institutional mechanisms, the established social order and the neo-liberal market system can be maintained. Furthermore, hosting a sports mega-event often works as a catalyst for social change. Civic organisations and political activists try to use the sporting spectacle as a platform for demonstrating their cause to wider audiences. In particular, for those events awarded to countries where non-democratic regimes rule, pro-democratic protesters use the opportunity to negotiate with the government because the event cannot be enacted effectively without support from the people. When the international media begin to pay attention to these movements from below, the political elites come under more pressure to reform, and eventually, albeit reluctantly, they may accept some of civic groups' demands for the implementation of more democratic practices.

Hence, it may not be an exaggeration to say that a sport mega-event is yet another type of a political project through which both governmental and non-governmental organisations vie to win public support and consensus both nationally and internationally. In this section, contributors examine the political nature of sports mega-events held in different geopolitical locales in different historical periods. In the next chapter, Large and Large revisit arguably the most politicised Olympic Games ever, the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. The authors identify the political legacies of Hitler's Games and look at their influence on future Olympics taking place in countries where non-democratic regimes are in power. Brewster and Brewster's chapter investigates the political protests which occurred before and during the 1968 Mexico Olympic Games and discusses how the authorities dealt with massive anti-government demonstrations. Gajek surveys the political meaning of sports mega-events held in the post-fascist period with reference to the cases of the Rome and Munich Olympic Games in 1960 and 1972 respectively. In the following chapter, Chepurnaya introduces the first Cold War Olympics, which took place in Moscow in 1980, highlighting the interface between the Soviet Union's internal politics and an ideologically divided international political structure. Dong looks at the political motivation of hosting the Olympic Games in China, and considers how the Chinese government responded to a range of political events taking place during and in relation to the Olympic Games. Lee examines the different political connotations assigned to three sports mega-events that South Korea has hosted since 1988. Horne and Silverstre's chapter provides a brief political history of sport in Brazil. The authors also discuss the contemporary aspects of mega-event bidding and hosting in the country. In the next chapter, Chen investigates the political character of sport in Taiwan with reference to the islanders' sensitive national identity politics represented in and through global sport. Whigham's chapter explores the historical and contemporary politics of the Commonwealth Games, and the relationship between the Games and the politics of the Commonwealth as an evolving geopolitical entity. Finally, Malcolm and Waldman explore the colonial/(post)colonial/and (neo)colonial relationships and tensions that have operated in, and continue to structure, the politics of international cricket.

33
THE BERLIN OLYMPICS, 1936

David Clay Large and Joshua J. H. Large

In the contention-ridden history of the modern Olympics, no single festival, summer or winter, has been more controversial than the Berlin Summer Games of 1936. Oddly enough, though, Berlin '36 also stands as one of the most formative and influential of the five-ringed Olympic circuses. In the end, no Olympiad has had a greater impact on the modern world – not just the sporting world – than the one hosted by Adolf Hitler in the German capital.

A boycott of Berlin?

On 29 April 1931, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voted 43 to 16 to hold the Olympic Summer Games in Berlin, over runner-up Barcelona. At that time Germany was still a democracy, albeit a beleaguered one, and some of the IOC voters hoped that a Berlin Olympiad might help buttress the Weimar Republic. Alas, less than two years later the country was under the control of a Nazi-led government that stood as a mockery of the (purported) Olympic ideals of internationalism and peaceful competition among the peoples of the world, independent of religion, race, or ethnicity.

Before Hitler assumed power it seemed highly unlikely that a Nazi government, should one come to pass, would even want to host the Olympic Games. Various National Socialist leaders and sports commentators had shown nothing but contempt for the modern Olympic movement, and indeed for most international sporting events, calling instead for purely German competitions and fitness programs based on *Turnen*, or synchronised group gymnastics. In the early 1920s they had objected to Germans competing with athletes from the Allied countries, which had imposed the "Yoke of Versailles" on the Fatherland. They had also objected to "Aryans" competing with "racial inferiors," such as Slavs, blacks, and Jews (Haller 1933). Hitler himself called the Olympics "a plot against the Aryan race by Freemasons and Jews" (Hart-Davis 1986: 45).

