

## RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN R.O.C. AND I.O.C. AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE ROMANIAN OLYMPIC SPORT (1920-1964)

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to accomplish a study regarding the relationships between the Romanian Olympic Committee (R.O.C.) and the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.) from the perspective of archive documents, edited publications and periodics sources during the reference period. The proposed time interval it starts with measures and implications of the Romanian representatives in the olympic phenomenon such as: the proposal related to the reintroduction of rugby and volleyball in Olympic Games, increasing number of foreign coaches in our country, improving training conditions and image of the Romanian athletes in the world etc. Thus the main issues in this historical approach are oriented on the Romanian sport personalities, sport prizes and Romanian sport affirmation at the olympic level.

**Key words:** sports history, Romanian sports, olympism

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### INTRODUCTION

"The Olympic Games have a history. And like any history, she created her own myths. It is time that gives to our deeds the dimension of the myth" (Goga, 1972, p. 7). The significance of time passing is raised to the rank of myth in the moment of considerable longevity, which puts a shadow of seniority upon the beginning, framing it in a mystery. It is the unknown who gives supernatural power to the confused origins created by a phenomenon, to highlight its greatness and, at the same time, the impossibility of its equation.

At the origin of the Romanian Olympism there are some main landmarks: the election of the first Romanian representative in the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.) by George G. Bibescu (1899-1901), closely followed by George Plagino (1908-1949) and the establishment of the Romanian Olympic Committee (R.O.C.) in 1914. Then the winning of the first romanian olympic gold medals and the election of the longest-lasting romanian member in I.O.C, Alexandru Șiperco (1955-1999), points out essential moments that are part of the roots of the Romanian Olympism, starting with them the whole sports activity will be driven at the Olympic Games standard. The Olympic Movement founded on Romania's territory too, will give the start to the Olympic achievements by our athletes.

The R.O.C. is officially recognized in 1914. Chronologically we are the 22<sup>nd</sup> National Olympic Committee accepted by the I.O.C. (Matache, 2006). I.O.C. officially recognizes R.O.C. at the international forum during the XVI<sup>th</sup> session (Postolache, 1995).

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## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In the elaboration of the paperwork we studied the national archive documents, periodic publications, as well as the content analysis of the data provided in the edited national and international sources of information.

The purpose of this historical study is to present and analyze the evolution of relations between R.O.C. and I.O.C., as well as the impact of these relations on Romanian sport in the context of the reference period.

## **ROMANIAN PERSONALITIES, PRIZES AND ROMANIAN SPORT DEVELOPMENT**

The troubles caused by the belligerent nations and the adverse consequences produced by the First World War have also influenced the Olympic Movement. Modern Olympism was passing through moments threatening its division, which contributed decisively to a geographical orientation of I.O.C. to other territories less affected by the political interests of the time (Coubertin, 1989). In the interwar period I.O.C. begins to show interest in expanding sports competitions in order to promote Olympic ideals. The attention of the international forum includes the Games of the Far East and the Games of Latin America, launched in the interwar period (Henry, 1948).

In our country the personality involved in the international Olympic movement that would "lead the Romanian sport on the path of total recovery" will be considered George Plagino (Teatru și Sport, nr. 22, decembrie, 1944, p. 2). This trust is not limited to the Olympic segment but refers to a global reconstruction of sport at national level with a view of full development with world-class results. Elected as the 57<sup>th</sup> I.O.C. member, son of the ambassador of Romania in Paris, Plagino will propose the reintroduction of the rugby in the 1920s Olympic program. His social status, the president position in Romanian Shooting Federation, will constitute some favorable arguments to Romania's presence in the international sport arena. Our country obtains the right to appear on the list of official guests at the Belgian Olympics, even if later the Romanian delegation will not honor this call for financial reasons (Bucur Ionescu, 1986).

George Plagino has been in contact with the Olympic Games since their second edition. He will be later a member of the The Sporting Societies Federation of Romania (F.S.S.R.) and from 1919 he will be elected president of the Olympic Games Commission created in Bucharest, in order to the participation of the Romanians athletes at the Olympics in Belgium (Serbanescu, 1980). His entire sporting activity, managerial capabilities and professional competence have kept him close to what sports performance means, Olympic values, having the needed qualities by a real ambassador of the country.

