if paraphrased, as if they were yours. It is detrimental to the author whose ideas one steals, to you, and to the community of scholars you belong. Plagiarism is punishable with suspension from the university. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the rules regarding academic integrity. Please review Yale's Academic Policy at <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism> . If anything is unclear or if you are not sure your use of something you have read constitutes plagiarism, make sure you consult with one of the instructors prior to the submission of your paper.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

Class attendance and participation 15%

Discussion responses 15%

Presentation 5%

Midterm paper 25%

Final paper 40%

**ATTENDANCE**

See summer school student handbook.

Pre-class readings:

* Ulrich Sinn, *Cult, Sport, and Ancient Festival,* p. 1-135
* Nigel Spivey, *The Ancient Olympics*, pp. 1-69

**May 31: Introduction to the topic & Homer: Sophrosyne versus Aristeia**

* Walter Burkert, "Pelops at Olympia”
* Homer, *The Iliad*, the Chariot Race for Patroclus (in ACHILLES’S WRATH, THE CHARIOT RACE, & MEETING PRIAM)
* Plato, *Phaedrus*, the allegory of the soul (excerpts: p.16-18, 21-23)
* Stephen Miller, *Arete: Greek Sport from Ancient Sources*, pp. 165-201

Discussion: The Iliad’s Chariot Race and Achilles’s Rage

**June 2: The Olympia Site, Foundational Myths, Poetry & City Politics**

* Pindar, “Olympian 1,” “Pythian 8” (excerpts)
* Nigel James Nicholson, *Aristocracy and Athletics in Archaic and Classical Greece*, pp. 1-41 (“Introduction” and “Charioteers, Mules-Cart Drivers, and Jockeys: Missing Persons”)
* Stephen Miller, *Arete: Greek Sport from Ancient Sources*, pp. 63-78

Discussion: Pythian 8 and Victory’s Slippery Slope

**June 7: The Mythological Background & Art**

* Winckelmann, “Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture,” excerpt on athletics and beauty, pp. 4-8 of the pdf file.
* Miller, Stephen Miller, *Arete: Greek Sport from Ancient Sources*, pp. 85-114, 121-150
* Nikos Kazantzakis at Olympia, *Report to Greco*, pp. 167-174

Discussion: Conversations and Statues: The Charioteer and the Boxer

**June 9: The Modern Movement and the 1896 Athens Olympics**

* Coubertin, Excerpts on athletic philosophy, education & ethics
* Young, Brief History of the Olympic Games
* Schantz, Otto J. (2008). "Pierre de Coubertin's Concepts of Race, Nation, and Civilization". In Susan Brownell. *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games: Sport, Race, and American Imperialism*.

**June 14: Social Class, Amateurism, and Gender Equality**

* Coubertin on Women in the Olympics and Amateurism
* Wamsley & Pfister, “Politics of Gender in OG”
* Lenskyj, “Sex, Gender, and Sexualities”
* *Chariots of Fire*, film, Hugh Hudson (1981)

**June 16: The Games in the Age of Totalitarianism and Eugenics: Berlin 1936**

* *Power, Politics, and the Olympic Games*, Ch. 4; Mark Dyreson, “Jesse Owens: Leading Man in Modern American Tales of Racial Progress and Limits,” in *Out of the Shadows: A Biographical History of African American Athletes*, David K. Wiggins, ed.
* Krüger, Arnd; Murray, William J. (2003). *The Nazi Olympics: sport, politics and appeasement in the 1930s*
* *Olympia*, excerpts, by Leni Riefenstahl

**June 21: Social Upheaval and Native rights: Mexico City 1968, Sydney, 2000, Vancouver 2010**

* Carlos, *The John Carlos Story* (excerpts)
* Meekison, “Whose Ceremony”
* Godwell, “Olympics Branding of Aborigines”
* Girginov, “Olympic Multiculturalism”
* Forsyth & Wamsley, “Symbols Without Substance”

**June 23: Politics, Violence and Boycotts: Munich (1972) and Moscow (1980)**

* Klein, Aaron (2007). *Striking Back: The 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre and Israel's Deadly Response*.
* Corthorn, Paul. "The Cold War and British debates over the boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics," *Cold War History*
* Evelyn Mertin, *The Soviet Union and the Olympic Games of 1980 and 1984: Explaining Boycotts to their Own People*. In: S. Wagg/D. Andrews (Eds.) East plays West. Sport and the Cold War,

**June 28: Doping Scandals, “the Natural Body,” and the Special Olympics**

* Cole, “One Chromosome Too Many”
* Straubel, “Doping Due Process”
* Krane & Waldron, “The Gay Games”
* J.L. Simpson *et al.*, "Gender Verification in the Olympics," *Journal of American Medical Association*
* *Asterix at the Olympic Games*

