

Games in the *Accademia Arcadia* as a Legacy of the Olympic Idea between the Seventeenth and the Eighteenth Centuries

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In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a specific type of games took place in the Roman Academy of Arcadia. These games were a major cultural event in the academy and were a type of poetry competition which, in many aspects, was similar to the ancient Olympic Games. Therefore, they are a perfect example of the heritage of the Olympic spirit of the given era.

Panhellenic Games versus a Pseudo-Olympic Games in the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Ancient games were spectacular sports–religious events. Participants (from all city states) in ancient Greece were entitled to take part in the games. Even though every Greek polis held its own sports games, only four of them were allowed to be called Panhellenic, meaning ‘Greek national’. These were the games in Olympia, Isthmia, Delphi and Nemea (Ross *et al.* 2016, 44). The most important of these, the ancient Olympic Games, were rated as one of the greatest events of the ancient world. The games were dedicated to various Greek gods, most notably Zeus (Łanowski 2000, 8). The year 776 BC is often cited in the literature as the date of the first games, as these are the first games for which we know the name of a winner – Koroibos from Elis, who ran at the stadium. However, other hypotheses point out that these games

were not actually the first.¹ The ancient Olympic Games came to an end in 393 CE (Sirracos 1984, 131), when the Roman Emperor Theodosius suppressed them as a pagan cult. Ingomar Weiler,² however, referring to the works of Pausanias, Plutarch and Denis of Halicarnassus, cites as the cause of their demise, next to the rise of Christianity, the abandonment of religious rituals, natural disasters, or an economic crisis in the Peloponnesian peninsula of Elis. Yet other sources suggest that the ancient Olympic Games could have survived up until the middle of the fifth century, as described in detail by Sofie Remijnsen (2015).

Even though the Olympic Games were banned from Olympia at the end of the fourth or in the middle of the fifth century, they continued to be organized in Antioch (modern-day Antakya) until 521 thanks to a licence granted by Elis during the reign of Emperor Commodus (161–192) that allowed the city to organize 90 games (covering 360 years). Antioch paid Elis for the licence, but the price remains unknown (Dindorf 1831, 224, 248, 284–288). The Antioch Games are part of the so-called ‘is-Olympic Games’, games inspired by the Olympics, and can be considered the first form of heritage of the Olympic idea at a time when the Olympic Games themselves had ceased to be organized.

Therefore, the end of the ancient Olympic Games did not mean the end of the broadly understood Olympic idea, which for the following centuries survived in literature, art, music and the ‘pseudo-Olympic’ games. The resurrection of ancient Greek culture in the form of sports and fitness began in the sixteenth century. However, to help it play the same role as its ancient predecessor, numerous demands had to be met, including from the political, economic and social spheres. If the Olympic phenomenon were to become something more than just a trivial holiday or sports event, some rational and thoughtful decisions had to be made, and organizers had to show an unusual determination.

Some scholars (Young 1991, 101–115) have labelled a number of games reflecting the Olympic myth ‘pseudo-Olympics’. The first amateur Olympic-style games were the Cotswold Olimpick Games organized in Willesley, Chipping Campden, in Gloucestershire (Woodcock 1998, 63). Robert Dover, an English sportsman and Catholic lawyer as well as a keen royalist, was their initiator. His promotion of traditional English sports was a way of opposing puritanism, which was gaining popularity at the time. In 1612, encouraged by a growing interest in classic Greek and Roman teachings, he organized a cultural festival mixed with sports games open to participants from all social classes (Martin 2005, 103). Among the disciplines represented were horse racing, wrestling, quintain, football, running, jumping, bowling and dancing. Chandler holds that the first attempt to organize Cotswold Olimpick Games had in fact taken place in 1604 (Chandler 2012, 60). Due to the risk of unsocial behaviour, the events were suspended in 1852 (Girginov and Parry 2005, 37).

1. It is believed that the ancient games may have taken place in 884 or even 1333 BC. The commonly accepted year 776 BC is considered the first date of the Games because of the fact that they were documented.

2. Lecture and presentation by Professor Ingomar Weiler during the International Olympic Studies Seminar for postgraduate students, International Olympic Academy, Olympia, September 2016.

Several more attempts were made to resume them, but without the old momentum. It was not until 1951 that they were revitalized and, since 1966, they have been organized annually again (Lipoński 2012, 322).