The Nazi objection to competing with black athletes was especially relevant because having had a modest presence in the Summer Olympics of 1920 and 1924, black athletes performed well in the Los Angeles Summer Games of 1932. African-American runners Eddie Tolan and Ralph Metcalfe, labeled the "Sable Cyclones" in the American press, excelled in the sprints, with Tolan setting a world record in the 100-metre race and an Olympic record in the 200-metre event. For Nazi ideologues, it was a "disgrace" that white athletes, including a German

runner named Arthur Jonath, had deigned to compete at all with the likes of Tolan and Metcalfe (Teichler 1991: 47). *Der Völkische Beobachter*, the Nazi house-journal, demanded in August 1932 that blacks be "excluded" from any German-hosted Olympic festival.

Hitler did not begin to view the Olympics more favourably until after he had assumed the chancellorship in January 1933. In March of that year one of the key members of the German Olympic Organizing Committee (GOOC), Theodor Lewald, who happened to be half-Jewish, argued in a meeting with the Führer that hosting the Games would provide an invaluable propaganda opportunity for Germany and undoubtedly constitute an economic windfall for the country (Lewald 1933). But what really seems to have transformed Hitler's initial skepticism was the prospect of building a grandiose stage for the Games in the Nazi capital, along with the prospect of demonstrating "Master Race" superiority on the athletic field. In May 1933 he therefore let it be known that his government would not only support the Olympic project, but would host the most magnificent Olympic festival ever.

Yet even while belatedly endorsing the Games, the Nazi government and German sporting associations pursued policies that clashed sharply with Olympic principles of openness and fair play in athletic competition. The Hitler government's programme of anti-Jewish persecution thoroughly embraced the world of sport, which was forced into conformity with Nazi dogma. In spring 1933 the German Swimming Association banned Jews from its member clubs. Germany's Davis Cup tennis team expelled one of its stars, Dr Daniel Prenn, because he was Jewish. The Nazi press called for the dismissal of Theodor Lewald on grounds of his part-Jewish ancestry, and he surely would have been pushed out had not the IOC warned that such a move might compromise Berlin's chances of holding on to the 1936 Games (Teichler 1991).

The retention of Lewald, however, was hardly enough to reassure a growing chorus of critics around the world who were beginning to insist that the Games be removed from Berlin, and to threaten a massive boycott of the Olympics if they transpired in the Nazi capital after all.

Interestingly, the protest movement had its origins and greatest resonance in America – a nation hardly without its own policies of racial discrimination in sport, and elsewhere. Early on, the American push to boycott a Nazi-hosted Olympiad was largely a Jewish affair, American Jews having reacted with alarm and outrage to the Hitler government's anti-Semitic pronouncements and measures. Various Jewish groups asked Avery Brundage, the president of the American Olympic Committee (AOC), to take a stand against holding the Games in the German capital. What the Jewish activists did not know was that Brundage was vehemently against moving the Games out of Germany, or boycotting the contest should it remain there. Time and again, he would justify this stance on the (specious) grounds that high-level "sports" and "politics" occupied independent realms, and that the Olympic movement could survive only if politics were kept out of it (Guttman 1984).

Brundage's position notwithstanding, the GOOC was deeply worried about the American protests. Hoping to stifle and inhibit the boycott movement, Theodor Lewald convinced the Hitler government to issue a statement promising to respect the Olympic charter and to welcome to Germany "competitors of all races." The regime added a significant caveat, however: the composition of Germany's own team was nobody else's business but Germany's. The Germans hoped the IOC would agree.

And in fact, for the most part the IOC did agree. IOC President Henri de Baillet-Latour, a Belgian aristocrat, held views similar to Brundage's in regard to the relationship between the Olympic movement and politics. He believed that the IOC should avoid taking any "political" positions except in the case of Communist penetration of the Games, which he felt must be avoided at all costs. Thus he issued a statement saying the IOC would hold to its 1931

decision for Berlin as long as Germany imposed no racial or religious restrictions on foreign participation.

The stance of the IOC guaranteed that the Games would stay in Berlin, but not that they would go un-boycotted. In fact, Jewish groups in America now openly called for a U.S. boycott unless the Germans opened their own Olympic programme to qualified competitors regardless of religion or ethnicity. Jewish groups also threatened to withhold financial contributions to the American Olympic programme should the AOC decide to send a team to Berlin (Gottlieb 1972).