Additional optional readings

* Porterfield, Jason, *Doping: Athletes and Drugs*
* "A Brief History of Anti-Doping," World Anti-Doping Agency
* R. Peel, *Eve’s Rib - Searching for the Biological Roots of Sex Differences*

**June 30: The Olympic Ideal, Media, Commercialism, and Athens 2004 Opening Ceremony**

* Robert Knight Barney, et al., *Selling the Five Rings: The International Olympic Committee and the Rise of Olympic Commercialism*
* Roche, Maurice (2000). [*Mega-Events and Modernity*](http://books.google.com/?id=aldh2YTO7XQC&printsec=copyright&dq=spartakiads+and+the+olympics)
* *Athens 2004 Opening Ceremony,*  excerpts.

**Bibliography**

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* Buchanon, Ian; Mallon, Bill (2006). [*Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement*](http://books.google.com/?id=fH3hD3MkIMYC&pg=PR101&dq=commercialization+of+the+olympic+games).
* [Burkert, Walter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Burkert) (1983). "Pelops at Olympia". *Homo Necans*.
* Cooper-Chen, Anne (2005). [*Global entertainment media*](http://books.google.com/?id=1Su8jRiVVdoC&pg=PA228&dq=tv+influence+on+olympic+games#PPA230,M1).
* [Coubertin, Pierre de](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_de_Coubertin); Philemon, Timoleon J.; Politis, N.G.; Anninos, Charalambos (1897). ["The Olympic Games: BC 776 – AD 1896"](http://www.la84foundation.org/6oic/OfficialReports/1896/1896.pdf) (PDF). *The Olympic Games in 1896 – Second Part*
* Crowther, Nigel B. (2007). "The Ancient Olympic Games". *Sport in Ancient Times*.
* Eassom, Simon (1994). *Critical Reflections on Olympic Ideology*. Ontario: The Centre for Olympic Studies. [ISBN](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Standard_Book_Number) [978-0-7714-1697-2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special%3ABookSources/978-0-7714-1697-2).
* Findling, John E.; Pelle, Kimberly D. (2004). [*Encyclopedia of the Modern Olympic Movement*](http://books.google.com/?id=QmXi_-Jujj0C&pg=PA283&dq=winter+games+at+the+1912+summer+olympics). Westport CT: Greenwood Press. [ISBN](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Standard_Book_Number) [978-0-313-32278-5](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special%3ABookSources/978-0-313-32278-5). Retrieved 30 March 2009.
* Golden, Mark (2009). "Helpers, Horses, and Heroes". *Greek Sport and Social Status*. University of Texas Press. [ISBN](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Standard_Book_Number) [978-0-292-71869-2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special%3ABookSources/978-0-292-71869-2).
* Girginov, Vassil; Parry, Jim (2005). [*The Olympic Games Explained: A Student Guide to the Evolution of the Modern Olympic Games*](http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=vxAmyvh0ZsQC).
* International Olympic Committee (2007). ["Olympic Charter."](https://web.archive.org/web/2011072307003/http%3A//multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_122.pdf)
* International Olympic Committee, "IOC Regulations on Female Hyperandrogenism".
* Krüger, Arnd; Murray, William J. (2003). [*The Nazi Olympics: sport, politics and appeasement in the 1930s*](http://books.google.com/?id=s5ntIQv0W5IC)*.*
* Mitchell Hunt, Thomas (2007). *Drug Games: The International Politics of Doping and the Olympic Movement, 1960—2007*
* *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 13 (1).
* Olympic Museum (2007). ["The Olympic Games in Antiquity."](http://www.webcitation.org/5gKmnnDyw) International Olympic Committee.
* [Pausanias](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pausanias_%28geographer%29), ["Elis 1"](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0160&query=book%3D%235). [*Description of Greece*](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0160). Loeb Classical Library. Vol. 2. translated by W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerud.
* [Pindar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pindar) (1997), [*Olympian Odes*](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0162&query=head%3D%231). Loeb Classical Library. translated by William H. Race.
* Porterfield, Jason (2008). [*Doping:Athletes and Drugs*](http://books.google.com/?id=YXWa6ll5GxoC&pg=PA15&dq=Hans-Gunnar+Liljenwall,).
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* Tomlinson, Alan (2005). [*Sport and Leisure Cultures*](http://books.google.com/?id=JphFoBnq2R8C&pg=PA14&dq=olympic+games+television+ratings).
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* Woods, Ron (2007). [*Social Issues in Sport*](http://books.google.com/?id=Krclca7m_z0C&pg=PA146&lpg=PA146&dq=television+ratings+decline+olympic+games+torino).
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