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## **Conference Proceedings**

# ***Sports Diplomacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024: Inter-Korean Communication and Collaboration through Sport Mega-Events***



**19-20 May 2022**

**at**

**Moray House School of Education and Sport**

**University of Edinburgh**

**funded by**

**ACADEMY OF KOREAN STUDIES**





Sports Diplomacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024:  
Inter-Korean Connection and Communication through Sport Mega-Events

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Sports Diplomacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024:  
Inter-Korean Connection and Communication through Sport Mega-Events

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**19-20 May 2022**

**Outreach Centre  
Moray House School of Education and Sport  
University of Edinburgh**

Sports Diplomacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024:  
Inter-Korean Connection and Communication through Sport Mega-Events

## **International Symposium**

### **Sports Diplomacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024: Inter-Korean Communication and Collaboration through Sport Mega-Events**

#### **Invited Speakers and Discussants**

Professor Alan Bairner (Loughborough University)

Dr Ik Young Chang (Korea National Sport University)

Professor John Horne (Waseda University)

Dr Koji Kobayashi (Otaru University of Commerce)

Dr Jörg Krieger (Arhus University)

Dr Dae Hee Kwak (University of Michigan)

Dr Guy Podoler (University of Haifa)

Dr Verity Postlethwaite (Hartpury University)

Professor David Rowe (Western Sydney University)

Dr Sarah A. Son (University of Sheffield)

Dr Bronwyn Sumption (University of Edinburgh)

Dr Minhyeok Tak (Loughborough University)

Dr Sang Keon Yoo (Sangmyung University)

#### **Symposium Organisers:**

Dr Jung Woo Lee (University of Edinburgh)

Professor Younghan Cho (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Dr Gavin Reid (University of Edinburgh)

Moray House School of Education and Sport

University of Edinburgh

Edinburgh, Scotland

2022



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## SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

### **DAY 1 (19 May 2022)**

#### **OUTREACH CENTRE (B1.11)**

#### **Welcome (13.15-13.30)**

#### **Session A (13.30 - 14.40)**

**Chair:** John Horne (Waseda University)

#### **What Divides Divided Societies and Where Does Sport Fit In?**

Alan Bairner (Loughborough University)

#### **The 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics and Inter-Korean Emotions in South Korea**

Younghan Cho (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

#### **Discussion (Q&A)**

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#### **Session B (14.50 - 16.00)**

**Chair:** Gavin Reid (University of Edinburgh)

#### **East Asia, Sports Mega-Events and the International Paralympic Committee: A Critical Examination of Sports Diplomacy and Elite Disability Sport in the Last Decade**

Verity Postlethwaite (Hartpury University & SOAS University of London)

#### **The 2018-2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games in East Asia: Challenges and Changes for the Region and the World**

Koji Kobayashi (Otaru University of Commerce & Lincoln University)

#### **Discussion (Q&A)**

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#### **TEA BREAK (16.00 – 16.30): Levels**

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#### **Session C (16.30 – 17.40)**

**Chair:** Alan Bairner (Loughborough University)

#### **Sport, Politics and Social Division: Will We Ever Achieve an Even Playing Field?**

Bronwyn Sumption (University of Edinburgh)

#### **Play Nicely Now: Cross-Border Sports and Cultural Events as Signifiers of Shifts in Inter-Korean Relations**

Sarah A. Son (University of Sheffield)

#### **Discussion (Q&A)**

**DAY 2 (20 May 2022)**  
**OUTREACH CENTRE (B1.11)**

**Session D (09.30 – 10.40)**

**Chair:** Minhyeok Tak (Loughborough University)

**Mega Sport Events and the Media**  
Sang Keon Yoo (Sangmyung University)

**Sport Diplomacy and the Anglophone Mediation of Korean Peninsula Politics**  
David Rowe (Western Sydney University)

**Discussion (Q&A)**

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**Session E (10.50 – 12.00)**

**Chair:** Younghan Cho (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

**“And Then There Was One”. The Role of Sport in Divided and Unified Germany:  
From a Tool of Confrontation to a Tool of Cohesion**  
Jörg Krieger (Aarhus University)

**North Korean Sport Diplomacy and the Olympic Games**  
Jung Woo Lee (University of Edinburgh)

**Discussion (Q&A)**

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**LUNCH BREAK (12.00 – 13.00): Levels**

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**Session F (13.00 – 14.10)**

**Chair:** Koji Kobayashi (Otaru University of Commerce)

**Sport in a Divided Scotland**  
Gavin Reid (University of Edinburgh)

**Building a Dream Team: A Marketing Perspective of Developing a Unified Sport  
Team between Two Koreas**  
Dae Hee Kwak (University of Michigan)  
Seok Lee (University of Pennsylvania)

**Discussion (Q&A)**

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**Session G (14.20 – 15.30)**

**Chair:** Jung Woo Lee (University of Edinburgh)

### **Sports Heritage and Inter-Korean Relations**

Guy Podoler (University of Haifa)

### **A Tale of Two Regimes: South Korean Sports Legacies from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024**

Ik Young Chang (Korea National Sport University)

### **Discussion (Q&A)**

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### **TEA BREAK (15.30 – 16.00): Levels**

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### **Roundtable Discussion (16.00 – 17.00)**

### **Sport Mega Events, Diplomacy and Geopolitics: a Critical Appraisal of Peace Promotion through the Olympics in Korea and Beyond**

**Chair:** John Horne (Waseda University)

**Discussants:**

Minhyeok Tak (Loughborough University)

Jung Woo Lee (University of Edinburgh)

Younghan Cho (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Gavin Reid (University of Edinburgh)

1

## **What Divides Divided Societies and Where Does Sport Fit In?**

Alan Bairner  
(Loughborough University, UK)

### **Abstract**

All societies are divided, and they are divided in multiple and often intersectional ways. However, the fissures that are taken to be significant in those societies that are normally described in political studies texts as divided, or even deeply divided, are more likely to be identified as language, ethnicity, religion, ideological differences and so on i.e. factors that are more often discussed in nationalism studies. My aim is to refer to examples of divided societies and consider the extent to which the fissures created by language differences are determining factors in their division together with sport which, at the very least, often reflects divisions and can, in some instances, serve to exacerbate them. This is not an attempt to provide a typology of divided societies. Although similarities can be found, the fact is that all divided societies are divided in their own unique ways. Comparison is interesting and sometimes even analytically useful, but it must not be allowed to get in the way of recognising and analysing specificities. The cases discussed in the paper are Ukraine, Spain, China and the United Kingdom with a brief consideration of Korea in the conclusion.

### **Introduction**

All societies are divided, and they are divided in multiple and often intersectional ways, not least related to gender and social class. However, the fissures that are taken to be significant in those societies that are normally described in political studies texts as divided, or even deeply divided, are more likely to be identified as language, ethnicity, religion, ideological differences and so on i.e. factors that are more often discussed in nationalism studies. I am grateful to Dr Lee for the invitation to take part in this conference. Initially, Jay asked me to speak about Northern Ireland about which I have written a number of works. However, because I could not clearly see how I could talk solely about Northern Ireland in such a way as to make a meaningful contribution relation to the main focus of the conference,

the divided Korean peninsula, I asked if I could speak instead about divided societies more generally.

My aim is to refer to examples of divided societies and consider the extent to which the fissures created by language differences are determining factors in their division together with sport which, at the very least, often reflects divisions and can, in some instances, serve to exacerbate them. This is not an attempt to provide a typology of divided societies. Although similarities can be found, the fact is that all divided societies are divided in their own unique ways. Comparison is interesting and sometimes even analytically useful, but it must not be allowed to get in the way of recognising and analysing specificities. I shall begin with the conflict that has been uppermost in most of our minds in recent months.

## **Language, Ukraine and Russia**

When Vladimir Putin ordered his armed forces to invade Ukraine, the ostensible reason was to liberate the Russian-speaking minority in that country from their Nazi oppressors. It was ludicrous and frightening in equal measures. It is true that there is a significant minority in Ukraine whose first language is Russian and we can only assume, given the existence of the breakaway people's republics of Luhansk and Donetsk, that there are people in the Donbas region who take sufficient exception to the unequal treatment of their language to welcome the Russian troops. The question is, however, does language really matter in this instance or are the real divisions between Ukraine and Russia, as opposed to the people of Ukraine itself, more to do with different ways of life than the methods of communication. As Manchester City player Oleksandr Zinchenko commented, 'In Ukraine we can speak freely, think freely, and that will be the same when we rebuild our country' (Ames, 2022).

It is no surprise that Ukraine's most successful football team in the modern era, FC Shakhtar Donetsk, moved from Donetsk to Lviv in 2014 and more recently has been playing in Kyiv. At the time of writing, Shakhtar was engaged in a Football Peace Tour taking in Greece, Poland, Turkey and Croatia. Furthermore, it is not the first Ukrainian team to take a stand against authoritarianism. In 1942, Dynamo Kiev, reformed as FC Start, successfully took on teams representing Nazi Germany's occupation forces (Dougan, 2001). It should be added that, when the Russian invasion began earlier this year, almost all of the Ukrainian footballers

and coaches who were with Russian clubs returned to Ukraine. Let me now consider a country where it would certainly appear that language is a major cause of internal division

## **Basque, Catalan and Mandarin**

It is possible, of course, for division to exist in and between societies where there are significant language divides. A prominent example with sporting overtones is the division that exists between both the Basque country and Catalonia and Spain of which the two are constituent parts. The story of Athletic Bilbao is well known. Its selection of only Basque players (albeit increasingly liberally defined) alongside its continued survival in La Liga is the stuff of dreams for sporting nationalists (Vaczi, 2015a). Yet the language most often heard in the city of Bilbao is Spanish. In Catalonia, on the other hand, where FC Barcelona has at times be seen as a surrogate national team, despite a heavy reliance on players from other parts of Spain and indeed the world beyond, Catalan is widely spoken (Vaczi, 2015b). Nevertheless, to fully understand both places, other factors need to be taken into account, including by referring back to the contrast between Russia and Ukraine, their histories and ways of life.

It is precisely these latter factors together with ideological differences that also help to explain the division between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. The percentage of Han Chinese in Taiwan is greater than in mainland China. In addition, the overwhelming majority of people in the two places speak Mandarin Chinese. No language problems there, then. But there are profound differences in terms of the forms of governance, historical development, especially since 1895, and once again, ways of life.

As regards sport, Taiwan is generally unable to compete on level terms with China except in baseball which, courtesy of the Japanese colonial period, remains the national sport. However, this serves to make the rare successes in other sports all the more memorable. At last year's Tokyo Olympic Games, in the men's doubles in badminton, Taiwan's (or Chinese Taipei's to use the Olympic Formula name) pairing of Wang Chi-lin and Lee Yang defeated Liu Yuchen and Li Junhui of China, thereby winning Taiwan's first Olympic gold medal in the sport (Chien, 2021). The phrase "Taiwan In", based on a frozen image of the landing spot of the shuttlecock on the final play of the match, became a lasting memory of the Olympics for Taiwanese sports fans. The head-to-head victory also marked the first time in Olympic



history that Chinese athletes were obliged to stand on the podium when the National Flag Anthem of Taiwan was played.

## **Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland**

Before turning my attention to Korea, it would be remiss of me not to say something about the United Kingdom and, for the purposes of that discussion, I intend to leave my native Scotland until last. England is to all intents and purposes the outlier in this particular context. Although a majority of its people voted to leave the European Union, there has never been a call for the largest nation in the UK to go its own way. Even demands for greater devolution of political power for and/or within England are relatively muted. In the other three constituent parts of the UK, however, we find varying degrees of support for secession.

In Wales, the nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, receives a considerable amount of support although predominantly in specific areas of the country. What usually characterises these Plaid-voting areas is the presence of a large percentage of native Welsh speakers. In Wales, language matters but as regards demands for independence, it may work in two distinctly different directions – either as a sign of the country's uniqueness which makes independent political arrangements not only logical but morally essential or as a source of comfort derived from the fact that Welsh uniqueness can survive in a multi-national nation state. Language also causes division in Welsh society itself. There are also differences between rural Wales and urban Wales and between the north and south of the country. It is often argued that Wales is even divided by its two most popular sports of rugby union and association football. It is certainly true that some people prefer one to the other. However, when

Welsh national teams in either code take the field, there are few sports fans in the country who would deny their support to one team or the other. Moreover, even if they are not native Welsh speakers, they will certainly be able and very willing to sing the national anthem – in the national language.