Genuinely afraid that American Jews could help effect a U.S. boycott of Berlin, the Germans decided to concede more ground, in principle at least. In June 1933 they promised not only to observe all Olympic regulations but also that "Jews would not be excluded from membership in German teams [for Berlin or the Winter Games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen]" (Teichler 1989: 47–48).

The reality, however, was that Jewish athletes, of which Germany had a sizeable number, were not considered for membership on the German Olympic teams. Most notably, a German-Jewish female high-jumper named Gretl Bergmann was denied the chance to compete in the qualifying rounds for Berlin, despite having won the German national championship in 1935. Moreover, anti-Semitic policies in other dimensions of public life in Nazi Germany continued unabated.

Against this backdrop of persistent government-backed racism in Germany, the American boycott movement expanded beyond its original Jewish base to include Catholic and Protestant organisations, labour groups, and the American Civil Liberties Union. On 7 March 1934, a mass rally was held in New York's Madison Square Garden to protest against Nazi racial policies and to threaten boycotts of German goods along with the Olympics if these policies persisted.

In response to the growing boycott movement, Avery Brundage undertook a "fact-finding" trip to Germany in the fall of 1934, promising to investigate the sporting scene in the Third Reich. He interviewed a few German-Jewish athletic officials, albeit only in the presence of uniformed SS officers. At one point he put his Nazi hosts at ease by pointing out that his own men's club in Chicago excluded Jews and blacks. Upon his return to America he gave the Germans a clean bill of health, saying he saw no evidence of racism and echoing German assurances that there would be no discrimination against any of the foreign athletes competing in Berlin (*New York Times* 1934).

Undeterred by Brundage's "whitewash" of Nazi Germany, the American boycott-Berlin movement continued to expand. In yet another effort to undercut domestic protest sentiment, Charles Sherrill, one of three American IOC members and, like Brundage, a strong proponent of keeping the Games in Berlin, travelled to Germany in summer 1935 with the goal of persuading Hitler to include at least one Jew in its Olympic team, a gesture he privately equated with the American tradition of the "token Negro". Sherrill warned Hitler that unless this happened, Berlin advocates like himself and Brundage might not be able to prevent a U.S. boycott in 1936 (Aufzeichnung [Sherrill] 1934).

Hitler personally rebuffed Sherrill, even threatening to call off the Olympics entirely and to substitute "purely German" games in place of the international festival. Yet this was a bluff: Hitler knew that German-only games would be useless in terms of propaganda, and would not facilitate the desired generation of foreign currency. In the end, he acquiesced with a gesture of tokenistic compromise worked out between Sherrill and the GOOC. The Germans agreed to name a half-Jewish fencer named Helene Mayer to their team for Berlin. For the Nazis, this decision was made more palatable by the fact that Mayer was an excellent fencer with medal

prospects for Germany, looked the part of a perfect Aryan Valkyrie, and was careful not to criticise Hitler's regime in any way (Large 2007).

The Mayer concession weakened the American boycott effort, which was further undermined by a lack of public support from President Franklin Roosevelt, who kept silent on the issue despite calls from the U.S. consular staff in Germany to signal his disapproval of Hitler via an American no-show in Berlin (Large 2007). At a crucial AOC meeting in December 1935, Brundage was able to outmanoeuvre his opponents and, by a very close vote, secure an endorsement of U.S. participation in the Berlin Games.

America's decision to go to Berlin significantly undercut boycott efforts elsewhere in the democratic West, from Canada to Switzerland. No nations ended up boycotting "Hitler's Games", although Spain failed to send a team due to the outbreak of its civil war in July. The willingness of national Olympic committees to overcome whatever scruples they might have had regarding participation in Hitler's spectacle did not stop some prominent individual athletes from staging personal boycotts of Berlin (Large 2007).

