

The Rio 2016 Olympic Games. A glance from the lens of academics and spectators

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Abstract

The modern Olympic Games, recovered by Coubertin, have been constituted in the last century as the most important mega-sport event, due to its social, political and economic issues. Through words of Olivera, these are considered as cultural heritage of the humanity. The diverse postures of sports scholars were focused in Rio Olympics 2016, and analyzed them from different perspectives including: the political implications in Brazil; participation of the media in its international dissemination; the immutable presence of the Olympic spirit, very much in spite of the well-known "lords of the rings"; the negative influence of professional sports over amateur sports, including dilemmatic discussions about sports improvement -which aims to bring the performance of athletes- "...to infinity and beyond...". This article is based on an academic position, under the spectator perspective. at Rio 2016 Olympics.

Keywords: Rio 2016 Olympic Games; Olympic spirit; economic and social issues; Legacy; sport spectacle.

Introduction

The ancient Olympic Games were held in honor to Zeus, maintaining a ritual character, which enshrined the triumphant sportsmen as heroes, becoming an example to follow by the youth, Aguirre (2010). For its part, the modern Olympic Games, revived by Coubertin, have been constituted, over the last century, in the most important mega sporting event worldwide, due to its social, political and economic implications. In the words of Olivera (2012), the Olympic Games are considered cultural heritage of humanity. Currently, it is challenging to find an academic discipline or field of knowledge that does not consider modern sport as a legitimate phenomenon to study. In this respect, the diverse views of sports scholars, focused on the Rio 2016 games, are analyzed from diverse perspectives which include: the political implications of its implementation in a country such as Brazil; the participation of the media on an international dissemination and in its social impact; the immutable presence of the Olympic spirit, in spite of the known '*lords of the rings*'; the contamination of amateur sport by professional sport, through the practices of its fans; and without neglecting, dilemmatic discussions about sports improvement - which aims to bring the performance of athletes- '*...to infinity and beyond...*'.

The carried out of Olympic Games in different cities of the world, from its globalizing effect (Llopis & García, 2016), is based on the promise that these mega-events have a positive impact on the city's economy and the host country; through an improvement in urban infrastructure, in a media visibility, which can attract large masses of tourists, and especially with the imagery that its '*Country Brand*' will be projected internationally, (Paz and Suzarte, 2013). However, the critical judgments regarding this positive vision can be exemplified in the phrase quoted by Sanchis (2015) published in the London newspaper, 'The Economist', prior to the election of the 2012 games venue "...Do a favor for London: award the Olympics to Paris..." (p. 3).

The purpose of this article is to present a reflection about the Rio 2016 games, based on the position of academics and sports scholars, but permeated by the perception of a follower of Olympism, which recognizes its deep philosophy and its educational potential, and finally the reflection is nuanced with the emotional vision of any spectator who had the chance to be moved in the Olympic stadium with the collective euphoria that transmits a hundred meters dash.

Economic impact of the Olympic Games in Brazil

There are several economic analysts who consider Brazil's decision to host two mega sporting events was unfortunate: The World Cup 2014 and the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, due to its short period of time. Given this fact, it is considered that even since 2009, when the mega-events were announced, an inflationary wave began in Brazil which, for 2016, is estimated at 8.6% per year and can be maintain until 2020 (Muñoz, 2016).

This increase in inflation contrasts with the belief mentioned, of considering that the Olympic Games generate important economic growth processes for the host countries of the games. In this regard, Muñoz (2016), made the following analysis:

The growing investment and tourism projects associated to the Olympics will add only 0.05 percentage points in Brazil's real GDP growth, which is expected to decline by 3.5 percent in 2016. According to official figures, the total investment in Olympic infrastructure between 2009 and 2015 could reach 38.5 billion Brazilian reais (12,000 million dollars), a small amount compared to the country's economy. Tourism is expected to generate 1.3 billion Brazilian reais (400 million dollars) and increase real growth by only 0.02 percentage points - less than half the impact, which was originally estimated (p.2).

