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Organizing the Fiesta del Fútbol: The Hosting of the 1970 and 1986 World Cup in Mexico

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by

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The Thesis of Jose Miguel Guzman Dominguez is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

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DEDICATION

Para la persona que siempre ha estado conmigo, en los momentos buenos y en los malos.

Para mi amiga, la que me acompaña a disfrutar y sufrir con el deporté que más me apasiona.

Para mi modelo a seguir, la que me enseñó a nunca rendirme. Esta tesis es para ti, mamá.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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by

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This thesis examines the organization of the 1970 and 1986 World Cup in Mexico. By implementing an ecology model, it demonstrates the connections between these events and the 1968 Olympic Games. This thesis argues that the hosting of the World Cup exemplified the PRI's diminishing interest in the potential of professional sports to promote a nationalist project, and the rising influence of sporting entrepreneurs over these activities. Emilio Azcarrága Milmo and Guillermo Cañedo became the driving figures behind the hosting of the 1970 and the 1986

World Cups from their position as leaders of the Mexican soccer federation and Mexico's telecommunications company. Together, they worked to pursue and organize the World Cup with the objective of making significant profits.

Introduction

On June 13, 2018, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), a non-profit organization responsible for governing soccer competitions worldwide, announced the venue for the upcoming 2026 World Cup. For the first time, FIFA members chose a project that included three nations: Canada, the United States, and Mexico. These countries submitted the project, *Unity*, as an opportunity to share the responsibilities associated with the organization of FIFA's prestigious soccer tournament. According to this plan, the United States would assume most of the economic burdens by hosting a significant number of the matches for the 2026 World Cup, which would offer Canada and Mexico a chance to limit their spending and receive some economic benefits. The project convinced FIFA voters, and *Unity* received sixty percent of the votes from the 200 valid voters.[1] After the announcement, a conversation emerged in Mexico about this selection's economic and political implications. On the one hand, some journalists perceived Mexico's decision to pursue another World Cup as an attempt to consolidate economic ties with the United States and Canada. To others, Mexico's decision to participate in the project and limit the number of hosted matches showed the nation's lack of economic resources to play a protagonist role in the organization of global competitions.[2] After all, Mexico had hosted two World Cups without its northern neighboring countries before the new millennium.

Mexico became a protagonist in the hosting of international competitions in the mid-20th century. Although Mexico had experience in regional and national sporting competitions, the

[1] "Canada, Mexico and USA selected as hosts of the 2026 FIFA World Cup" (June 13, 2019), https://www.fifa.com/about-fifa/who-we-are/news/canada-mexico-and-usa-selected-as-hosts-of-the-2026-fifa-world-cuptm

[2] Jassiel Valdelamar, "El Mundial 2026 generaría beneficios a México," *El Universal* (June 19, 2019) https://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/economia/el-mundial-2026-generaria-beneficios-a-mexico

nation's prestige increased with its selection as the official venue for the 1968 Olympic Games, the first major international competition it assumed responsibility for arranging. While Mexico's selection appeared to be an accomplishment, the 1968 Olympics and the preparation for them became associated with the massacre of students at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas. Hosting a global competition only uncovered the fragility of Mexico's political structure and the oppressive nature of the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). However, Mexico still became the IX World Cup's hosting state only two years after hosting the Olympic Games. The proximity between these events points to a different interpretation of the impact of hosting the Olympics. In subsequent years, Mexico became the official venue for another World Cup, which turned the nation into the only country to host this event twice. The hosting of these competitions indicates a transcendent effort from a group of individuals that attracted these events to Mexico during these years.

The 1970 and 1986 World Cups represent an opportunity to analyze Mexico's internal affairs during the Cold War era. I began this project by asking a simple question: Who were the driving figures behind these projects? The elaborate preparations behind these competitions pointed to a combined effort between different organizations, political figures, and members of the Mexican private sector. It became clear that the intentions and initial preparations came from the leaders of the national soccer federations and the telecommunications sector. Therefore, I began to formulate a different question: how did the privatization of soccer contribute to the hosting of two World Cups in Mexico?

My thesis answers this question by exploring the PRI's use of competitive sports during the late 20th century. The hosting of the World Cup demonstrated the PRI's dissociation from the use of sports as elements of a nationalist project and provided sporting entrepreneurs with an

opportunity to profit significantly. Mexican politicians perceived sports as capable of shaping the nation and promoting diplomatic ties. However, sporting entrepreneurs focused their attention on soccer as a commercialized product capable of capturing the attention of audiences from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Emilio Azcárraga Milmo and Guillermo Cañedo became influential figures behind the 1970 and 1986 World Cups. From his position as the owner of a global telecommunications company, Azcárraga Milmo constructed an advertisement campaign that promoted these competitions and protected the nation's image from criticisms coming from the unfolding of political developments. Cañedo, in turn, dominated the organizing committees with his administrative experience. These characters worked to eliminate competing narratives of political and economic instability emerging from local developments and the 1968 Olympics significantly influenced the conversations surrounding the events' hosting. Positive scores and the unfolding of public celebrations provided observers with evidence on the event' success. Negative scores and violent incidents that took place in the streets became manifestations of the country's internal political problems, and they increased the criticisms towards hosting these events. In short, Mexican soccer began as a state-backed project that aimed to enhance Mexico's status on the world stage through splendid sporting mega-events, but after the hosting of the 1968 Olympic games multiple World Cups, state interest waned, leaving space for private capitalists to capture the sporting sector for profit.

Sports and History

The examination of competitive sports presents a glimpse at social activities that have influenced societies throughout Latin America. Scholars studying sports have deconstructed these competitions to research different historical aspects in this region. In her book *Citizens and Sportsmen*, Brenda Elsey describes how "amateur football clubs integrated working-class men

into urban politics, connected them to political parties, and served as venues of political critique."[3] The argument connects sporting clubs to the formation of citizens in 20th century Chile. Roger Kittleson's book *The Country of Football* represents another essential study for understanding soccer's influence on Brazil's historical development. According to Kittleson, soccer became one area where the "formation of a tropical-modern brasilidade occurred."[4] In this case, examining soccer provided an opportunity to examine ideas of modernity and the developments that contributed to their formation. Elsey and Joshua Nadel take a similar approach in *Futbolera*, which examines women's and sports' history during the 20th century in Latin America. The study traces the relationship between women and sporting organizations and the influence of sports in their lives. The study notes how women participated in various athletic competitions, but soccer, a male-dominated sport, held a crucial place in the region's sports activities.[5] These studies prove that sports have immense influence over socially constructed ideas of gender, citizenship, and nationality.

The current historiography on Mexico's key sporting competitions emphasizes the 1968 Olympic Games. In part, this is because the event took place at a turning point of Mexican history. Between the 1950s and the 1960s, Mexico experienced years of political and economic stability commonly known as the Golden Age. However, multiple scholars have challenged the narrative of political stability by examining how these years also saw the rise of guerrilla movements and other competing political groups. These different experiences represent distinct social realities within Mexico. While some benefited from the Golden Age, others challenged the

[3] Brenda Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen: Futbol and Politics in 20th-century Chile* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2011).
[4] Roger Kittleson, *The Country of Football: The Making of Modern* Brazil (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).
[5] Elsey, *Citizens and Sportsmen,* 5.

ruling authorities and the economic system with their actions and political ideals.[6] Framing the era as a complex period of political and economic change is a better understanding of Mexico in the 1960s.

Mexico City became the epicenter of a student movement that captured international attention, with political implications for the PRI's ruling. Scholars examining the 1968 Olympic Games have positioned this international competition in the context of the Global Sixties. In their view, the Olympic Games were an attempt by the PRI to consolidate its leadership of Mexico in the eyes of the international arena. However, before the 1968 Olympic Games actually took place, the massacre of students in Tlatelolco became proof of the PRI's oppressive nature and the internal problems affecting the nation. For some scholars, "in the wake of the student massacre . . . gone was the shared concern for international reputation, which reached its epitome with the 1968 Mexico City Olympics."[7] Thus, the Olympics became associated with the end of the Golden Age and the beginning of political and economic destabilization. My study of subsequent hosted competitions contributes to this literature by examining how the history of competitive sports and the World Cup organization projects reflects the influence that sports had in Mexico's economic and political landscape, and how the PRI's declining interest over the promoting of sporting events led to private capitalists capturing the commercialization of soccer.

The structure of the thesis

[6] Alexander Avina, *Specters of Revolution: Peasant Guerrilla in the Cold War Mexican Countryside* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), Tanalis Padilla, *Rural Resistance in the land of Zapata: The Jaramillista Movement and the Myth of the Paz-Priista, 1940-1962* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008), and Jaime Pensado and Enrique C. Ochoa, *Mexico Beyond 1968: Revolutionaries, Radicals, and Repression during the Global Sixties and Subversive Seventies* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2018).

[7] Kevin B. Witherspoon, *Before the Eyes of the World: Mexico and the 1968 Olympic Games* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University, 2008), Eric Zolov, "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics," *The Americas* 61, no. 2 (October 2004), 159-188. Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein, and Eric Zolov, *Fragments of the Golden Age: The Politics of Culture in Mexico Since 1940* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 12.

This thesis begins with a historical examination of professional sports in Mexico. By retracing some of the most significant historical events in modern Mexico, I will examine how the Mexican government influenced the evolution of *fútbol,* or soccer, for U. S. audiences, from a leisure activity practiced by foreign industrial workers to an economic sector capable of capturing the attention of millions of fans. Despite this strong emphasis on soccer, I will also comment on the popularization and professionalization of other competitive sports, such as cycling, and how they shaped local economies. After all, these activities' popularization created the economic conditions necessary to form a private sector capable of sustaining national entrepreneurs. Finally, this chapter introduces the rise of the first sporting entrepreneurs in the Mexican communications industry.

Chapter two begins with an examination of the 1968 Olympic Games. As mentioned above, the Olympic Games became a crucial event for the nation due to their ability to attract the attention – and investment -- of other nations. I will also examine the ties between the process of organizing the Olympics and the initial preparations to host the 1970 World Cup. By examining a collection of sources from FIFA, I will discuss how the 1986 Olympics played a crucial role in the early meetings between FIFA representatives and Mexican organizers. This chapter also examines how the opening ceremony provided Mexican organizers with an opportunity to create a narrative of international integration in the Cold War. For the organizers and the Mexican authorities, the opening ceremony also provided a chance to eliminate criticisms surrounding the event's hosting. In this chapter, I will analyze how the Mexican team's performance and the local fans' reaction towards the matches affected the conversations surrounding the tournament. Finally, the chapter concludes by explaining how FIFA representatives judged the World Cup's organization in Mexico and the effects of this assessment on the nation’s image.

The third chapter examines the organization of the 1986 World Cup. I begin this analysis by exploring the economic and political environment surrounding the decision to host another World Cup in Mexico during the 1980s. I emphasize how FIFA's plan to increase the tournament's popularity provided Azcárraga Milmo with extensive influence over the World Cup in Mexico. For this chapter, I will also explore how the PRI supported the hosting of the 1986 World Cup by building soccer stadiums. These infrastructure projects became exhibitions of political priorities for local and national leaders, and they provided a rising critical media with evidence for the PRI's corruption. This chapter will explain how the Mexican organizing committee responded to the 1985 earthquake and how the national authorities intervened to eliminate criticisms towards Mexico's inability to host an international event after the natural disaster. Moreover, I will analyze how Mexico's disappointing performance in the tournament opened the door for political groups to question the PRI's rule. Finally, the chapter demonstrates how impactful FIFA's assessment of Mexico's organizing project was for the nation's image as a reliable organizer of international events. Thus, private capitalists dominated the hosting of the 13th World Cup and demonstrated the PRI's declining interests over the promotion of sporting events.

Sources and Methodology

My project attempts to examine the organizational process of two events in Mexico, the 1970 and 1986 World Cups. Highlighting these two competitions is critical to understanding their separate effects. For this project, I found Maurice Roche's concept of the *event ecology* or the *performance complex* particularly useful to my thesis. Roche distinguishes between different types of events and defines "mega-events" as "large-scale cultural events [that] have a dramatic

character, mass popular appeal, and international significance."[8] Following Roche's definition, the 1968 Olympics, the 1970 World Cup, and the 1986 World Cup emerge as the only mega-events hosted in Mexico during the 20th century.[9] Thus, I examine the hosting of the Olympics and the World Cups in Mexico from a theoretical position that understands how a combination of individual decisions and aspirations reflect deeper structural dynamics and become products of their particular time.

My thesis examines various collections of primary sources in the *Archivo General* in Mexico City. Unfortunately, accessing the collection of official documents from the 1970 World Cup proved challenging due to internal reorganization of the sources and misinformation in the institutional catalog, but I circumvented that difficulty by examining a collection of newspapers from this event. This thesis also analyzes institutional records from FIFA's organizing committees. These documents provide a window into the priorities and personal ambitions behind the organization of these mega-events. Moreover, FIFA's collections described how FIFA's expectations influenced the organization of the two World Cups in Mexico and their final assessments. Finally, the project includes an extensive examination of the sports section of the *El Universal, Milenio, Mediotiempo, Excelsior, El día*, and *Uno-mas-uno* archived in the *Biblioteca Miguel Lerdo de Tejada*. These documents provided information about the narratives and conversations surrounding these competitions' hosting in Mexico. By the 1980s, the rise of an

[8] Maurice Roche, *Megaevents and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture* (Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, 2000).
[9] Maurice Roche, *Mega-events and Social Change: Spectacle, Legacy and the Public Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2017), 7. For a conversation on how Roche's approach belongs to a ritual theory and the study of sports I examined, Niko Besnier, Susan Brownell, Thomas F. Carter, *The Anthropology of Sport: Bodies, Borders Biopolitcs* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2018), 175.

independent and critical media provided my project with different critical voices that challenged these mega-events' hosting in Mexico.

