

## Lost Heritage: Female Liberation and Ohst Return

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### Abstract

**This paper discusses and analyses the historical development process of women's participation in the Olympic Games by using the methods of documentation and theoretical analysis. It divides the modern feminist movement into two stages: the embryonic stage of women's sports, the stage of ascending the Olympic Games and the period of rapid development. It is found that before the modern feminist movement, the number of women participating in the Olympic Games is generally small, and the level of sports is generally low. But after the modern feminist movement, women's participation in the Olympic Games, the number of participants and the level of sports have been greatly improved. It is concluded that the change of women's status in the Olympic Games is related to the improvement of women's status, political status and gender concept, and the development trend is good.**

### Keywords

the Olympic Games, Women, Status, Change, The development trend.

## 1. The Changing Course of Women's Status in the Olympic Games

### 1.1. The Period before the Modern Feminist Movement---The Germination of Women's Sports (Before the 20th Century)

Mr. Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, devoted his life to the revival of the modern Olympic movement, which enabled the ancient Olympic spirit to acquire a new life in modern times. However, as the founder of Mr. Coubertin, due to his personal stubborn patriarchal thinking, he tried to prevent women from participating in the Olympic Games (Kong,2005). Due to the influence of many aspects such as history and culture, women were excluded from the enjoyment of sports rights from the beginning. The first Athens Olympic Games in 1896 marked the initial success of the modern Olympic Games, but such a highly inclusive international sports event did not involve a female athlete. Although women have appeared in the second Paris Olympic Games, the women's participation has not been officially recognized. For a long time after, women were marginalized in the Olympics for a long time, but they never gave up on the right to sports equal to men. Women's struggle for sports rights began in the late 1970s, and the booming feminist movement extended from the past emphasis on politics, culture, education and other fields to sports, a long-term exclusion of men (Fan,2004). Sport has become a focus of the women's liberation movement.

## **1.2. Modern Feminist Movement (Early 20th Century - 1960s)**

### **1.2.1. Women Board the Modern Olympic Stage**

The booming feminist movement has shifted from the past emphasis on politics, culture and education to sports, the so-called men's field, which has long excluded them. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it finally led to a campaign for women's equal rights in sports. This laid the foundation for the international development of women's sports after the First World War (Sun,2002). As women's calls for participation in the Olympic Games are growing, they even hosted the "Women's Olympics" independently and achieved the success of the Games. Under the general trend that women actively participate in sports and are eager to have equal rights to sports, the man's monopoly on sports rights has been broken a little. The female stage has gradually appeared on the Olympic stage, although in the second Paris Olympic Games in 1900. There have been cases of women's participation, but in fact, the Luxembourg Conference ten years later opened the prelude to the women's formal participation in the Olympics, which is undoubtedly a major advancement in the status of women's sports. The conference agreed that women participate in swimming, gymnastics and tennis programs, but athletics is still a restricted area for women. Until the modern Olympic Games, 32 years later, women were officially allowed to participate in track and field competitions. This is a historical change in women's participation in the Olympic Games. Women's patriarchal ideas that have broken through thousands of years have entered the stage of the modern Olympic Games. This is not only the progress of the Olympic sports, but also a symbol of the tremendous transformation of social thoughts.

### **1.2.2. Women's Participation in the Olympic Games during the Modern Feminist Movement**

#### **(1) Women's participation in the Olympic Games**

To break through the shackles of women for thousands of years, achieving women's equal status with men in sports is undoubtedly a serious and long-term challenge. The development of the feminist movement has promoted women's entry into the Olympic Games, breaking the rules that have banned women from participating in the Olympic Games since ancient times.(Ren,1998).Women's participation in the modern feminist movement has experienced a historical turn from scratch, while women's small items have developed slowly. But at least it is a steady growth. However, because the Olympic Movement has entered the torrent of the international feminist movement and has become a part of its development process, there is still a time lag, so the Olympic Movement has a certain lag in the transformation of women (Zhao,2008). The twists and turns in the number of women's major items also confirm the prevailing prejudice of the social masses for women's participation in the Olympic Games before the end of the modern feminist movement. Therefore, the number of women's projects has not been greatly changed. Compared with men's sports, the number of sports that women can participate in is still too small, whether it is a men's sport or a big item. Despite the overall increase in the number of participating projects in the Olympic Games, women's status in the Olympic Games has not changed substantially before the end of the modern feminist movement.

#### **(2) Number of female athletes in the Olympic Games**

Women's participation in the Olympic Games has also undergone a transition from nothing to breaking the 100% monopoly of male athletes in the Olympics. Except for the absence of women in the first Athens Olympic Games, women's participation occurred in the following Olympic Games. In the eighth Olympic Games, the number of women athletes was broken. Especially in the 10th Games, in the face of a significant reduction in the number of Olympic Games, the proportion of women participating in the competition increased, and it was the first time to break through 10%. Compared with the number of women participating in the Olympic Games before the end of the modern feminist movement, the gap is still huge, and it is difficult

to significantly promote the participation of women in the development of the Olympic movement.