In the same sense and taking advantage of the Olympic language, the economists Ordoñez and Delsert (2016), analyzing economic benefits such as; the increase in temporary jobs versus the growth in public debt, and the increase inflation. They affirm the Olympics Games constituted an invalid economic

way out for Brazil and granted it in a metaphorical way, making reference to a possible medal standings, the following ranking to the process:

- a. Bronze medal: Growth and employment. As the FIFA World Cup, the Olympics would not provide a significant boost to the Brazilian economy.
- b. Silver medal: Public debt and business insolvencies. The Olympics would add a value of +0.4 pp to GDP for the level of Brazilian public debt.
- c. Gold medal: Inflation. Inflationary pressures would be visible and long-lasting (p.1)

On the contrary, the official speeches, expressed from the Olympic Public Authority APO, state that Brazil spent 10.600 million dollars on the organization of the event, and obtained a boost of its economy for 11,000 million dollars, which was reflected between 2009 and 2016. Based on the figures, it was estimated for the decade 2017 - 2027, a growth of more than 13,500 million dollars. In the same sense, the Foundation of the Brazilian Institute of Administration affirms that between 2017 and 2027 the increase of 131,000 jobs is expected, as a result of the Olympic Games of Rio 2016 (Pérez, 2016).

Considering this dichotomy amongst official and unofficial discourses, it will only be possible to corroborate the real economic effects of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, when at least, a decade elapsed, and a real balance could be made between public investment and economic impact, for the City, the State and the Country, González (2016). In this sense Wagar (2009) analyzing in a projective way the Rio games, determined that:

This Mega-Event (the Olympic Games) has the potential to either hinder economic growth or propel a city/nation/region towards further social progression and economic development. The host nation accepts the responsibilities of the historic event with full knowledge of the long term costs they may incur. However, the magnitude of possible long-term benefits (especially for a third world country like Brazil) makes the investment more attractive. Another measure of benefits is the visibility the nation has and perception to the world public. Examining the past two decades of Olympic competitions, the outcomes vary greatly (p.4).

In the same sense, Domínguez, Darcy & Alen, (2014) reiterate the concern for the absence of academic and scientific studies which rigorously analyze the legacy and the real economic effects of the games, and the economic impact for the host country in subsequent decades to its execution.

The legacy of the Olympic Games for Rio de Janeiro City

Prior to the organization of the Games, several social imaginaries were built, regarding the legacy the Olympic Games for Brazil would leave, for the city of Rio de Janeiro (Sousa, Reis, Gurgel, & Duarte, 2013). The organizers promoted the legacy of these Olympics one of the ideas, in accordance with the environmental policy promoted as one of the banners of this mega-sport event, would be the cleaning of the giant body water of the Guanabara Bay. However, once the Games finished, this legacy was not accomplished.

An additional legacy promoted for the City was the construction of a new metro line required to connect the center of Rio with the area of *Barra da Tijuca*, where the Olympic Park was built. Lastly, despite countless difficulties, over costs and delays, the metro line was inaugurated days before the games began. For experts' economic analysts, although this project constitutes a tool for City's improvement and development, it also represents a considerable weight for the public debt assumed by Rio de Janeiro to respond for the infrastructure required by the IOC (El Universo, 2016).

In the same way, the construction of *Porto Maravilla*, which aim was to recover Rio de Janeiro's Port Area, and it constituted a very important area for exhibitions and commercial trade zone for great sponsors of the Games, offering also, to thousands of participating tourists a space for cultural and social integration. However, this construction likewise generated in the inhabitants of the area, deep questions regarding the real benefits that they considered overvalued, with respect to the improvement of the urban space and the direct benefits for the city (Castro, 2011).

The legacy of evictions due to the construction of Olympic infrastructure in Rio.

Under the name of "*the losers of the Olympic Games*", the Brazilian press called the news about the evictions of the families that lived in the slums located in the vicinity of Bara Di Tijuca, the area where the Olympic Park was built (Lucia, 2016).