Chapter 1: The Porfiriato and the Rise of Professional Sports

The Making of a Nation through Spectacle

Professional sporting competitions began in Mexico during Porfirio Díaz's government (1877-1911). During the late 1800s, the Díaz regime consolidated its control over the nation through a major economic and social transformation. Prior to this transformation, the eruption of an independence movement, foreign interventions, and internal disputes between regional elites had submerged Mexico in chaos. In Mexico City, the lack of political unity and economic stability led to high mortality rates between 1869 and 1878. According to national statistics, 42,162 children died under the age of ten, while people of all ages fell victim to deadly diseases such as tuberculosis, cholera, smallpox, yellow fever, influenza, and syphilis.[10] Once in power, Díaz recognized the need to hide these social problems from foreign observers to attract investors and gain political respect in the international arena. Thus, the Díaz administration started a quest to change the nation's image through propaganda campaigns. It became clear that Mexico needed a major event to reach global audiences and influence their decisions. In these years, the World Fair was the only event capable of changing a nation's image globally. The Díaz regime crafted exhibitions for these fairs to display Mexico's production of crafts, information about the country's infrastructure and human capital, and essential raw materials. At the same time, these displays highlighted the nation's native past to create a "secular, liberal, and republic epic [for] Mexico."[11] These components created a narrative of a Mexico with vast reserves of natural resources, a history that echoed Western states' ideals, and without internal

[10] Matthew D. Esposito, *Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics in Porfirian Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010), 23.
[11] Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1996), 8-11.

problems. Díaz's campaign transformed the nation's image and captured the attention of foreign investors.

The Díaz government succeeded in internationalizing the Mexican economy and stabilizing its political environment after years of internal adjustments. Díaz supported new businesses by establishing subsidies and tax exemptions. These domestic reforms produced a more than thirtyfold increase in foreign investment between 1884 and 1911. European and American investors concentrated their capital in "railroads construction, mining, and public debt, followed by public utilities, agriculture, and banking."[12] These projects represented a significant transformation for the nation and created opportunities for a rising national elite. This new, privileged group of elites, who witnessed great social and cultural changes around them, developed a Western outlook that became intertwined with ideals of progress and anticlericalism.[13] These ideals made the new rising Mexican elites willing to adopt new forms of entertainment from outside Mexico. During these years, cycling acquired popularity after the "safety bicycle" was introduced, reducing the number of accidents and somewhat erasing its image as a high-risk activity. Moreover, Mexican fans applauded cycling's "secular expectations, equality of competition, specialization, rational rules, bureaucratic organizations, record keeping, and production."[14] In other words, Mexicans supported at least one bureaucratized sport because it fit their new lifestyle amidst many national changes. Regardless of the experience of other social strata, a privileged group of individuals embraced political and economic change and adopted physical activities that complemented this transformation.

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[12] Juan Carlos Moreno-Brid and Jaime Ros, *Development and Growth in the Mexican Economy: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 54.
[13] William Beasley, *Judas at the Jockey Club and other Episodes of Porfirian Mexico* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 45.
[14] Ibid., 45.

The creation of new industries transformed Mexico into an attractive destination for European workers. During the Díaz government, Veracruz became an entry point for foreigners due to its access to maritime transportation and the new factories dotting the region. In Orizaba, foreign capital contributed to the opening of new facilities in the jute sector, a rising textile industry.[15] The opening of these factories represented the creation of industrial jobs for European migrants. A wave of new British working-class migrants arrived in Mexico complete with their experience in industrial technology and the organization of sporting competitions. Before they arrived in Mexico, this generation of workers had experienced the popularization of athletic activities in their home country. During the 1870s, British schools provided avenues and resources for young males to engage in physical exercise because of these activities' association with shaping personal character and promoting healthy habits. Participants continued practicing these activities outside of their schools, opening clubs and organizing regional tournaments. Simultaneously, rugby and soccer gained popularity because these sports attracted members of different social classes and the costs to organize competitions were low.[16] British workers arriving in Mexico belonged to a working class that had grown up practicing sports. In Veracruz, textile factories accommodated the arrival of these workers with the construction of small playing fields. By 1898, Scottish worker Duncan Macomish funded the "Fibras del Yute," a cricket team. In 1902, the organization changed its focus to soccer and created the Orizaba Athletic Club.[17] British workers introduced sports such as soccer and rugby and helped found Mexico's first official sporting clubs.

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[15] "Orizaba o Pachuca, ¿dónde nació el futbol en México?" *Milenio,* accessed in October 10, 2019, http://origin-www.milenio.com/deportes/futbol/orizaba-o-pachuca-donde-nacio-el-futbol-en-mexico

[16] David Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Soccer* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2006), 40-3.

[17] "Orizaba o Pachuca, ¿dónde nació el futbol en México?" *Milenio*, accessed in October 10, 2019. http://origin-www.milenio.com/deportes/futbol/orizaba-o-pachuca-donde-nacio-el-futbol-en-mexico, and "Fotografia del Orizaba Athletic Club en 1902," *Hemeroteca Nacional de Mexico* (Mexico City, 1902).

Veracruz and the creation of the Orizaba Athletic Club were not isolated cases. English workers funded the Pachuca Cricket Club and the Valasco Cricket Club at the Real del Monte mine in Pachuca, Hidalgo in 1898. Similarly to the jute industry, foreign capital revived the mining sector and attracted industrial workers to this region. In Hidalgo, the cricket clubs also changed their focus to soccer to form the Pachuca Athletic Club in November, 1892.[18] The foundation of these sporting entities became a national phenomenon, taking place in multiple industrial cities. It became clear for the players that their teams needed an association capable of creating tournaments and promoting competitions. In 1902, the Liga Mexicana de Fútbol Amateur Association was founded, and the creation of the first major tournament followed a year later, with Orizaba Athletic Club as its first champion.[19] British businessman Thomas Phillips noticed this development and recognized its diplomatic potential to create ties between Mexico and Great Britain. On March 16, 1894, Phillips founded the Reforma Athletic Club to sponsor tennis, cricket, and soccer tournaments in Mexico City.[20] The foundation of sporting clubs and a national league proves the popularity of soccer in Mexico and its potential to attract the attention of the locals.

Revolutionary Sports

The Mexican economy's internationalization brought multiple positive changes, but it also made the nation more susceptible to global crises. In 1907, the United States and Europe experienced capital shortages, leading to a decrease of exports and prices. This represented an obstacle to the development of Mexico's manufacturing sector, and the creation of business relations with American investors. In 1908, Mexico's financial situation deteriorated further,

[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997), 28.

when a massive crop failure forced medium and large landowners to default on their loans. The Díaz government responded to these problems by establishing a credit system known as the Caja de Préstamos, intended to protect more than 80 percent of the agricultural sector. However, the Caja de Préstamos approved most of its credit for only a small group of landowners. According to statistics, close to 53 million pesos were delivered to only 93 landowners, with only 4 million pesos going to national industries in Mexico's entire northern region. The unequal distribution of financial resources internally, alongside global developments, led to a further concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a small elite. By 1910, 850 individuals owned 8,431 haciendas, which represented a significant percentage of Mexico's entire agricultural sector.[21] These developments and growing, broad-spread political discontent provided the foundation for a nationwide revolution.

The 1910 revolution succeeded in starting a political transformation in Mexico, but it also created precarious social conditions. Years of fighting disrupted critical economic sectors such as the railroad system and agriculture,[22] which resulted in a destabilization of the national labor force. Moreover, the revolution interrupted health programs and preventive medicine initiatives adopted during the Díaz government. Disease and famine spread. Smallpox, yellow fever, and typhus, among other contagions, forced people from rural areas to move out of their communities to urban centers in search of better living conditions. Local governments responded to these developments by increasing public spending on hygiene programs.[23] While such measures helped reverse the Revolution's negative health legacy, they also led local authorities to increase

[21] Carlos Moreno-Brid, *Development and Growth in the Mexican Economy,* 63.
[22] Ibid., 71-4.
[23] Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution: Counter-Revolution* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 423.

their interventions in health-related issues, that is, the creation of these programs led the Mexican government to tighten control over its citizens' lives and daily choices.

The Mexican Revolution and its legacies did not stop the professionalization of soccer. By 1904, the Pachuca Athletic Club represented a serious business, striving to attract young talent to its organization. Thus, the club decided to create a team for young players who wanted to play for the club but needed more time to develop their abilities. In this youth academy, Alfred Crowle arose as a talented player, and his coaches allowed him to debut with the first Pachuca team in 1908. The Revolution impeded Crowle's career, but he continued practicing soccer during the conflict years. On one occasion, Crowle rented a truck bed to move eleven players to their next match in Mexico City. However, the truck had space for only ten players, which left behind Fred Williams, a team's defender. Crowle decided to stay with his teammate Williams and to travel to their next match on two horses. While traveling to their game, the "horse players" were arrested by soldiers, who believed they were Americans. The soldiers wanted to execute Crowle and Williams, but they proved their real identities with their soccer uniforms. After clearing the situation, the soldiers released the players in the middle of the mountains without their horses. Crowle and Williams missed the game and found their way back to Pachuca after six days. Once they encountered their teammates, Crowle asked them, "did we win or lose?"[24] This story turned into a legend of soccer's professionalization in Mexico and became a source of inspiration for aspiring players. Unfortunately, it is unclear how much money players like Crowle were receiving, but it is evident that soccer organizations were receiving financial

[24] Omar Perez, "La Revolución no detuvo al futbol mexicano," *Publimentro* (2010), https://www.publimetro.com.mx/mx/noticias/2010/11/16/la-revolucion-no-detuvo-al-futbol-mexicano.html, and Carlos Calderon, "Entre balones y fusiles: ¡Viva la Revolución!" *Mediotimepo* (11/26/2011) https://www.mediotiempo.com/opinion/carlos-calderon/columna-carlos-calderon/entre-balones-y-fusiles-viva-la-revolucion.

support during these transformative years. The violence of war was, no doubt, an obstacle to soccer matches, but the players' initiative and dedication were crucial to soccer's continued success.

President Alvaro Obregón (1920-1924) became one of the first political figures to promote sports and the organization of sporting events. For Obregón, these recreational activities had the social and economic potential to shape different aspects of the nation. The Obregón government became the first administration that included sports in military training. According to his government, these activities could modernize the army by creating stronger and healthier soldiers.[25] The transition of sports from recreational activities to military exercises seemed logical, because these competitions placed emphasis on physical strength and discipline. Obregón also became a pioneer in the organization and promotion of nationwide soccer tournaments. His administration was intent on celebrating the centennial of the nation's independence movement in 1921, and a soccer tournament was to become the centerpiece of this celebration. The event attracted thirteen teams from around the nation, with five from Mexico City. At the inauguration of the competition, President Obregón gave the first kick and witnessed the first matches alongside Martín Luis Guzmán Franco, a novelist and sports fan who supported the tournament's addition to the festivities.[26]

Obregón also recognized the potential of sporting competitions to change Mexico's image among international audiences. He knew that major sporting events created venues to attract the masses and reshape their understanding of what Mexico as a nation was all about.

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[25] Joshua H. Nadel, *Futbol! Why Soccer Matters in Latin America* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 188-9.

[26] Mauricio Mejia Castillo, "El primer Campeonato nacional de futbol," *El Universal,* accessed on September 29 https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/colaboracion/mochilazo-en-el-tiempo/nacion/sociedad/el-primer-campeonato-nacional-de-futbol.

Consequently, Obregón decided to allocate resources to foster cultural campaigns surrounding these events. To plan these campaigns, Obregón supported the creation of cultural campaigns that promoted the creation of a national identity based on the "idealization of indigenous people and the reinterpretation of the conquest."[27] The rethinking of the nation's past and present would provide the imagery to promote a new national narrative for all Mexicans. According to Vasconcelos, the construction of public buildings and monuments provided the space and visibility to present the new national image. In other words, architecture needed to retell these narratives to educate the public on the nation's history. The construction of the National Stadium in Mexico City became the first major project to reflect the influence of Vasconcelos' campaign. Designed by José Villagrán García, the stadium incorporated neo-colonial and new-indigenist elements and had a capacity of at least 30,000 spectators.[28] The stadium provided a venue for the practice of the promotional of competitions and local tournaments.

The foundation of the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR) gave Mexican officials an organization capable of mobilizing resources to promote a transformative political agenda in Mexico. To some of these officials, the PNR needed to form a social base with the mobilization of workers, peasants, and a rising middle class. During the Lázaro Cárdenas administration (1934-1940), the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) turned into a left-wing political machine for the government. Throughout Cárdenas' term, the SEP's representatives guided the formation of national policies with its six-year educational agenda, including sporting activities to promote healthy practices.[29] The inclusion of health campaigns represented an attempt to eliminate the precarious social conditions that the Revolution had created in some regions. During these years,

[27] Patrice Elizabeth Olsen, *Artifacts of the Revolution: Architecture, Society, and Politics in Mexico City, 1920-1940* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 9.
[28] Ibid., 11.
[29] Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, 42.

the SEP's agenda targeted the countryside because it considered rural regions to be the sites that needed the most help. Moreover, the SEP's representatives wanted to integrate rural and indigenous communities into the national state. To accomplish this objective, the SEP adopted a socialist education that emphasized "peasant behavioral reform with an intensified attack on superstition, religious practices, and the church."[30] These educational devices and objectives provided teachers with an influential role in shaping rural life.

Teachers' privileged position allowed them to become the most prominent promoters of athletic competitions outside urban centers. Throughout their training, the SEP encouraged teachers to adopt an action-oriented pedagogy to organize rural communities. Sports became a crucial segment of the new national curriculum for their reputation as activities that promoted collaboration, competition, and good hygiene practices. Teachers learned to build sporting facilities and organize competitive tournaments as part of their official training. The SEP's athletic programs quickly became popular activities in local communities. The activities' popularity reached a point where communities stopped local disputes to organize their teams and tournaments in basketball, baseball, and soccer. Moreover, the competitions turned into opportunities for young men to earn prestige inside their communities and a chance to get attention from eligible young women.[31] The SEP's educational agenda allowed sporting activities to transcend urban centers and acquire popularity in rural areas.

Soccer's popularity kept growing over other athletic activities throughout Mexico, but especially in Mexico City. Throughout the metropolitan center, neighborhoods organized their teams to play in the national league, but generalized lack of economic resources limited their participation. Pablo Alexanderson, a Swedish worker in a local German company, recognized

[30] Ibid., 5.
[31] Ibid., 94-5.

this problem and decided to create a new league in Mexico, the Liga Spalding. By 1927, the league enlisted over two hundred teams from around the city. To some observers, the creation of multiple leagues represented an obstacle to forming a stronger tournament. However, it became clear that the practice of competitive soccer had a financial component that divided players based on their economic status. The addition of teams from the Liga Spalding to the Amateur League turned into a critical point for professional soccer in Mexico because it emphasized players' physical abilities over their social status.[32] On the other hand, this league's growth turned into an administrative challenge for the main organizers. Therefore, the players supported creating the Mexican Federation of Association Football (FMF), a new organization responsible for supervising tournaments, recollecting records, and standardizing the competitions' rules. Moreover, the FMF provided Mexican officials with an official organization to affiliate the nation with FIFA and compete at international events.[33] The 1920s were thus a transformative decade for the professionalization, popularization, and standardization of soccer in Mexico. The Mexican government elevating soccer as an agent of change while Mexico City citizens were organizing their own leagues, games, and an independent organization to promote the competitions.