### (3) Female sports level

Before the end of the modern feminist movement, the level of women's exercise was generally not high, and the gap between men's and women's sports was still very obvious. Before the end of the modern feminist movement, women's participation in the Olympics is still at a stage of exploration. Due to lack of technical guidance and practical experience, it is difficult for women to improve their level of sports. In addition, the impact of the feminist movement on sports is not very significant at the beginning. There are few sports programs for women to participate in, and there is a lack of mature natural foundation for men's sports. Women can't play their own advantages when participating in competitions, leading to women's participation in sports. At a disadvantage. However, in some individual projects, it has been shown that certain achievements can be compared with men. In the marathon, although women are later than men, their achievements are not far from men. It can be seen that the general low level of women's sports before the end of the modern feminist movement is largely due to the lack of various factors such as the corresponding training and guidance of the women's movement.

## **1.3. Post-modern Feminist Movement (After the 1960s)**

### **1.3.1. The Rapid Development of Women's Sports**

With the development of the times, the attitude of the International Olympic Committee towards women has also changed a lot. On the one hand, it actively supports women's participation in the Olympic Movement, which has greatly increased the number of female athletes and the number of women's projects. On the other hand, efforts are made to provide women with equal access to management. After the 1980s, the reform of the Olympic Movement provided an opportunity for women to participate in the Olympic movement in all aspects. Women contribute to the Olympic movement on a broader scale and at a higher level. In the 1990s, the Olympic Movement accelerated the pace of gender equality. The International Olympic Committee's efforts to strive for equality between men and women have enabled women to continue to improve their position in the Olympic Movement (Cao,2006).

### **1.3.2. The Situation of Women Participating in the Olympic Games during the Post-modern Feminist Movement**

After the end of the modern feminist movement, until now feminism has continued to develop, affecting the contemporary women's liberation movement (Ren,2005). the wider and deeper development on a global scale makes it easier for people to accept women's participation in the Olympics, and even women's participation in the Olympics has become an era. New fashion. Secondly, the study of women's participation in sports in science and technology has also completely abolished the theory that women's physical unsuitable sports, and the status of women in the Olympic Games has been significantly improved.

#### (1) Women participate in the Olympic Games

After 2000, the International Olympic Committee has stipulated that the Olympic Games should be carried out within the scope of certain sports programs. In order to ensure more participation of female athletes, if the project is to be added in the future, the project must include small items for women to participate in (Zhou,2003). Women tend to increase rapidly in both major and small categories, and the rate of increase is very fast, especially in the trend of increasing women's majors in 2004, almost the same as men's majors in 2004.

#### (2) Female sports level

From the 18th Olympic Games after the end of the modern feminist movement, the level of women's movement has been greatly changed. Judging from the results of the competition, the difference between women's athletes' ability to compete and men's athletes is constantly

narrowing. In the 2012 Olympic Games, the men's 100m best score was 9.75 and the women's 10.75, only one second difference; the 2016 Olympic Games 50m freestyle men and women scored less than 3 seconds, the 100m freestyle difference was less than 5 seconds; in the marathon In 2012, the men's best score was 2:08:01 and the women's 2:23:07. It can be seen that the level of women's Olympics including track and field events is not bad. Even in sports such as diving and gymnastics, female athletes performed better. Since the 1964 Olympic Games, the number of medals won by women in the Olympic Games has greatly increased the number of men's medals, and even exceeded the number of men in certain countries and times. For example, at the 29th Beijing Olympic Games, American women athletes won more medals than male athletes. This is the first achievement of female athletes in the history of the Olympic Games. Chinese female athletes have been at the Seoul Olympics in 1988. Outstanding performance has earned 10 more medals than male athletes. According to this development, there is almost no difference in speed between male and female athletes in the 1920s(Su,1998). The rapid improvement of the level of women's movement after the end of the modern feminist movement benefited from the progress of the times and at the same time achieved the outstanding performance of women in the Olympic Games. Out of the prejudice of ancient ideology and culture, and through the great challenges of the times, women rely on their unremitting pursuit to achieve the arduous changes in the status of women in the modern Olympic movement. In the end, people have a preliminary understanding of the women's movements and laid the foundation for future development (Zhang,2002).

## 2. Concluding Suggestions

The status of women in the modern Olympic movement has experienced arduous changes in the times from the germination to rapid development of women's sports. This article takes the modern feminist movement as the stage of division, and has experienced the germination of women's sports and the stage of rapid development. It was found that women in the pre-modern feminist movement participated in the Olympic Games, the number of people was generally small, and the overall level of exercise was not high. However, after the modern feminist movement, women participated in the Olympic Games, the number of participants and the level of sports have increased significantly. It is also analyzed that women's status changes in the Olympic Games are related to the improvement of women's status, political status, and changes in gender concepts. The trend is good. Although the differences between men and women still exist in today's Olympic Games, women still do not have the same status as men, but women's status can be changed as long as women actively participate in the Olympic Games, including leadership positions in the Olympic Committee.

## 3. Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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