According to Wagner & Mascarenhas (2016), the construction of the new facilities for the Games left almost 13,000 people homeless, obeying to a policy of redevelopment supported by the legislation that Brazilian Government implemented within Olympic dossier framework to guarantee the Games' execution. This phenomenon, known as *gentrification*, is defined by Castro, (2011) as "the expulsion of popular classes and their replacement by new segments of greater purchasing power" (p.6).

To illustrate this situation Pérez (2016) quotes Raquel Rolnik, representative of the United Nations Organization in Brazil who points out:

The houses were painted (the authorities) with a number as the fascists did in the Second World War (to take possession of them and topple them). Savio Reader, in *Games and Cities*, reflects: "The withdrawal of families is the cruelest phase of Olympic urbanism" (p.1)

As for the Brazilian Government projected that the construction of 24,000 new homes of upper middle class, would have a positive impact on the generation of employment. Postures widely criticized in Rio, especially by Pérez (2016) who portrays:

In 2009, the year in which Brazil won the Games' headquarters, the Rio de Janeiro prefecture passed a law that prohibits derelict people being surrounded by two kilometers of the area of the Olympic Village, the Olympic Park and the facilities of the International Olympic Committee (p.1).

In the words of Oliveira, and Andrade (2017), "there is no doubt that the Olympic legacy, in general terms, points to the real estate, financial and tourism sectors" (page 59), which does not have a visible relationship with social development, economic or environmental that benefits the population in general.

Local sportsmen displaced by the construction of sports scenarios for the Rio 2016 Games.

Riquelme (2016), On the website, *Mutirao Livre*, has published the statements of PE professionals, responsible for the training of children and youth athletes who were displaced from the athletic stadium *Celio de Barros*, which was used as a deposit materials in the remodeling of the *Maracana stadium*. Before this situation a professor affirmed that:

I am not against the Olympics, I am in favor of Olympism, of Olympic history. It is the difficulties of an athlete to reach the Olympic dream, it is 10 years of training. I am in favor of a clean, planned Olympics, which leaves a good legacy for the city. I am not in favor of Olympics that leaves people without homes, athletes without respect who had to leave the city and train in other places, in other countries (Paragraph 8).

The political environment in Rio de Janeiro during the Olympics.

Sports mega-events will always be a space that makes visible the political situation of the host country, and Brazil, in particular, has already had a sufficiently political environment heated by internal and sensitive factors such as the economic situation, the impeachment against President Dilma Rouseff, the interim of President Michel Temer, and the cost of the Games' logistics. Under this condition, followers and opponents of the government, took advantage of any opportunity to disclose before the

spectators of the Games Olympic, and specifically before the international press to denounce the local political situation.

Of course, not everyone is happy with the celebration of this mega event. The week before the Games' opening had been marked by demonstrations against of some protesters define as "*the games of exclusion*". The same day, August 5th, there was a massive protest in Copacabana under the slogan "*Fora Temer*"¹, taking advantage of the last tour of the Olympic torch before reaching the Maracana. The interim president, who replaces Dilma Rousseff while waiting for the impeachment to take place finally from power at the end of August, has been booed during the opening ceremony.

The anti-temer claims have reached their most hilarious moment when Tarcisio Gomes, a musician known as *Cisão* and very popular among carnivalesque associations, has taken advantage of his moment of glory as an Olympic torch bearer to take off his pants and show the world his tropical ass wearing a leopard thong. In her black buttocks the painted "*Fora Temer*" stood out in white. (Saccone, 2016).

In virtue of this, the organizers of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games attended to the consolidation of a nationalist sense, to alleviate the political crises due to the dismissal of the current president, Dilma Russief. In this respect Aguirre (2010), affirmed that: "The Olympic Games has a ritual structure, a sense of celebration and they are even a civil religion, the synergy of these three components being a powerful driving force and nationalization of the masses "(p.1069).