In Northern Ireland, language, particularly Irish Gaelic but also Ulster Scots, has undeniably been politicised. However, it is not what divides the two main communities except perhaps in some symbolic sense. In reality, sport is far more likely to divide people together with political aspirations. I would argue that, in Scotland, language is even less

important except symbolically with Scots Gaelic and Lallans being acknowledged markers of national distinctiveness. The overwhelming majority of Scottish National Party supporters and of those who voted for Scotland to leave the United Kingdom do not speak Gaelic although many speak a rudimentary form of Lallans with only limited awareness that this could be seen as making a political statement.

Far more important in Scotland and, to a certain extent, Wales and Northern Ireland is the historic legacy of national sports teams which have been major contributors to the persistent sense of national difference against the backdrop of membership of a multinational state. This can lead of course to anti-Englishness which may or may not be simply a facet of ninety-minute patriotism (Jarvie and Walker, 1994)

## Conclusion

So language does matter in divided societies but not normally as much as other factors. Speaking the same language as other people does not always mean what it says. My impression is that it may not matter at all in the case of the Korean peninsula. However, I shall leave it to other speakers at the conference to comment on that. It certainly helps us to understand why much of the academic discussion of the prospects for reunification turn to the experience of the two Germanys, also divided for political ideological reasons but possessing a shared language. Language is unlikely to be a barrier to Korean integration.

As in most of the places discussed in this paper, however, how people want, and are allowed, to live their lives are crucial, arguably decisive, factors in the politics of divided societies. As for the symbolic aspects of the divisions, it is possibly sport that plays a more decisive role than language and even that may be less significant in Korea than in some of the other places that I have discussed.

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## 2

# **The 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics and Inter-Korean Emotions in South Korea**

Younghan Cho

(Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea)

### **Abstract**

The Olympics have provided an important venue in which we can observe the contemporary and changing relations between North and South Korea. This study illuminates how the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics served as concentrated and effective platforms for crystallizing changing structures of feeling of South Korea toward North Korea, which I refer to as inter-Korean emotions. By analysing South Korean news reports and online comments on the Olympic events, it explores inter-Korea emotions with focus on South Korea's changing attitudes, responses and even hatred to North Korea. This study shows that the media representation and online responses both configures and reflects the collective and salient feeling, attitudes, and approaches in South Korea toward North Korea in tandem with changing characteristics of nationalism and contemporary conditions of South Korea. It contends that the attention to an affective dimension is critical with understanding shifting status and multiple discourses of nationalisms in which state-nationalism has emerged as a salient and effective characteristic in South Korea.

### **Introduction**

This study attempts to illuminate how the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics (hereafter the PyeongChang Olympics) served as a platform for transforming the structures of feelings between North and South Korea. Specifically, it explores how the 2018 Olympics and related issues have influenced South Korea's perceptions, attitudes, and emotions towards North Korea, which I refer to as inter-Korean emotions. For this purpose, this study examines the news media representation of the 2018 Olympics and people's online responses to them throughout the PyeongChang Olympic period.

First up, the PyeongChang Olympics succeeded in attracting national, regional and global attention. Such attentions were striking and unexpected not only because the Winter

Olympics tend to be regarded as a lesser subset of global mega-events due to the relatively small amount of international attention they receive, but also because local and national expectations for the PyeongChang Olympics were low as well due to the domestic political scandal concerning the previous Park Geun-hye government and its preparations for the PyeongChang Olympics. However, the PyeongChang Olympics 'were remarkable in suddenly becoming a key subject for global media when North Korea unexpectedly announced its intention to participate' (Rowe, 2020, p.3).

Given the contentious disputes over North Korea's missile tests and nuclear bombs in the past decades and particularly its furious quarrel with the USA's Trump administration over the past couple of years, the surprising participation of North Korea in the Olympics marked a key turning point in enticing intense and diverging responses both nationally and globally. The PyeongChang Olympics provided momentum for starting conversations and developing a peaceful and reconciliatory mood between South and North Korea. Furthermore, such rapprochement throughout the PyeongChang Olympics led to political events such as the inter-Korea summit on April 27 and North Korea-US summit on June 12, 2018. Domestically, the PyeongChang Olympics facilitated 'the power struggles between different nationalist politics', which also made the PyeongChang Olympics 'one of the most politicized Olympics' (Lee, 2021, p. 2). Regionally, the PyeongChang Olympics marked the beginning of the East Asian era of the Olympics in which three consecutive Olympics were and will be held in East Asia—in PyeongChang (2018), Tokyo (2021), and Beijing-Zhangjiakou (2022).

This study approaches the PyeongChang Olympics as an effective and exemplary tool for examining changing relations and emotions between North and South Korea. Despite the attention to ethnic, political and ideological connections between North and South Korea, an emotional dimension in the inter-Korea has not yet been well underscored or articulated. While we observe an affective turn both in politics and academy, it is also worth paying attention to an affective influence on nationalism and inter-Korea connection in South Korea. For this purpose, this study deploys Williams' notion of the structure of feeling for illuminating 'meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt' as well as 'a social experience which is still in process, often indeed not yet recognized as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating' (1997, p. 132). The PyeongChang Olympics enabled

rapid changes in inter-Korean emotions by providing concentrated exposure to encountering North Korean athletes and delegates in both direct and mediated ways.

## Methodology

This study employs qualitative methods including discourse analysis and archival research. In media studies, critical discourse analysis, articulated by Fairclough, is widely used with various modification for research agendas and scopes (Fairclough, 2002). In so doing, this study attempts to trace two ways of constructing discourses on the Olympics, which include media news articles produced by professional journalists and online responses by ordinary people. For the news articles, the items were collected through the NAVER news library, in which I chose two national newspapers such as *Chosun-Ilbo* and *Hankyoreh*.<sup>1</sup> Both newspapers have national readership, and each is regarded as stereotypically reflective of conservative and progressive values respectively. For online responses, comments on the news articles were retrieved from the NAVER news library. Nowadays, it has become commonplace for people to access news articles through the portal sites such as NAVER, rather than by visiting each newspaper's website. Moreover, comments posted on the news items proved to be very influential because people read not only the news articles but also others' thoughts on them.

In order to trace the changing tones, thoughts, and opinions before and after the PyeongChang Olympics, the data were collected between January 1 and April 1, 2018, while the actual PyeongChang Olympics was held between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2018. During his 2018 New Year's Day address, North Korea's leader Kim, Jong-un firstly mentioned the possibility of North Korea's joining the PyeongChang Olympics, which elicited widespread media attention both nationally and globally. During the targeted period, a total of 1,014 news articles and their online responses were examined from *Chosun*, and a total of 854 articles and their online responses from *Hankyoreh*. The range of online responses is vast: for instance,

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<sup>1</sup> The NAVER is the biggest portal sites of South Korea, and its news library can be accessed on <http://newslibrary.naver.com>. The author translates news articles and online responses in Korea into English. The names of newspapers and the publication dates of the news articles were followed.

several articles have no responses while others have hundreds, some of which also ranked as the 'best' responses by being awarded points by other commenters.<sup>2</sup>

## **Celebrating the inter-Korean Connections as One Nation**

In South Korea, the 2018 PyeongChang Olympics became another national stage for Korea, as the hosting country, to show off its status as one of the world's major sport powerhouses. The participation of North Korea in the Olympics and the various exchanges between South and North Korea elicited much expectation, excitement, relief, anger, suspicion, and other feelings. As a festival and grand spectacle, the Olympics enable the assembled thousands of people to share an extraordinary expression of spontaneous *communitas* (MacAloon, 1984). As a reconciliatory mood between the two Koreas mushroomed during the Olympics, the mass media highlighted various interactions between two Koreas and paid much attention to the participation of North Korean athletes, cheering squads and special envoys, which also elicited various responses from South Koreans.

Attitudes toward North Korea were not always necessarily favourable, and to a certain degree, hate politics against North Korea and regional partners emerged among the Korean people, which will be discussed in the next section. The public debates on the relations between South and North Korea were particularly salient and explosive during this time because North Korea decided to join in the Olympics out of the blue at the same time that tensions between North Korea and the U.S. were sharply escalating. While many South Koreans were suspicious of North Korea's hidden intentions, many of them also welcomed North Korea as well as the reconciliatory mood between the two Koreas throughout the PyeongChang Olympics. As such, discourses on North Korea in South Korean media and people's responses could be divided largely into twofold dimensions, i.e., the positive and the negative. This section explores the positive responses and changes in the inter-Korean connections during the 2018 Olympics.

The Korean mass media produced news articles that celebrated the collaborations between the two Koreas and treated North Korea as a brother or as people of the same nation.

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<sup>2</sup> One of the functions in NAVER news is that people can show their thoughts both to articles and responses by clicking either the "like" (thumbs up) or "disagree" (thumbs down) buttons. The top responses often have hundreds of "I like" responses.

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Such news articles highlight national symbols, brotherhood, and peace, which the PyeongChang Olympics contributed to promoting. These discourses underscore an ethnic dimension of nationalism or a unified Korean ethnic nationalism (Shin, 2006).

Such an approach highlights various elements and symbols for one nation during the PyeongChang Olympics. In particular, the opening ceremony attracted media and publication attentions while the inter-Korean teams marched together while wearing unified uniforms and holding the unification flag, named the Hanbando-flag, which represents the geography of the Korean peninsula instead of North or South Korea's official flag.

In addition to the inter-Korean summit, the joint entry to the opening and closing ceremony as well as the joint team will increase the significance of peace throughout the Olympics. (*Hangyerhe*, 2018.01.15)<sup>3</sup>

Since the first joint parade between North and South Korea was made possible during the 2000 Sydney Summer Olympics, such collaboration received widespread celebration and compliments due to its contributions to promoting Olympic ideals of global friendship and fraternity (Cho, 2009; Lee & Maguire, 2009). As many studies point out, the opening and closing ceremonies are crucial for staging national identity, performing nation-ness and publicizing national development both to domestic and global audiences. During the opening ceremony, the unified march between the two Korea, the Korean Unification Flag, and a Korean folk song (Arirang) were welcomed and even praised for highlighting a mood of reconciliation and for evoking nationalistic emotions.

In addition to praising brotherhood and the idea of a united nation, the media discourses in news articles and online responses also express the desire for extending the peaceful mood and initiating peace processes on the Korean peninsula. The inter-Korean collaborations were treated as important initiatives for easing the geopolitical tensions on the peninsula. The unified female ice hockey team received particularly positive attention and elicited supportive messages as it continued to play in matches. The media discourses often highlight emotional reactions from fans, audiences and the general populace.

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<sup>3</sup> The author translates news articles and online responses in Korea into English. The names of newspapers and the publication dates of the news articles were followed.



A real emotion from the joint Ice hockey team, which symbolize PEACE. (*Hangyerhe*, 2018.02.20).

I hope for the Peace Olympics. I will cheer for the joint team in women's ice hockey (online response, *Hangyerhe*, 2018.01.16).

If the women's ice hockey were not for the South-North joint team, so many people wouldn't watch. It seems to be a big hurdle for the athletes just because so many people watched their games. Thank you for the joint team and its players who did their best! (online response, *Hangyerhe*, 2018.02.13).

While the media and commenters enjoyed the success of the Olympics in terms of global attention and diplomatic progress, wishful thinking for peace that lasts beyond the Olympics could also be found. Nonetheless, it needs to be noted that such a reconciliatory movement between North and South Korea, including the opening ceremony, was not as complimented as it had been in the past. In particular, conservative newspapers such as *Chosun-Ilbo* often criticized the South Korean government's initiative in collaborating with North Korea. Despite subtle differences toward inter-Korean connections during the PyeongChang Olympics, the positive media discourses celebrated a sense of brotherhood as well as the notion of a united Korea, along with projecting a vision of sustaining this cooperative and friendly mood on the Korean peninsula. Such discourses also expected that the political stability and rapprochement between the two Koreas ultimately contributed to the success of the current government in domestic, regional and even global diplomacy, in which the best interest for South Korea has been given priority.