In a periodic publication, Plagino's qualities are listed and described in a manner that shows a profound consideration: "Distinguished Athlete G. Plagino, who through the love and skill with which he permanently led this Sports Fora (U.F.S.R.) knew to impose a prestige and authority necessary for great achievements. Just what currently lacks in Romanian sport" (Teatru și Sport, 1944, p. 2). On the background of a sporting activity threatened by the danger of expanding the "made" results in football (Teatru și Sport, nr. 50, noiembrie, 1945, p. 2), "racing arrangements" (Teatru și Sport, nr. 48, decembrie, 1945, p. 2) and "smutty business" (Teatru și Sport, nr. 49, noiembrie, 1945, p. 2) that significantly distorts the destination of sport, there was need for a change that would save the degrading sport situation to which it was heading. The rescue solution was seen in the person of Plagino who had the necessary qualities to restore the damaged image of the sport.

The Olympic Congress held in Lausanne in 1921 marks a turning point in the Olympic activity by approaching the issue of amateurism. George Plagino and Dinu Cesianu, members of R.O.C. will represent Romania (Bucur Ionescu, 1975). The R.O.C. proposes in the same year the

opening of an Olympic Congress for the Balkan countries for good collaboration and sports training in the countries from this region. The proposal will be approved by I.O.C. the Congress setting up as points of debate the organization of inter-Olympic competitions with the participation of Polish, Yugoslav, Czechoslovak and Greek athletes (U.F.S.R. Anuarul sportiv, 1938-1939). As a result next year, in our country will take place an Olympic Congress of the Balkan Nations (Postolache, 1995).

For the Olympic Congress held in Paris (1924), the president of R.O.C. urgently appoints a Romanian representative, in the person of Mircea Ionomu. In the same year there will be an International Amateur Meeting. The Romanian Sports Federation calls for the participation of Ionomu, being a member of the Federation, to support the interests of Romanian sports (Mircea Ionomu Fund, file no. 5/1924), both as a sportsman and as an official delegate too.

The 1930s bring to the foreground the need for a global rethink of the idea of sport, that will bring into discussion the Sports Charter designed by Pierre de Coubertin. It will be translated into eight languages and will include an objective analysis of the sport situation and the factors involved in the sport phenomenon. Thus, there are mentioned some extreme indicators of the physical exercise in excess that pursuing different goals other than health, physical and intellectual harmony. The adverse influences of political power, sports federation leaders and the press (Gillet, 1970) are considered to be principally responsible for the decline of sports values.

In 1933, the awards in the field of sport was very en vogue. Thus Carol II receives the "Knight Cross of the Order of Sports Merit", but also the President of the Interbalcan Sports Committee and the Association of Hellenic Gymnastics and Athletic Societies, M. Rinopoulos is awarded with the same distinction (Postolache, 1995). This kind of sport rewards was initiated long before in the Olympic family, being taken over by our country too. So, in chronological order appeared the following distinctions: Olympic Diploma of Merit (1905), Olympic Cup (1906) - founded by Coubertin, Fearnley Cup and Trophy Mohammed Taher Pacha are established in the same year (1950) being trophies of I.O.C. members, follow Bonacossa Trophy (1955) founded by the Italian Olympic Committee and Count Alberto Bonacossa's family, the Tokyo Trophy (1964), The Olympic Gratitude Award (1972) and the Olympic Order (1974). These distinctions were created to be awarded to any man or sports institution that has made significant contributions to the propagation and development of Olympism. This principle aimed the universality and its shows that every effort is appreciated, either distinguished personalities, or National Olympic Committees and sports clubs, which by their implication and dedication were able to be role models for all the supporters of the Olympic Movement (Vrabie et al., 2002). We note that there are differences in the award of the Olympic prizes. Thus, at the onset of these Olympic awards, the name of the distinctions had a general Olympic character, but after the Second World War, this Olympic spirit channeled to certain Olympic personalities, nations or host cities, and finally returning to the universal Olympic character. The dynamics of Olympic interests followed a fluctuating process in the promotion, appreciation and rewarding of Olympic efforts, being sometimes dictated by conjunctions, specifically focused to a message that shows also colaterally Olympic interests. This situations can be argued by the confusing postwar periods of the Olympic Movement namely: on the one hand the need of the Olympic family to expand and perpetuate after a war that interrupted the event, and on the other hand ambiguity of the notion of amateur athlete create continuous discussions and tensions in the sports world.