Considering the Olympic Games as a civil religion, is sustained from Aguirre (2010), in considering the "doctrine of Olympism", as a valid mechanism for international organizations such as the IOC, which facilitates the promotion of values about peace, pedagogy of youth, and cultural diversity, and that has the ability to generate a strong nationalist sense in its followers.

This sense of nationalism was reflected in the massive attendance of Brazilians to accompany and encourage their fellow athletes in all sport events, regardless whether they had a chance or not to fight for any of the medals. However, for some Dilma Russief's followers, street events, such as triathlon or marathon, were the perfect scenario to challenge the members of '*A Torcida Brasileira*', who were entitled as members of '*Culture do Abacaxi*'. This Brazilian cliché refers to banal people who care more about football scores and results, especially, from the Brazilian national team, and also, the media representation of famous models than the political situation in the country.

In terms of repercussions on the international policy for the host country, from the completion of the Olympic Games, in Beijing 2008, the impact of the games on China's political relations with the rest of the world was already analyzed. In this regard, De Frutos (2014) affirms that:

¹ *Fora Temer* is a slogan for a protest that says "Brazil does not have president"

For years Chinese international relations were characterized by their limited contact with the world. However, the success obtained in the celebrations of the 2008 Games left a legacy of global power and the good image of the economy, and in the same way, they constituted a political convention of interesting dimensions with the union of both rivals and strategic allies of China, including the United States (page 48).

The multibillion-dollar businesses of the IOC, big brands and their economic benefits

The broadcasting rights payment to cover the Games, for Radio, Television and the Internet, is one of the most profitable businesses of the IOC. According to the CEO of Olympic Broadcasting Service OBS: "The majority of federations and national Olympic committees are supported by these revenues"(Lusport, 2016. p.3). Since 1971, the IOC has included in the Olympic Letter, a regulation that determines the exclusive rights of the IOC to negotiate and contract with TV operators (Fernández, 2009).

According to experts in London 2012, transmission rights constituted a high percentage of the ten (10) billion dollars, amount, which the international sport organization, won in those Olympics. The OBS, agency responsible for the broadcasting of games, was established in 2001, and began operating at the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008.

The OBS, in turn, sells broadcasting rights to television or radio stations throughout the world. It is estimated that the audition for Rio 2016 games was 5,000 million people in 220 countries. In this sense, the possibility that citizens of any country will have access to the contents related to the Olympic Games depends on which public or cable subscription channels bought the transmission rights. For example, in countries such as Colombia, broadcasting rights for the Olympic Games were acquired by the *Caracol* Network and broadcast on open TV.

One day after the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games of Rio 2016, the OBS launched the Olympic channel, available online, with the slogan: "Where games never end, because 17 days are not enough". This channel offers digital content, focused on attracting children and young people, and has the support of the official sponsors of the IOC.

Concluding Rio 2016, the OBS was involved in a legal scandal, with the Regional Labor Court of Rio de Janeiro due to the irregular management carried out by the hiring company where more than 2,000 workers were employed during the Olympics.

The decision of the Regional Labor Court of Rio de Janeiro has targeted the Olympic Broadcast Services OBS (...). The measure seeks to guarantee the resources in order to compensate about 2,000 people hired by the OBS hired as if they were companies to avoid the payment of the labor benefits, says the Public Ministry of Rio de Janeiro, which requested the embargo. The blocked goods included

transmission trucks, equipment for casting and editing images and sounds, as well as funds deposited in bank accounts (Marca, 2016. p.2).

Although as already it is mentioned, a great part of the resources from the IOC come from the sale of television rights through the OBS, but this is not the only source of funding. Currently, the IOC has eleven international sponsors that allow them to subsist comfortably, as for example, Coca-Cola, Atos, Bridgestone, Dow, General Electric, McDonald's, Omega, Panasonic, P & G, Samsung and Visa. At the Rio 2016 version, thanks to exclusive policies, in the host city, and in sports scenarios, were directly benefited by positioning their brand Manrique (2016). For Rio 2016, the IOC was also supported by local sponsors such as: Bradesco, Correios, Embratel, and the integration of new multinational sponsors such as Claro and Nissan.

