

Surveilling and Securing the Olympics: From Tokyo 1964 to London 2012 and Beyond

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Preface

This book is a team effort to articulate a coherent theoretical and empirical approach toward a historically and comparatively informed understanding of how surveillance and security have been serving as means to cope with increasing complexity of the Olympic Games. Security meta-ritual is outlined as a theoretical framework while historical and comparative team ethnography is proposed as a research method. The book is divided into multiple sections.

The Prologue invites theorist and ethnographer of public events Don Handelman to reflect on this research agenda. His essay draws connections between an insistence on equality and competition for the Olympic athletes and a preoccupation with exactness of measurement and controlled outcomes through continuous and systematic surveillance of athletic performance. He points out that this surveillance of the athletes is based on that bureaucratic ethos on which the modern Olympics were founded. Surveillance helps to uphold the venerable Olympic values and their motto *Citius – Altius – Fortius* (Faster – Higher – Stronger) and also provides a supporting structure to the quest for security against interruptions of the staging of the Games. In this way, surveillance is foundational to the Olympics, yet interestingly very much misunderstood. Surveillance for the purposes of exactness of measurement of outcomes in competitions is so accepted and taken for granted that it is not even seen as surveillance. In contrast, surveillance in the name of security is assumed to be an intrusion that is necessary to protect the Games from disruption but must not interfere with their festivities. Handelman offers insights into this confusion by drawing on literary work by French novelist Georges Perec for inspiration.

Following the Prologue are two introductory essays. Vida Bajc, the book's editor, outlines historical and comparative team ethnography as a research method and explicates security meta-ritual as a new form of social control, which has morphed in the context of global planned events through the nexus between surveillance technologies and techniques and security concerns. The surveillance-security nexus emerges through efforts to reduce the complexity of such events in the hope of being able to tame their uncertainty. Complexity of the Olympics stems from two sources: the organizational structure of the Games; and their actual performance in a particular time period and geographical location. A set of variables is articulated to analyze how security meta-ritual of the Olympic Games has historically emerged as a form of control of uncertainty. When the public is made aware that preparations for the Olympics are underway, there is a shift of local and international attention to the host city

and country, including through public protests and critical journalism, all of which tend to push security to the forefront. Official and public discourses draw on references to collective memories of violent disruptions in collective public life in the past. Institutions of public order have their own memories of such disruptions, using them as knowledge to envision protective measures. These memories support the push for making all possible resources available to ensure a safe Olympics. Everyone and everything related to the Games, including local legislation, is made to cooperate towards this common goal. At the heart of this activity is purification of social and physical spaces through which the potentially dangerous is separated from what is deemed safe. These practices lead to creation of sterile zones of safety within which the Olympics are to unfold as planned and without unwanted disruption.

Richard Pound offers insights into ways in which perceptions of surveillance and security have shaped the decision-making of the International Olympic Committee, of which he has been a longtime member, close observer, and decision-maker. The Committee is the sole arbiter in selection of the host city, inclusion of sports in each program, selection of athletes eligible to compete, accreditation of National Olympic Committees, and signing of broadcasting and promotional contracts. Among the numerous dilemmas, conflicts, and paradoxes that accompany this decision-making, one guiding principle takes center stage; namely, to ensure that the Olympics survive and thrive into the future.

The second section considers 15 Olympics as case studies spanning the period between the 1964 Tokyo Winter Games and the 2012 London Summer Games. Each Olympics is situated in its particular cultural, social, political, geographical, and historical circumstances. Detailed empirical evidence was compiled and analyzed for each case with the following in mind: What does security of the Olympics mean in this context? What constitutes its disruption? What kind of surveillance technologies and procedures are put in place to ensure security of the Games? The chapters are cross-referenced to suggest interconnections and show continuities but can also be read at random as each stands as an independent contribution. They are outlined in historical progression for practical reasons of clarity and ease of organization.

