Athens 1896: the renewal of an ancient tradition

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[简要] 5 April 2007:One hundred and eleven years ago tomorrow, the Games of the first modern Olympiad opened in Athens. Since then, the Games opening ceremonies, inspired by the ceremonies of Ancient Greece, have developed, without losing their spectacular and unique aspects. The Opening Ceremony of the first modern Olympic Games is a good example.
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A day full of joy and happiness

Athens, 6 April 1896: the streets were full of people and music. The atmosphere was even more festive as this was not only the opening day of the first modern Olympic Games, but also the Greek national festival. Banners and flags flew above the Panathenian Stadium, and in the stands were the general public, magistrates, women wearing multicoloured dresses, men wearing hats and officers in shiny uniforms…and the crowds gathered on the surrounding hills.

At the beginning of the afternoon, the royal family made their entrance. They were welcomed by the officials, and then made their way into the middle of the arena, accompanied by the royal anthem and by the acclamation of the crowd. The athletes from the different nations stood in a double row on the track. After a speech by Royal Prince Konstantinos, King George I declared the Games of the first Olympiad open. The orchestras and the Athens Philharmonic choir then gathered in the centre of the Stadium to strike up the Olympic Ha

Shortly afterwards, to the sound of the bugle, the first competition started…Back to their origin

The cure of the Sanctuary of Zeus, the King of the Gods, Olympia had major political and religious importance at the beginning of the 10th Century B.C. The First Ancient Olympic Games took place there in 776 B.C. They were organized in honour of Zeus and lasted one day. All free Greek men could take part in them, and only young girls were allowed to attend the spectacle. Over time, the duration of the Games and the number of events (equestrian events, running, long jump, etc.) increased. After the first day of preparations and sacrifi

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horse chariot race. The competitors entered the stadium in a procession led by the judges in purple tunics, accompanied by a herald and ringer. The competitors passed in front of the judges' stand and the herald proclaimed the names of the owners, their fathers and their cities, and declared the Games officially open.

The Olympic Games opening ceremonies have developed a great deal, not only since Antiquity, but also since the revival of the Games in 1896. For example, the Antwerp Games in 1920 saw the appearance of the first modern Olympic oath and the first Olympic flag. In 1928 in Amsterdam, the Olympic flame was lit for the first time. In Munich in 1972, the first officials' oath was pronounced.

Grandeur and emotion

However, time and fashion have not taken anything away from the intensity of the Olympic Games opening ceremony, which provides unique, unforgettable memories at each edition. Grandeur and emotions were just as present in Olympia in 776 B.C. as in the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 or in 2004, when the Games returned to their birthplace

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