

The emblem of the Games of the XIXth Olympiad

Motivations and embodiment

The following four elements were chosen to form the emblem for the 1968 Olympic Games, to be held in Mexico City :

1. The olympic circles ;
2. The aztec calendar ;
3. The name of Mexico, and
4. The mexican national colors.

The olympic circles represent the union of the five world continents. From their colors : blue, yellow, green, red and black, may be formed the flags of all the nations. This is the generic element in the emblems of all modern-day Olympic Games.

The aztec calendar was chosen as the characteristic element of the host country as it is known throughout the world and is identified with Mexico, because "it expresses the doctrine of the ancient Mexicans in keeping with their concept of the universe" and "encompasses all the knowledge attained by the Aztecs in the science of astronomy and the measurement of time".

If one bears in mind the Greek concept of the Olympiad, "a period of four years between the festivals of the Olympic Games", used in Greek chronology to establish a system of dates which commenced in 776 B. C. and ended in 394 A. D., there is happy affinity between the concepts of universality and the measurement of time in the aztec calendar and the Olympiads, and this spirit inspires the present-day Olympic Games.

It is evident that the proposed emblem embodies the characteristics required for heraldic standards and advertising purposes : to represent the fundamental nature of something ; to disseminate it in an up-to-date manner, and to preserve it as a complement of history.

Historic sketch (see pages 38 and 39)

The aztec calendar, also called the "piedra del sol" (sun stone) a cosmic monolith, is probably the most important graphic stone monument bequeathed us by pre-hispanic times. Found in the Main Square of Mexico City on December 17, 1790, approximately 35 meters to the north of the present City Hall, the stone is now exhibited in the new Chapultepec Museum. The calendar is carved from olive-green basalt rock taken from the quarries in the southern part of the valley of Mexico. This monument expresses the doctrine of the ancients of Mexico in accordance with their conception of the universe and sums up their astronomical knowledge. The cosmogonic suns, or the stages of the destruction and restoration of the world, are represented on this stone. According to those who have studied the stone, it contains all the knowledge of the Aztecs in the science of astronomy and the measurement of time. It is definitely of aztec origin and was carved in the XV Century, very probably in the reign of the Ahuitzotl (1486-1502). The calendar has been studied on many occasions, but has not been completely deciphered, as yet.