Innovations

The Berlin Olympic festival was the first of the modern Games to generate a large-scale (and nearly successful) boycott movement, but that was hardly the only way in which this Olympiad was innovative. Hitler's enormous financial and organisational support for Berlin (and Garmisch) was the first, but by no means the last, instance in which a national government provided extensive backing for a project officially managed by the host cities. The Berlin spectacle was also the first Olympics to be broadcast worldwide by radio and, more notably, by television (even though viewers could barely make out what was going on). Berlin inaugurated the now-traditional, opening-day release of doves. The track and field competitions at Berlin featured a display of African-American talent far surpassing earlier achievements and heralding the later domination by blacks of many Olympic events. America's Jesse Owens, the undisputed star of Berlin 1936, unwittingly ushered in the age of commercial endorsements by Olympic athletes when he donned a pair of running shoes given him by the Bavarian-based Gebrüder Dassler Company (forerunner of Adidas and Puma). Dassler was the tip of the iceberg at Berlin, which encouraged corporate advertising to an unprecedented degree. Among the sponsors were Mercedes, Lufthansa, and Atlanta's Coca-Cola Company, which ran a photo of Hermann Göring drinking a bottle of its product. With its combination of embryonic television and extensive corporate advertising, Berlin 1936 heralded the current global Olympic experience, wherein the Games constitute the world's longest commercial (Boykoff and Tomlinson 2012). Also unprecedented, at least in scale, was Berlin's vast array of the now-ubiquitous ancillary events such as dress balls, banquets, art exhibitions, scholarly conferences, parades and concerts. Perhaps most importantly, and certainly most ominously, Berlin 1936 made "safety" for visitors, athletes, and VIP's a major priority, providing a security apparatus of a size and sophistication never before seen in the history of the modern Games.

While these innovations were adopted by subsequent nations and National Olympic Committees, Berlin's most notable (and perhaps least forgivable) contribution to the modern Olympic experience involves its introduction of the now-unavoidable Olympic torch relay from ancient Olympia to the host city. This epochal undertaking transpired within a broader promotional campaign for Berlin 1936 that was itself unprecedented in scope and ambition. To advertise the Games both at home and abroad, German organisers hired stunt flyers and enlisted the Reich's famed Zeppelins. They sponsored an "Olympic Train" that toured parts of the

nation in what was clearly a propagandising pursuit. Yet these Barnumesque productions paled in comparison to the GOOC's pièce de résistance, a twelve-day, seven-nation-spanning relay run involving over 3,000 torchbearers (Large 2007).

Although the 1936 torch relay, which was documented by Leni Riefenstahl in her famous film *Olympia*, proved successful enough to launch a whole new Olympic "tradition", unlike most of its later emulators it was far more than Olympic romanticising: it was a slowly moving advertisement for Nazi Germany over a part of Europe that Hitler coveted – and would indeed soon seize via a faster-moving march travelling in the opposite direction. The underlying political and ideological implications of the torch relay became fairly obvious at various points along the route. Right at the beginning, during a kitsch-laden lighting of the Olympic torch by fifteen Greek virgins, Germany's ambassador to Athens apostrophised the sacred flame as a greeting across the ages from "our Führer Adolf Hitler and his entire German people". Relay organisers encouraged villagers to express their enthusiasm for the Olympic host nation by shouting "Hail Hitler" as the torch passed through their towns. When the torch (made by Krupp out of the best steel) reached Vienna, local Nazis exploited the occasion to demand Austria's incorporation into the Nazi Reich, a goal they would achieve two years later courtesy of the Austrian-born Führer. In the ethnic-German Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia, also soon to be part of Greater Germany, residents hailed the passing torch as a beacon from Berlin. By contrast, in the Slavic parts of the country torch bearers required police escorts to avoid being assaulted. If in more recent Olympic torch relays the bearers might be elderly, female, and/or handicapped, all the (German) participants in 1936 were expressly manly "Super-Aryans", perfect young embodiments of a physical ideal endlessly preached by Nazi leaders even if rarely realised in their own bloated or stunted physiognomies.

In addition to anticipating the Wehrmacht's romp through south-eastern Europe in World War II, the 1936 Olympic torch relay buttressed Hitler's imperial ambitions with an illustrious (albeit bogus) pedigree by positing a symbolic bridge between Nazi Germany and classical Greece. Carl Diem, general-secretary of the GOOC and mastermind of the relay, claimed that the Olympic flame was an ancient "symbol of purity" prefiguring the purity of the modern German nation. He touted the torch relay as a reawakening of the cult surrounding Prometheus, whose theft of fire from the gods for the betterment of mortals was honoured in antiquity by torchlight parades. The fact that the ancient Olympic Games had included no torchlight parades did not prevent Diem from seeing the "sacred flame" at Olympia as an anticipation of the blazes carried by Hitler's followers on the night of his inauguration as German chancellor. For Diem and other philhellenic Germans, including Hitler, the torch relay, and then the Berlin festival itself, with its neo-Doric stadium and exposition entitled "Sport in Hellenic Times," would remind the world that Nazi Germany was the true "blood" and spiritual heir of ancient Greece and the most worthy modern steward of the pagan values underlying the original Olympic Games (Large 2007).