## **Disliking the inter-Korean Connections with anti-North Sentiments**

The news media articles and online responses also produced negative opinions toward North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang Olympics and the ensuing inter-Korean connections. Along with huge media attention and expectations, the sudden participation of North Korea also sparked deep-rooted suspicion and discomfort toward North Korea in South Korea. Such anti-North sentiments have a long historic genealogy dating back to the division between North and South in 1945 and the historic conflicts and trauma caused by, most notably, the Korean War between 1950 and 1953. Driven by anti-communist ideology, anti-North sentiments in South Korea are rooted in historic memories,

indoctrinated ideology and even personal experiences particularly among the older generations. During the Cold War period, North Korea was one of the most prominent enemies depicted in South Korean media, who called it the 'North Monster' (Cho, 2009). By contrast, the recent inter-Korean emotions are driven by hate politics which consists of different hate speech and acts against North Korea.

Firstly, the hate politics toward North Korea is based on the idea that North Korea is a free rider, who did not provide any funds, human resources, or diplomatic support for hosting the Olympics, but got the biggest benefits from the Olympics. It is undeniable that the participation of North Korea led to attracting global attention as much as it did through the missile tests and disputes with the U.S.A. in 2017. While the increasing global attention on the events was welcomed, the South Korean media and public opinion became concerned about North Korea hijacking the Olympics. South Korea seemed to show its jealousy and even resentment toward global attentions and their positive attitudes to North Korea.

Now, North Korea is making the PyeongChang Olympics into the PyeongYang Olympics [the capital of North Korea] in a few days although we [South Korea] are doing our best in hosting these Winter Olympics. (*Chosun*, 2018.01.23)

Although we [South Korea] sweat our guts out for the events, North Korea is becoming the main character of the event. Ah... Out with the political Olympics! (online response, *Hangyerhe*, 2018.01.13)

A related source of hate is that public funds of South Korea were consumed for the expenses of North Korea's participation. For the Olympics, North Korea sent their athletes, performing groups, 230 cheerleaders, and a 30-member taekwondo demonstration team. In these processes, the South Korean government paid for all the expenses of North Korea, including transportation, lodging, meals, and escorting. In preparing a cultural event, Hyun, Song-wol, a head of North Korea's performing groups, visited a concert hall in South Korea. Financial support for North Korea's participation not only brought out diplomatic issues on international sanctions against North Korea, but also instigated people's complaints on spending public funds on North Korea. People expressed their grievances against "our national tax" being expended for North Korea.

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If public money is used for North Korea, it would violate the international sanction against North Korea. It is a serious problem that might cause another sanction against South Korea. Do not use our taxes on the reds [North Korea]. (online response, *Chosun*, 2018.02.02.)

Don't waste money on the concert in North Korea. Devote such energy and money on solving the fine dust issue with China! (online response, *Hangyerhe*, 2018.01.15)

Secondly, the hate politics toward North Korea can be witnessed in the controversy over a single inter-Korean team in Women's hockey. As one of the joint activities between South and North Korea, the two governments agreed to organize a unified team, and they chose women's hockey. Before this decision, women's hockey rarely attracted people attention because hockey, particularly women's hockey, was not popular in South Korea and, in addition, the South Korean women's hockey team was far from medal contention. However, the decision instigated arguments over fairness: people raised questions as well as contentions on the decision process and the rights of South Korean players. People no longer agreed with the political meddling with sports, which had requested the sacrifice of individual players for the glory of the nation-state for the past decades. In particular, young generations in their twenties and thirties, empathized with the South Korean players, who might lose their playing time during the Olympics due to the addition of the North Korean players.

As public opinions are increasing against the joint-team between South and North Korea, the opposition to the current government policies have increased (*Chosun*, 2018.01.23).

It is nonsense to organize a joint-team only a month in advance. Politicians do not have brains. If our [South Korean] players are disadvantaged, I won't go to PyeongChang (online response, *Hangyerhe*, 2018.01.11).

Thirdly, the hate politics toward North Korea crystalized in misogynistic reports on North Korea, particularly its women athletes, performers and special envoys. According to Ueno (2010/2012), misogyny needs to be understood as despising women rather than disliking or hating women, and its major features are identified with othering and objectifying women.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Misogyny has been one of the most controversial and widely discussed topics in South Korea in the past few years. Son, Heejung, a Korean feminist scholar, similarly defines misogyny in South Korean contexts as a typical culture and structure that discriminates against women by universalizing women's inferiority to men (2018).

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South Korean mass media paid special attention to women delegates and athletes: among various participants, Hyun, Sol-wol, the leader of the performance group and Kim, Yo-jong, the sister of Kim, Jong-un, were under the spotlight of the mass media. Besides discussing the roles and careers of each delegate, the mass media often devoted too much coverage to describing their fashion, appearance, and body postures.

Hyun, Sol-wol syndrome in PyeongChang. It was a topic of conversation every day, from the dress to the clutch bag which Hyun carried (*Chosun*, 2018.01.30).

Kim, Yo-jong always keeps her head up and eyes up: compared to the skinny body, the lower abdomen is prominent. Some suspect a pregnancy (*Chosun*, 2018.02.12).

Kim, Yo-jong, with no make-up, was dressed in a neutral colour dress, jacket, skirt and trousers (*Hangyerhe*. 2018.02.11).

Mass media also deployed misogynistic descriptions in representing North Korea, which is usually identified as female and even objectified as a sexual object. The media utilized the phrase “Southern Men, Northern Women”, which means that in the South it is the men who are handsome and, in the North, it is the women who are beautiful. Several news reportages covered the private activities in the powder rooms and accommodations, which brought about controversy over violating journalistic ethics. In their coverage, it is easy to witness South Korea’s rooted prejudices against North Korea by treating it as a sexual object and negating its agency (Nussbaum, 2010/2012).

*TV Chosun* [cable television] broadcast the internal video of the inner room of the North Korean cheering squad. *Yonhap News* [national news agency] reported the North Korean cheering squad on waiting in format of the rest room. (*Hangyerhe*, 2018.02.13).

Hate politics toward North Korea was often expressed in terms of hate speech and acts of violence. In the online responses, various levels of curses and disparaging expressions were made toward North Korea and South Korean institutions that favour the inter-Korean collaboration. While reporting an incident that a group burned the national flag of North Korea, a conservative newspaper published an article that was sympathetic with this act of

burning, and later, the same newspaper suggested burning a controversial mask that allegedly represented Kim, Il-sung's face, a founding figure of North Korea.

20s-30s are relaying "Burning photo of Kim, Jung-un" The jointed team spread anti-North sentiment (*Chosun*, 2018.01.27)

I'll see if I can burn the mask in front of the North squad. It will not be possible to burn the mask, but the answer is likely to come right away. (*Chosun*, 2018.02.14)

I see hope in the future of the country [South Korea] when I see the burning of the North Korea's national flags.... I want to put my hope in the people in their 20s and 30s who burned North Korea's flags (online response, *Chosun*, 2018.01.27).

Despite the peaceful mood between the two Koreas and the diplomatic success, the overall tone and comments online toward North Korea were still largely negative along with rooted suspicions and aversion. It is quite striking to witness both a sense of brotherhood and the emotion of hate together. In the mass media, the latter is the majority, and young generations who have not been exposed to ideological education nor experienced historic tragedies continue to dislike North Korea and to treat its people as abhorrent parasites to South Korea. Also, the grounding rationales of their emotions both reflected and repeated the most heated issues in contemporary South Korea such as the violation of fairness and misogyny. Such affective dimension of inter-Korean emotions also led to acts of hate speech and violence, which emerge as the serious social issues in South Korea. Young generation's hate politics against North Korea illuminate how "emotions operate to 'make' and 'shape' bodies as form of action" (Ahmed, 2015, p. 4).

## **Conclusion**

By focusing on the dimensions of emotion, this study illuminates the rapid changes of inter-Korean connections in South Korean media and people's online responses to them. What is special during the PyeongChang Olympics is that emotion, rather than ideology such as anti-Communism or historic experiences and trauma, became a powerful motivator for shaping and transforming the structures of people's feelings and attitudes toward North

Korea. The mass media news reports and people's responses during the PyeongChang Olympics signified a specific stream of structures of feeling toward North Korea, which is referred to as inter-Korean emotions. Such emotions are shared by individuals as well as society, which produce surfaces and boundaries that delineate concrete changes (Ahmed, 2015). In so doing, this study reveals that hate politics worked strongly against North Korea during the PyeongChang Olympics, despite its huge contribution to political rapprochement between South and North Korea.

Abundance and multiplicity of emotions embedded in the Olympics underscores the necessity of taking seriously people's feelings, excitement, frustration, and agony, which can be coined as sporting emotions. Sporting emotions are individual as well as social, even historic, and at the same time, are an efficient catalyst for mobilizing collective activities and for constructing a certain belief, norm and even ideology. Individual responses to the news articles often served as accumulation of public opinions in which people often identify other's thoughts and reactions, which in turn enforce their own decision making and change of their support. In this sense, attention to emotions contributes to expanding our understanding on "how subjects become *invested* in particular structures" and to approaching emotion as a "form of cultural politics or world making" (Ahmed, 2015, p.12).

Such a recognition turns our attention to how emotions and affect are produced and then enforce people to act based their feelings under specific conditions. Attentions to emotion and affect, therefore, remind us that collective and structural dimensions of feeling are corporeal as well as impulsive while these feelings are both empowering and transforming people. In order to perceive the changing structures of feeling in the inter-Korean connections, we need to understanding emotional motivations and affective enforcement. At the same time, the PyeongChang Olympic insinuates that the abundant attentions and discourses to North Korea do not necessarily work for building pan-Korean identity and positive attitude to North Korea in South Korea. Despite its diplomatic development, furthermore, the PyeongChang Olympics do not necessarily embark the transition of South Korea's general attitude and emotion toward North Korea.

To conclude, the inter-Asian emotions in the PyeongChang Olympics underscore the importance of emotion, neither ideology nor politics, on constructing particular perspectives and approaches toward the inter-Korean connection. Finally, this study suggests that the

changing structure of feelings in the Olympics signals a potential shift in prioritizing the interests of state, not nation, both in the sporting events and in inter-Korean connections, which can be summarized as the emergence of state-nationalism as a new and hegemonic stream of South Korean nationalism.

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**East Asia, sports mega-events and the International Paralympic Committee: a critical examination of sports diplomacy and elite disability sport in the last decade**

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**Abstract**

This paper is an extension of a growing number of research projects I have conducted on aspects of East Asia, the hosting of international sports events, and activities connected to the Paralympic Games and Paralympic Committee (IPC). In this paper, I seek to explore two main points, firstly, the growth of the Paralympic Games promotion of knowledge exchange between the official games' organisers and how this was particularly successful during the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics and Paralympics. Then, secondly, to begin to problematize and praise the East Asian approach to para-sport and developing 'inclusive' sports diplomacy enterprises, through an exploration of the Japan Sport for Tomorrow initiative. The contribution of this paper is to invite event attendees to consider an event and organisation beyond the Olympic Committee, then raise a number of discussion points around East Asian event involvement in growing the visibility and effectiveness of para-sport diplomatic activities.