Already in London, Olivera (2012) questioned the exacerbated mercantilism of the Olympic sponsors, who took advantage even to promote harmful food products, or commodified elements that threaten the environment, and in some cases are produced in violation of international labor contracting standards.

However, regarding the economic contribution made by the sponsors, there is also an important difference between official discourses and the opinion of non-governmental organizations. In this way, while Rio de Janeiro's major states that 57% of the costs of organizing Rio 2016 were assumed by the sponsors, the Popular Committee for the World Cup and the Olympics points out that the private sector pays less than 38% (kalos, 2016).

Therefore, economic analysts say that although the contributions of the sponsors to the organization are not so representative, the revenue produced by the visibility of their brand, during the Olympic Games, they do bring substantial monetary profit which according to Pérez (2016):

Four years ago, for the London Olympic Games, P & G carried out a specific campaign that benefited in the image, it gave away more than 60,000 tickets and in the process it obtained 20 million dollars in revenue in the United Kingdom attributed to these jousts. General Electric, as one of the strongest brands for the Olympics, took advantage over the other brands, and accompanied the IOC to Beijing to acquire substantial contracts in China valued for 750 million dollars (paragraph, 22).

The Olympic spirit, beyond sport spectacle.

The emergence of the modern Olympic Games was marked by an ideal conception of sport, based mainly on attributing to itself. Some particular characteristics that allow its systematic practice to contribute to the formation of desirable values such as self-control, discipline, tenacity and perseverance. According to Barbero (1993) the precepts of Thomas Arnold (1795-1842) that attributed to sport the

ability to develop in young people qualities of initiative, solidarity, competitiveness and fair play, were fundamental for the formulation of the principles and purposes that Coubertin would postulate at the end of the 1800s. In this same perspective, Olivera (2012) considers games and Olympic philosophy as a universal pedagogy with great power of influence in the world population.

For Gavala (2015), the Olympic motto "*citius, altius, fortius*" assumed in 1894, it allowed him to understand how this Olympic spirit was conceived at that time. It was based on a moral improvement of the athletes, which goes beyond the simple improvement of the records. This Olympic spirit from the perspective of Coubertin, highlighted the meeting of cultures, races and religions, around a sport that helped the human being to improve in all dimensions. Concerning this, Betancor & Almeida (2001) affirm that:

Olympism will be presented as a new philosophy of life, with a code of conduct that aims to recover certain aspects of the ancient Greek world, especially its conception of freedom. The postulates of this new doctrine, aimed at enhancing the dignity human beings in an atmosphere of social peace will have as a goal the achievement of a more balanced society that makes the education of young people rest in sports, all within an environment of solidarity, friendship and fair play (p.82).

In the last century, the dissemination of these Olympic values and their philosophy have been directly linked to the development of the media and its connection with the modern Olympic Games. At the beginning of the 1900s, the monitoring of the radio and the written press, television broadcasts since the 60s, which evolved to the transmission of digital content on the internet since the 90s, have conditioned the way the world lives these games. For Delgado (2016) "the conversion of the media into 'mass media' allowed the universalization of the Olympic Games" (p.68).

At present, it is not so easy to identify in a mega-sport event as Rio 2016, the almost ritual and magical presence of this Olympic spirit, which supports the transit of the Olympic torch as a symbol that evokes the myth of Prometheus, or the atmosphere of solidarity and brotherhood that should involve the athletes, beyond the nationalist sentiment promulgated and exacerbated in the latest versions of the Olympic Games. Despite difficulties, during the Rio 2016 Games, it is possible to think that a high percentage of the spectators who come from all over the world, are mainly motivated by the search of the Olympic spirit.

