

# This Great Symbol: Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games (Sport in the Global Society)



This Great Symbol is the definitive study of the origins of the modern Olympic Games and of their founder, Pierre de Coubertin, whose ideological stamp the Olympics still bear. Behind this fascinating blend of biography and history lies an impressive framework of cultural, social, and psychological theories skilfully employed to interpret the creation and symbolism of the modern Olympic Games. Hailed as both a classic in sport history and as a paradigmatic study in the anthropology of the past, This Great Symbol helped launch the new collaboration between historians and cultural anthropologists that continues to mark the human sciences worldwide. For this 25th anniversary edition, Professor MacAloon adds a new preface evaluating subsequent scholarship on Coubertin and the Olympic origins and a highly personal afterword describing the impact of This Great Symbol on his own subsequent career as an Olympic anthropologist and cultural performance theory. This book was published as a special issue of the International Journal of the History of Sport.

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