"Darktown parade"

The ancient Greeks "would turn over in their graves if they knew what modern men were doing with their sacred national games", thundered the *Völkische Beobachter* (1932), with reference to the presence of black athletes in the Olympics. If one of the great ironies of Berlin 1936 is that an Olympiad originally awarded to buttress a struggling democracy ended up benefitting a profoundly anti-democratic regime, another is that a contest envisaged by the host nation to confirm a perennial and immortal athletically and intellectually superior "Master Race"

ultimately helped to undermine that dogma, though in the shorter term, alas, merely brought refinements to it.

Berlin 1936, at least in the track and field competition, was largely an African-American show – a "Darktown Parade," as one American newspaper put it. Jesse Owens's four gold medals is the achievement that many appear to remember, but Owens's ten black teammates were successful in their own right: Ralph Metcalfe took gold in the 400-metre relay and silver in the 100-metre sprint; Mack Robinson (Jackie Robinson's brother) won silver in the 200-metre race; Archie Williams got gold in the 400-metre event; James LuValle took bronze in the 400 metres; John Woodruff won the 800 metre; Cornelius Johnson and David Albritton went one-two in the high jump; Fritz Pollard took bronze in the 110-metre hurdles. In total, America's black athletes accounted for 83 of its 107 points total in track and field. No other team, Germany included, came close.

Naturally, the huge success of America's "race boys" (another U.S. newspaper term) was much celebrated back home. Yet the importance of America's "Darktown Parade" resided not only in the medal haul but in the very presence of these black athletes in Berlin. There is considerable significance, too, in the ways in which the black triumph was interpreted by contemporaries, both in Germany and in America itself.

During America's boycott-Berlin debate some African-American organisations, most notably the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), had insisted that blacks, including Jesse Owens, must shun "Hitler's Games" on the grounds that Nazi Germany was as hostile to blacks as to Jews. The NAACP warned that blacks might be mistreated if they dared show up in Berlin. Apparently accepting this argument, Jesse Owens initially declared that he would boycott Berlin should he be selected for the American team. Yet, ultimately Owens and the other black athletes selected for Berlin participated in the Games. Owens in particular hoped not only to showcase his brilliance on an international stage but to parlay expected Olympic gold into a remunerative post-Games professional career – something he notoriously failed to achieve in a persistently racist society.

Contrary to NAACP warnings, America's black Olympians received a very cordial welcome from the Berliners when they arrived in the Nazi capital. Owens, his earlier athletic feats well known to the Germans, was mobbed by autograph-seekers wherever he went. Young women pressed love letters into his hands. But what Owens and his black teammates did not know was that they were being closely monitored by the German police, who were determined to prevent any "unsuitable" contacts between the visitors and natives. Fearing possible acts of miscegenation between the black Americans and willing German women, the Gestapo issued fifty-two warning citations to female citizens "for approaching foreigners, especially coloured foreigners, in an unseemly manner" (Krüger 1972: 194).

Although the great athletic achievements of Owens and company were touted in the American press, newspapers in the South tended to record the victories without any commentary, and not a single southern paper printed a photograph of Owens. In Germany, on orders from Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, newspapers avoided discussing "race" in connection with the African-American performances (Bohrmann 1936).

According to the American black-owned press, Hitler was so upset over Owens's victories that he refused to shake the athlete's hand. The charge of a Hitler "snub" was taken up by the mainstream press and has since become part of the popular lore about the Berlin Games. The snub story, however, remains spurious, since Hitler avoided the possibility of physical contact with Owens by promising IOC President Baillet-Latour after the first day of competition to eschew *any* public hand-shaking with athletes, a breach of Olympic protocol he had committed early on. Had he not made this pre-emptive promise, Hitler would undoubtedly have found

some other way to avoid physical contact with Owens: "I would never shake the hand of a black man", he later told an aide (Schirach 1967: 217–218). It should be noted, too, that Owens himself did not, initially at least, claim to have been rebuffed by Hitler. On the contrary, upon returning from Berlin, he insisted that it was *President Roosevelt* who had acted ungraciously. "Hitler didn't snub me – it was our president who snubbed me. The president didn't even send me a telegram", Owens added (Olympic File, Box 384). Moreover, Owens professed admiration for the Nazi ruler, calling him a "man of civility" and "the man of the hour in Germany" – a leader who deserved much better treatment from the American press than he was getting (Baker 1986: 137).