**Introduction**

The role of the Olympic Games and International Olympic Committee (IOC) in facilitating diplomatic activities is a self-professed important endeavour (see, IOC, 2018) and a source of significant political and academic debate (Black & Peacock, 2013; Cha, 2013; Dichter & Johns, 2014; Espy, 1979; Heere et al., 2012; Ho, 2012; Larson and Park, 1993; Lee, 2021). The importance and significance of this premier global sport mega-event and its governing Committee has contributed to a spike and relevance of considering sports role in diplomatic affairs (Postlethwaite et al., forthcoming), yet as this piece and a growing number of others argue, there is a need to consider other events and governing organisations in greater



detail, as this is important for furthering the understanding and evidence surrounding the effectiveness of international sporting events in influencing diplomatic relations (Rofe & Postlethwaite, 2021).<sup>1</sup>

## **The visibility of the Paralympics and growth in knowledge exchange between event hosts**

Elite disability sport and international sporting competitions connected to para-sport have a rich history, with excellent monographs and edited collections from a variety of disciplinary voices, for example, Frost (2021), Misener et al. (2018), and Brittain and Beacom (2018). In my research, the visibility and understanding of the IPC and the Paralympic Movement appears to have experienced a step change in the past two decades. Notably, London 2012 represents a significant context to changes in the nature and extent of the federation's relationships with other organisations at both a domestic and international level. This change is in part due to the increased visibility of the IPC and Paralympics during the bidding and planning stages of an Olympic Games cycle (Kerr, 2018; Postlethwaite, 2020). Around the time that London was preparing to bid for the 2012 Games, the international sports federations (IOC and IPC) were implementing agreements between each other to foster further collaboration. Formal agreements between the IOC and IPC around financial, branding, commercial opportunities and facilities, for example, the agreements in 2001, 2003 (Gold & Gold, 2017) and most recently in 2018 the work of the past decade has led to a "historic long-term agreement establishing a partnership between the two organisations until at least 2032" (IPC, 2018). From a diplomatic perspective, this formalisation of the relationship was lucrative for the IPC's leverage and stature in conversations with potential host cities and how the Paralympics should be included in bidding and planning in a more substantive way (Brittain & Beacom, 2016; Gold & Gold, 2017; Postlethwaite, 2021).

A large area of recent investment by the IOC and IPC has been around knowledge transfer and professionalization between organizing committees. Part of this is to offer

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<sup>1</sup> This paper has been made possible by a number of experiences I have been afforded since 2013, in particular, thank you to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (PE18768) [https://www.jsps.org/funding\\_case\\_studies/2020/02/dr-verity-postlethwaite-university-of-worcester.html](https://www.jsps.org/funding_case_studies/2020/02/dr-verity-postlethwaite-university-of-worcester.html) and SOAS University of London for the opportunity to travel to East Asia and conduct research/attend events on a number of occasions.

insights into other iterations of the Games, but also, to reduce the costs associated with hosting the events which saw the number of bidding nations reduced to one for the summer 2024 and 2028 Games. The IOC has facilitated knowledge exchange in running an official Observer Program since Vancouver 2010 and is part of the more comprehensive Olympic Games Knowledge Management program (IOC, 2011). The IOC claims the program to be useful to “witness how things are done, but also study specific areas so that they can learn and improve upon those subjects within their own organizational and cultural context” (IOC, 2014). This communication between the central international federation then the prospective and current hosts is a key communication conduit to exchange knowledge, protect particular customs, and as aforementioned to reduce costs.

The growth of formal knowledge transfer is a pertinent area to explore in relation to East Asian and para-sport as this formal dialogue has increased the depth of engagement with the global Paralympic community and IPC. For example, Park and Ok considered the role of the IPC Excellence Program, delivered in conjunction with the political and societal intentions of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics and Paralympics, around growing the public discourse of para-sport during the hosting cycle. The authors see an opportunity for the program and experiences from other countries “can challenge existing prejudices and create new paradigms for sport for the disabled” (Park & Ok, 2018). The range of activities that are connected to the IPC Excellence Program facilitates practical and theoretical knowledge transfer and were in place for the Tokyo 2021 Games and Beijing 2022 Games. This kind of formal knowledge exchange forum highlights the understanding from international federations that in order to drive their particular agendas, such as the IPC’s vision for challenging discourse around sport the disabled, the organizing committees and these formal knowledge networks are fertile fora to shape and influence.<sup>2</sup>

## **Japan, Tokyo, and ‘inclusive’ sports diplomacy**

Tokyo 2020(1) bidding and hosting cycle included a further significant increase in visibility of the Paralympics, IPC and what Japan terms para-sport. This is demonstrated from the outset as symbolically (and a ‘first’) the Japanese bidding committee delivered the bidding

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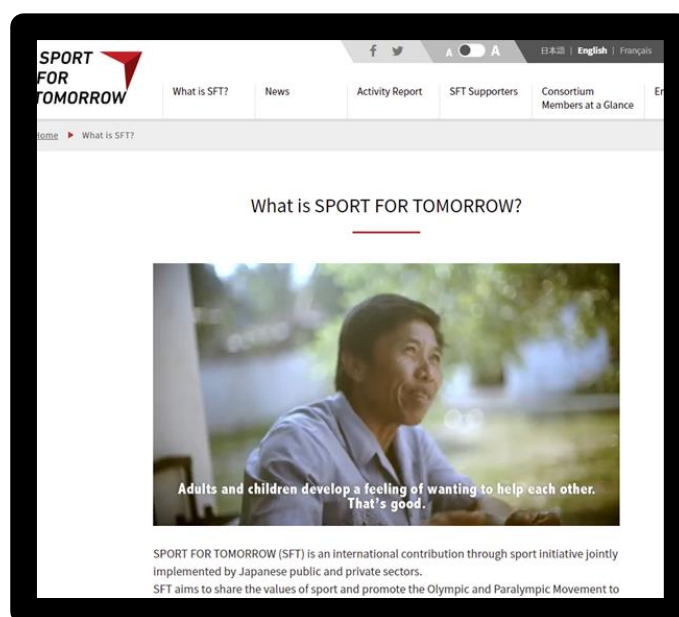
<sup>2</sup> This point is cited from and developed further in Rofe and Postlethwaite, 2021.

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documentation, as required, to the IOC at their headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland then additionally, and not required, they also delivered the bidding documentation to the IPC at their headquarters in Bonn, Germany (Degun, 2013). Symbolically the IPC and IOC are seen here as two comparable organisations in terms of building leverage and support for a bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Beyond the bidding process, the following figures and discussion showcase how the Japanese Sport for Tomorrow initiative<sup>3</sup> embraced the concept of inclusion and developed an initiative and system to capture a wide range of activities connected to the Tokyo 2020(1) Olympic and Paralympic (alongside other international sporting events they've hosted or will be hosting, such as the World Masters Games). The website is still live and shifted from a traditional static programme or landing page (such as, International Inspiration connected to London 2012) where dominant activities are often promoted via the Olympics Games and heavily regulated, to a more dynamic and user-led content and, in turn, more inclusive of para-sports and non-traditional activities, voices and partnerships (see Figure 1). Using the following text and figures, I want to flag some strengths and points of interest to how the initiative functioned.

Figure 1. Screenshot of the Sport for Tomorrow landing page



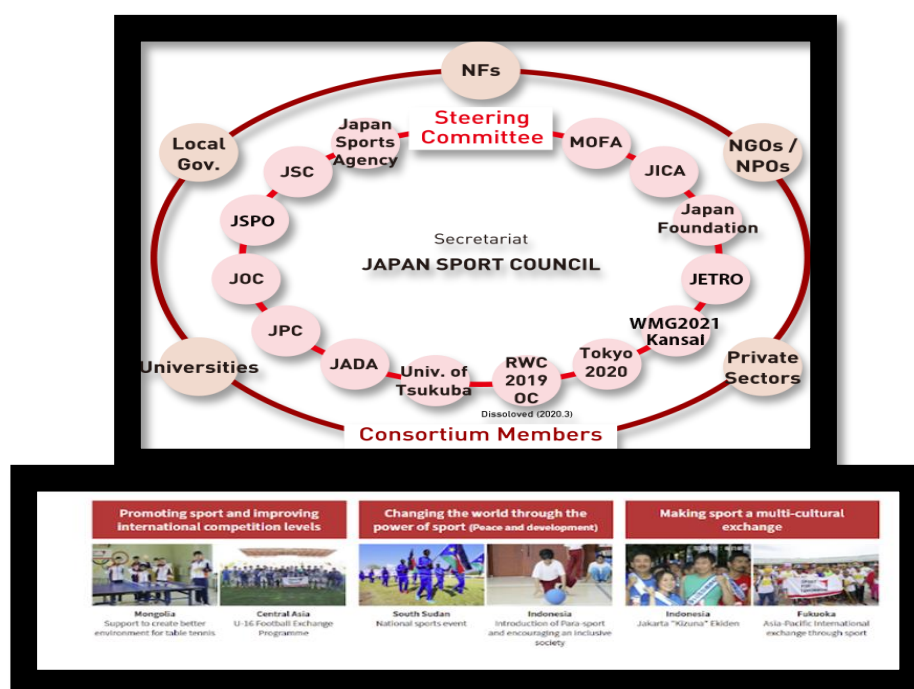
<sup>3</sup> The Sport for Tomorrow initiative, <https://www.sport4tomorrow.jpnsport.go.jp/>, "is an international contribution through sport initiative by Japan, toward the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

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The activities can be best described as a ‘hub’ as the Olympic and Paralympic Games acted as the central point to a number of different spokes of activities and vehicles. A significant spoke was the Sport for Tomorrow programme, which as you can see from Figure 2 is to bring together a strong and powerful Steering Committee of organisations and further organisations through consortium membership. The programme included activities connected to dominant sports in Japan and the Olympic Movement, such as athletics, football, rugby union, but it went beyond traditional activities and allowed an unlimited amount of contributions to the site. Notably, consortium members included those from the Rugby World Cup, World Masters Games and Olympic and Paralympic Games respective organizing committees.

Secondly, the aims displayed in the latter image in Figure 2 describe the three key aims of the programme and these all use language associated with sporting diplomatic endeavours, such as, promoting, changing the world or multi-cultural exchange. The initiative was aimed at international partnerships and audiences, but did not have a formal set of key performance indicators or strategic targets. Instead, as described above it was activity and community led in terms of what activities have been reported on, varying types of funding, scale and impacts. Again, this hub approach encourages a more organic and inclusive network of activities.

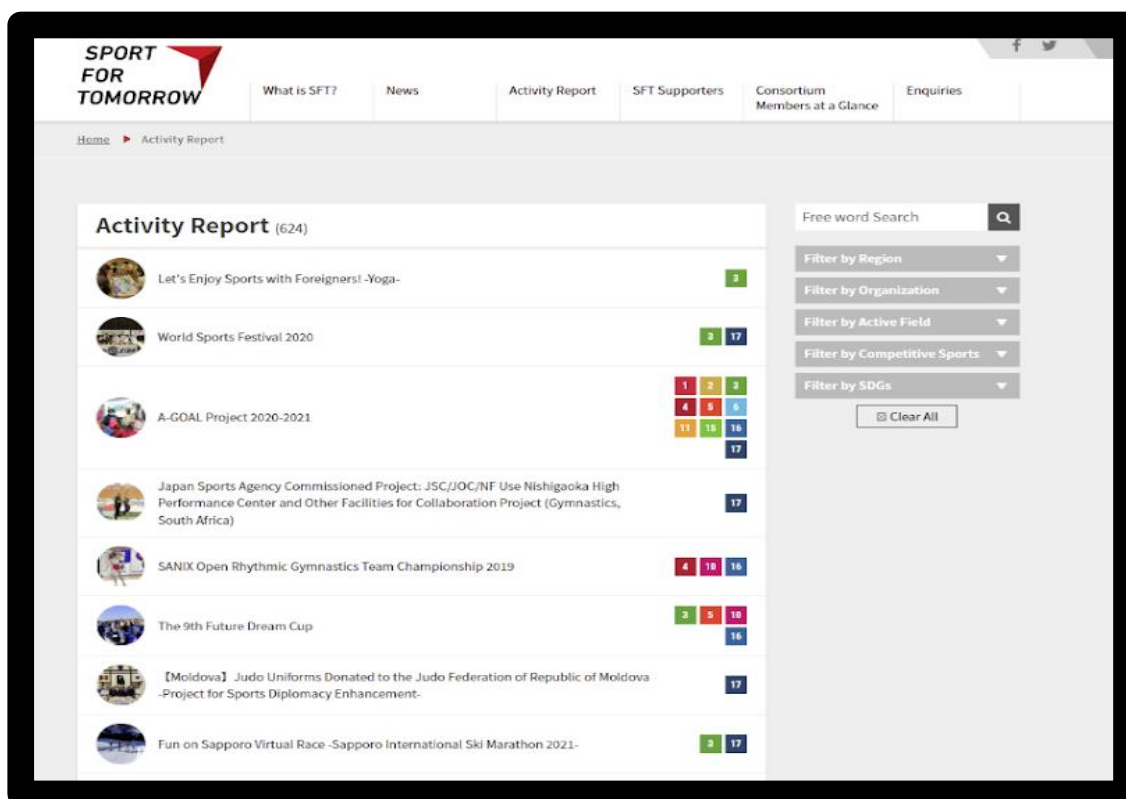
Figure 2. Screenshot of the Sport for Tomorrow members and aims



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Further to this user-led approach, as depicted in Figure 3, the robust nature of the website and 'Activity Report' section allows for a multitude of activities and voices to contribute and log their work, through a formal and straight forward accreditation system. This system and reporting are simple and effective to build the content. To date, 624 activities have been logged on the website and can be filtered by: region, organization, active field, competitive sports, or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals it contributes to. Allowing people with different vested interests to filter the most relevant activities to them. Of those 624 activities, 17 are connected to disability and 120 connected to para-sports. This equates to a little over 20% of all activities being focused or directly connected to a Paralympic activity. Depending on your thoughts on how integrated or prominent para-sports should be, this percentage will resonate in different ways. For the purpose of this paper it demonstrates a sustained amount of activity and attention on Paralympic activities, rather than tokenistic and ad hoc patterns seen in previous host nations.