I.O.C. presidents between 1896 and 1942, Pierre de Coubertin and his successor Henri de Baillet Latour (Bucur Ionescu, 1975) will receive from the R.O.C. the *Order of the Cultural Merit for Sport, first class knight* (U.F.S.R. Anuarul sportiv, 1938-1939). Count Baillet Latour will also be awarded with the "Order of Cultural Merit for Sport, Second Medal" as well as Carl Diem (U.F.S.R. Anuarul sportiv, 1939-1940).

Director of I.O.C., founder of the Higher School of Physical Education in Germany and editor of an Olympic periodical, Karl Diem, will visit Romania during the war (1943) (Postolache,

1995). Supporter of rigorous sports training, Diem said that "if the Olympian winner will take the sword, he will be more capable of fighting" and "if war is vanishing, evolution stops" (Alexeev, 1952, p. 49). In the context of the global conflagration, his claims and beliefs are partly motivated. On the other hand, Diem's reasoning as supporter of Olympism may seem less pacifist, perhaps even instigator at riot or division. According to the above mentions, the Olympic athlete is a fighter, a survivor in the most difficult trials, finds quick and optimal solutions to various challenges in the fight with sports records, being a precious human capital designed to be, to think and to act as a winner. So the war can be worrying regarded as a "other sports arena". Indeed, there is a link between the sport and the preparation of the soldier, as Eisenhower said. "The war has shown that every good soldier has been tied to some sport. He was not supposed to be "a star" at all, often enough to have good sports training". This association of sport with war can mean both the application of physical training superior to soldiers to cope with war as effectively as possible, and the using of sport as a selection area for the army.

Three years before Coubertin's death opens at Lausanne the Olympic Museum. Previously, the Archaeological Museum of Olympia (Tudor and Ludu, 1985) had a tendency to immortalize and reunite sports values and symbols in a single institution: the Olympic one. Among the last impressions shared by the renovator Coubertin, in terms of the Olympic phenomenon, was one less worthy of his creation "The only true Olympic hero (...) is the individual male adult. Therefore, neither women nor team sports" (Meyer, 1960, p. 13). From the previous quote we observe a few aspects contrary to the ideals and principles of Olympism launched by Baron Coubertin: equality of chances in participation is preferential applied, the universality of games being directly affected; the recognition of human value is done in a way dictated by an individual ethic, not a social one.

Under the aegis of R.O.C., it will be carried out a movie about the Berlin Olympics (1936) (Anuarul sporturilor, 1939-1940). The event marks in our country the diversification of the possibilities for dissemination and information in this sports field.

In 1939, General Secretary of the Italian Olympic Committee, G. Vaccaro, was distinguished in Bucharest with "The Knight's Cross of the Order of Cultural Merit" (Postolache, 1995). Taking into account the moment of global tension in which the decoration of a member of the international Olympic movement is granted, we can consider it a powerful ambassador of crisis situations. At the same time, other arguments have been raised in favor to the previous assertions, aiming this time the improving of the Romanian-German relations. At the proposal of the Romanian Olympic Committee, efforts are being made to improve the Romanian-German ties through sport. German sports chief Hans von Tschammer und Osten and German Olympic Committee secretary Karl Diem were honorary guests in Romanian sporting events. The program covered both sporting and diplomatic activities.

Athletes' models launched by Olympics between the two world conflagrations will have a long resonance. Sonia Henje and Johnny Weissmuller are multiple champions of the Olympic arenas. The talents and perseverance of the two athletes will be confirmed and rewarded in consecutive editions for sporting reputation and subsequent affirmation as actors. The patterns created by their image have generated a new possibility of professional orientation: acting.

By exemplifying patterns and tendencies initiated by the world sports, a Romanian model that will ensure the perpetuation of sporting values is now taking root. Born in the interwar period, in an Olympic year (1932), the athlete Lia Manoliu will be the only ambassador who will receive the highest Olympic honors. We mention two of them: "The Olympic Order" and "The Centenary Trophy" awarded by I.O.C. Participating in six consecutive Olympic editions, she has achieved the stunning performance of being the Olympic champion at the age of 36. Having subsequently served as chairman of R.O.C. and senator in the Parliament of Romania will be crowned in 1974 with an "International fair-play trophy" awarded by U.N.E.S.C.O. in Paris (Matei, 1996). Due to the constant and fruitful work carried out by Lia Manoliu within the Executive Committee of the