Hitler's anger over the African-American victories is said to have played a role in another race-related story to emerge from Berlin – this one involving American Jews rather than blacks. Runners Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller, the only Jews on America's track team at Berlin, were originally scheduled to participate in the 4 × 100-metre relay but lost out at the last minute to make room for Owens and Metcalfe. Glickman claimed that Avery Brundage himself intervened with the American coaches to effect this change so as not to further offend Hitler, who would have seen Jewish triumphs on top of the black ones as adding insult to injury. Glickman's interpretation of his and Stoller's exclusion has since become widely accepted and may be correct. Yet there is no empirical evidence for a Brundage intervention, and in the end it seems equally plausible that the American coaches simply wanted to have the best possible team on the track, which is what they maintained all along (Large 2007).

Contrary to another tenacious element of Berlin Games lore, the victories by Owens and other African-American athletes in 1936 did not significantly challenge prevailing theories of white athletic supremacy in Hitler's Germany, or for that matter in FDR's America. Nazi pundits argued that America's black Olympians were little more than gifted freaks who owed their victories to their "jungle inheritance". Disgusted by America's reliance on "animals" to win medals, a German Foreign Office official proclaimed: "If Germany had had the bad sportsmanship to enter deer or another species of fleet-footed animal, it would have taken the honours from America in the track events" (Dodd 1939: 212). Germany won the largest number of medals overall in the Berlin Games, but finished a distant second to America in the track and field competition. Influential American commentators offered similar explanations for the black successes. Assistant track coach Dean Cromwell opined: "The Negro excels in the events he does because he is closer to the primitive than the white man. It was not long ago that his ability to spring and jump was a life and death matter to him" (Large 2007: 331). Owens's own coach, Larry Snyder, argued that his "boy" and other black sprinters owed their success to "the striation of their muscles and the cell structure of their nervous system" – not to mention their willingness to take orders from their white coaches (Large 2007: 331). Thus the black achievements at Berlin tended to refine earlier stereotypes regarding racial differentiation for both the Nazis and the Americans, whereby Negroes were said to possess biological advantages in certain sports like boxing, but owing to alleged character and intellectual shortcomings, could never surpass whites in contests requiring discipline, fortitude, stamina, strategy, and teamwork such as long-distance running and basketball. It was only later, during America's belated and tortured soul-searching regarding ongoing racism in sport and society that the great black athletic achievements in the Berlin Games took on the meaning they deserved.

Legacies

Today, much of the public perception about Berlin 1936 derives largely from Leni Riefenstahl's famed documentary, *Olympia*. Riefenstahl always claimed that her work was a purely

non-political piece of cinematic art, but in actuality it is rife with Nazi ideological and aesthetic motives – probably the most effective advertisement for the Third Reich ever made. Yes, the film makes Owens one of its stars, but the other African-American achievements are largely ignored and there is a strong bias in favour of home-team athletes. The work's long prologue, ending with Myron's statue of an ancient Greek discus thrower morphing into an Aryan superman, underscores the Nazi thesis that the classical Greeks were just modern Germans waiting to happen.

Leni Riefenstahl hoped to make a film about the second German-hosted Summer Olympics, the Munich Games of 1972, but the Munich organisers wanted no part of her. "Hitler's favourite filmmaker" was a living reminder of Berlin 1936, and the makers of Munich 1972 were determined to do everything they could to differentiate their Games from those of 1936. This second chance at Olympic-hosting would showcase a Germany (or at least a West Germany) that had thoroughly cast aside the bad old ways and become a paragon of democratic pluralism, openness, and amiability. Alas, the push to erase memories of the past embraced even the security arrangements for the festival, which were kept minimal and relaxed. Unquestionably, lax security at the Olympic Village was partly responsible for the greatest tragedy in modern Olympic history: the murder of eleven Israeli Olympians by Palestinian terrorists. The bitter irony of Munich 1972 is that its organisers, in trying so hard move beyond Berlin 1936, ended up re-awakening memories of the bad old days in the worst possible way (Large 2012).

