

aspect of the growth of international sport in the early 20th century. Keys posits that even the Nazis were unable to impose their ideology with impunity upon the Games in Berlin. Rather, they were forced, however briefly, to appease the Olympic leaders and to conform (or appear to conform) to the internationalist and inclusive ideals promoted by the IOC – ideals which even the latter itself did not always follow that closely.

Keys' arguments concerning the influence of internationalist and inclusive ideologies on these great powers via the Olympic Games are convincing – even given the fact that the Soviets did not actually make it to the Games until 1952. Her position raises additional questions: why did these powers and others accept the dictates of organizations such as the IOC and key international sports federations? In an era in which states struggled to make the League of Nations work, organizing committees in Los Angeles and Berlin followed the directions of an unelected group of men running what amounted to a club. There appear to have been no significant thoughts of challenging the IOC (unlike the earliest years of the century when the IOC did face challenges as to whether it should be the organization in charge of choosing the locations for the Games and deciding upon the program of events). By the 1920s nation-states accepted that the IOC ran the Olympic Games and agreed to play by its rules rather than challenging it.

Likewise FIFA was firmly in control of the World Cup. While giving up sovereignty to a supra-national body such as the League of Nations was problematic (indeed a non-starter for a significant number of countries), the Great powers willingly went along with the IOC and FIFA and their internationalist ideologies. Was this because they did not think sport worth the effort of controlling themselves? Did they foresee similar organizational problems that plagued the League of Nations? These questions may go beyond the boundaries Keys set for herself in this book. However, that additional questions remain suggest that Keys has, in fact, done her job well in explicating the rise of global sports events since her work will prompt fellow scholars to consider the implications of this rise for our understanding of global international relations during the 20th century.



*Nazi Games: The Olympics of 1936* by David Clay Large (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 407 pp. Reviewed by Matthew P. Llewellyn, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, USA.

In *Nazi Games: The Olympics of 1936* author David Clay Large, a historian of modern Germany and author of numerous texts on Nazi Germany, uncovers the intricate relationship that exists between international sport and politics. As Large demonstrates, this relationship was forcefully accentuated during the

most controversial international sporting event of the modern era, the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. Building upon the vast body of secondary literature that exists on this topic and adding “fresh” primary source materials from the International Olympic Committee, the German Olympic Committee, the United States Olympic Committee, and other archives, Large places the games within the context of Germany’s wider cultural renaissance following the National Socialist Party’s seizure of power in 1933. Identifying international sport as a platform for national propaganda, Large asserts that Adolph Hitler embraced the Olympics as an opportunity to dazzle the world with the power of the new militaristic German state. By opening some “new vistas” and correcting popular misconceptions surrounding the games, Large presents a thoroughly enjoyable account of the infamous 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Appealing to a general audience, *Nazi Games* covers the customary range of topics addressed in similar historical works. Large covers the boycott movements, the winter games held in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, the Max Schmeling-Joe Louis heavyweight boxing bout, and Leni Riefenstahl’s ground-breaking cinematic capture of the Berlin games in remarkable detail over the course of ten comprehensive chapters. Large also documents the sporting events and athletes that comprised the summer Olympic program, such as Jesse Owens’ superlative four gold medal performances. He also examines the intense pseudo-classical symbolism associated with the summer games, contending that the invention of the torch relay and the Olympic bell by the Nazi Propaganda Ministry served as powerful symbols that evoked images of a heroic ancient past and connected them with a revived and vigorous Germany.

In his opening chapter Large attempts to explain the revival of the Olympic phenomenon from its agonistic roots in antiquity to its development into a global athletic festival. The author’s sweeping review of all the early modern Olympic Games from “Athens to Amsterdam” may suit the book’s intended general audience, but from a scholarly perspective, the chapter is too broad and is replete with omissions and mistakes.

In spite of these early problems the highlight of the *Nazi Games* is the author’s examination of the Olympic boycott movement that gathered steam ahead of Hitler’s strident anti-Semitic policies and crackdowns of internal dissent. Surpassing similar works on this topic, Large unravels the drama that unfolded in the years leading up to the Games. He focuses on the boycott movement in the U.S., but also details the protest movements that germinated in both Great Britain and France. The author also presents an excellent discussion on the handful of Jewish athletes from around the world who did successfully boycott the games, including U.S. track hopefuls, Milton Green and Norman Cahners and Austrian swimmers, Judith Deutsch, Ruth Langer and Lucie Goldner.

In the final section of his book Large provides a detailed epilogue that covers a whole host of topics ranging from Jesse Owens' post-Olympic career to future intrusions of politics including the Olympic boycotts of the 1980s. Regrettably, the final section fails to provide an adequate conclusion. Ultimately, Large fails to offer a final assessment of the place the 1936 Olympics holds in the development of the international Olympic movement. As numerous scholarly works, such as Maurice Roche's, *Mega-events and Modernity: Olympics, Expos and the Growth of Global Culture*, have posited, the 1936 Olympic Games signaled the growth of the Olympics from a sideshow aligned with world fairs into a truly global sporting mega-event. Moreover, Large adds little new insight to the existing analyses of the impact of the Nazi Olympics on the modern relationship between sport and politics. Finally, Large reveals that an impetus behind writing this text was the award of the 2008 Olympics to Beijing. He asserts that a correlation exists between the Third Reich's and Communist China's hosting of the games. Frustratingly, Large fails to develop this interesting idea further.

To judge the Nazi Games one must compare it to other leading historical texts that examine the infamous 1936 Berlin Olympics. Richard Mandell's work, *The Nazi Olympics*, has long been held by scholars as being the seminal historical treatment. Although Large's text is not as rich in historical analysis nor as well composed as Mandell's, *Nazi Games* provides a wealth of new information. Unfortunately, mostly because no notes are included, and this is certainly a damning indictment, Large fails to indicate clearly for the general reader when new material is being presented. This omission aside, Large provides fresh insight by examining the lively Berlin "social scene" that bustled throughout Olympic competition. Germany lured large numbers of foreign dignitaries and celebrities to Berlin in an attempt to win global approval for the Nazi regime. As Large reveals, American VIPs, such as the aviator Charles Lindbergh and the novelist Thomas Wolfe, along with anti-Nazi diplomats, such as Sir Robert Vansittart of Great Britain, were wined and dined by Nazi officials throughout the games.

Notwithstanding the weaknesses noted above, *Nazi Games: The Olympics of 1936* accomplishes what the author sets out to achieve by producing an obviously well-researched and vivid text that successfully brings the 1936 Berlin Olympics to the general reader. Placing the games in the wider context of a German cultural renaissance, Large demonstrates how the Olympics serve as an important platform for both the transmission of political ideologies and the measure of national virility.