By the 1940s, competitive sports became a driving force in the growing entertainment sector, capable of capturing people's attention. In 1937, the PRI recognized the public's rising interest in the results of major competitive events. To capitalize on this development, President Cárdenas' government introduced the practice of reporting sporting scores to the general public with the Departamento Autónomo de Prensa y Publicidad (DAPP), an agency responsible for organizing political propaganda. In their radio stations, the DAPP recorded educational and

[32] Nadel, *Futbol!* 190.
[33] Ibid., 190.

historical programs and music, and initiated the reporting of major sporting tournaments and scores.[34] Incorporating sports into official programming reflects the government's perception of athletic activities as primary motivators of social change.

The Mexican government's domination over the broadcasting of sporting results ended with the emerging of private mass-communication outlets. In Mexico City, news outlets started to publish scores despite their limited resources, to keep up with these events' rising popularity. For José Garcia Valseca, an entrepreneur in the news industry, the publication of sporting scores represented an opportunity to reach larger audiences. Garcia Valseca prioritized the inclusion of images over written content to attract the attention illiterate consumers. In 1941, García Valseca established Mexico's first standalone sports weekly, *Esto*. The publication was only ten cents, and it covered two of the most popular sports in Mexico City, bullfighting and soccer. By 1943, *Esto* outsold other news publications and García Valseca's model became an example for other entrepreneurs.[35] Reporting sporting scores started as a political service but turned into a business in Mexico City capable of attracting the attention of consumers from different social classes.

By the 1940s, the Mexican government established a new economic agenda to prioritize the nation's industrialization, the Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) model. Adopting the ISI model provided Mexican politicians with the power to support the nation's private sector and its new leaders. In the 1940s, Emilio Azcárraga Vidaurreta arose as a promising figure in the communications sector. While visiting the 1939 World Fair, Azcárraga Vidaurreta witnessed the exhibition of the first commercial televisions. Convinced of this invention's potential, Azcárraga Vidaurreta explored the investment possibilities of this new technology. The only obstacle to

[34] Benjamin T. Smith, *The Mexican Press, and Civil Society, 1940-1976: Stories from Newsroom, Stories from the Street* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 57-8.
[35] Fernandez, Claudia, and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre: Emilio Azcárraga y su imperio Televisa* (Mexico, DF: Grijlado, 2013), 75-7.

investing in this growing industry was the Mexican government and its control over the communications sector. Azcárraga Vidaurreta funded the Televisión Asociada to create an organization capable of making the appropriate concessions and creating communication channels for politicians' approval. By 1946, Televisión Asociada submitted the first set of requests to the Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas.

The Miguel Alemán Valdés (1946-1952) presidency approved these petitions, a crucial step for his administration towards the PRI's new economic strategy for the nation. In part because Alemán's government wanted to increase its intervention in the development of other national industries, the privatization of the communications sector "liberated" the PRI from the responsibility of administrating and developing this sector. On August 31, 1950, Azcárraga Vidaurreta received the responsibility to provide a system of communication, and his first channel, XH-TV, initiated transmission. Even though he did not receive significant concessions, Azcárraga Vidaurreta consolidated his rising business by recruiting talented individuals and employing new technological developments. This allowed Azcárraga Vidaurreta to become an entrepreneur with the introduction of televisions and channels to Mexico. During the 1950s, Azcárraga Vidaurreta also started transmitting sporting competitions such as baseball, wrestling, and bullfighting because he wanted to attract male audiences' attention, an idea attributed to his son, Emilio Azcárraga Milmo.[36] Azcárraga's involvement with the transmission of sporting events further contributed to the popularization of professional sports and provided him with great control over the representation of sports in the media and their commercialization.

President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958) inherited a nation with a growing economy and an apparently stable internal political environment. His administration perceived an

[36] Ibid.

opportunity to exhibit Mexico's new image to international audiences. In 1952, the Panamanian government refused to organize the 1954 Juegos Deportivos Centroamericanos y del Caribe (JDCC). The decision left the organizers of this event without time to choose another venue. President Ruiz Cortines nominated Mexico as an alternative host. By 1954, the government had mobilized the local authorities to transform Mexico City into an exhibition of sporting festivities. For these games, the Mexican organizers chose the Olympic Stadium of the Universidad National Autónoma de México (UNAM) to showcase Mexico's new image. The stadium followed Vasconcelos' vision, with its volcanic rock foundations and murals depicting pre-conquest images.[37] There was no better venue to receive the 1954 Games and promote a new national image. The Olympic Stadium carried such a critical ideological message that the Mexican organizing committee for this project included the building in its official propaganda material.[38] By placing the stadium at the center of the advertisement, the Cortines administration showed that the JDCC games were a platform to erase any doubts about Mexico's potential for regional leadership and economic prospects.

To local authorities, Cortines successfully hosted the 1954 JDCC games because "these sporting manifestations are part of a national tradition."[39] However, Cortines also promoted the hosting of this competition because he was a sports fan. Once he completed with his time in office, Cortines became involved with the professional soccer league. During the mid-1950s, Club América, a local soccer team in Mexico City, experienced a financial crisis associated with overwhelming administrative costs, which pushed the club to the edge of bankruptcy. The team's

[37] Luis Castaneda, *Spectacular Mexico: Design, Propaganda, and the 1968 Olympics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 127, "Estadio Olimpico Universitario, icono de la arquitectura nacional y casa de los Pumas," *UNAM, Direccion General de Comunicacion Social*, accessed in December 3, 2019. https://www.dgcs.unam.mx/boletin/bdboletin/2016_800.html.
[38] Ibid.
[39] "Memoria: Septimos Juegos Deportivos Centroamericanos y del Caribe" (March 6, 1954), 11.

popularity in Mexico City inspired a group of investors to save the team. There were prominent figures in this group of investors, such as the Secretary of Education José Angel Cisneros and famous engineer Manuel Moreno Torres. Cortines also became an investor for Club America once he completed with his presidential term, and with his financial contribution, the team survived its financial problems. Years later, Club América was sold to Isaac Bessudo, the owner of a growing soft-drink company.[40] Cortines's decision reflected a personal interest in becoming involve with the professional soccer league. The Club América's case also exhibited how soccer was turning into an attractive investing opportunity for individuals from different professional backgrounds. Thus, the hosting of the JDCC reflected the PRI's growing interest on the promoting of sporting competitions as events capable of shaping Mexico's political image while soccer was growing as a private sector.

Conclusion

Mexican officials perceived the growing popularity of professional sports around the nation as an opportunity to promote their political agendas. After the Mexican Revolution, politicians perceived these type sports as activities capable of modernize and stabilize the nation's political environment. This perception led to the injection of public funds into the construction of sporting arenas and the organization and promotion of local tournaments. Moreover, the integration of sports into the nation's educational reform led to the introduction of sports in rural communities, further eliminating social and cultural barriers for the practice of sports like soccer. In this process, it is unclear how the locals first responded to the practice of these athletics competitions. Years later, President Ruiz Cortines supported hosting an

[40] *100 Años del Club América*, directed by Viviana Motta (Mexico City: Televisa, 2016), 11:22.

international sporting event, the JDCC. By organizing this project, President Ruiz Cortines wanted to exhibit the nation's new image and Mexico's potential for regional leadership.

Mexican politicians perceived the practice of sports and sporting events as agents of political and social change. Crowle's story provides insights to this early possess of professionalization, and to how the eruption of the Mexican Revolution hampered the scheduling of games and tournaments for the emerging professional Mexican soccer league, but it also provided the games with stories that inspired players to continue with their work. Although it is unclear how the locals supported these games and official clubs, the formation of a league demonstrated a growing interest to organize these competitions even during the 1910 Revolution. Years later, local newspapers followed the structure of federal outlets to report on competitions. Azcárraga Vidaurreta continued this trend with the introduction of the new technology of television, which allowed him to broadcast multiple sports. The commercialization of soccer continued while characters like Azcárraga Vidaurreta emerged as architects of professional sporting events. Even individuals like President Cortines became involved with the professional league after their political careers concluded because professional teams needed financial support.

Chapter 2: The Olympics and the World Cup: Setting the Stage

Throughout the 1960s, Mexico was a nation of contrasting realities. To a rising urban middle class, the PRI needed to open more channels to political participation. In other regions of the nation, an emerging discontentment at the failure of the 1910 Revolution to produce an equitable economic model led to rising tensions and created the basis for rural mobilizations. Mexico was, therefore, a nation with multiple problems and internal instability. However, this understanding was not shared by the most prominent sectors of society. To these individuals, Mexico was passing through a period of financial stability and economic growth thanks to the ISI model. For policymakers, the one-party system guaranteed control over the political landscape and protected their social status. In this period of contrasts, Mexico organized two prestigious sporting competitions, the Olympic Games and the World Cup. These events were organized simultaneously, but the Mexican government monopolized the organization of the Olympics. This chapter examines the organization of these events, emphasizing how the Mexican government dominated the hosting of the Olympic Games and it traces how the Olympics influenced the organization of the World Cup to explore the main organizers' aspirations and motivations. These events reveal the PRI's declining interest over the promotion of sporting events as agents of political change and the rising influence of sporting entrepreneurs over Mexico's economic landscape.

The Olympic Project

President López Mateos (1958-1964) became the driving force behind hosting the Olympic Games in Mexico City. The head of state was a sports fan, and he recognized his government's potential opportunity to bring the Olympics to Mexico. To accomplish his goal,

López Mateos gave his complete political and economic support to the Mexican Olympic Committee (MOC). The MOC was charged with creating and submitting an official bid to the committee that was to select the official venue, the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Creating a winning bid was a challenge due to the intense competition that the Olympics generated among nations. For example, the Mexican delegation competed against prominent projects proposed for Detroit and Paris. Both venues were planning to present their cities as modern centers of economic development. The MOC decided to present Mexico City as a modern city that also embraced its glorious and ancient civilizational past. Moreover, MOC members added a series of public exhibitions, concerts, and sporting events to their overall project, hoping to convince the IOC of Mexico's capacity for enthusiastic local audiences.[41] These intersecting narratives were not unique to the MOC. Ideas of Mexico embracing its indigenous past while endorsing modern ideas came from past political campaigns aiming to attract tourists, foreign capital, and diplomatic ties, particularly with the United States.[42] Therefore, the MOC made an effort to present a nation in keeping with its pre-established presence in the international arena. In adopting these narratives, MOC hoped to separate its project from its competitors.

The international political environment influenced the selection of Mexico City as the venue for the 1968 Olympic Games. For the IOC, the competition needed to maintain an image of neutrality in the Cold War to protect athletes and increase the event's popularity. These objectives set the agenda for the IOC's selection process. For example, the City of Detroit

[41] Kevin B. Witherspoon, *Before the Eyes of the World: Mexico and the 1968 Olympic Games* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University, 2008), 31-3.
[42] Alex Saragoza, "The Selling of Mexico: Tourism and the State, 1937-1960," in *Fragments of a Golden Age: The Politics of Culture in Mexico Since 1940*, edited by Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein, and Eric Zolov (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 91-6.

created a competitive bid for the IOC, but their project suffered from the rising tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. Even though the American government supported Detroit hosting the Games, the IOC was concerned with the treatment of athletes from the Communist bloc. In another peculiar case, William Brandt, mayor of Berlin, put forth his city for the Olympic Games. For Brandt, the games had the potential to reduce the political tensions in the region. The IOC rejected this bid to avoid the complexity of organizing a sporting competition in a place divided by American and Soviet military divisions.[43] It was clear that the IOC was looking for a nonaligned country with a stable government. Argentina also competed for the host spot, and it had a tracking record of neutrality in the Cold War. However, the IOC members did not support the project because it perceived the Argentine government as economically unstable and politically unpredictable. Mexico's one-party system and its apparent financial stability guaranteed a stable political atmosphere for the long process of preparations.[44] Even though Mexico's stability was partial and contested, the IOC favored the selection of Mexico City. Thus, Mexico became the first nation in Latin America to win the hosting contest.

Mexico's Olympic project depended on its ability to maintain its image of political stability and Cold War nonalignment. However, that stability narrative did not adequately represent the sociopolitical developments unfolding in Mexico during the 1960s. First, the Cuban Revolution became a pivotal moment for the country and the direction that the PRI's political regime by forcing Mexicans to reexamine how the 1910 Revolution had failed to create radical social and political transformation.[45] This evaluation process represented a direct challenge to the

[43] Ibid.
[44] Ariel Rodriguez Kuri, "Ganar la Sede: La Politica Internacional de los Juegos Olimpicos de 1968," *Historia Mexicana* 64, No. 1 (July -September 2014), 250-56.
[45] Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 7.

PRI and its carefully constructed image as the defender of the Revolution. At the same time, Mexican students mobilized against educational authorities, local politicians, and international developments such as the Vietnam War. By the late 1960s, students from multiple academic institutions in Mexico City mobilized to make demands of local authorities. The government of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) perceived the students' movement as an obstacle to political stability during the imminent organization of the Olympic Games.[46] The MOC's project ignored the mobilization of students and the response of the authorities to protect Mexico's image as a stable nation for the hosting of the Olympics.

The Díaz Ordaz administration saw the student movement as an obstacle to successfully organizing the Olympic Games. Instead of solving the situation in a dialogue, the government decided to shatter the movement. Confrontations between the authorities and students became common in Mexico City. [47] Obviously, these clashes contradicted MOC's narrative of a stable nation. On October 2, 1968, the Mexican authorities and military units arrived at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas to intervene in a student gathering. According to Jaime M. Pensado, state-sponsored snipers opened fire against the students, and soldiers joined in the firing. State forces killed hundreds and injured and imprisoned thousands more in the chaos.[48] Students worldwide responded to the massacre with protests to discourage the public from attending the 1968 Olympic Games.[49] The massacre of students demonstrated the lengths that the Mexican government was willing to reach to protect the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City.