European Association of National Olympic Committees (E.A.N.O.C.), she will be rewarded as an honorary member of E.A.N.O.C. (Vrabie et al., 2002). The sporting model fully launched by our athlete has succeeded in conquering the national and international Olympic family through the achieved sports performances, the moral values, the winning spirit, qualities that speak for themselves about the authentic Olympic ideal launched by the ancient Greeks. Is not by accident that we will find Lia Manoliu mentioned in the famous Guinness-Book publication (Matei, 1998). For our country it means a huge image gain, which many countries did not have. The fullness touched by Lia Manoliu evokes the famous words of Emerson: "What you are, sounding so loud in my ear, that I can not hear what you say to me" (Moț, 1998, p. 99). Regardless of the longevity and brightness of laurels accumulated in a sporting life, it must be taken into account that they are ephemeral, what remains is the human genetic background. The education gained during the sport life gives quality to the genetic heritage, so that a special sporting result will be often accompanied by an exemplary life. Sports medals always talk to us about the past, but the present shows the person who remains beyond these laurels.

Ion Matei's publication entitled "The Sport- Deity with 1000 faces" speaks of a supernatural power that sport provides through its practice, about the familiar or lesser known parts of sporting life, and the laurels achieved in a performance career with their reverse too. The examples and manner of their description are attributed to the hero ranked at a level of deity due to the psycho-social impact that it has on all people.

Year 1944 brings with it the celebration of half century of existence since the founding of I.O.C. (Meyer, 1960). The ongoing world war still far ahead to conclude, with increasing human and material losses, could not provide the time to celebrate events in the history of Olympism, which, once more, through the ancient tradition, presupposed peace, the cessation of any confrontation armed between the human communities of "city-states", confrontation through sport, acclaiming the victorious, who is superior by physical, psychic and moral qualities, including by the defeated.

Presidents I.O.C. who worked during the period 1940-1964 were: the Belgian Count Henri Baillet Latour (1925-1942), the Swedish J. Sigfrid Edstrom (1946-1952) and the American Avery Brundage (1952-1972) (Bucur Ionescu, 1975). As we see for four years the Olympic Movement did not have an officially appointed president to lead it. One reason that contributed to this hiatus in the Olympic Movement was the sudden death of Belgian President Latour. At that time Vice-President I.O.C. was the Swedish Edström who will take over the leading during the war until he will be formally elected at the Lausanne Session (1946).<sup>1</sup> What saved the Olympic spirit was "clandestine games" organized during the Second World War.

The participation of the Romanian delegations in the inter-war Olympics was reduced numerically, as medals too. However, the collaborative relationships of R.O.C. with other national committees mentioned during the 1948 Olympic Year, were sufficiently well represented numerically. We can recall the relations with the Olympic committees: Italian, Swiss, Californian, Indian, Brazilian and Spanish (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 12/1948, file no. 13/1948). Subsequently, other Olympic committees will be added to the collaborators list.

So, after the Second World War, the result of the presidential election at the leadership of I.O.C. nominated as the winner the Swedish Sigfrid Edström. His good diplomat skills will be highlighted in the fragile post-war context when he excludes Germany and Japan from the London Olympics (1948) and will start the Soviet Union's acceptance campaign in the Olympic family. On his withdrawal from office he will be appointed honorary president of I.O.C. until his death in 1964. <sup>2</sup> He said he would hand over his post as president of I.O.C. to the one who will find "a

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<sup>1</sup> [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)

<sup>2</sup> [www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org)

middle way between the rigid amateurism of the Anglo-Saxons and the "hidden professionalism" of the state-sponsored sports nations, implicitly a president who will "guide Olympism to reality." At that time, the struggle for the leadership of the international Olympic took place between Brundage from the United States and Burgley from England (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 49/1951-1952, f. 174). The election will decide the president in person of American Avery Brundage. He will know how to combine the sporting attributes listed by the former President of I.O.C. in a single unit without causing major repercussions on the two characteristics, apparently in contradiction: amateurism and professionalism.

Brundage's conviction was that sport should be apolitical, saying that "when you enter in the sanctuary of sport, leave politics at the door" (Alexeev, 1952, p. 13). His subsequent decisions on some issues raised in the Olympic Movement will prove that the image of sport, considered apolitical, will be attributed to new, more permissive nuances in this direction.