The earliest case we consider, the 1964 Tokyo Winter Games, highlights a preoccupation with self-image and its global media representation. Christian Tagsold finds little evidence for concerns with potential disruptions to the security of the Games. The organizers seemed to have been much more focused on how to portray Japanese culture to the world. For this they did not use the occasion to spotlight particularities of local and indigenous culture, as the Olympic values would encourage, but to demonstrate that Japan adhered to Western standards of development and sophistication. To this end, every effort was made to avoid what the West could have perceived as disorderly behavior. Traditional, spontaneous, exuberant elements of folk carnival were curtailed. In their place came promotion of patriotism and sportsmanship. Participation of the military and police was acknowledged to be central

to the success of the Games. As it becomes evident in the subsequent chapters, preoccupation with Western perceptions of orderliness and the roles the military and police are to play during the Olympics toward achieving these standards have been central to concerns regarding security at the Olympics.

The 1968 Mexico City Games took place during a period of worldwide outbursts of popular discontent, collective mobilization, and public protest. Kevin Witherspoon shows that while the official post-event report makes no mention of security issues or surveillance measures, other empirical evidence suggests that the organizers made use of an extensive network of state institutions with a known history of repression. The push to organize the Games came from the highest-ranking military official in Mexico who also happened to be the highest-ranking sports official in the country, a member of organizing committees of other high-profile sport events in the region, and an elected official of the International Olympic Committee. Reliance on hyper-powerful individuals for the organization of the Games is another defining feature of this event. The Mexican elites and their supporters were eager to showcase the country, and themselves, to the world, but they were out of touch with the general public and its grievances. Days before the Opening Ceremony, several hundred people died in the central public square in the government's attempt to squash the protest. Foreign reporters and film crews were in the city for the Games, and various media outlets reported on the killings. Yet, decades later, this disruption of the Olympics remains largely forgotten outside of Mexico.

In the history of the Olympics, it is the Munich Games that have come to be widely remembered in this regard. To understand surveillance and security in relation to such disruptions, however, the Winter as well as the Summer Games in 1972 are of interest. The Sapporo Olympics in February were facing extensive public protests, yet Kiyoshi Abe found no empirical evidence to suggest that the organizers consulted Mexico City on matters of public dissent. It seems clear, however, that staff was sent for consultation to a number of other cities that had previously organized such global events. This kind of institutional knowledge accumulation later comes to be known as "best practices." Some form of public protest tends to accompany most Olympics. The Sapporo organizers took their own, culturally specific approach to dealing with it. They used mass media to discredit the protesters by accusing them of disrespect for the emperor, an issue of deep concern for the Japanese public. The police conducted raids in the red light district, arrested pickpockets, locked up drug dealers, and surveilled dissenting citizens. These undemocratic activities on the part of the state were faced with little public outrage or debate. Instead, the police was able to successfully claim that it was its preemptive surveillance tactics that ensured the safety of the Games.

The organizers of the Summer Games in Munich consulted previous Olympic cities, particularly Rome, Tokyo, and Mexico City, and took advice from organizers of similar events in Asia and South America. Jørn Hansen shows that this institutional memory was used in different ways. Special temporary regulation was put in place in the city of Munich to prohibit the right to demonstrate. Such legislation has become an element of the organization of

the Olympics. For culturally specific reasons, however, a heavy military presence was not appealing to the organizers of the Munich Olympics of 1972. They wanted the Games to be open, audience friendly, and clearly disassociated from the militaristic Olympics organized under Hitler in Berlin in 1939. Several days into the Games, eight members of the Palestinian Black September Organization pushed their way into the quarters that housed the Israeli team, killing several and taking others hostage. The act and its failed rescue mission were televised live by a German station and followed by millions around the world. In this decisive moment in the history of the Olympics, the then president of the International Olympic Committee stepped in front of the television cameras and declared to the world that despite the tragic disruption the Games must continue.