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[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid., 51-58.
Jaime M. Pensado, *Rebel Mexico: Student Unrest and the Authoritarian Political Culture during the Long Sixties* (Stanford University Press, 2013), 209.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 210.

The MOC responded to the Tlatelolco massacre with a campaign to reduce the effects of criticism against the Mexican government. For the MOC members, the arrival of the Olympic flame provided an opportunity to raise enthusiasm for the competition and recover an image of stability for Mexico City. The MOC modeled the traveling of the flame around Christopher Columbus' voyage. First, the flame started at the sacred grove of Zeus in Olympia, Greece, and arrived at San Salvador after traveling across the Atlantic. On Columbus Day, the flame arrived in Veracruz, where it was divided into five torches. These torches traveled around the nation to be "reunited at the Pyramid of the Moon at Teotihuacan, thirty-one miles away from Mexico City."[50] The pyramid lent its civilizational legacy to Mexico's Games. On October 12, 1968, 80,000 spectators filled the UNAM's stadium to witness the Games' opening ceremony. During the ceremony, 7,225 athletes from 119 nations marched around the stadium in colorful clothes. The ceremony included the release of thousands of doves in the middle of the arena, an apparent effort to regain the image of peace in Mexico.[51] Finally, the MOC selected Norma Enriqueta Basilio as the person responsible for lighting the official Olympic flame. The decision made Enriqueta Basilio the first woman to receive this honor. The MOC also selected Enriqueta Basilio due to her rural socioeconomic background, which provided an opportunity to attract small communities' attention to the games.[52] The MOC used the arrival of the Olympic flame and the opening ceremony to promote an image of a stable, politically unified nation.

The Games

The beginning of the competitions brought new challenges for the Mexican organizers. During the first contest, the 10,000-meter run, several athletes collapsed due to breathing

[50] Witherspoon, *Before the eyes of the World*, 123.
[51] Ibid., 124.
[52] Ibid., 124.

problems associated with the city's high altitude. The incident had the potential to revive debates over Mexico's challenging climate for competitive sports, but subsequent games dismissed these discussions. High jumper Dick Fosbury amazed local and international audiences with his new technique of a headfirst backward jump.[53] Fosbury's historic performances provided moments of entertainment and gave the organizers hope for the event's potential to capture the attention of sports fans.

The organizers faced another challenge with the unexpected activism of U.S. runners Tommie Smith and John Carlos. During the 200-meter sprint, Smith and Carlos won first and third place, as had been predicted by observers of their past performances. At the medal ceremony, Smith and Carlos decided to wear black gloves, take their shoes off, and place them beside them on the podium. Once they received their medals and the United States national anthem started, Smith and Carlos raised their right hands to honor the Black Power movement in the United States. The International Olympic Committee described the action of these U.S. American athletes as a violation of the official medal ceremony. The U.S. Olympic Committee published a formal apology and simultaneously requested the expulsion of both athletes from Mexico City within 48 hours. However, the Mexican government disregarded the pressure to take action against Smith and Carlos, and openly supported the athletes throughout the Games.[54] The Díaz Ordaz government likely did so to overwrite international memories of previous images of Mexico's oppression of local social movements. Moreover, the Mexican government needed to maintain its noninterventionist image for the Olympic Committee and other international actors watching the competitions.

[53] Ibid., 125.
[54] Ibid.

It is clear, therefore, that the Mexican organizers were willing to deploy a diverse portfolio of tactics to boost their country's image abroad and solidify control at home after the Tlatelolco massacre. The 1968 Olympic Games included a soccer tournament among the list of competitions as it had since 1906. The MOC selected multiple venues to host the matches. Sixteen delegations were separated into four groups, and the games took place in Puebla, Guadalajara, Leon, and Mexico City. The Azteca Stadium in Mexico City was selected to host the final matches due to its physical capacity and its status as a modern soccer arena that also visually reflected Mexico's ancient civilizations' heritage.[55] The politics at play in the soccer tournament would prove to be particularly difficult for the organizers. At the initial matches, Morocco refused to play with the Israeli delegation. The organizers responded by selecting Ghana as Morocco's substitution. During their competition, Ghana and Israeli players started a fight on the soccer field that continued at the Olympic Village.[56] The Mexican organizers faced another challenge with a match between Czechoslovakia and Guatemala. In this game, the players started another fight on the soccer field. Once again, the organizers and the referees decided to reschedule the game to continue with the tournament.[57] The Olympic soccer tournament turned into an exhibition of political discontent, violence, and administrative decisions that prioritized the tournament's success.

The Mexican organizers perceived an opportunity to increase the participation of the local fans with a positive performance from the Mexican soccer team at the bronze-medal match.

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[55] "Football at the 1968 Ciudad de Mexico Summer Games," *Sports Reference* https://web.archive.org/web/20200417045639/https://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/summer/1968/FTB/
[56] México City, 1968" *FIFA Digital Archives* https://www.fifa.com/mensolympic/archive/mexicocity1968/. "Olympic Football Tournament Mexico City 1968," accessed in September 29, 2020. https://www.fifa.com/mensolympic/archive/mexicocity1968/.
[57] "México City, 1968" *FIFA Digital Archives* https://www.fifa.com/mensolympic/archive/mexicocity1968/. "Olympic Football Tournament Mexico City 1968," accessed in September 29, 2020. https://www.fifa.com/mensolympic/archive/mexicocity1968/.

For these organizers, the best way to change the narrative of disorder was with celebrations from the local fans. In the bronze-medal match, the Mexican team needed to defeat its Japanese counterpart. Mexican players arrived at the bronze-medal game after defeating the Spaniards with two goals to zero. The win enthused local fans. who expected another historic performance in the bronze-medal match. Meanwhile, Japan became a serious contender to win a medal after defeating France in the knockout phase. Unfortunately for the local organizers, the bronze-medal match did not produce the hoped-for celebrations -- the Japanese team defeated Mexico with a score of 2-0. The result, and a controversial call by the referee in Japan's favor, angered the local fans, who expressed their discontent by throwing their seat cushions to the field.

Finally, the Mexican organizers received a last political defeat in the tournament's final game. 75,000 fans filled the Azteca Stadium to witness the Hungarian team winning gold against Bulgaria with a score of 4-1. Unluckily for the organizers, the final match also saw the throwing of cushions to the soccer field after a controversial call from the referee Diego DeLeo in favor of the Hungarian team.[58] The soccer tournament, with its multiple violent incidents between players, referees, and fans, represented a particular public relations failure for the Mexican organizers.

The Mexico City Olympic Games of 1968 concluded on October 27. It was clear that the decision to pursue the host position had come from President Díaz Ordaz, and his governmental organization, the MOC, dominated the organization of the proposal and the games. During the selection process, the MOC attempted to construct an image of political and economic stability for Mexico which would ensure the IOC's recognition. The massacre of students at Tlatelolco made clear the holes in the MOC's narrative, but the Games went on. Even so, the violence

[58] Ibid.

strongly influenced the Mexican government's response to Smith and Carlos's protest and subsequent political turmoil in the soccer tournament, ensuring that it had to treat these instances of protest responsibly. Thus, the PRI utilized the hosting of the 1968 Olympic games to exhibit the nation's political stability and its potential for international leadership.

The World Cup: Winning the Bid

Preparations for the IX World Cup took place simultaneously with the Olympics but represented a different organizational strategy, one linked more to the private sector than the state, the first major sporting event to be left to the auspices of non-politicians. Compared to the Olympic Games, the FMF officials dominated the creation of the official bid and initial preparations without significant public intervention by national authorities. During the early hosting efforts, Azcárraga Mimo and Cañedo arose as the most prominent figures behind the Mexican project to host the World Cup. Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo used the momentum from the hosting of the Olympic Games to pursue the organization of the World Cup in Mexico.

The Origins

The World Cup was created early in the 20th century to resemble the Olympic Games and compete for profitable international attention. During the 1920s, FIFA's representatives first discussed the creation of an international soccer tournament with national delegations. This event's creation would require a collection of countries willing to form teams and compete for the host spot. It was also clear to FIFA that the tournament needed to take place in different countries to attract new delegations and the attention of audiences. By 1929, FIFA had enough support to promote its first official World Cup tournament. Five nations submitted their hosting proposals to the selection committee. Four European delegations withdrew their candidacies for lack of economic resources, which influenced the committee's decision to chose Uruguay as the

first hosting country.[59] The submission of multiple projects indicated the event's potential to attract international attention. On the other hand, the withdrawal of European delegations sent a message to FIFA about the cruciality of having a financially stable hosting state.

For the first World Cup in Uruguay, the Mexican government organized an official national team. Although the Mexican team did not win a single match, the World Cup aroused enthusiasm among Mexican officials and the general public.[60] The popularity of the national team's participation in the first World Cup provided a foundation for future competitions and inspired individuals to imagine the possibility of hosting the World Cup in Mexico.

The commercialization of soccer and the development of a professional league during the mid-1950s provided Mexican entrepreneurs with multiple investment opportunities. Among these entrepreneurs was Emilio Azcárraga Milmo, the inheritor of Telesistema's communications empire. During the early 1960s, Azcárraga Milmo expanded his business enterprise with the purchase of Club América from Isaac Bessudo. To administrate his team, Azcárraga Milmo hired Guillermo Cañedo, a young manager who had accumulated national prestige at the Zacatepec Football Club. By 1961, Cañedo had formed a competitive squad for Club America, which allowed him to become the team's president.[61] The decision to hire Cañedo provided Azcárraga Milmo's business venture with stability and prestige inside the FMF. Club América turned into an outstanding league competitor. Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo used the positive momentum to promote a rivalry between the Club América and the Club Deportivo Guadalajara, a famous soccer team located in Jalisco. The Guadalajara team had a strong number of fans due to its internal rule of only using Mexican-born players to compete in the league. For Azcárraga Milmo,

[59] Chris Hunt, *The History of FIFA World Cup: World Cup Stories* (Bunting Ford, UK: Interact Publishing Limited, 2006), 10.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Carlos Calderon Cardoso, "El Estadio Azteca: Historia del Coloso de Sanhta Ursula," *Editorial Clio*, 2001.

the Guadalajara team represented a hero to Mexican soccer fans and the Club América needed to adopt a villain image to promote a rivalry. The advertisement campaign turned the games between these teams into popular events in Mexico and into success stories for the FMF's league. These decisions also increased Cañedo's profile inside the FMF, which catapulted him to the FMF's presidency.[62] In a couple of years, Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo turned into leaders of the soccer industry and the league's future.

Azcárraga Milmo had yet bigger plans. During the early 1960s, he announced his intent to construct a new soccer arena in Mexico City. Pedro Ramírez Vázquez responded to the announcement with the design of a massive stadium with the capacity to host more than one hundred thousand spectators, based on European soccer arenas. Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo selected Ramirez's project due to his professional experience and the construction initiated, the stadium was named "Azteca." While construction was underway, Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo discussed the facility's potential to increase the nation's profile by making it possible to host major international soccer events. Both men understood the centrality of sporting facilities for an aspiring hosting nation like Mexico.

These conversations turned into serious attempts to create an official project once López Mateos's government initiated its campaign to host the Olympics in Mexico. The political atmosphere convinced Cañedo and FMF members that Mexico was prepared to pursue hosting the World Cup. Similar to the Olympics selection process, FIFA followed a democratic system that provided each member with one vote. Cañedo's solution to consolidate the project was to unify the two regional soccer federations, the Football Confederation of Central America and the Caribbean and the North American Football Confederation. This merging created the

[62] Ibid.

Confederation of North, Central American, and Caribbean Association Football (Concacaf), which led to securing the votes from the countries affiliated with these organizations. On October 8, 1964, the Mexican bid received enough votes to secure the host spot for the IX World Cup.[63] The building of the Azteca stadium and the creation of the Concacaf provided Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo with access to a modern soccer arena and international institutional recognition inside FIFA to win the World Cup's hosting. The power of the Mexican soccer business to mobilize resources and support made the intervention of PRI representatives unnecessary for the organization of a World Cup.

The Preparations

Mexico's selection as the IX World Cup's hosting nation initiated a long process of preparations and meetings between the Mexican organizing committee and FIFA. These organizations discussed various aspects of the event and possible changes to the game in these meetings. Cañedo represented the Mexican project and the interest of the FMF, while Sir Stanley Rous, FIFA's president, worked to protect the FIFA's interests. Even though these individuals had different affiliations, they shared a similar goal of turning the IX World Cup into a financial success.

FIFA's representatives used the initial preparation meetings to change different aspects of the World Cup. FIFA members wanted to adopt the average goal system for the knockout stage and eliminate the goal difference policy. The measure represented the basis of selecting teams with the same number of points at the contest's group stage. In subsequent meetings, FIFA's

[63] Ibid., and Carrion, Fernando, and Maria Jose Rodriguez, *Luchas Urbanas alredor del Futbol* (5ta Avenida Editores, 2014), 173. Sergio Varela Hernandez, "'No queremos goles, queremos frijoles,'Mexico mundialista: 1970 y 1986" in *Luchas Urbanas* (Ecuador: Graficas Benic, 2014), 171-73. "FIFA World Cup host Announcement decision," accessed on February 29, 2020. https://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/mencompwc/51/97/81/fs-201_13a_fwc-bidding.pdf.

representatives discussed the idea of including an award for players who exhibited fair play throughout the tournament. The addition of these prizes would only affect a small element of the final ceremony. Even though FIFA had the authority to adopt these measures, the organizers decided to postpone their decision until the end of the Olympic soccer tournament. The Olympic tournament had these measures, and the FIFA authorities wanted to test their effects. Once the Olympic Games ended, the organizers adopted an average goal system and a fair play award without major deliberations.[64] The application of these policies became early exhibitions of the Olympic Games' centrality for the organization of the World Cup. These measures changed small aspects of the final ceremony and the selection process for the group stage and did not represent major challenges for the Mexican organizing committee. Nevertheless, other preparation elements became topics for debate between FIFA and the Mexican organizers due to their economic implications.