In May 1950, I.O.C. will launch a project regarding the reduction of the Olympic Games program, applicable after the Helsinki Olympics. The reference program will be the London Games edition, where no new sport is expected to be later accepted (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 93/ 1952).

On this ground in September 1952, the new president of I.O.C. Avery Brundage, sends a letter to all the National Olympic Committees and International Federations, in which proposes, among other things, the elimination of all team sports as well as feminine competitions from the Olympic Games. The invoked reasons are related to the prevention of the increasing number of participants in games, due mainly to the tendencies manifested by the athletes to obtain money at any price and to the increasingly violent competitive spirit. According to Brundage, all these characteristics will lead to an unpleasant end in which "the games will totally lose their raison of being" (C.N.E.F.S Fund, file no. 93/1952, f. 64-67). Suggestions proposed by the I.O.C president were rejected because they contradicted the universality and fairness of the Olympic ideals (Meyer, 1960).

Despite Romania's relations with a number of Olympic committees from other states, after the first post-war Olympics, the situation of physical education and sports at national level did not appear too optimistic. Evidence is also our lack of participation in the London edition. The future Romanian member in I.O.C, Alexandru Șiperco, expresses his dissatisfaction with the indifference of ministries regarding the place and role of physical culture in Romanian society. To improve this inconvenience, Șiperco calls for an approach to the subject of physical culture and sport at government level (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 28/1950). The purpose of the request was to inform and empower state-related structures to support the promotion and development of the field of physical exercise.

Since 1950, Șiperco become more and more aware of his presence through his daring proposals and interventions, which have a different viewpoint than that of the majority used to find in our archive documents (Chancellery Section Fund, file no. 81/1950). The members of the party will describe as "unhealthy" these manifestations of Alexandru Șiperco, vice-president of Committee of Physical Culture and Sport (C.C.F.S.), considered in contradiction with the Communist party's priorities related to the expansion of the relations with the Soviet Union (Chancellery Section Fund, file no. 143/1950, f. 2-4). We are at the full stage of class struggle, when the party and administration of the elements of the old bourgeois-interwar intergovernmental regime was the order of the day. Coming from a small bourgeois family, Șiperco was also classified as a competent and correct person, both politically and professionally, eager for continuous improvement, being called "the man who reads everywhere" (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 95/1950, f. 28). The characterizations made in favor of Șiperco prove to be sufficient and persuasive to counteract his "excesses" in attitudes manifested in certain circumstances, without mentioning disciplinary measures taken against him.

On international level, at the Helsinki Olympics, the Romanian Boxing Federation will designate the top three referees to represent our country in this competition. In the end, only two Romanian judges will be accepted, namely: Ion Gruia and Aurel Weintraub (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file

no. 86/1950). The list of referees will be completed in the following editions with three other sports: gymnastics, fights, shooting (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no.345/1956). In Olympics held in 1952, the first foreign coach was called to train the national water polo team (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 6/1952). The exchange of international experience in sports training intensifies. The demands made by the national sports forums are oriented towards several countries, the priority being on Soviet Union (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 102/1953). The increasing number of foreign coaches in our country is due, on the one hand, to their sporting performances, but also to the financial expenses necessary for their employment, which are considered lower. From a financial point of view, it was more advantageous to hire a foreign coach than to invest in more players. An appropriately selected sporting group can bring results to the record of the Romanians without charging the record to other countries if they are running athletes in foreign teams. The sporting human capital selected from the mass of the Romanian people denotes confidence in its genetic qualities and a promotion of national sports values that will bring the desired international recognition.

In 1953, one year after the Helsinki Olympics, in our country were made prospective plans to evaluate as honorably as possible to the next Olympic Games (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 102/1953). Three years of sports training are considered insufficient for rigorous and efficient preparation, future proposals taking in account the four-year Olympic period. As a support for these revisions to Olympic preparation plans, it is the example of all countries applying such long-term periods, being considered the only way to ensure success in sports performance (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 366/1956).

The relationship between Romanian Republic and Soviet Union is increasingly strengthening in the field of sports. On the occasion of the organization of the World Youth Festival in Bucharest, is established a delegation consisting of the president and vice-president of the C.C.F.S. , who will go to Soviet Union. The two delegates, Manole Bodnăraș and Alexandru Șiperco, will consult each other, as a matter of priority, on the international sports links and the organizational steps related to the world festival. In the same year (1953), Șiperco is also scheduled to attend a I.O.C. meeting in Mexico (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 102/1953).