Inevitably, memories of Germany's first Summer Olympic festival resurfaced with a vengeance when Berlin itself, in the early 1990s, bid to replay its Olympic-hosting role – this time as the freshly minted capital of newly reunified Germany. Oddly, Berlin's bid for 2000 included using as its principal venue the very same stadium in which Hitler had stood in 1936. This breathtakingly insensitive proposal offended even many Germans, who complained that it represented an insult to the memory of all those who had suffered under the Nazis. Many Berliners expressed relief when the 2000 Summer Games were awarded to Sydney.

Ghosts of Berlin 1936 have ended up haunting not only German turf but the Olympic landscape in general ever since the Games resumed after World War II. Undeterred by charges of having helped bolster an enemy of pluralistic (and Olympic) values with its Berlin decision (or, for that matter by giving the war-cancelled 1940 and 1944 Games to militaristic Tokyo and fascist Rome, respectively), the IOC would award Olympic-hosting honours to several other authoritarian venues, most notably Moscow (1980), Beijing (2008), and Sochi (2014). Echoing its attempts to justify staying with Nazi Berlin in 1936, during every subsequent venue controversy the IOC claimed that the process of organising the Games would help foster "liberalising" tendencies in oppressive host nations. Of course, just the opposite occurred.

Equally predictably, opponents of these controversial venue decisions cited Berlin 1936 in their condemnations of IOC behaviour – and, in the case of Moscow 1980, to justify boycotts of those Games. Of the Beijing selection in 2001 a French politician, François Londe, warned:

> The decision of the IOC goes toward justifying a repressive political system that each day flouts freedom and violates human rights. Following the example of Nazi Germany in 1936 and the Soviet Union in 1980, Communist China will use [the Games] as a powerful propaganda instrument destined to consolidate its hold on power.
>
> *(CNN 2001)*

Some twelve years later, American presidential candidate Mitt Romney invoked the Berlin Games to chastise the IOC for awarding the 2014 Winter Games to Sochi, thus affording Stalinesque strongman Vladimir Putin a huge advertisement for authoritarian Russia – and for himself. For his part, as if to prove Romney right, Putin jailed a Moscow journalist for comparing Sochi 2014 to Berlin 1936. Putin unwittingly emulated the Nazis also in making some token pre-Olympics concessions, such as freeing the jailed "Pussy Riot" protestors in order to pacify foreign critics and prevent any shunning of his Games. Meanwhile, the German Olympians at Sochi may have had not just Russian homophobia in mind but also their own dark past when they showed up in rainbow-coloured outfits that looked like an advertisement for Gay rights.

If the examples of Beijing and Sochi offer the most obvious recent parallels to 1936, the upcoming 2016 Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro beg the fundamental question of whether Berlin's ghosts do not merely haunt the Olympic regime but constitute it. Rio, after all, is supposed to open a new and splendid chapter for the Games – just as Berlin 1936 was meant to showcase the modern Games at their finest (something Avery Brundage insisted they had actually done). Rio will indeed be, as Brazil's president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva proudly pointed out when the city was selected in 2009, the first city in South America to host the Games (Clift and Andrews 2012). The host nation of Brazil, Lula also boasted, stood as a veritable poster child of economic progress and democracy in the "developing" world. In keeping with this democratic spirit, Rio's Olympic facilities would be the most "transparent" and "inclusive" in history.

Predictably, the real story behind Rio's Olympic build-up has proven to be more complicated. Municipal and state governments, as well as business elites, clearly view the Olympics as key to the physical reshaping of the city and its global rebranding for investment. Central to this undertaking is an alleged "public–private partnership" in the planning and financing of projects. "Legacy," "sustainability," and "transparency" are the favoured buzzwords.[1] Here we seem to have come a very long way from Berlin 1936, and yet the Nazis too were obsessed with making the Olympics a lasting part of their anticipated "1000-year" legacy – "sustainability" in spades.