Cañedo and the rest of the organizing committee used the Olympics to exhibit Mexico's abilities to host international competitions. During an early meeting, Cañedo demanded control over manufacturing the official balls for the tournament. The Mexican delegation commented that it was "not necessary to import footballs as Mexican manufacturers would be in a position to supply a suitable World Cup ball."[65] The Mexican organizers aimed at further financial benefit from the tournament. By making the balls, the Mexican organizers could also promote the competition as a job-creating event. Even though Cañedo made a convincing argument, the FIFA authorities decided to wait until the end of the Olympic Games to vote on the Mexican request. Once the games concluded, Sir Stanley Rous accepted Cañedo's demand and selected Adidas as

[64] Minutes of Meeting No. 6 of the World Cup Organizing Committee (Bureau) held at the Hotel Doelen, Amsterdam on 17th March, 1969 at 15.00, Meeting Minutes World Cup Mexico 1970, FIFA World Museum.
[65] Minutes of Meeting No. 2 of the World Cup Organizing Committee 1970 (Bureau) Held at the Hotel Maria Isabel in Mexico City on Tuesday, 14th March 1967, Meeting Minutes World Cup Mexico 1970, FIFA World Museum.

the tournament's official ball producer. FIFA noted that Adidas had successfully produced the balls for the 1968 Olympic Games, and that the company had a factory in Mexico, which provided locals with direct benefits from the tournament.[66] Hosting the Olympic Games provided the Mexican organizers with a stage to showcase the nation's ability, helping them control more aspects of the World Cup's organization.

Sir Stanley Rous and the FIFA members also perceived the Olympic games as a chance to examine how the government of President Díaz Ordaz was working with the Olympic committee. For FIFA, eliminating their tax obligations represented a priority for hosting the event in Mexico. Although the Mexican authorities agreed to exclude FIFA from paying taxes at multiple locations, the soccer organization wanted the complete removal of their financial duties in Mexico City. The concentration of bureaucratic bodies in Mexico City made eliminating taxes difficult, but not impossible. During the preparation meetings, the Mexican organizers responded to this appeal by commenting that FIFA needed to wait until the end of the 1968 Olympic Games. According to the Mexican delegation, their government planned to eliminate tax obligations for the International Olympic Committee. By lifting these financial responsibilities, Mexico would "create a [favorable] precedent enabling the World Cup Organization also to be exonerated from taxes."[67] Once the 1968 Olympic Games concluded, the Mexican government representatives decided to eliminate FIFA's tax obligations in Mexico City for the duration of the tournament.[68] The Mexican government approved the elimination of taxes to facilitate the hosting of the World Cup even though PRI's representatives remained distant from the

[66] Minutes, May 17, 1969, FIFA World Museum, and "Official Ball WC 1970: 'Telstar,'" *FIFA* (May 29, 2020), accessed in July 26, 2020 https://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/mexico1970/photos/#official-ball-wc-1970-telstar.
[67] Minutes, March 17, 1967, FIFA World Museum.
[68] Ibid.

organization process because the Díaz Ordaz government focused its attention on creating a friendly economic environment for the hosting of the 1968 Olympic games.

The price of tickets became another complicated economic issue during these early organizing meetings. FIFA's representatives wanted to maintain the price of tickets from the previous World Cup, held in England in 1966. Even though FIFA had the authority to increase the IX World Cup ticket cost at any time, the organization waited until the 1968 Olympic Games' conclusion to make their final decision. On November 12, 1968, FIFA members selected the official prices and sent a guideline to the Mexican government.[69] FIFA waited until the end of the 1968 Olympic Games to measure the attendance to the Olympic competitions and the general public's response to their prices. This analysis provided FIFA with enough evidence to increase their tickets' price and expect good attendance for their games. However, FIFA representatives did not consider the geographical conditions of the venues expected to host games outside of Mexico City. FIFA dismissed the possibility of adopting a different set of prices because it focused its objective on earning the same profits regardless of the nation hosting the tournament. By sending the official guidelines for the Mexican government's costs, FIFA representatives demonstrated its desire to create a positive communication channel with local authorities. The tickets' selection demonstrated FIFA's perception that the IX World Cup needed to produce the same profits as previous soccer tournaments regardless of Mexico's socioeconomic realities.

The signing of official contracts for broadcasting the 1970 World Cup became a regular discussion topic in the preparation meetings. In previous soccer tournaments, FIFA had divided the broadcasting rights to multiple companies united under the European Broadcasting Union

[69] Minutes of meeting No.5 of the Organizing Committee ("Bureau") for the World Championship – Jules Rimet Cup 1970, Mexico held at the Hotel Maria Isabel in Mexico City on 12th October, 1968, Meeting Minutes World Cup Mexico 1970, FIFA World Museum.

(EBU). However, FIFA sold this event's rights exclusively to Telesistema for 1.6 million dollars, an equivalent purchasing power of about 10.8 million dollars in today's money. [70] For EBU, the transaction represented a problem because it forced the EBU to pay Telesistema more money to receive some of the rights to broadcast the World Cup in Europe. In 1967, FIFA's representatives and the Mexican delegation noted that a meeting between Telesistema and EBU concluded without reaching an agreement. FIFA representatives highlighted the need to create a contract between these parties to secure the tournament's broadcasting in Europe. On the other hand, the soccer authority also noted that it would not authorize the final deal until the end of the 1968 Olympic Games.[71] For FIFA's members, the Olympic Games represented a test for Azcárraga Milmo's company and its capacity to air and advertise an international event. While this conflict was developing, broadcasting companies from the United States approached the soccer federation to sign their separate contracts. FIFA representatives responded by explaining to these companies that they needed to wait until the completion of deals between Telesistema and EBU.[72] The signing of this contract represented a clear priority to FIFA because it secured the broadcasting of the tournament to the maximum number of international fans and the possibility of receiving more financial gains from its commercialization.

Telesistema and EBU's conflict continued with Azcárraga Milmo making a significant decision. In 1969, it became public that Azcárraga Milmo received 2.4 million dollars, about 18.9 million dollars in today's money, from World Wide Sports, an English broadcasting company for a substantial portion of the broadcasting rights.[73] The news irritated the EBU members because it represented the loss of broadcasting rights for the 1970 World Cup. FIFA

[70] Fernandez, *El Tigre,* 225.
[71] Minutes, May 17, 1969, FIFA World Museum.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Fernandez, *El Tigre*, 225.

responded to this development by organizing a meeting between Telesistema and EBU. Azcárraga Milmo decided to attend this meeting and defend his decision. Representatives from EBU requested a contract with favorable prices. Azcárraga Milmo defended his prices by explaining how Telesistema had the equipment and experience to provide European audiences with the best signal. Sir Stanley Rous supported Azcárraga Milmo's position, explaining how Telesistema had proved these abilities during the 1968 Olympic Games broadcasting. The meeting concluded with a contract between Telesistema and EBU with prices that resembled those discussed in their previous encounter. After the session ended, EBU members commented that they accepted the offer from Telesistema because the Mexican company was "an associate member."[74] FIFA's concern over enacting broadcasting contracts between Telesistema and the EBU reflected the organization's intentions to commercialize the event and expand the tournament's popularity. The signing of these contracts also exhibited Azcarraga Milmo's influence over the broadcasting of the event, and the PRI's limited control over Telesistema's growing power over the telecommunications sector.

The Opening Ceremony

On May 31, 1970, the IX World Cup's opening ceremony finally arrived. Thousands of people made a pilgrimage from their homes and hotels in Mexico City to the Azteca stadium. In some cases, fans without tickets made the same journey and stayed inside their vehicles to listen to the event from their radios. FIFA's officials recorded that the stadium reached its maximum capacity moments after its doors opened. Inside the stadium, arranging the fans on their seats became chaotic, with officials reporting issues finding their private boxes.[75] While the scene led

[74] Minutes, May 17, 1969, FIFA World Cup.
[75] Donald Ford, *Official Report: The 1970 World* Cup (Southwick: The Grange Press, 1972), 11, and "Partidismo y Hospitalidad," *Excelsior*, June 2, 1970.

to moments of anxiety for the organizers, the crowd fomented a positive atmosphere. FIFA officials noted how the spectators created a mystical environment with a noise that had a "feel of something physical – a cascade of sound spilling from the high terraces with all the shock of a wall of water."[76] The fans' spontaneous reaction signaled the possibility of success to the FIFA representatives and the Mexican organizers.

The opening ceremony was a multiphase event with which the Mexican organizers intended to create a welcoming atmosphere. The ceremony commenced with the arrival to the soccer field of one-hundred and thirty-five individuals carrying the flags of each of FIFA's members states, who marched into place in a long, horizontal line. In front of this line, sixteen women accompanied by small groups of young men carried the flags and names of the countries participating in the tournament to create another horizontal line in the middle of the soccer field.[77] The creation of these lines visually emphasized the soccer federation's reach and the number of competitors in the tournament. Cañedo and Sir Stanley Rous escorted President Díaz Ordaz into the arena and onto the soccer field. The head of state delivered a welcoming speech for the participants, fans, and more than 800,000,000 spectators watching the event worldwide from their televisions. However, President Díaz Ordaz's welcoming speech was interrupted "by shrill whistles of protest . . . [from] large sections of the crowd."[78] Díaz Ordaz continued his participation by shaking hands with the Mexican and Soviet players. For FIFA's organizers, these gestures were vital theater meant to reduce the tensions surrounding the Soviet Union's participation during the height of the Cold War. Thus, the opening ceremony concluded with

[76] Ibid.
[77] Ford, *Official Report*, 11, and "A General view of the Azteca Stadium duirng the Opening Ceremony," *FIFA* (February 11, 2020), accessed in July 29, 2020 https://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/mexico1970/photos/#a-general-view-of-the-azteca-stadium-during-opening-ceremony.
[78] Ibid., 12. "Inauguración del IX Campeonato Mundial de Futbol," (1970) *Colección y Archivo de Fundación Televisa*, accessed on May 16, 2020 https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/CAJyVDxxS7SGJg

Díaz Ordaz publicly demonstrating his support to the event even though members of his administration were absent from the project to host the IX World Cup in Mexico.

The IX World Cup's first game pitted Mexico and the Soviet Union against one another. Mexican players received extensive support from the crowd throughout the game. The most extraordinary moments came from a fan-organized group that was spread around the arena. These soccer fans were young men, and their chant of "Me-xi-co, ra, ra, ra" turned into a popular rallying cry.[79] While the public chanted, both teams failed to create "good entertainment" -- their defensive playing styles and fear of losing the first game kept on-field drama to a minimum. The teams tied, and the two delegations shared the first points of the contest. Once the game ended, thousands of spectators initiated their departure towards the Azteca stadium's exits. Observers noted how "the crowd leaving the Azteca was quiet, almost thoughtful . . . every Mexican supporter was disappointed that Mexico had not won, but content that at least they had not been defeated."[80] Other segments of the population did not share the feelings of disappointment. Throughout the Reforma road, people participated in a spontaneous festivity to celebrate the tournament and Mexico's first game.[81] The fans' reaction protected the World Cup's image locally after the Mexican team's disappointing performance.

The Mexican squad continued with its participation in the IX World Cup with another game at the Azteca stadium against El Salvador. Once again, thousands of fans filled the arena to support the Mexican delegation, despite an intense heatwave. However, the Mexican squad continued to exhibit a cautious, defensive style of play. The game continued with the Mexican players increasing their dominance over their counterparts from El Salvador, which led to a final

[79] Video, Ford, Official Report, 11.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.

score of four goals to zero. The score sparked a four-hour-long celebration in Mexico City's streets. Tourists from other countries joined these festivities from their hotel rooms.[82]

The massive celebrations proved the tournament's early success, and Mexico's second victory over Belgium encouraged the festivities to continue. Thousands of people went back to the streets to celebrate with their flags and chants of "Me-xi-co!"[83] While the public was celebrating these victories, other observers looked for a causal analysis. According to the editorial staff from *El Nacional*, the PRI deserved credit for this positive performance due to a series of policies adopted in previous years that promoted the practice of sporting activities. These journalists also perceived a connection between these scores and Mexican athletes' positive results at the 1968 Olympic Games.[84] These comments demonstrate an early attempt to present scores and the fans' reactions as tangible evidence on nation's political state.

The Mexican team's elimination marked a turning point for the IX World Cup. During the quarterfinals, Mexico faced off against Italy, a team expected to win the tournament. The game was scheduled at the Luis Dosal Stadium in the city of Toluca, Mexico. For the local organizers, the Mexican team needed to play at the Azteca stadium to capitalize on the public's interest in this game. However, FIFA officials rejected the proposal, and the Mexican squad played against Italy in front of only 26,851 fans. The game concluded with the Italian team defeating the Mexican team with a score of four goals to one. Mexican journalist Guillermo Ochoa described

[82] "Verdadera Verbena Popular por el Exito del Campeonato de Futbol: Duro Muchas Horas la Jubilosa Celebracion en Centricas Calles," *El Nacional*, June 8, 1970.
[83] "Me-xi-co! Hilo Para la Union" *El Nacional*, June 13, 1970, "Fiesta" *El National*, June 13, 1970, and "La Santa Alegria Popular" *El National*, June 13, 1970.
[84] Editoriales "Meresido Triunfo Deportivo," *El National,* June 12, 1970.

how the score left an atmosphere of sadness around the stadium and "children's tears in men's faces."[85]

While the score represented Mexico's elimination from the tournament, it also other conversations to a public space. After the game, the Mexican press analyzed the team's performance and commented on how the score was expected based on its rival. The editorial staff from *El Universal* emphasized the significance of reaching the quarterfinals for the Mexican squad and earning the chance to compete against Italy, a World Cup champion. Even the fans received praise for demonstrating a peaceful reaction towards the match's final score. On the other hand, some observers commented how Mexico's defeat exhibited the need to invest more resources in promoting athletics programs and national competitions. According to this argument, the rise of these sporting activities could give Mexico new generations of energetic citizens to protect the nation's sovereignty "from foreign interventions of any kind."[86] Mexico's elimination had implications over people's perception on the local team's position in the international classification and the utility of professional sports for the nation.