Figure 3. Screenshot of the Sport for Tomorrow activities page



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A final observation is around the types of para-sport activities reported on through this initiative. I have highlighted a couple of the 20% in Figure 4 connected to Wheelchair rugby, the I'mPossible educational programme, and Zimbabwe and para-sports. The three activities here showcase how the Sport for Tomorrow initiative allows a number of innovative activities connected to disability to flourish and get recognition. The purpose, scale, funding and impact all differ, for example the Zimbabwean example is connected to the Danhiko Project and the Japanese Embassy to Zimbabwe, it lists 21 people as individual beneficiaries. Arguably, this type of activity would ordinarily get lost or overlooked in a more traditional programme output, such as a factsheet, funding database or monitoring and evaluation/impact report; whereas this website and the content gives equal space and recognition to all activities. What this paper does not have the space to unpack is the success of these programmes or some of the problematic issues raised by others about the hypervisibility of disabled bodies (more on this in a number of other publications, such as Beacom & Brittain, 2016). The focus here is on the inclusive presentation and ability for such activities to gain recognition and visibility i.e. the medium and representational aspects.

Figure 4. Screensrabs of the Sport for Tomorrow activities connected to para-sport



## Conclusion

In this paper, I have presented two main points connected to East Asia, the hosting of international sports events, and activities connected to the Paralympic Games and Paralympic Committee (IPC). From the first point, I hope this raises further discussion points



and questions around the growth of the Paralympic Games promotion of knowledge exchange between the official games' organisers. This strategy for communicating across events was particularly successful during the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics and Paralympics. There is more to be done to understand the role of the IPC and organizing committees in the landscape of sports diplomacy, especially activities connected to bidding and hosting international sports events. Then, secondly, the description and observations of the Japanese Sport for Tomorrow programme should hopefully spark some reaction around approaches to para-sport and developing 'inclusive' sports diplomacy. From my perspective on the operationalizing of sports diplomacy, the Sport for Tomorrow initiative demonstrated the benefits of a 'hub' based approach, where common goals and accessible platforms will give a broad range of actors and activities the ability to be recognised. This will go a long way to rupturing some of the dominant and ineffective practices and content that have been used by previous hosts. I am undecided to whether this is truly 'inclusive' sports diplomacy, but I look forward to discussing this further with you all.

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4

**The 2018-2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games in East Asia:  
Challenges and Changes for the Region and the World**

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**Abstract**

The paper discusses the recent development of the 2018-2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games in East Asia or the 'East Asian era' of the Games. In doing so, the following four themes that denote challenges and changes for the host cities/nations and the world during this era were identified and outlined: (1) the shift of economic power from the West to the East; (2) the consequences of Olympic Agenda 2020; (3) the crisis of Western liberal democracy exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; and (4) the changes in inter-Asia regional power dynamics.

**Introduction**

In the span of four years from 2018 to 2022, three consecutive Olympic and Paralympic Games were held in East Asia – namely PyeongChang 2018 in South Korea, Tokyo 2020 in Japan and Beijing 2022 in China. Given this geographic concentration of global multi-sports mega-events in the Far East, Horne and Whannel (2016) referred to this period as the 'East Asian era' of the Olympic Games. The 'East Asian era' alludes to an important question about whether it epitomizes a shift in geopolitical and economic power from the West to the East or the further incorporation of the Far East into the global order characterised by Western cultural hegemony (Lee, 2016). In this paper, I aim to identify and outline four themes that denote challenges and changes for the host cities/nations and the world during the East Asian era. These themes are as follows: (1) the shift of economic power from the West to the East; (2) the consequences of Olympic Agenda 2020; (3) the crisis of Western liberal democracy

exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; and (4) the changes in inter-Asia regional power dynamics.

## **The Shift of Economic Power from the West to the East**

From the historical point of view, the West has not always been the most prosperous part of the global economy. Asia – and China and India in particular – enjoyed the largest share of world's GDP before Europe and the U.S. emerged as the centre of international trades and economic activities around the nineteenth century. According to Maddison (2008), the Western economic dominance peaked around 1950 when the West recorded 56.8% of the world's GDP in comparison to Asia's 14.9%. Since then, the power balance tilted back towards Asia. Maddison (2008) predicted that the trend of strengthening of the Asian economy and weakening of the Western economy would continue well into 2030 with predicted shares of the world's GDP being 53.3% for Asia and 32.8% for the West. Although these predictions may or may not come to pass, it is undeniable that the rise of China as the second largest economy has been the key driving force of change to the global economy over the past decade. In this context, Asia emerged as a likely destination to host the world's largest sports events more frequently, and the East Asian era from 2018 to 2022 in fact may have epitomised this larger shift of economic and political power from the West to the East.

What does this shift mean to the ways in which the Olympic and Paralympic Games are governed, organised and delivered? While the answer to this question would only be revealed by more research in the future, some observations may be warranted. It is fair to say that more resources coming from East Asia are likely to result in more influences and controls exerted by East Asia, particularly China, over how the Games are further developed or modified. Several of Chinese, Japanese and Korean multinational corporations have already been named as TOP sponsors financing the International Olympic Committee (IOC) substantially. More funding coming from the broadcasters in East Asia may incentivise the IOC to move the timing of the most popular events, which has currently been set in favour of American broadcaster NBC, to the time zone that is more friendly to East Asia. Prior to Tokyo 2020, the Japanese government requested the IOC to add Japan to the category of countries that follow the order of surname first and given name second as already practiced by China, North Korea and South Korea. This could be just one example of how the 'East Asian way'

may be more and more accepted in challenging and negotiating the Western foundations and norms of the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

## **The Consequences of Agenda 2020**

A set of reform policies called Olympic Agenda 2020 was initiated by the IOC in 2014. The initiative aimed at increasing the IOC's level of sustainability and social responsibility by, for instance, reducing the costs of bidding, promoting the use of existing and demountable venues and allowing events to be held outside the host city or even host country (MacAloon, 2016). As such, the 2018-2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games in East Asia coincided – and perhaps not so coincidentally – with this transformative process of Agenda 2020 and therefore served as its testing ground. Some of the proposed changes from Agenda 2020 appear to be contradictory to the traditional values and principles, including Confucianism, that continue to underpin the political, economic and social formations in the East Asian host nations. For instance, East Asia is known to lag behind the West in promoting such concepts as 'sustainability', 'transparency', 'good governance' and 'gender equality'. As such, it is likely that China, Japan and South Korea faced challenges in achieving these goals as they were hampered by the realities of the extant traditions and status quo one way or another.

One of the illustrative examples of how a certain change in relation to Agenda 2020 was promoted is 'gender equality' in Tokyo 2020. It is well-known that Japan has been ranked 120th out of 150 countries in global gender gap index – the lowest among the world's leading economies in 2021 (*Kyodo News*, 2021). While the mixed-gender events and the record number of female athletes competing in the event were highlighted by the event organisers, the reality of the gender inequality was revealed rather unexpectedly when Mori Yoshiro, then President of the Local Organising Committee and former Prime Minister, resigned from the role over his discriminatory remarks on women, which led to a wider public discussion about the patriarchal tendency among politicians and sport managers in Japan. In an effort to recover the reputation of the event organisers and to symbolise the theme of diversity and inclusion, female politician and Olympian Hashimoto Seiko was chosen to replace Mori, and female tennis star Osaka Naomi was chosen to light the cauldron at the opening ceremony (Kobayashi, 2021). Likewise, a range of the proposed changes promoted by Agenda 2020 can

be considered as forces of societal changes to East Asia with respect to such global issues as sustainability, human rights and gender equity.

## **The Crisis of Western Liberal Democracy Exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The East Asian era coincided with the global pandemic of COVID-19 as the Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022 organisers faced unprecedented challenges and complexities in hosting the Games while placing strict border controls and a range of preventative measures against the spread of the virus at the venues and beyond. Despite these challenges, the two editions of the Games in the mist of the global pandemic have been generally seen as being successful due to the relatively low numbers of infection and fatality linked with the events, which led IOC President Thomas Bach to credit the organisers of both nations for excellent organisation in a 'safe and secure' manner (*The Associated Press*, 2022). With a higher mortality rate of COVID-19 recorded in the Western nations, the delivery of the 'successful' Olympic and Paralympic Games may have created a general impression that more authoritarian or autocratic forms of government is more effective in containing the spread of the virus and could further exacerbate the crisis of Western liberal democracy.

According to Stasavage (2020), neither the democracies nor the autocracies (or authoritarianism) are necessarily superior at handling emergent threats but each of these forms of government does have strengths and weaknesses. In this sense, the 'successful' delivery of the Game under tighter governments' controls and restrictions overplays strengths of the authoritarianism – that is, decisive actions through the centralisation of the political power – and underplays its weaknesses including suppression of public demands and transparency in decision-making. Interestingly though, in the case of Tokyo 2020, its postponement fuelled anti-Olympic movements, reinforced democratic voices in support for cancellation of the Games and led the wider public to re-evaluate the costs and benefits in hosting the Games (Kobayashi, 2021). In the nation where such Confucian values as obedience, conformity and discipline are upheld as righteous qualities of 'good citizens', the public oppositions to the government's firm insistence on hosting the Games during the pandemic marked a rare occasion for critical consciousness and democratic actions to thrive.

## The Changes in Inter-Asia Regional Power Dynamics

Intra-regionally, China, Japan and South Korea have competed and cooperated with each other through centuries of economic and cultural exchanges. In modern times, the hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games have been perceived as a measure of its political and economic competitiveness on the world stage. One of the most notable developments during the East Asian era was the rise of China and its escalated political tensions with the U.S., which has also shaped the dynamics of political relations within the rest of Asia. As South Korea and Japan are allies of the West while sharing many of philosophical and cultural foundations including Confucian thoughts and values with China, they are located as key mediatory nations in clash between two of the world's leading superpowers.

Although South Korea-Japan relations have long been overshadowed by contested war memories and geopolitical disputes, there is some evidence to suggest that the two nations are becoming closer in cooperation and solidarity as commonly facing challenges emanating from the rapid rise of China in their neighbourhood. While sports mega-events often serve as platforms of intense nationalism on both shores, rare occasions of friendship were highlighted in PyeongChang 2018 and Beijing 2022 through the relationship between Lee Sang Hwa and Kodaira Nao. In PyeongChang 2018, the scene of Lee and Kodaira skating a lap around the rink together after Lee lost to Kodaira for what would have been her third straight Olympic gold medal in front of her home crowds was celebrated as one of the most memorable moments of friendship between Korean and Japanese star athletes. In Beijing 2022, their friendship was picked up once again by the Korean media after Lee, working as a television commentator this time, broke down in tears watching Kodaira's one of the worst performances in her career on the ice. However, in Japan, this story was underplayed as the media turned their attention to another speedskater Takagi Miho's feat of winning four medals, thereby missing an opportunity to mutually strengthen the international friendship and solidarity between the two nations.