During the competitions of Rio 2016, there were several situations that reflect in a textual manner, the principles of Olympic philosophy, in which fair play is understood as an ethical behavior, and it goes beyond the norm (Sekot, 2011), and solidarity exceeded the competitive claims of athletes. Perhaps, the event that had the greatest circulation through all the media was what it happened in athletics, during the women's 5,000-meter event, when athletes Abbey D'Agostino and Nikki Hamblin were involved in a fall. D'Agostino, managed to get up first, but before continuing the competition she took care to encourage

the Hamblin Athlete, to finish the race, "*You have to finish, and we are in the Olympic Games!*". At the end of the competition and before the euphoric ovation of the spectators of the Olympic stadium that animated them, the Hamblin Athlete declared to the press: "D'Agostino, that girl is the Olympic spirit" (El Universo, 2016).

Throughout the Olympic Games, the contagious of the Olympic Spirit was also evident worldwide, where people from all social levels, with different occupations that in most cases have no relationship with the field of sport, are agglutinated in front of the televisions during the three weeks throughout the games' transmission, by giving expert opinions, on the arbitration decisions, or on the technical performance of the athletes, in sports disciplines, which sometimes, are not even practiced in their country. In this regard, it is possible to affirm that the Olympic Games have the capacity to seduce contemporary society with an agonist spirit, in a way that any politician or world leader would like to match.

In Rio 2016, despite the intense criticism and demonstrations against the organization of the Olympic Games, the Cariocas were seduced. They became involved in the games, especially demonstrating a nationalist sentiment, which was reinforced by the transmission of all the events in which Brazilian athletes competed, and that reflected the motto defined for the Carioca version of the Olympic Games as *Live Your Passion*, making a clear allusion to the festive manner Brazilians enjoy life (Gavala, 2015). This fact also seduced the younger ones, as recorded in the press:

..."I'm very excited. It's the first and the last time I'm going to see an event of this cover in my city. It's wonderful"... -says a teenager from the north of the city- ... "They could have thought more about the population and spent this money on health and education. But I want everything to go well"... -adds a man of about 45 years old- ... "It's amazing to have people from all over the world here"... ... "We Cariocas are very hospitable and we would like to know other cultures"... (Saccone, 2016. p2)

The contamination produced by the hooligans "*barristas*" of professional sports, such as soccer in the Olympic stadiums.

Thousands of spectators, who attended the Olympic Games and moved by the Olympic spirit, were invaded by groups of professional sports fans, who contaminated sports venues with their practices.

The Olympic followers are moved by the interest of observing the highest aesthetic sense in the execution of sports such as gymnastics, or to hold the breath for the nine (9) seconds that lasts the test in which the fastest men on earth runs, or they want to contemplate with astonishment how women and men demonstrate the greatest plasticity and technical perfection in a pole vault. However, in Rio 2016, in the stadiums, courts, arenas and swimming pools, the Olympic spectators were invaded by a horde of

fans that, in the best football style, sang the songs of their football teams, disturbing spectators with their attitude, athletes, judges and logistics personnel. To illustrate this situation: During a women's Water Polo match between Russia and Hungary, spectators were between amazement and disgust of the event, until Civil Guard had to evict, from the stadium, a group of fans from Argentina and Brazil who disturbed the rest of attendees, with songs they sang for or against their local soccer team.

It turns noteworthy that these groups of football fanatics have access to other sports venues, and regardless of whether the game is played such as Water Polo, Basketball, Gymnastics, Boxing, Tennis or any other sport, spectators of this scenarios have a cultural distance to a common football fans performance in a football stadium, fans invade the stage with their flags, pretending to become the show to watch. In fact, there were several situations recorded by the press in which the athletes themselves felt assaulted by the unethical practices of the spectators, as for instances who booed or offended the athletes during the competitions.