Four years later, the same president made it clear to Canadians that ensuring security was their responsibility. The organizers of Montreal 1976, however, were not only concerned about what happened in Munich. They were also focused on internal political issues, including labor strikes, the nationalism movement in Quebec, and the gay rights movement. Bruce Kidd details how surveillance was featured prominently on all fronts. The most advanced military technology was employed in cooperation with special intelligence units, police, and border-crossing agents. Helicopters patrolled in the air, soldiers with automatic weapons and sharpshooters patrolled on the ground, and hidden surveillance cameras and listening devices patrolled the rest. In addition, the most advanced biomedical testing laboratory was set up to surveil athletes for banned substances. This show of force infamously put the city of Montreal into debt for decades.

In their own ways, the 1980 Moscow Games, like those in Montreal, were also about security and order, but as Carol Marmor-Drews shows, this case highlights what it meant to organize a global event of this scope in a society that saw itself as bearing the responsibility to represent to the world an alternative model of social organization. The Moscow organizers hoped that the country would be acknowledged by the Western world as like but different. There was anxiety about the boycott campaign spearheaded by the United States, internal subversive activities with support from outside the country, and the threat of crime, which would be seen to reflect badly on Soviet culture. The acute awareness that the world was watching for any mishap also created high sensitivity to negative representation and critical reporting on the part of the international media. Huge pressure exerted on the organizers through global news reporting becomes more evident in later Olympics. The Soviet state had a policy of tight control of state border crossing as well as restrictions on internal geographic mobility. The International Olympic Committee, however, demanded that the organizers enable free movement within the host cities. The task was enormous as the Games were staged in five cities spread apart by huge distances. To both meet Western expectations and be able to enforce a crime- and sabotage-free environment, the Moscow organizers resorted to tested and trusted strategies from the past: Stalin era residential policies and community-order policing.

The 1988 Seoul Olympics exposed another Cold War rift – this one between North and South Korea. The push by the military government of South Korea to host the Games in Seoul ignited, in multiple countries, fierce opposition and attempts to derail the plan. Gwang Ok and Kyoung Ho Park show how the Seoul Olympics became an opportunity for a wide-ranging cooperation in matters of surveillance and security between South Korea and its Western supporters, including France, Israel, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and West Germany. The allies supplied intelligence, special forces, navy and air force support, and surveillance know-how. South Korea shared all its intelligence on North Korea in exchange for information on international terror suspects, a computer system identifying forged passports, and antiterrorism training with foreign special operations forces. The South Korean military was on full alert and was battle-ready. Personal information on participants at the Olympics was subjected to background checks, and individuals were monitored throughout their stay in South Korea. Thousands of volunteers were trained in surveillance and used to fill up space at competitions and ceremonies. Private computer and software-related companies were commissioned to develop central management systems to oversee all the surveillance activities. These systems are early examples of the search for capacity for a central command and control, which appears to have become one of the most highly priced surveillance technologies and strategies for the Games.

There was much diplomacy and publicity management at work in Spain for the 1992 Barcelona Games. As Stephen Essex argues, the goal was to show to the world and the emerging European Union that Spain had moved beyond its decades-long military-style rule. It was now able to democratically integrate the different interest groups vying for political autonomy and independence, and it was on its way to be prominently positioned as an economically vibrant and modernized state with favorable conditions for international investment. A number of political activists were jailed to prevent disruption, which nevertheless took place but was neglected by the global media and dismissed by the organizers as inconvenient but not threatening to the Games. Those responsible for security had learned from the successful implementation of surveillance in Los Angeles, Calgary, and Seoul and then designed their own model for the Barcelona Games. The Director of Security subsequently acted as adviser for the next four Olympics, demonstrating that experience in dealing with surveillance and security during the Olympics can be highly marketable, and showing an early example of consolidation of the role of security advisers as powerful players in the emerging field of private security expertise of the Olympics.