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5

**Sport, Politics and Social Division: Will We Ever Achieve an Even  
Playing Field?**

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**Abstract**

Sport, politics and social division are multifaceted and complex phenomena in the context of South Africa. Rich culture, government regimes and the concept of a 'developing' country have dug deep roots that lay the foundation for the current reality of sport in South Africa. From exclusion at a global level to 'Ubuntu'- meaning 'I am because we are' at one of the most profound moments in South African history at the 1995 Rugby World Cup final. With South Africa being chosen to host major sporting events such as the 1995 Rugby World Cup, the 2003 ICC Cricket World Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the idea of a 'booming' sporting system makes for a picturesque setting. So, what does sport look like in 2022 in South Africa? At a global sporting level, South Africa is known for their competitive male representation in primarily rugby and cricket. However, the reality of this representation is distort at a national, let alone community level across all sports. Despite apartheid legislation being abolished, the uprooting of the sporting system has been slow to change. The social, political and economic situation in South Africa directly impacts the development of sport. There are several factors at the meso and macro levels that inhibit individuals from participating in sport. With it being 28 years post-apartheid, sport looks different but the social division still exists, in some instances even more divided than before, especially for women. South Africa, the most unequal country in the world, will we ever achieve an equal playing field? This paper draws on research findings that identify what factors are inhibiting active sport participation across an individual's lifespan in impoverished communities in South Africa.

**Introduction**

South Africa has a rich history of politics, cultural diversity, and sporting representation at a global level. Despite being 28 years post-apartheid, South Africa has high levels of socio-economic inequality, mass poverty, cultural and ethnic division (Swart, 2017). The extent of South Africa's social division can be seen as a result of the apartheid regime

legacy. Recent statistics indicate that South Africa is the most unequal country in the world, ranking first among 164 countries in the World Bank's global poverty database (The World Bank, 2022). Poverty is a complex concept deeply embedded in the social environment, with multiple manifestations that has detrimental effects on individuals living in impoverished settings, who have a severe lack of access to free time, education, resources, and opportunities to access sport (Meyer, 2017; Sumption and Burnett, 2021b). Populations who live in impoverished settings experience various factors that influence their choice to participate in sport. These factors present differently in various settings and affect both men and women of different ages and classes in unique ways across their lives (Burnett, 2018).

Informed by influential environmental, socio-political, and socio-cultural factors, the study explored factors that influence continued sport participation in institutionalised settings in selected impoverished communities in Gauteng across an individual's lifespan.

## **Methodology**

The paper uses a descriptive and exploratory research design to explore and describe the myriad of factors influencing active participation in sport-related activities for individuals from 16 to 65 plus years. A mixed-method research approach was adopted that combines qualitative and quantitative methods in the research (Abbato, 2009). This research study uses questionnaires, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews as research instruments. These approaches enabled the study to gather data regarding human behaviour (Creswell, 2013). The research study consists of a cross-sectional study. The cross-sectional research design consists of four age cohorts that are segmented into four intervals, namely ages 16-18; 19-35; 36-60, and individuals older than 61 years. This research design used an inductive process for coding where codes emanated from the qualitative data and new themes emerged from the collected data.

## **Theoretical framework**

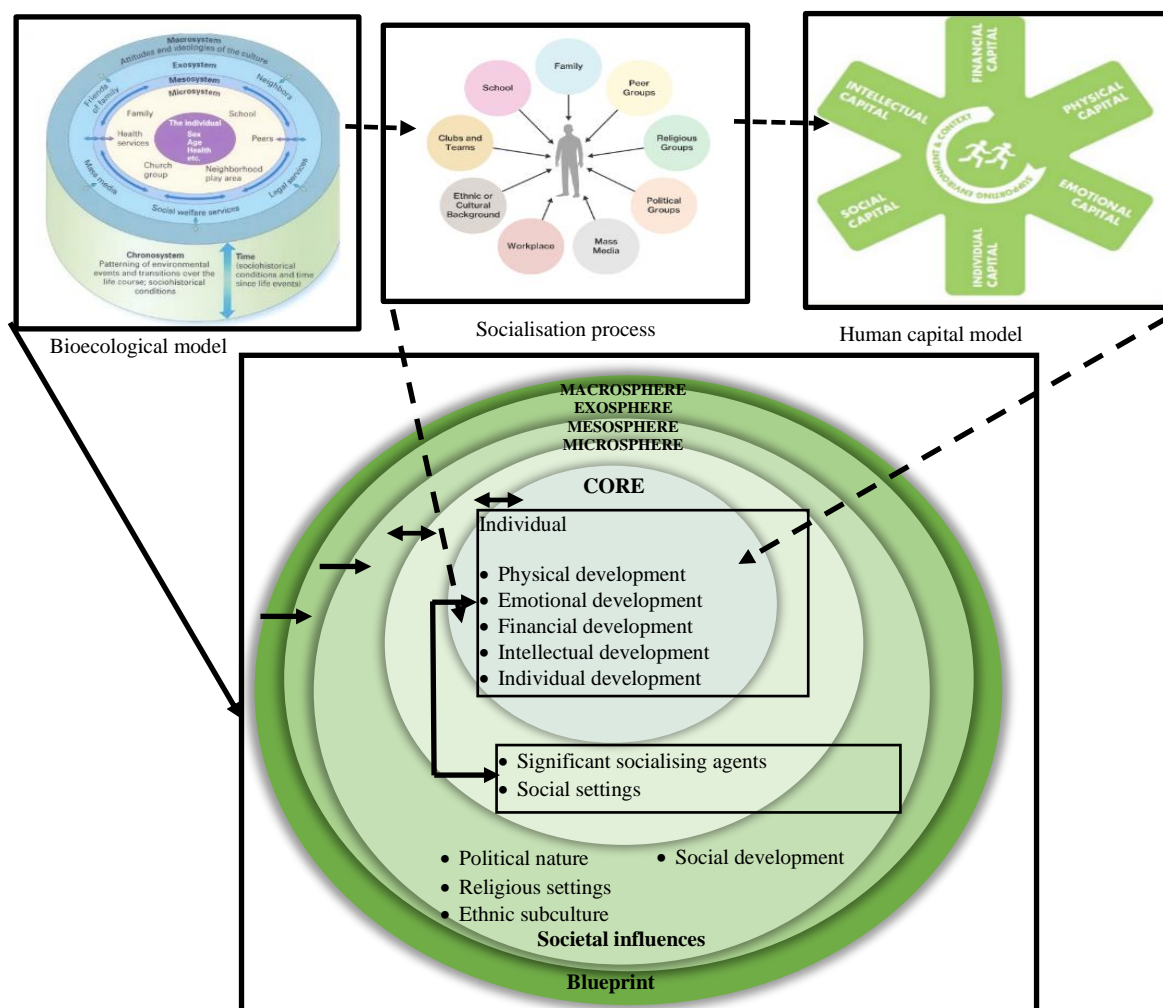
The complexity of this research could not be explained by a single theory, as multiple layers of influences play a direct and indirect role as individual construct social meanings, and negotiate life transitions (Sumption and Burnett, 2021a). Studies on life-long participation



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in sport within impoverished communities is under-researched and presents as a gap in the existing body of knowledge (Lennox, Pienaar and Wilders, 2008; Fourie, Slabbert and Saayman, 2011; Draper *et al.*, 2018). The theoretical framework includes 'Bronfenbrenner's (1989) bio-ecological model that draws on insights from the socialisation process (Coakley and Burnett, 2014). Richard Bailey's Human Capital Model (HCM) provides relevant explanatory concepts (Bailey *et al.*, 2012)' (Sumption and Burnett, 2021a, p. 3142). These theoretical frameworks found integration and synthesis in the holistic physical participation framework (HPPF) for capturing real-life dynamics as they emerge through individual choices, interaction, and engagement in various social settings (Sumption and Burnett, 2021a). The integration of these perspectives presents a holistic approach (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Theoretical integration for a conceptual framework for the study



The HPPF presents a conceptual framework and model of inter-related components and reflects an individual's choices relevant to active participation in sport-related activities at micro and meso-level manifestations (Sumption and Burnett, 2021a).

## **Longitudinal model (LM)**

The complexity of the findings from this research resulted in the development of a longitudinal model (LM) that quantifies qualitative data for presenting as a value. The LM presents data that identifies key themes as contributory and inhibitory factors that influence active participation across an individual's life. For the purpose of this paper, only the inhibiting factors will be discussed. Each key theme 'value' for each age cohort was formulated in accordance with the mathematical equation applicable to the rating scale for each age cohort. Both quantitative and qualitative data was used in the development of the LM.

### ***Scale rating criteria and equation***

The LM is developed on a scale rating of 1–10, with 1 (one) being of least influence and 10 (ten) being highly influential. The scale rating is presented on the  $y$ -axis of the graph. The age cohorts and key themes are presented on the  $x$ -axis of the graph. Each age cohort has its own scale rating and criteria for incorporating the selection of data collected for this research study. Each age cohort has a gender split presented in the respective scale rating.

The results of the focus groups were aggregated to represent each gender from each focus group as one case. Therefore, the score obtained from the focus groups ( $y$ ) were averaged across all the participants ( $m$ ) of the same gender in the focus group.  $x = \sum_{j=1}^m y_j / m$

Each focus group's average scoring per gender then contributed as a single case to each sub-theme's scorings per age category.

The overall scale rating per sub-theme was then calculated as:  $s = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i / n$   
These scale ratings for the sub-themes were then aggregated to obtain the scale rating for each key theme per age category.

The overall scale rating per key theme is calculated as:

$$k = \sum_{l=1}^o s_l / o$$

(Sumption and Burnett, 2021a)

## Inhibitory factors influencing participation at a community level

Figure 2 and 3 presents inhibitory factors influencing participation in sport-related activities in impoverished communities across an individual’s lifespan for males and females respectively.

Figure 2. Inhibitory factors influencing male participation at a community level across lifespan