The complaints of athletes were multiplied. The toughest was the Olympic runner-up and world record-holder of pole vault, the French, Renaud Lavillenie, Gold medal in London 2012, was "the enemy number 1" of the local hope Thiago Braz. While the participants often invite the audience to accompany their attempts to cheer up with applause, they are not used to be booed and receive insults. Lavillenie suffered and exploded: *"It's fucking annoying having a shitty audience here at the Olympics"*. Far from tempering the mood, he doubled the bet: *"It's a football environment that we see too often, it's the first time this has happened in athletics, the last time we saw it was when Jesse Owens ran in 1936 in Berlin"* sentenced. "It was not by chance the mention of Owens and the Hitler's Games: he sought to give the right point just of how he felt (Cerviño, 2016. p.3).

However, this behavior was not generalized. On the contrary, for some experts, the Brazilian fans, and in general, the Latin American spectators, showed a passion for the competitions that overflowed the passive attitude, more common in the European public, in front of the sports events, encouraging Brazilian and foreign athletes, and cheering the Olympic scenarios, with ovations overflowing, as for instance Bolt received during each of his appearances at the Olympic athletics stadium.

Sports improvement: "to infinity and beyond"

Competitions, especially in the sports of time and marking, a special media coverage is made related to World and Olympic records, and therefore, the athletes who possess these trophies. In this perspective the Rio 2016 Olympics, were in debt to some spectators who waited attentively, the materialization of Coubertin's precepts (already mentioned) about the *"citius, altius, fortius"* as principles

of the Olympic athlete, in the performance of Bolt, who was expected to break the world and Olympic record on the 100 meters.

In the XVIII Games of Olympic history, 65 records were broken, which 19 are world and the rest Olympic record. These figures leave Rio 2016 far below the statistics of London 2012, which closed with 32 world records, much more than the 43 that were fought in Beijing 2008 (Aliaga, 2016. p. 1).

The 100 meters, long known as the benchmark of high performance sport, it is for sports bioethicists, the evidence that sports improvement aims to bring sports performance, "to infinity and beyond". This Olympic sport's maxim generates improvement practices that surpass human nature, and viewed from an idealized posture of sport, could mainly be due to the implantation of technology as an objective of sport development, contrary to the Olympic philosophy. In this way Caro & Hoyos (2014) affirm that:

Historically, sport has been a field of experimentation where several sciences have converged with the aim of boosting performance and achieving success. In this sense, everything that allows to overcome the athletic marks, is quickly assimilated and put into practice, without too much emphasis on its ethical implications [...] however, the pressures to win, increasingly higher, make the sports community to recur also to the advances of other sciences, disciplines or fields of interdisciplinary research, as is the case of biotechnology (p. 21).

Rio 2016 showed an impressive display of technological development, focused on improving sports performance. The swords of the fencers made of maraging steel (iron alloys), which allow the blade to bend up to 250° grades, and avoid fatal accidents like the one that occurred in the fencing World's Championship in Rome 1982 caused by a breaking of a foil with a carbon blade. The technological aids implemented in Rio, also allowed athletes, coaches and judges to know in real time the results of the Canoeing and Kayak competitions, from the use of sensors with gyroscopes, accelerometers, magnetometers and GPS (Muñoz, 2016).

The development of cutting-edge technologies was also a determining factor, reinforcing in some cases the abysmal differences in the performance of the athletes representing developed countries, before the other "mortals", who attend the Olympic Games; sometimes with the sole objective of improving your personal brands. The delegation of Australia used a team designed by Microsoft, to predict the risk of their athletes to suffer an injury, three days in advance, thanks to a monitoring system of their muscle function, their vital signs, and the quality of sleep. For its part, the US cycling team used *Solos Smart* goggles, which incorporate a tiny interactive screen where they receive information about their speed, heart rate, and distance traveled (Cordova, 2016).

The participation of volunteers in Rio 2016 games. Reflections on the search for the Olympic spirit.

