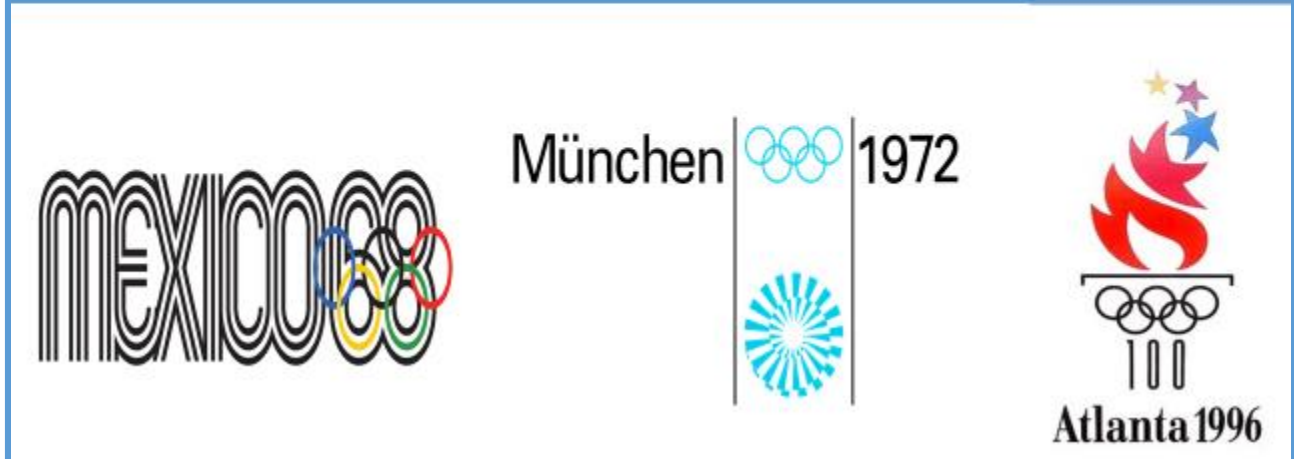


“The Nationalist Meanings of 20th Century Olympic Games: Conflicting National Identities and Memories in Mexico, Germany, and America”



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In 1896, Pierre de Coubertin established the modern Olympic Games to foster global "mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship and fair play," according to the International Olympic Committee. Despite his hopes, the Games have long been used as political attempts to create coherent, modern images of host nations. Host nations have used media as diverse as architecture and newspapers to introduce themselves to a global audience and to create common national identities. Opposing groups within these host nations have also used the world stage of the Olympics to air their grievances, though. As seen in the portrayal of conflicting strains of nationalism in the Olympics of Mexico City 1968, Munich 1972, and Atlanta 1996, the international media provided confirmation or denial for one of these narratives. Analysis of international newspaper, magazine, and TV accounts proves that in Mexico City and Atlanta, conflicting views of the host nation developed internally, and the international press validated one of these views; in the Munich Games, the international press struck down the idealized view of the German nation and inspired fractures from within the nation. In all three scenarios, the "winner" of this nationalism contest was defined by who succeeded in drawing the most international support.