In 1620, Symonds D'Ewes, a student at Cambridge University, who later became a well-known English antiquary and politician, wrote in his diary about Gog Magog Olympiks being held near Cambridge. Such games had been taking place since the second half of the sixteenth century, yet they may not have been called 'Olympic' then. The next remarks about students calling some sports competitions 'Olympic' can be found at Oxford University in 1681, when some local sports games taking place in a district of Oxford, Cowley, were called 'the national Olympics' (Galligan *et al.* 2000, 59). In 1679, in Hampton Court, the Royal court organized local Olympic games (Toohey and Veal 2007, 29). The next games of this kind were held in the nineteenth century.

However, in other parts of the world similar events were being organized: at the end of the eighteenth century, in 1788, the British politician Thomas Brand Hollis wrote to Joseph Willard of Harvard University asking that Olympic games be organized there (Mallon and Heijmans 2011, 40). A few years earlier, in 1776, sports games entitled the 'Drehberg Olympic Games' took place in Worlitz, Germany (Rühl 1997, 27), while, in 1790, Paris held 'suggested games' which were considered Olympics (Toohey and Veal 2007, 29).

During the nineteenth century, the number of games inspired by the ancient Olympic Games increased. These included 'Les Jeux Olympiques au Rondeau' (1832–1954) in the French city of Grenoble, the Ramlösa Olympic Games (1834 and 1836) in Sweden, the Montreal Olympic Games (1844) in Canada, the Wenlock Olympian Games (since 1850) in England, the New York Olympic Games (1853) in the United States, the Shropshire Olympian Games (1860–1862 and 1864) in England, the Evangelis Zappas Olympic Games in Greece (1859, 1870, 1875, 1888/1889), the National Olympic Games in England (1866–1868, 1874, 1877, 1883), the Liverpool Grand Olympic Festivals (1862–1967) in England, the Morpeth Olympic Games (1870–1958) in England, and the Lake Palić Olympic Games in Serbia (1880–1914) (Rühl 1997, 27). One also should not forget that the Olympic Games served as an inspiration for circus performances in nineteenth-century Europe (Danowicz 1984). Nor should it be forgotten that many other kinds of 'Olympic' games that took place in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have either been forgotten or rarely mentioned in the relevant literature. An example of this is the Olympic Games dedicated to poetry, which took place in the Academy of Arcadia in Rome.

The Academy of Arcadia

A characteristic feature of cultural life in Italy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the countless number of academies as 'networks of molecular

intellectual life' (Lee 1887, 8, 13–70). Their goal was to reform Italian literature, ridding it of the extravagance, phoniness and conceit dating from baroque traditions. At the time, most academies were operating locally. Such was the case of, for instance, the *Accademia degli Transformati* in Milan, *Accademia degli Gelidi* in Bologna, *Accademia degli Intronati* in Siena, and many more around Italy. The *Accademia dell'Arcadia* or Academy of Arcadia in Rome was the sole exception, as it operated nationally. Its rules and hegemony quickly spread, affecting cultural life in Italy for over a hundred years. It was composed of poets, artists, actors, scientists, clergy and other upper-class citizens. The Arcadians opposed Marinism (*marinismo* or *secentismo*) and leant towards neoclassicism – a simpler and more natural style in poetry and prose. The renewal of poetry was to take place by returning to its uncontaminated sources, which were to be found in Greek antiquity. The Arcadian reforms also found an echo in the opera *L'Olimpiade*, with a libretto by Pietro Metastasio and set to music by Antonio Caldara, first performed in Vienna in 1733 to celebrate the birthday of Empress Elisabeth Christine (Metastasio 1733; Segrave 2005, 3–4, 7).

The Academy of Arcadia was established on 5 October 1690 in the gardens of the Convent of Saint Peter in Montorio (Crescimbeni 1804, 5, 7; Graziosi 1991, 5) by a circle of intellectuals supported by the Swedish queen Christina (who died in 1689) who had allowed them to hold meetings in her Roman gardens since the 1650s (Stephan 1966, 365–371). The Arcadians took the name of their academy from the mythical Arcadia, a carefree country of everlasting happiness, bliss and peace, and inspired by the pastoral romance *Arcadia* (first publication 1504) by the Italian poet Jacopo Sannazaro, who introduced the pastoral theme, pastoral poetry and literature into European literature (Putnam 2009, 3; Skrunđa 1995, 481). Sannazaro's work formed the inspiration for many subsequent poets, including Jorge de Montemayor (*Los siete libros de la Diana* 1559), Philip Sidney (*The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* 1590), Lope de Vega (*La Arcadia* 1598) and Honoré d'Urfé (*Astrea* 1607–1627) (Skrunđa 1995, 376, 495, 554, 563). They popularized the Arcadian myth in renaissance Europe.