Perhaps one of the aspects that call the attention to the international press, and researchers in the field of sports, has to do with the phenomenon of volunteering in the Olympic Games. This modality of participation in the mega-sport events, began in the 1980s, and the first mega event which it has been recorded. The event was in the Lake Placid winter games in 1984, when the organizing committee incorporated 6,700 civilians into the organization. However it was during the 1984 Olympics of Los Angeles, when the participation of 30,000 volunteers is formalized, approximately, who supported all the logistics of the event (Agency SINC, 2012).

The participation of volunteers in the Olympic Games increased significantly from the Olympics in Los Angeles 1984 to London 2012, when the organization had the participation of 70,000 volunteers. Although in Brazil the number of volunteers was reduced to approximately 45,000 people. The statistics of participation make emphasis on the idea of considering that the modern Olympic Games could not be carried out without the participation of volunteers. This premise is based on several factors: first, economically this mega event would not be admissible if the organizing country had to assume the hiring expenses for the staff required for logistics, and secondly, volunteers can be the materialization of the precepts that Coubertin promulgated for these jousts in the early modernity. For Moreno (2012) cited by Palomo (2012), the Olympic volunteering is a "symbolic and mediatic representation of the spirit of the games" (p. 9).

In this perspective, there are several reasons that inspire people from all over the world willing to participate as volunteers in a mega-event such as the Olympics. Service will be associated with the social imagery of the Olympic rites that exalt heroism, which can be seen in the Olympic symbology of fire, ceremonies and competitions, which move and thrill millions of spectators (Aguirre, 2010).

Within the factors that can motivate the millions of volunteers, can be highlighted the will to serve, a nationalist sentiment, represented in the expectation of contributing to the success of the event, the interest to closely monitor the performance of the athletes, the evocation of their years and moments as athletes, or the particular interest in the study of all the manifestations of sport, which moves hundreds of professionals in the field of physical education and sports, who have in their "check list" participation in Olympic games. However, no matter what the motivation of each volunteer is, they all come with the same disposition to work in this event. Although the final balance of the experience of each volunteer may leave different perceptions, which are mediated on many occasions, for the type of functions that have to be fulfilled during the event. In the particular case of Rio 2016, including the local press, they recorded perceptions of some Cariocas who worked as volunteers, a discontent for considering that job they did, it should have remunerated, given the particular economic and political conditions, in which a country as Brazil had to face the production of these Olympic Games.

However and despite the efforts that were made by the Organizing Committee of Rio 2016, to make visible to the thousands of spectators attending, the fundamental role played by volunteers, during the games, for some volunteers their experience of knowing the athletes it is inspiring and completely fulfills their expectations (Nepomuceno, 2016), while the relationship with the spectators, and in general with the members of "the Olympic family", can perhaps be in the plane of a trade that can be invisible, as the usual work of logistics personnel, general trades, security or information, which have little social representation, which for some Olympic volunteers, it may not be a very rewarding experience.

Final reflection

The Olympic Games of Rio 2016, as the most important mega-sport event held in South America, must become a mandatory field of study for sports academics, understanding it from its ability to generate critical analysis, as a socio-cultural phenomenon, able to visualize the interactions and social dynamics in all their complexity, and the way in which international institutions such as the IOC, and local governments, through the ritual engineering that implies the organization of an Olympic Games, transmit a social discourse, and political, with pretensions of neutrality that cannot be seen in an unprepared manner.

The social effects of Rio games can also be studied from the intangible legacies, which can be translated even in the way people in the common are infected with the Olympic spirit, and its philosophy, assuming some of its values. The perception that citizens have of the common of the intangible legacy of games is relative and depends on factors such as educational, socio-cultural and economic level. (Waitt, 2003; Sousa, Reis, Gurgel, Duarte, 2013).

From the point of view of a sports scholar, it is essential to deepen the analysis of the Olympic Games, highlighting the possibility offered to teachers and coaches to work with young athletes, in training processes, from the scrutiny of the role of athletes, coaches and spectators, along with the understanding of the development of modern sport, from its social, cultural and political implications.

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