With little fear of internal political conflict, terrorism, or crime, security did not seem to be a prominent concern for the Norwegian organizers of the 1994 Lillehammer Games. Rather, Ingrid Rudie shows that the public took issue with the conflicting values between the egalitarian tendencies of the Norwegian society and the elitist orientation of the Olympics. In response, the organizers opted for surveillance strategies that were to be sufficient but not overshadow the festive atmosphere of the Games. There was free pedestrian movement in the central area of

Lillehammer and between the venues. Entry into competition venues and areas for athletes, as well as special guest quarters, were monitored through checkpoints. As a member of a research team, Rudie was accredited with an “observer” status, which allowed her to enter only the sports venues directly relevant to her research agenda – and within those venues, only the zones designated for administration and the press. Adjusted to local needs, this accreditation system seems to have become a standardized surveillance strategy on the ground, regardless of where the Games are hosted.

In the United States, the ambition to centrally command and control surveillance procedures during the Olympics is faced with a number of challenges. The federal constitution limits the power of federal agencies over local districts, public sentiment tends to be strongly against federal involvement in municipal affairs, and events such as the Olympics are considered to be private enterprise and therefore not the government’s responsibility. With the hindsight from the disruption to the 1996 Atlanta Games, and on the heels of 9/11, Sean Varano, George W. Burruss, and Scott Decker show how a series of special legislation, aimed at bypassing constitutional restrictions, allowed the 2002 Salt Lake City Games to be designated as a “National Special Security Event.” Through this classification, the United States President or head of the Department of Homeland Security can allocate extraordinary powers by designating certain events and their private infrastructure as nationally significant. This designation permits the use of the military for domestic security, allows for the allocation of federal tax money, and positions the United States Secret Service as the umbrella agency for the implementation of all technologies and techniques of surveillance. Such implementation of extraordinary legislation to enable surveillance at the Olympics has become an integral part of the preparation for the Games.

The case of the 2004 Athens Olympics exposes the workings of vast internationally networked political and economic power structures and their strategies of exerting pressure on a host country. Anastassia Tsoukala illuminates some of these tactics, including shaming Greece for inadequate policing capacities, threatening to boycott the Olympics in the absence of adequate antiterrorism efforts, media reporting strategically aimed at influencing the Greek public perceptions of threat, and demands for foreign special forces agents to carry weapons in the state of Greece. These pressures successfully challenged the sovereignty of the Greek state when the host city was forced to purchase, from a consortium of corporations, a state-of-the-art surveillance technology, which was to remain in place after the Olympics to fight terrorism. The system, however, was not delivered by the agreed deadline and, in addition, turned out to be so complex that those parts which were delivered failed to be fully installed in time to be operational for the Games with proper training of personnel. This failure of super technology demonstrated, in fact, that conventional surveillance technologies and techniques were more than sufficient to prevent disruption to the Games.

The case of 2006 Winter Games allows us to understand the spatial configuration of surveillance. As Alberto Vanolo details, the Olympic zone in Turin was divided into three sections: the urban area; and two mountain regions. Each of the three spaces was further divided into noncompetitive, competitive, and residential areas. Within each of these sub-areas, the space was divided by concentric circles leading toward the central “security ring” isolated by a high fence. Olympic villages were self-contained spaces with their own daily newspapers, flower shops, convenience stores, hair salons, disco parties, prayer sessions for many faiths, recreation rooms, coffee houses, ballroom dance parties, shopping centers, Broadway shows, live concerts, and birthday celebrations to give the athletes little desire to leave the village. Every village and competitive venue also had a doping control station. Samples were collected daily from randomly selected athletes and delivered to the Olympic laboratory to be analyzed by accredited physicians, and the results were then reported directly to the International Olympic Committee.