Most events in the Academy or Arcadia were organized in honour of some distinguished guest who, though not always keen on poetry, nevertheless generously funded the academy, expecting in return to receive some praise in the literary works of the Academy's members. This was the case with King John V of Portugal. In 1724 he bought the gardens on the hill of the Janiculum in Rome and ordered the construction of a park whose central point was a circular theatre. The whole area was named *Bosco Parrasio* after the southern region of the ancient Arcadia, and from 1726 on the most important events of the Academy were organized there. The members of the Academy repaid the generosity of the Portuguese ruler by dedicating the Olympic Games of 1726 to him (Lee 1887, 8, 13–70; Crescimbeni 1804, 5–6, 9, 42–49). Earlier, members of the academy organized meetings in many places in Rome, which were usually the gardens near villas of aristocrats and dukes (e.g. *Palazzo Riario* or *Orti Farnesiani*), as Susan M. Dixon describes in detail (Dixon 2006, 55–82). Places were chosen to correspond to the Arcadian or pastoral ideal.

Among the 14 founders of the Academy of Arcadia were Alessandro Guidi, Giambattista Felice Zappi, Silvio Stampiglia, Giovanni Vincenzo Gravina, and Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni. In their works they invoked pastoral themes and for meetings they changed their names to pastoral ones (e.g. the pastoral name of Crescimbeni was Alfesibeo Cario; Crescimbeni 1804, 49) and would wear black coats, white belts and wigs made of horse-bristle. A *Custodio*, elected every four years, presided over the gatherings. Two deputies helped him with his duties. The Academy of Arcadia had a democratic character, which was conducive to a free exchange of ideas. It was assumed that the world view or religion of the members of the academy did not matter. At first (1690–1710), the stress was on reforming literature in Italy – bringing back the simplicity and innocence of the Golden Age, improving the reputation of authorship, and getting rid of literary mistakes and ignorance. As the academy started to be more and more recognized, books describing the Arcadians' meetings, and works by the Academy's members started to find their way into print.

The first president of the Academy of Arcadia was Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni, who remained in this position until his death in 1728, but the basic theoretical rules of the Academy were formulated in 1696 by Gian Vincenzo Gravina. Crescimbeni looked primarily to Roman times for inspiration while Gravina emphasized the Greek era. This divergence led to a schism in 1711, when Gravina left the Academy and three years later, in 1714, set up a new academy – the *Accademia de' Quirini*. On Gravina's death in 1719, the two academies fused again under the old name. The Academia of Arcadia focused on the legacy of Italy's past, finding in it new sources of inspiration, not only for literature but also historiography, archaeology, the history of literature, biography, and philology, and in a variety of events cultivated civic pride in what, in effect, was a broken homeland (Moncallero 1953; Roszkowska 1965, 39–41). After Crescimbeni's death, the Arcadia circle fell apart. Only 15 years later, in 1743, did a new president, Michele Giuseppe Morei, reunite it. In 1925 the Academy of Arcadia changed its name to *Accademia Letteraria Italiana Arcadia* and this became the foundation of the national mission, social norms and the archive of the first Arcadias.³

The Games in Arcadia

From 1693 on, the Olympic Games constituted one of the most significant events organized by the Academy of Arcadia (Roszkowska 1994, 18). Contrary to the ancient Olympic Games that had focused on prestige and sports, the Academy's games consisted mainly of literary competitions. Their basic goal was to pay respect to the clergy or nobility. Apparently however, from 1705 or 1709, the games were also organized to honour the memory of the late members of the academy (Crescimbeni 1705, 1710). Replacing the physical games with lexical-literary games was a way of adjusting ancient rituals to modernity. The members of the Arcadia,