The elimination of the Mexican team from the World Cup might have transformed the event into a failure for the local organizers. However, the Mexican fans were engaged with the tournament due to their solidarity with the Brazilian team. During the first round of matches, Brazil played against Czechoslovakia at the Jalisco Stadium. The game concluded with the Brazilian team defeating Czechoslovakia four goals to one. Although the Brazilian players exhibited spectacular skills, observers and tourists paid more attention to the celebrations that

[85] "World Cup 1970" FIFA Digital Archive https://web.archive.org/web/20160701154217/http://www.rsssf.com/tables/70full.html, and Guillermo Ochoa, "El Mundial Paso a ser de los Extrajeros," *Excelsior*, June 15, 1970.
[86] "Editorial: Magnífico Esfuerzo" *El Universal*, June 16, 1970, "Buena Actuacion Deportiva," *El Universal*, June 16, 1970, and "Se impose el Balance en Nuestro Futbol," *El Universal*, June 16, 1970.

unfolded after the game. Thousands of Mexican fans celebrated the score throughout the streets of Guadalajara. To some, these celebrations resembled the Carnival of Rio de Janeiro.[87] These comparisons were positive news for the Mexican organizers. In Brazil's next game, the team continued their winning streak with a victory over England. Celebrations among the local fans continued. On the other hand, English players complained about the Mexican fans' unequal support. According to them, the Mexican public created an environment that affected their performance. Mexican diplomats in England responded to these complaints by making a public statement about the Mexican fans' right to support any team. For these officials, the broadcasting of these protests had the potential to make diplomatic ties between Mexico and England politically unpopular. Therefore, the Mexican officials made a public statement about the Mexican fans' right to support any competition team.[88] During the semifinals, Brazil needed to defeat Uruguay to secure a position in the final game. The Mexican public continued demonstrating their unconditional support in this vital game, which ended with a Brazilian team's victory. Galo Plaza, General Secretary for the Organizacion de Estados Americanos, attended the semifinals game in Jalisco, Mexico. Plaza described the environment inside the soccer stadium by explaining how the seats became "a field of fraternity, not of war."[89]

The Mexican fans' support towards the Brazilian delegation turned into a public topic of discussion. Eusebio Castro, a professor of philosophy at the UNAM, argued that the connection between the Mexican fans and the Brazilian team reflected a profound historical relationship between these groups of people. According to Castro, Brazilians and Mexicans were destined to

[87] "Rivales, pero no enemigos," *El Universal*, June 9, 1970.
[88] Rodolfo de LaRosa, "Las Criticas Iglesias a México son Injustas," *El Nacional*, June 9, 1970.
[89] Alejandro Ortiz Reza,"'El Futbol, Deporte de un solo Idioma', Afirmo Galo Plaza, en Guanadalajara," *Excelsior,* June 18, 1970.

support each other, as these nations shared a historical origin: “these are mestizo countries with vast reserves of vital energy and sentiment.”[90] For Castro, the World Cup provided a stage for people to meet and share their experiences. To Claudia Hernadez, the Mexican public's support was the result of a marketing campaign by Telesistema.[91] After it became clear to Azcárraga Milmo that the Mexican team was unlikely to win the tournament, and that the elimination of the Mexican team had the potential to lower attendance and TV viewership for the rest of the games, he decided to provide more coverage to the Brazilian team before the World Cup had even begin. Azcárraga Milmo theorized that the Brazilian team had the potential to win the IX World Cup and capture the local fans' attention. Telesistema’s sporting commentators emphasized the Brazilian players' qualities while downplaying their rivals throughout the tournament. Moreover, the same commentators antagonized the English players, who had defeated the Mexican squad during the 1966 World Cup.[92] By creating this narrative, Azcárraga Milmo guaranteed the Mexican fans' interest in the World Cup after the Mexican team's imminent elimination. Thus, Azcárraga Milmo secured the financial success of the broadcasting of the games and positive levels of attendance to the games hosted at the Azteca stadium.

On June 21, 1970, the Brazilian delegation defeated its Italian counterpart at the IX World Cup's final match. President Díaz Ordaz personally gave the Jules Rimet trophy to the Brazilian team during the final ceremony.[93] The trophy delivery represented the end of the tournament for the participants and the organizers. Throughout the competition, it became clear that the Mexican public had made a special connection with the Brazilian team. To capitalize on

[90] Ibid. Rafael Garcia, “La final no tendrá el impacto del juego del miércoles, pero será el partido clave de la copa del mundo,” *El Nacional*, June 20, 1970.
[91] Fernandez, *El Tigre*, 226.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ford, *Official Report,* 180.

this development, President of the National Council of Tourism Miguel Aleman Valdez decided to honor the most famous Brazilian player, Edson Arantes Do Nascimento, or "Pele."[94] The Mexican politician granted Pele a medal of merit for his behavior inside and outside the soccer field. Pele responded to this honor by sending a message to the Mexican public, "God bless this beautiful land."[95] The official gesture aimed to exploit the political potential of this connection after the tournament.

The culmination of the tournament also initiated a process of evaluation for FIFA. In its final report, FIFA noted that "from a financial point of view, as well as from most points of view, the Ninth World Cup was a success."[96] The financial point of view was crucial for measuring the soccer tournament's success. After paying for the rent of stadiums, local taxes, and hosting the organizing committee, the competition made 80,678,052 pesos in profit from tickets, merchandising, films, telecommunications broadcasting, and publicity throughout the tournament out of an initial revenue of 446,586,492 pesos. The money was divided between the finalists, the FMF, and FIFA. The FMF received 21,356,439 pesos, FIFA 7,348,525, and each finalist 2,985,308.[97] The revenue distribution shows that each finalist received an equal amount of money and that the FMF received from being a finalist and organizing the tournament. Thus, the IX World Cup meant a considerable economic gain for the major players, both literal and figurative.

Throughout the process of creating and enacting the IX World Cup, Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo became prominent figures, and they received significant rewards for their work.

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[94] "Pele at Mexico 1970," *FIFA* (February 14, 2020), accessed in July 29 2020 https://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/mexico1970/photos/#pele-at-mexico-1970.
[95] Rafael Moya Garcia, "Pele Como Ejemplo," *Excelsior,* June 25, 1970.
[96] Ford, *Official Report,* 180.
[97] Ibid., 177-83.

Azcárraga Milmo received the financial revenues from the Azteca Stadium and his telecommunications company. First, he received profits from the games hosted at the Azteca stadium, and a percentage from the merchandise, food, and beers. Moreover, the hosting of a major sporting event provided Azcárraga Milmo's company with an opportunity to become a pioneer in the use of giant screens. By working with José de la Herrán, Jr., a colleague in the broadcasting industry, Telesistema installed giant screens at multiple locations around Mexico City, including the Palacio de Los Deportes and the Arena Mexico.[98] Hosting the IX World Cup represented a complete success for Azcárraga Milmo and his company. For Cañedo, the tournament provided him with a chance to expand his professional network with FIFA representatives. Once the event concluded, Cañedo left the FMF presidency and searched for a FIFA executive position. Inside FIFA, Cañedo could continue his efforts to provide Telesistema with new business opportunities and the FMF access to the most prestigious sporting events.[99] The IX World Cup opened multiple doors to Cañedo's continued professional development in soccer management. The IX World Cup rewarded the most prominent figures involved in the event's organization, many of whom were not PRI representatives and were connected to the Mexican soccer league.

Conclusion

The impetus to host the 1968 Olympics and IX World Cup came from Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo, rather than from the PRI. In contrast to the World Cup, the Olympics carried a greater international significance for the Mexican government, and PRI officials were far more hands-on their management, seeking legitimacy on the global stage. For Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo, on the other hand, the pursuance of the Olympics provided an opportunity to create a

[98] Ibid., 224.
[99] Ibid., 227.

competitive project to host the World Cup in Mexico. The Olympics needed to prove to the international soccer world that Mexican fans would support and consume the event as entertainment. On the other hand, Mexico's pre-Olympics record as a nation with a professional soccer league and millions of fans engaged with the games eliminated some of the challenges that the MOC faced during the organization of the Olympics. Moreover, Cañedo's effort to consolidate the regional soccer federation secured the necessary number of votes to bring the World Cup to Mexico. On the other hand, the MOC could not influence the Olympic Games' voting system. For the MOC, the project depended on presenting Mexico as a nation with a stable political environment without connections to the politics of the Cold War. These differences became critical for the organization of the events and the unfolding of the games. The MOC needed to protect and reaffirm Mexico's image of internal stability. For the organizers of the IX World Cup, the challenge came with the inevitable elimination of the Mexican team and the plausible reduction of attendance to the games. Fortunately for Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo, the public expressed enthusiasm towards the tournament as a whole which impressed the FIFA authorities. Moreover, Mexican fans' celebrations of positive results by their preferred teams became tangible accomplishments for the hosting the event in Mexico. Thus, the PRI's lack of contribution to the IX World Cup organization process came from the growing influence of individuals like Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo over the professional soccer league and the telecommunications sector.

Chapter 3: The 86' World Cup: Fiesta and Contention

In 1973, Emilio Azcárraga Milmo monopolized the headlines of the Mexican newspapers. Telesistema merged with Television Independiente de México, a new broadcasting company founded in 1965. Televisa was the product of this merger, and it monopolized the Mexican communications industry.[100] Azcárraga Milmo's decision transformed his business into an empire in the entertainment sector with enough influence to bring the most prestigious mega-events to Mexico. On October 26, 1982, an announcement from Colombia caught the international audiences and Azcárraga Milmo's attention. Colombian President Belisario Betancur announced on national television that his government could not financially support the burden of organizing the 13th World Cup. According to Betancur, Colombia lacked the economic resources to host the soccer tournament and "comply with FIFA's extravagancies."[101] Betancur's announcement was expected to those familiar with FIFA's new ambitions. FIFA executives wanted to increase the World Cup's popularity through a wider broadcasting network and receive more profits from each game in the competition. FIFA demanded that the hosting nation have access to modern transportation and a global broadcasting system. Moreover, the soccer authority required a minimum of twelve stadiums to host 40,000 people for the group stage, four with 60,000, and two with 80,000 for the first and final matches.[102] Colombia did not have the

[100] Rogelio Rios, "Que paguen quienes ya pagaron? Las ganancias del futbol" *Uno-mas -uno*, March 16, 1984, and "Convenio Philips-Televisa Para la Copa del Mundial de Futbol Mexico-86" *Excelsior*, April 12, 1984.
[101] Dagoberto Escorcia, "Betancur: Colombia no tiene tiempo para attender las extravagancies de la FIFA," *El Pais* (October 27, 1982).
[102] "Colombia renuncia al Mundial-86 de futbol" *El País*, Oct 26, 1982.

infrastructure or economic resources to fulfill FIFA's demands, which led to Betancur's television statement.

FIFA responded to Betancur's announcement by opening the 13th World Cup's candidacy to a new collection of countries. FIFA representatives decided to limit the selection process to North and South American participants to maintain the tournament in the previously selected region. Once the news became public, soccer federations from the United States, Canada, Brazil, and Mexico expressed their interest in hosting the event. FIFA provided these national delegations with a package that outlined the demands and expectations for hosting the tournament. Early on in the selection process, the Brazilian commission announced its lack of the necessary economic resources. Alongside the Brazilian government's financial troubles, Canada and the United States did not even complete their official dossiers. In Mexico, the committee responsible for organizing the official bid completed its project, and it became the only serious candidate for hosting the international event. Herman Neuber, head of the FIFA Selection Committee, received the Mexican bid and recommended its selection to the Executive Committee. On May 20, 1983, the Executive Committee announced that Mexico had won the selection contest. The FIFA authorities commented that the decision "was influenced by the fact that Mexico hosted other international sporting events (Olympic Games 1968, WC 1970)."[103] Once again, the FMF accepted the challenge of hosting the World Cup.

Why Mexico?

The announcement of Mexico's selection as the hosting state sparked a discussion over FIFA's decision and the PRI's political priorities. For local journalists Mexico was incapable of hosting an international competition due to its economic problems. Prior to President Betancur's

[103] Ibid, and *FIFA World Cup Mexico '86: Official Report* Zurich (Switzerland: Federation Internationale de Football Association, 1986), 8.

announcement, the Mexican economy recorded positive numbers for state-owned enterprises with new capital injections from an increase in oil prices on the international market. The news inspired national firms to invest in their businesses, which led to a rise in national debt from 30 percent in 1978 to 63 percent in 1981. International banks shared this optimistic view and decided to redouble their loans to Mexico with the hope of receiving payments from the oil boom.[104] However, the stabilization of politics surrounding oil production in the Middle East decreased petroleum prices, and Mexico lost its new capital injections. For the Mexican elites, the changing of oil prices represented a financial crisis. These economic problems led to an unprecedented capital flight that "absorbed as much as 54 percent of the increase in Mexico's total foreign debt."[105] Subsequently, international lending was interrupted, devaluations followed the announcement, and the Mexican government decided to suspend its public debt payments. President López Portillo responded by nationalizing the banking system and adopting a new series of controls on capital flow. Unfortunately, López Portillo's policies came too late for the Mexican economy, and the nation exhausted its national reserves. On December 10, 1982, President López Portillo decided to accept a structural adjustment program with the International Monetary Fund to secure the rescheduling of loans in exchange for widespread structural adjustments.[106] Thus, PRI officials were desperate searching for economic resources to stabilize the nation from its financial troubles.

Mexico's financial crisis arrived in a pivotal political moment for the nation. On July 4, 1982, Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) won the presidential elections. Once in office, he initiated an intensive campaign to stabilize the nation's economy. For the new administration, the

[104] Moreno-Brid, *Development and Growth in the Mexican Economy*, 136-7.
[105] Ibid., 136-7.
[106] Louis E. Walker, *Waking from the dream: Mexico's Middle Classes after 1968* (Stanford, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 144.

pathway to stability was in attracting foreign capital alongside austerity measures and economic liberalization. By adopting these measures, the Mexican government distanced itself from the efforts of other indebted nations in Latin America.[107] De la Madrid positioned Mexico in this way to secure the support of international financial institutions. While the de la Madrid government attracted foreign capital, the new financial policies contributed to an increase in social tensions. On one side, the economic policies inspired Mexican technocrats to search for investment opportunities in the previously state-owned enterprises. Even though the nation was struggling financially, economic liberalization represented the opening of previously nationally owned industries. However, the middle classes suffered from an atmosphere of economic uncertainty. For small owners, the changes brought a new set of regulations and difficulties in securing credit. Newspapers captured the sentiment of insecurity with articles that described the decline of the Mexican middle class. These stories explored the disappearance of families with disposable income for recreational activities and other entertainment events. For Louis E. Walker, these families became the perfect target for advertisement campaigns that promoted the World Cup as the best entertainment event hosted in Mexico in years.[108] Thus, President de la Madrid's economic project facilitated the creation of a project to host the 13th World cup because the tournament represented a private initiate with the potential to bring foreign capital to Mexico.