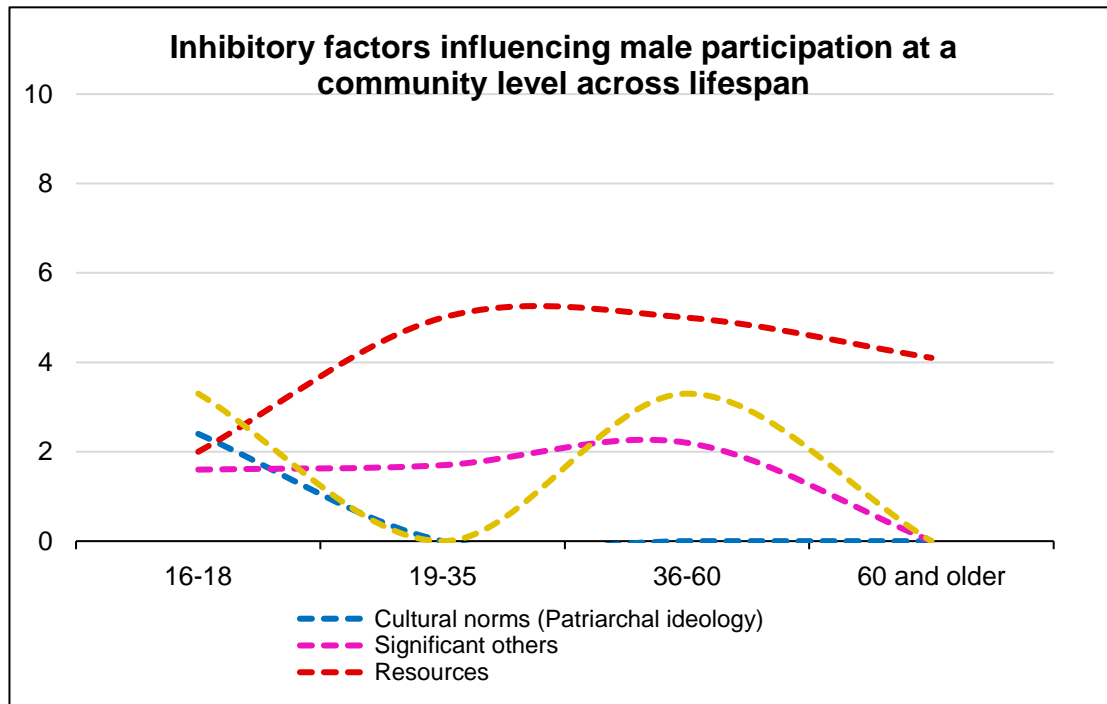
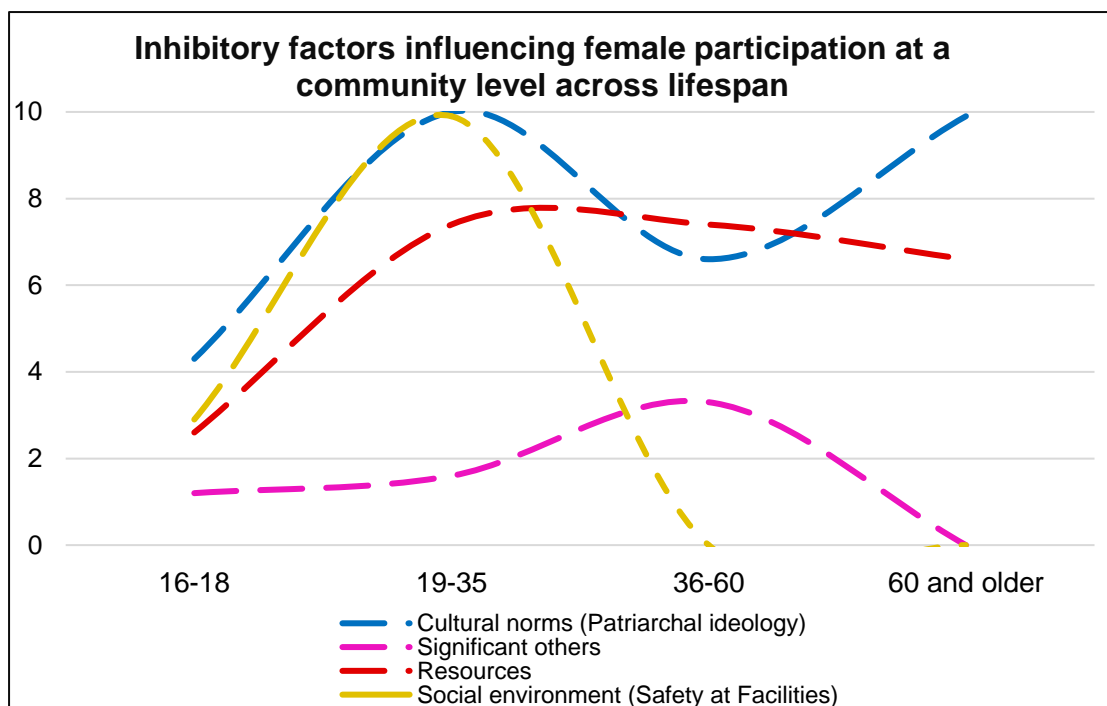


Figure 3. Inhibitory factors influencing female participation at a community level across lifespan



The LM presents the key themes that inhibit an individual's choice to participate in sport-related activities over time. The themes depicted in this framework present as a continuum across each age-related transition that represents various phases of an individual's life.

## **Discussion**

For this section, the paper provides an outline on three of the key themes that have been identified in the LM that inhibit an individual's choices to participate in sport related activities across the lifespan. The three key themes that will be discussed are cultural norms, access to resources and the social environment pertaining to safety at facilities.

### ***Cultural norms***

Factors pertaining to patriarchal ideology and cultural norms are prevalent across the lifespan that inhibit a women's choice to participate in sport. Girls face multiple challenges despite being taught about their right to equal access to sport participation (Burnett, 2018). In impoverished communities women and girls feel the brunt of poverty to a greater extent due to gender inequalities and lack of equal opportunity to participate (Kahts, Du Randt and Venter, 2017).

Masculinity entrenched by patriarchal ideology associates men with being physically stronger, more aggressive, and competitive, which translates into a preference for competitive sport participation. In public space, sport is associated with masculinity and leadership and not intended for girls (Sumra, 2019). Embedded cultural perception and patriarchal ideology inform perception that girls have to be socialised into the private space (Sumption and Burnett, 2021b). Mother figures tend to instil gendered roles onto their daughters (Walter and du Rosa, 2011). These engendered roles then result in girls and women having domestic responsibilities at home to attend to across their lifespan (Vambe and Saurombe, 2019).

Women from poor communities have been exposed to fulfilling specific gender roles from their childhood and demonstrate an ethic of care. These factors present as being inhibitory to women being able to choose to participate in sport-related activities in their community across the lifespan. In this sense, cultural norms augment the mechanisms necessary for the survival of the household. (See Figure 3)

### *Access to resources*

Access to resources in the context of this study relates to human, physical, financial and time as a resource.

In understanding lack of financial resources, households struggling to survive socio-economically have concerning levels of unemployment and poverty that directly affect people who reside in the communities as they do not have the financial means to afford paid-access for sport clubs, or necessarily the means to pay for transport to reach a club facility (McHunu and Le Roux, 2009; Scheba and Turok, 2020). In impoverished settings, children only take part in sport at school rather than in the community as sport at school is free and less time-consuming. School children are reliant on public transport and this inhibits them from being able to participate in club sport after school.

In impoverished communities, coaching is taken on by volunteers who may not be qualified to coach. Most 'coaches' are people, typically male, who have usually just played the sport but have not undergone appropriate coaching certification (Burnett, 2018). In impoverished communities, volunteer 'coaches' will not be paid to 'coach'. In most instances, the coaches are players as well.

Lack of time as a resource was primarily expressed by female participants as they had household duties, or duty of care to attend to in their 'free time'. The prevalence of this can be seen throughout the lifespan and links up with cultural norms that underpin how women and girls are socialized into their environment.

In South African communities, many sport facilities are dilapidated, of a poor standard and not maintained at all (Burnett, 2020). Impoverished communities have limited financial means that restrict them being able to purchase additional equipment. There are also limited or no changerooms and running water at facilities which makes it challenging for all individuals but even more so for women who need a safe space to change into sports attire.

Lack of access to resources is seen as inhibiting to individuals' active participation in sport for both males and females (See Figure 2 and 3). The different genders are influenced differently based on what type of access they have at different stages in their life.

### *Social environment*

Social environments in impoverished communities are notorious for being unsafe (Lee and Thomas, 2010). Many public spaces have become the gathering place for youth to engage in juvenile and delinquent behaviour similar to the phenomenon of street corner gangs (De Wet, Muloiwa and Odimegwu, 2018). Individuals reporting on unsafe facilities also reflect on falling victim to criminal activity (such as assault) either at their facility or walking home from sport participation (Shields, Nadasen and Pierce, 2008; Koraan and Geduld, 2015). Women in these communities are at a higher risk and 'fear public violence associated with drug abuse and heavy drinking at local taverns that make the streets unsafe' (Burnett, 2022, p. 865). Impoverished communities have become a prime setting for gender-based violence that many women have become victim of.

Safety at facilities is major concern in the context of South Africa, mainly for girls and women who need to occupy these spaces. The prevalence of this can be seen on Figure 3 that indicate the high scale rating on the graph for females in comparison to the lower scale rating on Figure 2 for the males.

## **Conclusion**

People living in impoverished communities are influenced by a myriad of factors that either inhibit or contribute towards active participation in sport. This paper presented on three of the factors that are perceived as inhibiting an individual to actively participate in sport. In the context of poverty, survival is the most important thing. Once an individual's basic needs are met, there is leverage for an individual to engage in active sport participation but in a context of poverty, there are various factors that impede on participation.

Based on the results of this study, it is evident that there is a dire need for local stakeholders (e.g., schools, community clubs, local governing bodies) and civic society agents (e.g., NGOS, NPOs) to have a contextual understanding of what factors influence active participation in sport. There is a need to create enabling environments for accessible, safe and equal opportunities to participate in sport for both men and women

Literature outlines that individuals living in impoverished communities tend to be overlooked pertaining to PA and sport policy (Yi *et al.*, 2020). This notion of individuals from marginalised communities being overlooked is supported by global policies that provide

recommendations and guidelines that cannot be implemented with a 'one size fits all' approach.

With the deep-rooted inequalities, social injustices, and layered manifestations of poverty, it is difficult to picture South Africa with an even playing field for all.

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6

**Play Nicely Now: Cross-border sports and cultural events  
as signifiers of shifts in inter-Korean relations**

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**Abstract**

This paper reflects on the role of cross-border sports and cultural events between North and South Korea in efforts towards achieving peace and reconciliation on the Peninsula. It draws on theory on state socialisation and identity in international relations to understand the emotional and political effects of sports and cultural exchanges on cross-border relations. It finds that the small scale of sports and cultural exchanges in the inter-Korean context provides insignificant opportunities for meaningful people-to-people socialisation, rendering these activities peripheral to the challenging task of reviving a pan-Korean national identity as a key step towards reconciliation. Instead, this paper suggests that sports and cultural events between the two Koreas are best understood as signifiers of change in inter-Korean relations and are aimed principally at achieving two alternative goals. First, they serve a purpose in building a political mandate for pre-existing policy plans by cultivating a positive emotional response towards North Korea among the South Korean public. Second, the spectacle of inter-Korean sports and cultural exchanges plays a role in garnering esteem from significant actors in the international system, in an era where being “seen” to be a responsible international actor is a marker of state power that is particularly salient for small states like North and South Korea.

**Introduction**

In this paper, I draw on constructivist international relations theory, which is useful for understanding the possibilities and limits of states “doing things together” away from the table of formal diplomatic dialogue. I look at processes of state socialisation and identity convergence specifically, to assess whether North and South Koreans playing games together and performing for one another do indeed carry potential to generate meaningful, positive outcomes in the inter-Korean relationship.

First, I discuss briefly some of the theory on state socialisation and identity building, before applying that theory to selected sports and cultural exchanges between North and South Korea to assess their purpose and impact. Next, I consider the role of emotions generated in the performance of cross-border socialisation in two distinct processes: first, in building a domestic mandate for per-determined policy plans and second, in projecting a certain state image or identity towards international onlookers.

## **State Socialisation and Identity in International Relations**

To understand the inter-Korean relationship is to understand the many facets of and problems associated with identity, specifically national identity. Constructivist scholars argue that national identity is not something that just exists “out there”, rather, it is constituted by a narrative resulting from the deliberate and strategic governance of authoritative actors in a society (Berenskoetter, 2014, p. 18).

A national identity narrative is a type of “master narrative”, which seeks to be cohesive and to minimise internal contradictions to maintain national solidarity (Robinson 1994; Hansen 2006). A conflicted or confused sense of national identity causes insecurity and so is to be avoided at all costs. While the two Koreas once enjoyed a relatively coherent national narrative as a single political entity prior to the division of the Peninsula, the last seventy years have undermined the idea of a pan-Korean national identity due to their physical separation, the efforts of both states to distinguish themselves from one another during the ideological contestation of the Cold War, and as a result of the inevitable hybridisation of the two national collectives away from one another due to their very different ideologies and life experiences (Son, 2015).

The “master narrative” of a pan Korean identity is therefore a fragile one: it relies on an increasingly distant united history which very few living members of either Korea ever experienced, and focuses heavily on ethnic unity as its foundation, something which is being challenged in South Korea by the reality of a burgeoning civic nationalism (Campbell, 2011) and the gradual ethnic diversification of society (Lim, 2010).

For the several decades since the end of the Cold War, unification policy in South Korea has been oriented towards the goal of maintaining unification as an ideal, albeit one that tends to be presented in rather abstract and apolitical terms (Kim, 2020) and with an

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emphasis on the present division as an unnatural condition that has stymied the political and economic potential of the Korean Peninsula as a united, global power (Son, 2015).

As a result of this policy narrative, forms of North-South Korean socialisation are situated as test-beds for unification, in the sense that they are designed as opportunities to practice friendly coexistence. The presence of North Korean refugees in South Korea is one key example of this, where this group of people is seen as the Avant Garde of unification. It is imagined that their successful socio-cultural assimilation, advancement and economic independence provides great possibility for imagining the integration of the two Koreas (Son, 2016). The reality, of course, is less rosy, given the lived experiences of North Koreans in South Korea, where they are subject to discrimination and obstacles to upward mobility due to having less social capital and being treated with suspicion at times (Son, 2016).