3. The history of 'Arcadia' was described, among others, by Maylander (1930).

who were mostly lay aristocrats and high church dignitaries, in accordance with their social position, sophisticated intellectual culture and dominant rationalism, adjusted the Arcadian Olympic Games to their own needs. However, the games in Arcadia did not only play a political-cultural function, but also a moral one. Crescimbeni thought that the games in their literary form were better than the athletic games of ancient times. He frequently highlighted the spiritual assets involved (*Biblioteca Angelica, Archivio dell'Arcadia, Atti arcadici*, 1, I (1690–1696), f. 186). The reason behind such an attitude was a papal–political crisis at the beginning of the eighteenth century, which was caused by the war for the Spanish succession (Rome at the time was under the Church's ruling, and was considered heir to ancient Greek culture, adopting some of its elements). As the academy was based in Rome, the clergy's influence was inevitable, as confirmed by the dedication of games to popes Clement XI in 1701 and Innocent XIII in 1721 (Crescimbeni 1701, 1721). By adopting the poetic form of the games, Crescimbeni wanted to show their moral superiority over the 'imperfect' ancient games and make them play an active role in restoring the political balance in Europe.

The Olympic Games also aimed to uphold the hegemony of the Academy of Arcadia in terms of literary works and its leading role in reforming Italian literature. As far as their actual organization was concerned the Arcadian games closely resembled the ancient games – they had their official Olympic calendar (according to which the *Custodio* was also elected once every four years),⁴ official opening ceremony, referees and sportsmen-poets as well as an interesting agenda of the games and prizes for the winners (Crescimbeni 1804, 42–49). All these elements made a direct link to classical culture, thanks to which – in the academy members' opinion – a revival of Italian culture at the end of the seventeenth century was supposed to take place. Apart from the above-mentioned reasons for the ancient games furnishing inspiration, the link to the ancient Greek agon lies in the geographic location of ancient Olympia – in Elis, a land located near the Greek Arcadia, to which the founders of the Roman academy also referred (Tatti 2012, 63–64, 70, 73).

The organizers of the Academy of Arcadia Olympic Games continued the numeration of the ancient games. Crescimbeni meticulously calculated how many years had passed since the first games in 776 BC until 1692; therefore, the first literary games in Arcadia fell on the first year of the four-year cycle of the 618th games (1693) and were to take place periodically at the same interval. The games were organized according to the Ancient Greek calendar – they begun on the tenth day of the first month, which was called *Hekatombaion*. Handing out prizes took place five days later, therefore the whole event lasted as long as did the ancient games in Olympia at their peak. A Greek year began on the midsummer solstice, so the Arcadian games started at the beginning of July (Morei 1761, 214–227; Crescimbeni 1804, 42–49).

The leading person at the beginning of the Olympic Games in Arcadia was Carlo Alessandro Guidi, one of its main founders and often called a reformer of Italian

4. A detailed description of the rights and duties of the academy's authorities and the way they were elected was presented by Crescimbeni (1712).

poetry. Earlier, Italian poetry had been under the influence of Giovanni Filoteo Achillini and Giambattista Martini. It was Guidi who, after coming to Rome in 1685, promoted reciting poems in an open space (Biliński 1991, 135–168). His works, at the local level, are compared to those of Pindar, the author of paeans to the winners of the Ancient, Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean Olympic games. However, it was Rome, the first direct heir to ancient Greek culture, that provided myths and legends about heroes. The Roman heroes were portrayed as better than the Greek ones, more spiritual, moral and ethical. As a Greek hero, Heracles for instance, was famous for his strength, valour, manhood and war-related skills. His Roman equivalent Hercules was associated not only with physical strength, but also with spiritual virtues and with the arts. Some people even considered him a Christian hero (Quondam 2003, 115–162).

Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni was responsible for making the games both ideological as well as political. He made the games into the main cultural event of the academy. Being the keeper, he was documenting the events, issuing the Olympic poetry as well as describing the games. A proof of his importance for the functioning of the Academy of Arcadia is the fact that, after his death in 1728, the games ceased and were resumed only in 1754 and 1784 (1754; 1784). On the initiative of Crescimbeni, nine editions of the games were held (1693, 1697, 1701, 1705, 1709, 1713, 1717, 1721 and 1726) (1726, 15).