The structure of the Mexican selection committee exemplified the driving forces behind the hosting of another World Cup in Mexico. First, Cañedo appeared as the most prominent figure behind the project, as a FIFA executive and member of the Mexican organizing committee. By 1983, Cañedo was a respected administrator of sporting competitions in Mexico

[107] Ibid., 153.
[108] Ibid., 157.

and internationally. Rafael del Castillo, FMF's new president, also participated in the creation of the Mexican project.[109] Their participation in the World Cup selection process appeared appropriate and was expected given the event's nature. However, a character inside the organizing committee raised some eyebrows for the Mexican public. Romulo O'Farril, Jr. attended the selection meeting without having experience in the organization of sporting competitions. For Jorge Aymami, a local journalist, O'Farril attended the event "without an apparent justification [except for] holding one of the most important positions inside the Mexican enterprise, Televisa."[110] The structure of the committee reflected the capitalist force driving the hosting of the 13th World Cup and the PRI's intension to remain distant from the organization process.

'86 Organizing Preparations

Once again, FIFA and the FMF organizing committee hosted a series of meetings to prepare Mexico for the 13th World Cup. Compared to the IX World Cup's hosting project, FIFA representatives showed optimism towards the event. Regardless of Mexico's financial problems, FIFA members perceived a stable structure inside the FMF organizing committee. During the first reunion, Cañedo explained to FIFA representatives that he was responsible for making the final decision with FMF members' collaboration. For the FIFA authorities, the FMF committee's continuity provided stability to the soccer tournament organization. Cañedo also stated how the Mexican committee secured contracts with advertising companies to promote the competition before the initial meetings. FIFA representatives complemented these announcements by explaining how they made contracts with Adidas to manufacture the official balls. Finally, Cañedo explained that the Mexican committee had secured contracts with Azcárraga's company

[109] Jorge Aymami, "Mirador," *Excelsior*, May 26, 1983.
[110] Ibid.

to broadcast the event and rent the Azteca stadium.[111] The signing of these contracts guaranteed the commercialization of the World Cup for FIFA and Azcárraga Milmo's financial success.

The FMF organizing committee concentrated its efforts on improving Mexico's sporting infrastructure. Following FIFA's new intentions to increase the World Cup's popularity, Mexico needed to access a collection of modern stadiums to host the soccer tournament. The FMF created a list of available arenas for FIFA's approval. In this list, the FMF included stadiums that needed renovations and a plan to construct two new arenas in Michoacán and Guanajuato. The Mexican organizers commented that these projects did not represent a problem because they had full support from the local governments. FIFA approved the list of stadiums and construction efforts initiated at each venue.[112] FIFA's committee supervised the renovation projects and the building of the new arenas. According to FIFA's supervising members, the enlargement project for the Estadio Cuauhtémoc and the construction of its new media facilities presented no problems, in part because Puebla's governor was investing massive amounts of public funds. FIFA representatives praised the plans, and the Mexican organizers noted that other stadiums were receiving similar support.[113] The 13th World Cup organization triggered a series of construction projects around the nation to fulfill FIFA's stadiums requirements and expectations.

The unfolding of infrastructure projects demonstrated the PRI's past involvement in the development of sporting events. During the early organization process, there was a public concern over the lack of participation of members of the Subsecretaría del Deporte (SD), the highest national athletic organization, in the FMF's organization committee. However, FIFA's

[111] Minutes of Meeting No. 1 of the Organizing Committee for the 1986 World Cup held at Hotel Camino Real, Mexico City on Friday, 17 June 1983 at 10.00 hours, 1986 FIFA World Cup Mexico, FIFA World Museum.
[112] Minutes of Meeting No. 3 of the Organizing Committee for the 1986 FIFA World Cup held at FIFA House, Zurich, on Wednesday, 28 November 1984, 1986 FIFA World Cup Mexico, FIFA World Museum.
[113] Minutes of Meeting No. 5 of the Organizing Committee for the 1986 FIFA World Cup held on 11 December, 1985 in Mexico City, 1986 FIFA World Cup Mexico, FIFA World Museum.

supervising committee recorded how the local officials were supporting the hosting of another World Cup in Mexico. For FIFA, the Bombonera Stadium in Toluca presented financial difficulties to complete the arena's renovation project. The Mexican committee responded to these problems by ensuring FIFA that local authorities promised to invest 150 million pesos in completing the expansion, approximately 21 billion pesos in today's money. The committee warned the local authorities that the stadium could not qualify for FIFA's new capacity requirement without this investment. In Irapuato, FIFA noted how the local government pledged to invest 110 million pesos on building a new stadium that followed FIFA's requirements.[114] For Mexican journalist Inocencio Reyes Ruiz, these projects represented mismanagement of public funds and a display of a PRI's long tradition of using public resources to support the professional soccer league. Reyes Ruiz explained how the Corregidora Stadium in Querétaro embodied the local's government control over the construction of soccer arenas. First, the stadium was constructed with public funds under the PRI government of Rafael Camacho Guzman. Years later, the Corregidora was sold to private companies under its price value to secure local businesses' political support for an upcoming campaign. Consequently, the Queretaro citizens lost the revenues from the hosting of local competitions and the upcoming 13th World Cup.[115] Although PRI representatives appeared absent from the organizing committee, local officials provided the basis for the national soccer league and they were prepare to collaborate with the 13th World Cup project.

Azcárraga's Dream and Nightmare

[114] Zaragoza Zacarias, "Mejor ven el munidal por la tele: La Bombonera debe invertir 150.000,000 de pesos," *El universal* (May 15, 1984).
[115] Inocencio Reyes Ruiz, "Futbol, epidemia nacional," *El Dia* (May 10, 1986).

The benefits of hosting the 13th World Cup in Mexico materialized rapidly for Azcárraga Milmo and his company. Televisa received a credit line of 25 million dollars to invest in its infrastructure and broadcasting capacities. Azcárraga Milmo used this credit line to arrange a contract with Philips International, an American broadcasting technology producer. Philips International modernized Televisa's communications equipment and provided training to its Mexican personnel.[116] Azcárraga Milmo had secured the credit by essentially controlling the nation's telecommunications industry. During the preparation efforts, it became public that Azcárraga Milmo was involved in a legal dispute with his soccer club's fans. Prior to the announcement that Mexico would be the World Cup's hosting nation, Azcárraga Milmo made contracts with fans to secure them spaces in 696 private boxes inside the Azteca Stadium. These contracts covered their attendance at the Club América home games and other significant events. However, Azcárraga Milmo wanted to demand more money from these fans for their right to watch the games of the World Cup from their private boxes. The decision violated the fans' contracts, and for the 18,737 affected fans, it represented "an attack to public and private rights in the country."[117] While the dispute was underway, Azcárraga Milmo initiated his plans of constructing 773 new private seats for the Azteca stadium.[118] Azcárraga Milmo exhibited a lack of concern for solving the legal dispute. His mission was to maximize profits by hosting the 13th World Cup in Mexico and the PRI's lack of

The criticisms against Azcárraga Milmo increased after a soccer match hosted at the Azteca Stadium. In 1983, Mexico hosted FIFA's World Youth Championship with the de la Madrid administration's support. For FIFA, the tournament represented an opportunity to test

[116] Ibid.
[117] "Acusaran a Futbol del D.F. de 'Tentativa de fraude'" *Proceso*, February 25,1986.
[118] Rios, "Que paguen quienes ya pagaron? Las ganancias del futbol" *Uno-mas -uno*, and "Convenio Philips-Televisa Para la Copa del Mundial de Futbol Mexico-86" *Excelsior*, April 12, 1984.

Mexico's capacity to host another competition. Once the competition concluded, FIFA registered positive outcomes from the organization's efforts. However, Televisa received criticism for the event's broadcasting. Televisa aired the contest's final game but decided to ignore the collapse of two hot air balloons over the public and a physical fight between Argentine players and journalists. According to Jose de Villa, a local journalist, Televisa was protecting Mexico's image as a hosting nation of sporting competitions by ignoring these incidents.[119] For other journalists, the decision to block the incidents represented a more significant problem for the country. By refusing to broadcast the violence at the Azteca stadium, Azcárraga's company misinformed and manipulated audiences. Therefore, they argued the Mexican authorities needed to intervene to control Televisa's presentation of public events. Journalist Javier Solorzano Zinser complemented the criticisms by explaining how Azcárraga's company misinformed the audience on the Mexican team's likelihood of winning the World Youth Championship. According to Solorzano Zinser, Televisa's campaign represented an attempt to make the soccer tournament an advertising success by lying to viewers.[120] Azcarraga Milmo used his control over the telecommunications industry to eliminate any criticisms surrounding the hosting of another World Cup in Mexico and protect the tournament's financial success.

The 1985 Earthquake

By 1985, the Mexican government was recovering from its financial problems, and the FMF was starting the preparations for the 13th World Cup. However, eight states experienced a seismic episode of 8.1 on the Richter scale on September 19. On the next day, Mexico registered an aftershock with a magnitude of 7.5. In Mexico City, a combination of geological conditions and other factors led to massive property destruction and the loss of thousands of lives. At

[119] Jose de Villa, "Irresponsabilidad Informativa" *El Dia*, June 21, 1983.
[120] Javier Solorzano Zinser, "Medios de Comunicacion y futbol: del fracas al negocio" *El Dia*, June 23, 19883.

Azcárraga Milmo's telecommunications company, two transmission towers, one of its theater complexes, and various television sets were severely damaged. In the city's western region, two of the oldest middle-class neighborhoods, La Roma and Condesa, also suffered from critical damages. Even federal infrastructure was damaged, particularly office spaces.[121] President de la Madrid responded to the natural disaster by declaring a state of emergency and making a radio statement. In this radio appearance, De la Madrid explained to the public that he did not have precise statistics on the scale of destruction but commented that "above all the priority [was] to save lives."[122] The earthquakes left behind destruction and desperation among Mexico City citizens.

De la Madrid's response to the 1985 natural disaster generated confusion among Mexico City citizens in part because the national disaster-response strategy did not match the actions of the authorities and local businesses. In some instances, owners of manufacturing companies ignored people under the debris to rescue their machinery. People also witnessed how the military protected companies that suffered damages instead of helping the victims.[123] These cases became an exhibition of the business-first priorities guiding the recovery efforts. Moreover, the aftermath of the disaster exposed the PRI's destructive and oppressive nature. First, it became apparent that the local authorities ignored protective measures, as evidenced by the collapse of buildings and public infrastructure. In an infamous case, the Nuevo León residential building's collapse uncovered a collection of reports about the precarious stage of the construction. Later on, the destruction of the metropolitan police headquarters exposed the tortured bodies of two

[121] Ligia Tavera-Fenollosa, *Social Movements and Civil Society: The Mexico City 1985 Earthquake Victim Movement* (December 1998) Yale University. 86-97.
[122] "1985: Mexico City in Chaos as Buildings Fall; Death Toll Heavy," *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 19, 1985.
[123] Jaime Hernandez, "Sobrevivientes y sus historias" *El Universal*, accessed on November 14, 2019. https://interactivo.eluniversal.com.mx/sismo85-historias/.

Colombian detainees and the body of Saul Ocampo, a criminal lawyer.[124] The discovery of extra-judicial executions, the mismanagement of public buildings, and the prioritization of private property over human lives led to the formation of a social movement against the PRI's leadership in Mexico City.

A sentiment of disconformity among the citizens of Mexico City towards hosting the 13th World Cup increased after the 1985 earthquake. Rumors spread that President de la Madrid refused to accept foreign aid to protect Mexico's image as a stable hosting nation for the World Cup. Moreover, people commented that de la Madrid's first phone call after the disaster erupted was to FIFA's representatives.[125] The neighborhoods most impacted by the World Cup expressed their discontent towards the de la Madrid's priorities inside their newspapers' publication. In their daily papers, the Unión de Vecinos y Damnificados made their position clear with stories that included the message, "No World Cup, yes houses."[126] Even though these local organizations were not exclusively mobilizing against the 13th World Cup hosting, their disapproval represented an obstacle that only representatives from de la Madrid government could eliminate. De la Madrid personally responded to these criticisms at a meeting with the Mexican organizing committee and FIFA executives. During this meeting, De la Madrid commended how the public "reacted with surprising solidarity, vigorous and responsible, and that is why the Mexican government effectively managed the social commotion."[127] For the de la Madrid administration, the only way to reduce the tensions between his government and the victims' organizations was to present the victims' mobilization as an exhibition of social

[124] Tavera-Fenollosa, *Social Movements and Civil Society,* 99 -100
[125] Walker, *Waking from the Dream*, 177.
[126] AVG (September -May 1986), Unidad de la Cronica Presidencial, Asociaciones Civiles, Box 6, file 6.
[127] AVG (December 12, 1985), Unidad de la Cronica Presidencial, Box 5, file 4.
"En la audencia que concendio a los miembros del Comite Organizador del Campeonato Mundial de Futbol Mexico 86, en el Salon Carranza de la residencia official de Los Pinos," AGN,

determination. De la Madrid intervened to protect the 13th World Cup because the tournament represented a private initiative to bring an event capable of attracting foreign capital to Mexico.

The 1986 World Cup Opening Ceremony

On May 31, 1986, the 13th World Cup was initiated with an opening ceremony at the Azteca stadium. Inside the soccer arena, 100,000 spectators witnessed the soccer tournament's first day. Millions of people also watched the spectacle from their televisions in more than 100 countries worldwide. For the Mexican organizers, the opening ceremony represented an opportunity to eliminate criticisms surrounding the competition. To amaze the audiences and the FIFA authorities, the organizers decided to present a series of colorful performances exhibiting elements from the Mexican culture. First, the soccer field was covered with a 100-meter-long carpet of fresh flowers in bloom. The "Fiesta Mexicana" continued with female folkloric dancers performing to the beat of mariachis' music. Once the dancers concluded their performance, the audience stood up to sing the national anthem and complete the "ola verde," a wavy movement with fans standing up and waving their arms to create the illusion of an ocean wave. The soccer authorities were impressed with the inauguration and the creation of a "fascinating spectacle which was part of [a] thrilling football opera."[128] Female dancers provided the ceremony with entertainment for the male-dominated audiences, while the national anthem's inclusion was aiming to provide the celebration with an element of nationalism and officiality. President de la Madrid continued with the ceremony with a welcoming speech:

> "I congratulate myself with the Mexican people that our country has deserved the hosting of the World Cup again. Mexicans give a fraternal and cordial welcoming

[128] *FIFA World Cup – Mexico '86: Official Report* (Zurich, Switzerland: Federationale Internationale de Football Association, 1986), 15.

to all the participants to this sporting Fiesta: We trust that our effort will contribute to a greater understanding among the nations in this world."[129]

De la Madrid's message aimed to provide confidence to the organizers on the nation's capacity to host the soccer tournament. Once again, the public interrupted the head of state with whistles of disapproval.[130] Thus, the 13th World Cup started in Mexico with a promising inauguration that reflected the intentions of building enthusiasm for the tournament's financial success.

