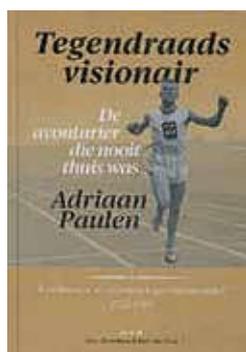


BOOK REVIEWS



Cees Haverhoek & Paul van Gool

Tegendraads visionair – De avonturier die nooit thuis was. Adriaan Paulen. Hardloper, verzetsman, sportbestuurder 1902–1985

(Contradictory Visionary – The Adventurer Who Was Never at Home. Adriaan Paulen. Runner, Resistance Fighter, Sports Official 1902–1985)

Arko Sports Media, Nieuwegein 2019; 480 pages, 27.25 EUR, ISBN: 978-90-5472-425-4, in Dutch

Reviewed by Kees Sluys

“The adventurer who was never at home.” This is the perfect subtitle to the extensive Dutch book, *Tegendraads visionair*, which was published this year about the life of Adriaan (Adje) Paulen (1902–1985). In 1963, when he retired as director of the Dutch Athletics Federation, he was already a much-travelled man who had taken more than 430 flights – not to mention his car kilometres – since assuming the post in 1945. “Traveling seems to him an almost compulsive activity, which gives him enormous joy”, note the authors about Paulen.

This travel mania was given a major boost by the sport he practised with great success. After he reached the 800-metres final at the 1920 Antwerp Olympics as a 17-year-old (!) and finished seventh, invitations to competitions from abroad began to pour in. Paulen, who would later graduate as a mining engineer, became friends with greats such as Charlie Paddock and Charles Hoff and fought against the famous German athlete, Dr. Otto Peltzer, in thrilling duels at 400 and 800 metres.

One thing that occupied Paulen as an athlete at the time was the untenability of the amateur status, which the authorities considered sacred. Contemporaries such as the Finnish runners, Paavo Nurmi and Ville Ritola, he observed, were certainly not pure amateurs, but, according to Paulen, “they should not be blamed too much”.

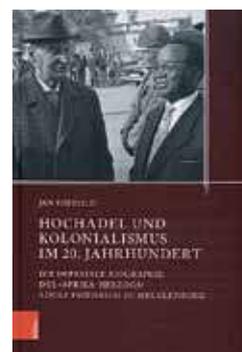
After the World War II, in which he distinguished himself as a member of the Dutch resistance, Paulen's star began to rise as a sports official. A thorn in his eye remained the “mess” of the IAAF about amateurism and professionalism. In the late-1940s he expressed his expectation that “every individual (in 30 years or so) will decide for himself whether he wants to be an amateur or not.”

Paulen developed within the IAAF into the expert concerning regulations, and did not hesitate to intervene on the spot, e.g. during the long jump competition in Mexico 1968 where Bob Beamon jumped his incredible 8.90 metres.

Six years later, he became president of the EAA, and the presidency of the IAAF followed in 1976. In this position, he was at odds with the arch-conservative IOC chairman, Avery Brundage, with regard to amateur regulations, but in 1981 Paulen saw his prophecy of 30 years earlier come true. The new IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, “came with the liberating announcement that the IOC for the Games would refer the word ‘amateur’ to the archives.”

But this was not enough for growing commercial interests. In a unified collaboration between Horst Dassler and the ambitious IAAF candidate chairman, Primo Nebiolo, Paulen was sidelined. However, in 1983, one of his long-held wishes was fulfilled: the first World Championships.

Tegendraads visionair is a wonderful, comprehensive, and dedicated work about an individual who played a key role in (international) athletics throughout his life.



Jan Diebold

Hochadel und Kolonialismus im 20. Jahrhundert

Die imperiale Biographie des „Afrika-Herzogs“ Adolf Friedrich zu Mecklenburg

(High Nobility and Colonialism in the 20th century:

The Imperial Biography of the “Africa Duke” Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg)

Böhlau Publishers, Cologne 2019, in German 342 pages, 50 EUR, ISBN: 978-3-412-50081-8

Reviewed by Volker Kluge

One of the IOC Members with some of the best transnational networks, due to his origin, was Duke Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg. Born in 1873 at Schwerin Castle, he was elected as the third German member of the IOC in 1926. This was allegedly at the request of the Dutch Queen Wilhemina, who in 1901 had married his brother Heinrich, three years younger than he. Prince Hendrik – his name as Prince Consort – opened the Games of the IXth Olympiad in Amsterdam in 1928 on behalf of his wife.

Grand Duke of Mecklenburg Friedrich Franz II, the father of Adolf Friedrich and Heinrich, had already been committed to the Olympic Movement when he took over sponsorship of the newly founded German Participation Committee in 1895 – which had been contested in chauvinistic circles – for the 1896 Olympics in Athens. Like his father, Adolf Friedrich preferred horse breeding and hunting. He was a gifted jockey until he suffered a serious fall in 1898.

As he had no prospect of succession as the fifth son, the option