The games in Arcadia stressed the manifestation of active virtues, fitting the perfection supposedly resulting from the mixture of ancient traditions and modern factors, including church-related ones. They assumed their proper shape in 1697 and continued unchanged for the following few decades. The first comprehensive issue of all scripts of the games was published in 1701. Thereafter, two following editions, including all recited compositions, were published in 1705 and 1710. Because of the crisis of the games in 1713 and 1717 there are no full published versions of them (Tatti 2012, 63–64, 70, 73). Afterwards, poetic materials were issued a few more times – in 1726, 1754 (1726; 1754) and 1784, when the games were organized in memory of Pietro Metastasio (1784). These were probably the last games in their original form although some researchers claim that they again took place in 1824.⁵

The opening ceremony constituted a vital part of the Arcadian event. The 1705 edition of texts describes it as an exceptionally important event which took place in the garden of the *Giustiniani* palace, at *Piazza del Popolo*, where round theatre with *boscherecci* seats would fit as many as 500 people. Cardinals had their exclusive lounges there (Crescimbeni 1705, 7–8). Nine pyramids, serving as tombstones for the most noble deceased, were placed around the seats. The games took place in the presence of Cardinals Rubini, Pignatelli, Pamphili and Ottoboni, as well as a large group of prelates and other nobles (Crescimbeni 1804, 5–6, 9, 42–49; Tatti 2012, 63–64, 70, 73). Acting out was necessary to give the ritual a formal shape, and the games ceremony became a vital ritual, highlighting the public meaning of Arcadia.

5. This is the date given by Bronisław Biliński.

The Academy also recalled the tradition of the ancient Olympic Games. Published in 1708, *L'Arcadia* by Crescimbeni describes the history of the Academy in the form of a romantic story mixed with fantasy elements. In the sixth book, the Nymphs wandering around the Peloponnese reach Elis, where Olympia was located, and organize games following the ancient example. The members of the Academy of Arcadia (under their fictional names) take part in them. The whole description proves that the tradition of the ancient Olympic Games was still alive among the Italian intelligentsia at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Crescimbeni's description of these sports games was based on contemporary knowledge about the ancient games and actual eighteenth-century games. Using his imagination and with great attention to detail, Crescimbeni's agenda for his imaginary games included short-distance running, horse racing, chariot racing (portrayed as a spectacular, yet incredibly risky discipline affected by numerous accidents), high jump (up to a bar attached at the height of one and a half men), discus throwing, a kind of boxing – *cesto*, which was about hitting the opponent's left arm – and wrestling. As the latter lasted until the late hours it was decided to end the games by awarding all four best wrestlers. The final event was the awards ceremony, when the winners were presented with olive wreaths as well as treated to a formal dinner at which were served, among other delicacies, chocolate, fruits, pasta and beverages (Crescimbeni 1708, 267–271, 293–319; Biliński 1990, 3–10).

After the sports games, the literary games took place, based on the ancient pentathlon (*Quinquertium*). It is no coincidence that the pentathlon was chosen, as in ancient times this was the most versatile competition, considered to be the crown of Greek agonistics, as emphasized by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* where he deems the pentathletes the most beautiful, versatile and excellent athletes (Freese 1926, 55). The Olympians had to combine strength with speed, agility and endurance to compete for the highest goals. The Pentathlon itself in ancient times did not refer only to Olympic competition; the term was also used to pay tribute to someone who was comprehensively educated, as Thrasyllus did when he called Democritus *Pentathlos* because he combined humanistic, physical and mathematical knowledge (Durant 2014, 353).

The Pentathlon as practised in the Academy of Arcadia was made up of five disciplines: oracle (*Oraculum*); poetic agon (*Contesa*); intellectual show (*Gioucho d'ingegno*); poetic metamorphosis (*Transformazioni*); and poetic tinsel made from various flowers (*Ghirlande*) (Biliński 1990, 3–10). Despite the fact that their description in Crescimbeni's work is wrapped in a coat of fantasy, it makes a precious source of knowledge about certain poetic disciplines.