Azcárraga Milmo's and the rest of the FMF organizing committee worked to create an atmosphere of entertainment, but the tournament's success depended on the reaction of the public to performance of the Mexican team. For the 13th World Cup, the Mexican public had high expectations for their delegation of players. Prior to the Colombian announcement, nobody wanted to coach the Mexican team because it failed to qualify for the World Cup in 1982. Once Mexico became the official hosting nation for the IX World Cup, the FMF initiated its search for a new coach to prepare the players for the upcoming competition. The FMF selected Bora Milutinović, a Serbian coach with experience in the Mexican league. To some, Milutinović's selection was not appropriate to represent the national team due to his foreign background.[131] However, Milutinović's decision received official support and initiated a project to prepare his squad with a series of games during an unprecedented international tour. Throughout 1985, the Mexican team lost only four of twenty-two games. The Mexican team competed against delegations from multiple regions, including strong teams such as Italy, England, and Germany. Hugo Sánchez's performance, in particular, caught the Mexican fans' attention during these

[129] AVG (May 28, 1986), Unidad de la Cronica Presidencial, Dependecia 56, Box 1, file 2.
[130] Walker, *Waking from the Dream*, 199, and *Carlos Monsivais, Entrada Libre: Cronicas de la Sociedad que se organiza* (Mexico, DF: Ediciones Era, 1987), 3771.
[131] Carlos Calderon Cardoso, *Mexico El Proyecto de Bora* (Mexico City: Entre Vistas, 2019), 17-8.

matches. Sánchez had a respected career that started with the Pumas, the UNAM's soccer team located in Mexico City. By 1985, Sánchez played with the Real Madrid team and led the Spanish soccer league's scoring boards.[132] The Mexican fans had high expectations due to Sánchez's talent and professional connection to the national soccer league.

Mexico had extensive success in the group stage was positive for the 13th World Cup organizers. However, the local celebrations delivered a different story for the event's planners and the global audiences. Thousands of people celebrated winning the first game against the Belgian team. According to local newspapers, more than one million citizens from Mexico City celebrated the result. In these celebrations, there were multiple violent incidents and extensive use of alcoholic beverages. Attorney General Renato Sales Gasque responded to these incidents by making a public statement to explain that his office prepared 43 agencies from the Public Minister to protect citizens for the next matches.[133] The message aimed at reducing the tensions surrounding the tournament and motivate the fans to attend the next games. However, the Public Minister's office was not prepared for the public's response to the Mexican team's final victory over Iraq. Local authorities registered multiple fights between fans throughout the city, the destruction of automobiles, stealing from stores, and numerous people injured. According to the local newspaper, more than one thousand fans were arrested for disturbances. In other instances, local journalists recorded how fans hijacked public buses to move people to local festivities. These developments, the excessive selling of alcohol, and the heavy rain that the city recorded made the authorities' mobilization impossible. To some, these incidents represented a greater defeat for the nation than losing a soccer match. It also exhibited how the government could not

[132] Nadel, *Futbol!,* 194-5.
[133] 'Energia si hay Excesos: el Procurador," *Uno-mas-uno*, June 15, 1986.

control the fans and protect its citizens.[134] Thus, PRI officials worked to protect the tournament from the unfolding of incidents associated with the public's response to the performance of the local team.

The Mexican squad's elimination concluded its participation in the 13th World Cup after a defeat in the quarterfinals. Azcárraga Milmo and FMF organizing committee, the elimination of the Mexican team could reduce the number of attendees to the games and level of viewers. However, the performance of the Argentinean squad captured the attention of the local and international audiences. During the quarterfinals, the Argentinean squad played a knockout game against the English delegation. Surrounding the game, a narrative of political confrontation between Argentina and England influenced the competition. In 1982, Argentinean military forces had invaded and occupied the English-occupied Falkland Islands. The United Kingdom responded to the military intervention with a violent response. For the Argentinian government, the invasion was an exhibition of self-determination to liberate the islands from English domination. The conflict between Argentina and England carried over to the 13th World Cup quarterfinals. News outlets and observers perceived the match as a crucial match to test the Argentinian squad in the competition. At the 13th World Cup game between these teams, Diego Maradona scored Argentina's first goal by pushing the ball with his hand. The referees did not notice the penalty, to the English players' surprise and anger. Moments later, Maradona took the ball on his side of the soccer field and dribbled it until he scored the game's second goal. Eleven seconds saw Maradona score "the most stunning piece of the brilliance of his entire career."[135]

[134] Ibid., "Derrota Civica" *Excelsior*, June 16, 1986, Fernando Mera, Rafael Medina, y Victor Payan, "Vandalismo Aislado, Secuestro de Autobuses y 625 detenidos," Excelsior, June 12, 1986, " Derrota Civica," *Excelsior*, June 16, 1986.
[135] "Maradona's Immortal 11-secon dash," FIFA https://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/mexico1986/teams/team/43922/

Argentina advanced to the semifinals, where it defeated its counterpart from Belgium. The victory over the Belgian squad sent the Argentina team to the final match against Germany. Once the last match ended, Argentina became the 13th World Cup champion.

President de la Madrid delivered the trophy to the Argentinian team to culminate the tournament. However, the participation of the head state in the closing ceremony represented only a superficial component of the tournament. The end of the tournament represented the beginning of an analysis for the main organizers on the World Cup's success. According to Cañedo, the hosting of the tournament was a success because "Mexico gave the World Cup the best possible setting, kept violence away from the stadium and transferred its enthusiasm and happiness about the accomplishments of its own learn to football in general."[136] For Cañedo's and FMF organizing committee, the event's success depended on maintain incidents away from the arenas. On the other hand, FIFA measured the 1986 World Cup's success based on its financial revenues. According to FIFA, the 1986 World Cup was a financial success "as much for the organizers as for the teams, and this despite the economic situation and the media's pessimistic predictions."[137] Thus, the 13th World Cup succeeded on generating the expected financial returns for the organizers.

Conclusion

President de la Madrid's efforts to promote the growing of a national private sector contributed to Mexico's selection as a hosting state. For President de la Madrid, the hosting of the tournament represented the possibility of attracting needed foreign capital and promote an initiate of privatization. After all, the Azcarraga Milmo's company and the FMF, an administrative body with business connections to multiple businesses around the nation were the

[136] Official Report: FIFA Archives, pg. 214.
[137] Ibid. 214.

driving force behind the project. De la Madrid only intervened in the organization process to convince FIFA representatives that Mexico City was prepared to receive the games after the 1985 earthquake. The response of the Mexican fans to the participation of de la Madrid in the inauguration ceremony exhibited this discontent towards the local authorities' mismanagement of the earthquake. Once the tournament started, the local authorities intervened to ensure the fans that they were working to eliminate violent incidents unfolding around the tournament. On the other hand, Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo dominated the organization of the 13th World Cup. By the early 1980s, Azcárraga Milmo was the public's image of the Mexican private section after the creation of Televisa. Azcárraga Milmo used his connections with the FMF to pursue the hosting of another World Cup after President Bentancur's announcement, in part because the hosting of the IX World Cup provided significant financial returns. Thus, the de la Madrid administration worked to facilitate the hosting of the tournament due to its financial potential and capacity to support private interests.

Epilogue

Mexican politicians sought to exploit the popularity of sports to promote their political agendas. Public spending in these activities contributed to the professionalization and commercialization of sports like soccer. While the PRI investing resources on the promotion of sporting events, a rising group of capitalists increased their investment in this sector. By the 1960s, the PRI's political machine pursue the hosting of the 1968 Olympic games with the intention of using this event to legitimize power and improve Mexico's image in the international arena. At the same time, Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo organized a project to host the IX World Cup from their position and influence inside the FMF. The PRI officials remained distant from the hosting of the IX World Cup because they concentrated their efforts on the organization of the Olympic games. Moreover, the IX World Cup project did not depend on maintaining Mexico's image of internal political stability. This project depended on protecting the event's financial success after the eventual elimination of the local team. President Betancur's announcement provided Azcárraga Milmo and Cañedo with the opportunity to collaborate on the creation of a new project to host the 13th World Cup. By 1982, PRI representatives renounced the idea of using sporting events to promote political initiatives and focused their attention on implementing an economic reform that encouraged foreign capital and the privation of state-owned enterprises. Thus, the Mexican private sector dominated the hosting of the 13th World Cup with the intension of earning significant economic dividends and the PRI supported the project to encourage a new economic agenda.

The study of mega-events provides an opportunity to examine how nation-states have attempted to internationalize their economies and images. In Mexico's case, the hosting of mega-

events is associated with the 1968 Olympic Games and the decline of the PRI. However, the study of two World Cups demonstrated the private sector's influence on the organization and presentation of these events. By studying these events, a narrative of individual and institutional achievements challenges the previous understanding of the political effects of hosting the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico. For example, FIFA representatives considered the organization of the Olympic Games in Mexico a complete success. These assessments protected Mexico's image as a valid and stable host state. Indeed, Mexico is scheduled to host another World Cup in 2026 with the United States and Canada – its prior successes likely paving its way. As FIFA once again attempts to increase the tournament's popularity with more competitors, Mexico has a place as an organizer.[138] Thus, Mexico and the rest of the North American delegation will set the example, for good or ill, of hosting an international competition as a transnational project.

Mexico, the United States, and Canada will become the first nations to host a World Cup with forty-eight competitors. In the official bid, the North American committee crafted an organizational project that advertises political unity between the hosting nations. This might be a tall order: the hosting nations will each experience national elections before the World Cup. The project's stability lies in the inclusion of a collection of representatives from the private sector, including the participation of the Alcarraza empire with Televisa. Moreover, the project mentions how the united bid "offers a network of modern stadiums and facilities capable of hosting the 1st ever 48-team FIFA World Cup without the need for new construction or major investment."[139] In the list of available stadiums for this event, the united project included the Azteca stadium as "one of the most famous and iconic football stadiums in the world . . . it is one

[138] FIFA World Cup, 2026, accessed in January 2021 https://www.fifa.com/worldcup/fifaworldcup2026/
[139] Unity, Certainty, Opportunity: Canada, Mexico, and the United States United bid to Host the 2026 FIFA World Cup, accessed in January 29, p. 110. https://img.fifa.com/image/upload/w3yjeu7dadt5erw26wmu.pdf

of only two venues in the world to have hosted two FIFA World Cup finals (1970 and 1986)."[140] The organizers perceived the Azteca stadium's inclusion as a tangible link between the previous events and the 2026 World Cup. Mexico preserves an image of a strong organizer of mega-events because it continues to follow the expectations of international organizations.

Sporting events in Mexico

The study of mega-events' organization presents multiple possibilities due to their political, economic, and social implications. However, a nation like Mexico organizes multiple international, national, and regional events with similar implications. Each year, the FMF organizes a soccer league where teams formed with local and international players compete to win the tournament. Narratives of nationalism and regionalism collide in these competitions while companies promote their services to audiences that reach millions of viewers. For the Concacaf, the FMF represents a critical member to organize and participate in regional competitions. The participation of Mexican teams in these events carries an image of official representation for the entire nation. These competitions also represent economic opportunities for regional entrepreneurs looking to capitalize on the public's interest. Even though these competitions may appear insignificant for their lack of international recognition, they qualify as mega-events under Roche's definition, and Mexico's history in sports and the region provide these events with unique elements to examine.

The FIFA U-17 World Cup, hosted in Mexico in 2011, represents a peculiar opportunity. Compared to the World Cup, the U-17 tournament is considered a low-ranking event due to its player age limit of seventeen years old and lack of attention from international audiences. However, the organization of the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Mexico became a massive sporting

[140] Ibid.

and organizational success. First, the FIFA U-17 World Cup followed a similar structural organization as other international events. The Mexican organizing committee selected seven venues to host the games. Local governments supported the organization of the games and the preparation of the sporting facilities. From the beginning of the tournament, the FIFA U-17 World Cup produced massive celebrations. Throughout the group stage, the Mexican team captured local audiences' attention by defeating its counterparts from North Korea, Congo, and the European champion, the Netherlands. In these games, Carlos Fierro and Marco Bueno received national recognition for their goals. However, the player who stole the fans' hearts and minds was Julio Gómez, also known for his nickname, the "mummy." Gómez crashed his head against a rival in the semifinals, which resulted in a bleeding head wound that the doctors treated with bandages. While the drama of the tied score kept the fans at the edge of their seats, Gomez returned to the soccer field. Two minutes before the game concluded, Gómez struck a ball with a bicycle kick to defeat the German team. Celebrations followed Gómez's goal and catapulted the Mexican team to the tournament's final match. At the Azteca Stadium, the Mexican team defeated Uruguay to become the World Champion of the U-17 World Cup. Close to 100,000 fans celebrated the local team winning the tournament "in a record-breaking attendance figure for the junior competition."[141] The U-17 World Cup organization became a success for the Mexican organizers because the local team's achievement influenced the public's assessment of the organization of another international event in Mexico.

Compared to previous sporting competitions, the U-17 World Cup provided Mexican fans with the chance to celebrate a tangible achievement. For local organizers, Mexico's performance eliminated criticisms associated with a sporting competition organization in a

[141] "Mexico's date with Destiny," https://www.fifa.com/u17worldcup/archive/mexico2011/.

nation facing multiple contemporary challenges. The hosting of another global tournament provided a glimpse of a national desire to see their heroes defeat their enemies and reach their goals. Sporting events have the potential to create narratives of national unity, regional integration, and individual triumph capable of influencing economic and political realities.

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