The 2008 Beijing Games were conceived as an event of the people, showcasing the culture and heritage of the roughly 50 ethnic groups of the People’s Republic of China, at home and in the diaspora. Gladys Pak Lei Chong, Jeroen de Kloet, and Guohua Zeng show, however, that this aim was disrupted by uprisings in Tibet, protests surrounding the torch relay as it traveled around the world, and demonstrations inside China to counter this international response. In the midst of these dynamics, the International Olympic Committee began to publicly pronounce that the Beijing Olympics would be safe and that safety of the Olympics was more important than the competitions, while the organizers turned to the domestic public for support. They began a huge media campaign, using television, radio, street billboards, and posters, asking people to help create a festive and safe Olympics by cooperating, following the rules, and acting as security guards in their own neighborhoods. A public television program aired a feature on the history of surveillance and security in the Olympics, explaining that disruptions such as in Munich 1972 and in the United States on 9/11 prompted a global trend in the use of surveillance technology and techniques to ensure safe Olympics. The public was to accept that a special visa regime was imposed to require everyone in Beijing, both Chinese and foreign, who was not a resident of the city to register with the local police. Despite these efforts, it seems that in the eyes of the organizers, intentions and behavior of the general public could nevertheless not be unconditionally trusted so, in some venues, specific individuals were recruited as volunteers and trained as audience to replace the public.

Olympic hosts showcase their cities as idealized spaces that are secured and ordered to the liking of global economic, financial, and political elites. How this is achieved is locally specific. Jacqueline Kennelly details how various municipal guidelines tutored the residents of Vancouver for their 2010 Olympics on good manners, pride, and patriotism. Those who were deemed not suitable for such civility, particularly the homeless, the marginalized youth, and other vulnerable populations, were targeted for jaywalking, possession of drugs, loitering, or squatting,

and promptly removed from the host city. Others were educated in good behavior. Frowning, for example, was said to convey anger, so the residents were asked to smile. They were informed, however, that exaggerated smiles could come across as artificial or even invite suspicion, so people were asked not to simply smile but to do so with sincerity. Such strategies aimed at purifying the host city of inhabitants whose ways of being are not in line with the image of a wealthy, prosperous, and technologically developed host country have become a part of the process of staging secure Olympics.

The scope and complexity of this ambition to stage secured and perfectly ordered Olympics were on full display in London for its 2012 Summer Olympics. So, too, were the role of the military, the importance of volunteers, and the shortcomings of the reliance on privatization of surveillance and security services. Joseph Bongiovi shows that the enormity of this undertaking was such that a corporate security behemoth, together with thousands of volunteers, huge police force, military force larger than that deployed in war zones, and military technology such as missiles positioned on residential rooftops of east Londoners, all struggled to deliver safe Olympics. A major global security corporation was entrusted with putting together the labor force for the Games. Despite its extensive history of operations in areas as diverse as diplomatic missions, war zones, immigration detention centers, prisons, hospitals, asylum centers, and police stations, the Olympics proved to be a challenge the corporation could not handle. The day before the ceremonial opening of the Games, the company publicly admitted that some 9000 volunteers were still waiting to be approved and trained for work in the Olympics. At the last hour, additional volunteers were asked to help and the military was forced to make available several thousand more soldiers to help make safe Olympics happen.

There are local variations in how security meta-ritual, as a form of social control of the Olympic Games, transpires through intensive attention by the mass media and public dissent directed toward the host country, the workings of collective and institutional memory, the push for mobilization of all possible resources, efforts to make participating institutions and individuals adhere to a centralized authority, purification of social and physical spaces, and the nature of the sterile zone of safety created through this process. The symbolic meaning of this activity seems nevertheless to have crystalized with the following message: If there is the ambition to stage the Olympics, this is how it is done safely.

The secure social order which emerges through this process is a challenge to the values espoused by the Olympic Games and the democratic principles of social organization. This is a large-scale, maximally controlled social and physical environment in which social complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty are controlled through hierarchy, exclusion, and authoritarian decision-making. The book concludes with an artistic rendering of these Olympic dilemmas by cartoonist Bruce Beattie. The editor, Vida Bajc, in turn, offers her reflection on ways in

which this experience of delivering secure Olympics on the part of the host country may reverberate in everyday life well beyond the event itself with potentially lasting transformations in multiple domains of society.