In the year preceding the Melbourne Olympics (1955), Alexandru Șiperco is chosen member of I.O.C. for Romania (Postolache, 1995).

With the preparation of the Australian edition, a series of measures will be taken regarding the development of the Romanian Olympic Movement. The first two major measures envisage: the reorganization of the R.O.C., which was no longer in line with the composition set at the previous Olympiad (1952), and the finding of a settlement for the R.O.C, distinct from that of the C.C.F.S., as the model of the other countries with popular democracy. Several objectives were also set out in the project: establishment of a permanent weekly rubric in the newspaper "Folk Sport" about the Olympic Games, editing of a trimestrial Romanian Olympic Bulletin, with translation in French, English and Russian, and editing of Olympic stamps (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 40/1956).

Other concrete situations regarding the desire to make time and sports training more effective are highlighted by the growing interest shown by R.O.C. regarding the study of the venues of the Olympic Games in Australia. The delegation of our Olympic Committee will be among the leaders of the countries moving on the Austral Continent to study the organizational conditions offered by the hosts regarding future games (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 365/1956), the climate, the time required to travel between sporting venues, acclimatization periods, etc. Traveling on the Australian continent brings a factor that should be taken into account in sports performance: large time zone differences. Time gap differences will require a new strategy of sports training: acclimatization. As a result, the stages of acclimatization will be scheduled to take place in the Olympics year, in Chinese Republic (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 350/1956).

Motivated by the first gold medal conquered in the previous Olympics, as well as by our country's socio-political impact on the international level through the conquest of this medal, the involvement of the state and the sports institutions will be more categorical. The lots of athletes who will represent us at the Olympics will be politically indoctrinated periodically by conferences and written materials on Marxist-Leninist ideology. The training is done by persons competent in propaganda (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 364/1956), the purpose is to inoculate to the athletes a behaviour as faithfully as possible of the principles of socialism. At the cultural and genetic level, Romanian athletes were considered inferior to those from the capitalist countries. The remedy of these factors should be done in a way that is more deontological in order to obtain the expected effects (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 355/1956). The best stimulant for athletes is given by granting monthly allowances that provide differentiated nutritional treatment on sports disciplines (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 357/1956), thus providing the caloric intake necessary to support the physical effort of performance. Other measures are provided by the removals from production and school frequency exemptions (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 356/1956) in order to ensure continuous and efficient training, all these steps being reflected in the changes made to all the state institutions who were linked to the day-to-day life of Olympic athletes.

Reports and statistics are starting to be drawn up with the chances of our athletes ranking first place in some Olympic disciplines. Last but not least, the accumulation of points for the final ranking of the participating countries is also targeted. The conclusion is that: through a larger participation, the possibilities of our country are growing, referring to its best position in the overall ranking of the Nations of the Olympic Games (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 366/1956). These facts denote a quantification of the image of Romanian sport on the international level, which begins to gain greater importance at national level in order to improve the image of our country and to develop its relations in the world.

Every Olympics tries every year to be brighter and to remain memorable in the mind and soul of the participants and the spectators through the various actions that are taken. The 1956 edition launch a new competitive spirit long before the competitions starts. The conclusion is that: the foundations of outstanding Olympic sport results have been settling long before the competition began (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 327/1956).

The attention paid to the details for the gifts offered by our delegation at the Olympics (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 355/1956) to the foreign delegations with which they came into contact, as well as to the presentation clothes at the official opening of the Games, the Olympic Games in Melbourne begin to play a major role in the image of Romanian sport (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file No. 357/1956). The four-year Olympic training plan is being considered more and more. Accordingly, it is used to prepare training documents to reflect the sports performance at different stages of training (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 360/1956), while offering the possibility of prompt intervention in preparation, in situations where there are some inconsistencies with the established objectives. In addition to the determinants factors of performance (physical, technical and tactical), individual scores of athletes show the importance and effects of psychological factors (C.N.E.F.S. Fund, file no. 336/1956) in the sport effort. In equal sports value, the weight of mental training is essential in the effort and performance. Self-confidence, motivation, and persuasion of achieving a good result provide an advantage to the mentally trained athlete, against the least trained at this level.

There will be a first TV show on the national as well as worldwide. It is about the Olympic theme broadcast in Romania of the year 1960. Named "Olympic medals", the show presented a timeline of the Romanian results for the last two Olympic Games, Melbourne and Rome (Nobilescu, 1996). The event contributes significantly to increasing the possibilities of disseminating information from all corners of the world and from all fields of activity, including sports.