For the poetic agons, three referees were elected, and the games were officially opened by the keeper of the Academy on the 11th day of the first month of *Hekatombaion*, according to the calendar of ancient Greeks. After every discipline, the referees praised every participant for his eloquence and his participation in the games, before proceeding to announce the winners. Instead of the olive wreath of ancient Olympia, a laurel wreath with myrtle (a symbol of love, which in this case meant that the games had a friendly and educational character) was handed out. This was related to the poetic nature of the Games, which were held under the patronage

of Apollo, and as a direct reference to the Pythian Games, considered by some researchers to be the second most important after Olympia's Pan-Hellenic Games, and in which poetic competitions were extremely important. The award ceremony finished with an ode to the winners, during which they were referred to as heirs to the ancient Greeks (Crescimbeni 1708, 267–271, 293–319).

The first discipline of the Arcadian pentathlon – oracle – was created by Domenico Trosi⁶ (Lee 1887, 17–18). One person played the role of an authority answering a question with one word or a short sentence. Next, this word/sentence was explained by two interpreters in a way to match the question asked. With time, the game gained popularity outside the Arcadian Olympics, with upper-class ladies and gentlemen and even members of the clergy taking part in it. Scholars having knowledge in various fields were usually the interpreters. They were interpreting the given word philosophy-wise, using rhymes and other literary techniques. Then, the referees announced which interpreter performed better and faster with the authority's words in terms of both literacy and philosophy. Thus, the metaphorical comparison of oracles with chariot racing and running (1726, 19).

Another discipline of the literary pentathlon was poetic *agon*. The participants recited works about rural life (shepherds, farmers, hunters, fishermen) portrayed in an idealized way, describing the charm of a calm, peaceful and blissful life in line with nature. However, they also referred to contemporary social–moral issues. This literary genre, the eclogue,⁷ was introduced into Greek literature by Theocritus. In Roman eclogues, poetry, foremost by Virgil, idealized and blissful existence took the upper hand. Metaphorically, it was related to the javelin throw, pointing at the unison of the minds of all Academy members and harmony in the poetic republic (1726, 19).

The third discipline, *Giuoco d'ingegno* (intellectual show, genius) mainly addressed the participants' creativity. The intellectual display was supposed to be the manifestation of the value of noble talents hidden inside the participant. Thus, it was compared with the discus throw, where the aim was to get the best (the longest) result thanks to the harmonious body movement of the athlete (1726, 19).

The fourth discipline – poetic metamorphosis – was all about showing and remembering the perfection of the soul in comparison with the primeval aspects and the primitive instincts of human nature. In Greek mythology Lycaon, the king of Arcadia, went through a divine transformation after being changed into a wolf for eight years because of his meddling with cannibalism. Eventually, he was changed in a noble and gentle manner and his negative feelings and emotions were rejected. Sports-wise, this discipline was compared to wrestling (1726, 19–20).

The final discipline of the pentathlon, *tinsel*, was about cherishing virtues which provide humans with a wise and happy life. Sensibility and life wisdom were featured during the most important literary day of the pentathlon. Because of this discipline's reaching to attain these virtues it was compared to the long jump (1726, 20).

6. Before this game was included in the Olympics it was called *Giuoco del Sibillione* and was very popular among the upper classes.

7. Other names are also used: idyll, bouquet, pastoral.

Conclusion

The Olympic Games in the Roman Academy of Arcadia can without doubt be classified as so-called ‘pseudo-Olympic’ games. They were heavily inspired by the ancient Olympic Games mainly in terms of their organization. However, their organizers repeatedly made it clear that the poetic format was superior to the sports competition. Even in times of crisis (the beginning of the eighteenth century), the games in Arcadia played a vital role in providing neutrality and ensuring a space for dialogue and strengthening relations between, but not limited to, city institutions. The games made a central point of Italian culture. They were the body capable of absorbing and toning down criticism, cementing the strategic role of culture as pleasure and entertainment. The games generated a contemporary base for facing key issues such as the revival of knowledge and the arts, Christian hegemony or the classical legacy.

There is no doubt that, through their poetry games, the members of the Arcadia brought back to life the memory of the Olympic Games in European culture, expressing this in the name, organization and other elements of this most important event at the Academy. On the other hand, it should be remembered that, for the ancient Greeks the Games were an important sacred, cultural and prestigious sporting event, and not, as for the Arcadians, a sophisticated intellectual event. Still, the Arcadian games can be treated as another example, next to for instance the Cotswold Olympick Games or the Gog Magog Olympik Games, of the legacy of the Olympic idea before the modern revival of the Olympic Games in 1896.

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