The builders of Berlin 1936 cleared out a whole section of the city to make way for Hitler's grand Olympic stage. Potential "troublemakers," including Communists and Gypsies, were rounded up in advance and incarcerated in camps. In the case of Rio, a vast $1.7 billion "pacification" programme launched in 2007 began clearing away unsightly *favelas* and hunting down the gang lords who ran them (Baena 2011). Yet despite these efforts, violent crime has increased since 2012, while drug-trafficking has likely moved to parts of the city not yet "pacified" (Monteiro 2014).

The Olympic Games, Brazilian critics claim, do not merely inspire horrors like this but supply the exigent legal means whereby normal channels are circumvented or overwritten in the name of efficiency and patriotic necessity.[2] Tellingly, these critics have deployed the term "state of exception" to justify circumventions of established law by Brazil's Olympic planners, thus directly invoking the language the Third Reich's favourite legal philosopher, Carl Schmitt, used to describe the *Ausnahmefall* (Exceptional Situation) exploited by Hitler to rule dictatorially (Vainer 2011).

Emergency laws and police brutality notwithstanding, one might reasonably observe that the sort of anti-Olympic (and anti-World Cup) mass protests that Rio witnessed in recent years distinguish this case from Berlin (or Moscow, Beijing, or even Sochi), where no similar protests could have occurred. So too, one might note that the very embrace of "entrepreneurial" civic development and its attendant push to make the city safe for international capital betrays a markedly different set of priorities from those of Berlin. Undoubtedly the age of neoliberal globalisation has created a competitive market for international urban development on a wholly different

scale from the 1930s. Even so, if the essential myths of the Olympic Games – that they are not political, that they celebrate the purity of amateur sport over professionalism, commercialism, and so forth – were laid bare by the "Nazi Games" as never before, then surely no modern Olympic festival can escape the ghosts of Berlin. For it is in that gilded gulf between concocted fantasy and reality that the Olympic Games trade. Were that gulf to close, what would be the point in bidding for them?

Notes

1 The words "transparency," "inclusivity," and "sustainability" are omnipresent in the Rio Candidature File.
2 Municipal Decree 30.379/2009, for instance, dictates that "all the necessary efforts" are made "to ensure that properties belonging to the municipal government are available for use if they are essential to the 2016 Rio Games, even if they are (currently) occupied by third parties." See "Mega-Events and Human Rights Violations in Brazil," Report from the National Coalition of Committees for a People's World Cup and Olympics, Executive Summary, June 2012, p. 5.

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34

LATIN AMERICA'S FIRST OLYMPICS

Mexico 1968

Keith Brewster and Claire Brewster

With barely two years to go before the 2016 Olympics, unsubstantiated rumours were circulating the international media claiming that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was perturbed by the 'state of unreadiness' in Rio de Janeiro. With only 10 per cent of the infrastructure completed, the IOC was apparently making 'informal, secretive enquiries' with a view to London taking on the Games if the Brazilians were unable to deliver (*Independent* 2014). While the rumours provoked strong denials and even stronger reassurances from the IOC, there may have been more than a few Mexicans who could be forgiven for offering a wry smile: they had heard it all before.

Despite the cyclical nature of mega-sports events and the predictability of the controversies they attract, organising committees are keen to emphasise features that make their Games different. In the case of the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, several were easy to identify. This was the first time the Olympics had come to Latin America; indeed it was the first time a Spanish-speaking country had played host. It was the first time a nation from the euphemistically labelled 'developing world' had staged the Games. It was the first time a woman lit the Olympic flame, and the first time that televised images of the events were transmitted 'live' and in colour across the globe. It was also the first time that the Olympics and Football World Cup were held in the same country within two years; an occurrence that has seldom been repeated and would take until Brazil 2014 and 2016 for this to be achieved again in Latin America.

Mexico 1968 also set a series of precedents that its organisers neither planned nor celebrated. It was one of the first in which the spectre of a large-scale international boycott seriously threatened to jeopardise the Games. It was one of the first at which competing athletes used the global sporting arena to make political protests. It was also one of the first in which the host nation's sense of insecurity on the international stage led to heightened tensions at home. This produced a situation that would be witnessed in later Games: an international posture of inclusion and magnanimity existing simultaneously with domestic press censorship and containment of protests. An analysis of Mexico 1968, therefore, offers an opportunity to scrutinise a host nation under multiple and varied strains, to compare its differing reactions to local and foreign protests, and to assess the ways in which the IOC fed into the equation.