The establishment of the International Olympic Academy (I.O.A.) in 1961 meant a new opportunity to propagate the Olympic ideals in order to ensure the values they launched and



consecrated (Matei, 1985). At the I.O.A. sessions were highlighted by the Romanians paperworks: Alexandru Șiperco and Victor Banciulescu (Tudor and Ludu, 1985). The Romanian Olympic Academy will be founded after three decades.

Starting with the Olympic Games held in Tokyo (1964) mass media sources began to put more emphasis on the image of athletes and sport. The articles published in the press about the Olympics will be more suggestive through photos, highlighting the beauty of sport and sporting show (Sport, octombrie, 1964). The number of published Olympics articles is impressive. The publishing space allocated to the Olympic Games is held consistent throughout the Olympic Year, not just during the Olympics competitions (Sportul popular, 7 aprilie, 1964). The press is completed in information with radio and television, through which the Olympic edition can be watched and lived more intensely every day by the Romanian people (Sportul popular, 1 octombrie, 1964).

### CONCLUSIONS

In the interwar period, important changes in Romanian physical education and sport were made predominantly during the years of Olympic Games such as: initiatives and approaches in education, the setting of objectives and the achievement of outstanding results etc.

The appreciation of the national and international personalities involved in the Olympic Movement is achieved by awarding sports distinctions. In 1954 members representing Africa and Asia in I.O.C. were in number of two for the black continent and ten for the eastern one (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 10/1962). Five years later, out of the 97 countries admitted to I.O.C., only half (50) were represented with members. Hungary, Romania, Poland and Switzerland had one member on the list of affiliates (Meyer, 1960).

The Melbourne Olympics (1956) brings to the foreground the results of our athletes and the competence of the Romanian referees present at the Olympic Games. In refereeing, there are noticed the following sporting branches: canoeing, boxing, gymnastics and shooting. With the Olympic gold medals won in this edition, Romania is among the top ten countries in the world from the nearly 70 participating nations.

The list of the Romanian Olympic medals conquered in four post-war olympic editions in which we participated as a nation, amounts at 39, number that succeeded in removing Romania from the anonymity of the countries participating in the Olympics. In comparison with the two medals (bronze and silver) conquered in a 12-year period – between Paris (1924) and Berlin (1936) - their number increased considerably in the 12 postwar years (1952-1964) (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file no. 10/1962).

The 4-year Olympics training round remains for the Romanian sport a desideratum that is mentioned as an optimistic measure at each Olympiad but not yet applied with the necessary consistency (Propaganda and Agitation Fund, file.no. 54/1964). The Japanese edition introduces new sports into the Olympic sports disciplines, such as volleyball. This is a merit attributed to the R.O.C. which maintains its active involvement in the International Olympic Movement (Sports in Romania, 1990), that denotes the credibility given to our forum through the pertinent proposals made and achieved in the world sports.

In the decades of the 70- '80s the issue of explosive expansion of the Olympic phenomenon, through the newly accepted team sports (volleyball-1964, handball-1972), becomes a priority concern of I.O.C. in order to control Olympic gigantism phenomenon (Filaretos, 1998).

The longevity organization of the Olympic Games with their universality produce "something illustrative in the world. National energies, instead of opposing and fighting them selves, take place in parallel, and instead of destroying each other, they want to compete" (Bănciulescu, 1983, p. 100). Regardless of the time in which these Olympic competitions took place, indifferent to the political tensions they were subject and to their exposure to the phenomenon of gigantism that risks to interrupt their cursivity, or the interferences they have been

exposed over time, they have succeeded in convincing through their capacity to adapt to modern social trends; they have mobilized the world through the joy of supreme victory that they transmit at the time of its attainment; they have sensitized the society through the beauty of the sport show and the impressive efforts of the organizers showed from the edition to edition in the opening ceremonies; they have continued to reinvent themselves and take power when world conflicts have denigrated the existence of all mankind, but they have known to assumed the criticisms that may have spoiled them from the carefully constructed image. All this demonstrates that the Olympic ideal has found and finds resources to survive despite the obstacles encountered over time, the engine of this eager energy to perpetuate her self lies in the desire and the joy of competing, being among the best, but also in the unequalled feeling offered by the sports victory.

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