Significantly, the key challenge for North Korean refugees trying to integrate and find acceptance in South Korean society is their lack of shared experience with South Koreans, or a lack of socialisation from their crucial formative years.

Peters describes socialisation as the method by which members of a national collective “inherit and grow into an existing social world” (Peters, 2002, p. 14).

This world,...with institutions, an artificial environment, stocks of capital, and a complex stock of cultural elements... is the accumulated result of the labors of earlier generations.... [T]o make a cultural heritage one’s own means that one has to acquire it in the sense that one has to learn about it, understand it and practice it.... [T]his may lead to some kind of affective identification, to pride in the collective culture, and to certain collective commitments: people become interested in the continuance of shared of shared cultural tradition.

In this way, socialisation occurs as citizens participate in shared events and experiences. Crucially, the most effective form of socialisation is primary in nature – first hand, in other words. It is part of growing up in a community and its impact is to build a shared sense of identity between individuals within that community. It creates a shared narrative of the Self and who “We” are as a collective, that reflects a joint understanding of the past, present and future (Berenskoetter, 2014).

I present this interpretation of socialisation to foreground the idea behind cross-border sports and cultural exchanges as a form of socialisation designed to forge identity convergence between North and South Koreans.

## **Driver or Signifier of Inter-Korean Relations?**

This brings us to the question of whether it is possible then, for sports and cultural events to provide meaningful spaces for the type of socialisation that builds identity convergence between divided or separated societies. To answer this question, I refer to back to the qualification provided by Peters (2002) about the importance of *primary* socialisation, of people spending time face to face with each other over extended periods of time, building shared experience.

In this regard, I question the impact of sports and cultural events as spaces for meaningful socialisation. Athletes may have the opportunity to spend hours or days with members of the other Korea, a selected audience may spend some time watching a performance by citizens of the other Korea, but none of this is on a scale sufficient to socialise large numbers of hearts and minds. Most of those observing these events are safely ensconced in their own homes watching proceedings on television stations with commentary from their own commentators. Moreover, those selected to participate in such activities on the North Korean side are bound to behaviour which preserves loyalty to North Korea, which may limit the authenticity of their interactions (Jung, 2013). The degree of first-hand, people-to-people socialisation is therefore questionable, as is any identity convergence that may result from playing or performing together. However, I do not wish to imply that there is no impact from these events in terms of changing the way divided or distinct societies view one another.

Indeed, as Brannagan and Grix (2016) have argued, large scale sports and cultural events have great potential in furthering states' diplomatic objectives by presenting a nation, its culture and its values in a positive light, which can have a persuasive impact on spectators. This is due to the power of affect and emotions (Solomon, 2014) to engender attraction, seduction and persuasion upon audiences. Sport is inherently emotionally gripping, but international sports events, particularly between actors with a history of contentious relations, are also inescapably political. This is why we see sports deployed in the wider arena of inter-Korean relations, as a means to make a statement about what is happening behind the closed

doors of diplomatic meetings. Inter-Korean sporting and cultural events are a means of giving citizens a seat at the table of diplomatic dialogue, not as participants but as onlookers and, it is hoped, approving bystanders. In this regard, and due to the limited potential for primary socialisation within the forms of sports and cultural events currently allowed between the two Koreas, these events are not drivers of peace or reconciliation, but rather indicators or signifiers of the state of international relations at any point in time. Put another way, sports and cultural events are, as Lee (2017) has argued, a barometer rather than a driver of peace and reconciliation.

Thanks to a long history of inter-Korean sporting activity, we have plenty of examples to draw on to exemplify this point. In all these instances, we see that sporting events hold little potential for impact if the underlying relationship is under strain. Rather, sporting events have shown themselves to be a companion to diplomacy going well.

At this point, it is helpful to discuss two objectives that I argue sporting and cultural events between the two Koreas *do* achieve, even if it is difficult to draw a convincing causal relationship from the event to actual political progress towards peace and reconciliation.

## **Building a Domestic Policy Mandate**

First, while the socialisation taking place between North and South Korean athletes or performers is insignificant in terms of identity convergence between the peoples of the two Koreas, the visual spectacle or *performance* of socialisation does have an impact on the mass national psyche, albeit in a way that may be rather temporary and vulnerable to the ever-changing currents of inter-Korean relations.

Scholars such as Bleiker (2009) have noted the considerable political power of the visual spectacle in international relations, due to its ability to affect human emotion. Sporting and cultural events are another means of making politics visual and participatory, bringing together members of the national collective as witnesses to inter-national socialisation. In terms of harder evidence that such events do, for example, engender changes in attitudes towards North Korea in South Korea, polling data from the Asan Institute for Policy Studies shows surges in positivity towards North Korea around periods of positive diplomatic engagement, which are, as we know, often accompanied by public spectacles in the form of sporting events and cultural performances (Asan Institute for Policy Studies, 2019).

Indeed, it can be argued that a key purpose of national spectacles, showcasing North and South Koreans socialising with one another, is building a mandate for policy decisions that are already on the agenda. Events which portray North Korea as a friend, compatriot, partner or brother, and one with which cooperation is possible, has a role in countering the prevailing winds of distrust and scepticism towards the possibility of reconciliation.

## **International Image-Management through the Spectacle of Socialisation**

A second purpose of sporting and cultural events is not aimed at North and South Korean citizens, but at an international audience. Much has been written in recent years about the forms of governance aimed at international image-management, whether that be in the form of nation branding in a business and marketing sense, or in the form of public diplomacy, designed to curate and control the degree of esteem states may hold among peers in the international system (Browning 2015). As I have written elsewhere, both Koreas have demonstrated a desire to win the esteem of “significant others” in the international system, via a range of dedicated public diplomacy strategies (Son 2018a; Son 2018b; Son 2021).

Holding joint sporting and cultural events during times of positive diplomatic relations provide, once again, a powerful spectacle accessible to international audiences that, I argue, are aimed at demonstrating a number of things:

1. That the two Koreas are capable of working together without the permission or intervention of other powers;
2. That South Korea is capable of “managing” North Korea in a way no other state can, due to the “special” nature of the relationship and the unique similarities they share in terms of historical unity, colonial and Cold War victimisation, and national vision;
3. That North Korea is a rational and peaceful power capable of reasonable and conciliatory behaviour when the conditions and partners are right.

Each of these ideas garner positive esteem for one or both of the Koreas, in light of their mutual objectives to be recognised as legitimate and powerful members of the international system.

## Conclusion

In summary, I argue that we ought to hold sports and cultural exchanges in perspective, not granting them more credit than they are owed in facilitating peace and reconciliation, but rather regarding them as helpful indicators of the state of the inter-Korean relationship and as important performances with distinct political objectives aimed not so much at each other, but at their own citizens and the international community.

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## **Mega Sport Events and the Media**

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### **Abstract**

This research investigated how the Korean media can contribute to promoting Seoul. Pyongyang co-hosting the Olympic Games. Of the many mega-events of the world, the Summer Olympics is the one alone classified as a giga-event due to its number of visitors attracted, media exposure, cost, and transformative impact. The hosting of the Olympics may have far-reaching political, social, and economic effects, and may also affect the foreign relations of a nation. For a politically divided nation like Korea, there may be additional effects. If an inter-Korean Olympics were held, major exchanges between the two Koreas can be expected, and through this, a road towards peaceful coexistence can be opened. Additionally, while achieving the opening of North Korea to the world through such an event, a jointly hosted Olympics can have significant economic impact on North Korea. The event can help decrease the extreme economic gap between the two Koreas, and normalize North Korea's position on the world stage. Therefore, there is a need to continuously work towards holding such a giga-sport event on the Korean Peninsula. Recently, the anti-Olympic movement is increasing around the world. Reasons for the anti-Olympic movement are diverse, and include environmental destruction, forced relocation of the poor, financial burden, and even collision between the classes. Additionally, in the case of South Korea, there are groups strongly opposed to such an event between the two Koreas due to political ideology. The journey to peaceful coexistence between the two Korean states can be aided by a joint-hosting of the Olympic Games. To begin the journey, it is imperative to reach a public consensus first about co-hosting the Olympics. Due to the fact that the media has the function of agenda-setting, Korean sports journalism can contribute to fostering a positive opinion of both South Korean and worldwide opinion to such an event.

### **Introduction**

Of the many mega-events of the world, the Summer Olympics is the one alone classified as a giga-event due to its overwhelming visitor attractiveness, media exposure, cost, and transformative impact (Müller, 2015). Not only is the hosting of the Olympics meaningful

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for sports-related reasons, but it also holds political and economic importance. In particular, from the perspective of South Korea, which is in military conflict with the North, the importance of the Olympics is especially great. Korea has already hosted the 1988 Summer Olympics and 2018 Winter Olympics. Other major sports events Korea has hosted include the 2019 World Aquatics Championships, 2011 World Athletics Championships, and 2002 Korea - Japan FIFA World Cup. To date, only six countries including Korea have hosted the four big international sports events (the Summer and Winter Olympics, FIFA World Cup, and World Athletics Championships). During the previous Moon Jae-in administration, there was political intention to jointly host the 2032 Summer Olympics with North Korea, but a lack of public consensus and failure to organize a proper bid on the governmental level, as well as lack of cooperation from North Korea resulted in failure to host the 2032 Games. Such a mega sports event held on the Korean Peninsula can help promote a mood of permanent peace and reconciliation between the two Korean states. For such an Olympics to be successfully jointly held on the Korean Peninsula, it is imperative for the two Koreas to discuss together, to build the relevant infrastructure and increase people to people exchange.

**Table 1. Size classification of selected events (Müller, 2015)**

Event	Location	Visitor attractiveness	Mediated reach	Cost	Transformation	TOTAL	Class
Olympic Summer Games	London 2012	3	3	3	2	11	Giga
Euro	Ukraine/Poland 2012	2	2	3	3	10	Mega
Football World Cup	South Africa 2010	3	3	2	2	10	Mega
Expo	Shanghai 2010	3	0	3	3	9	Mega
Asian Games	Guangzhou 2010	2	0	3	3	8	Mega
Olympic Winter Games	Vancouver 2010	2	2	2	1	7	Mega
Commonwealth Games	Delhi 2010	2	0	2	2	6	Major
Universiade	Kazan 2013	1	0	2	2	5	Major
Pan American Games	Guadalajara 2011	1	0	0	0	1	Major
APEC Summit	Vladivostok 2012	0	0	3	3	6	Major
European Capital of Culture	Liverpool 2008	3	0	0	2	5	Major
Rugby World Cup	New Zealand 2011	2	2e	0	0	4	Major
Super Bowl	New Orleans 2013	0	1	0	0	1	Major

Note: e = estimation.

For this 'Road to Peace' to be achieved, what must happen? This research shows what is necessary from the perspective of the media.

### Some Cases: Anti- Olympic Movement

A month before the 2020 Summer Olympics held in Tokyo last year, the anti-Olympics campaigns No Olympics 2020 and Network of Opposition to the Olympic Disaster held protests in Japan against the hosting of the Games. At the same time, there have been No

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Olympics Day demonstrations against the 2024 Olympics in Paris and the 2028 Olympics in LA (Takashi, 2021, July 21). While opposition to the 2020 Games happened in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were other reasons to oppose the event. Reasons for the anti-Olympic movement are diverse. While the hosting of the 1976 Winter Olympics in Denver, Colorado was successful, when the amount of environmental destruction brought on by hosting the event surpassed 300% of what was initially predicted, reaching consensus from residents to host the event through a democratic referendum was abandoned. The 1998 Games in Nagano and 2018 Games in Pyeongchang also received backlash for environmental destruction, real or perceived. Environmental or financial grounds are the main reasons for opposition to the Olympic Games, but other reasons such as forced relocation of nearby residents to build Olympics-related infrastructure is also a major reason. For example, for the 1988 Summer Olympics held in Seoul, over 720,000 people were forcibly relocated, and at least six people died in opposition to these relocations. For these reasons, university students at the time including myself and my peers protested the Olympics under the slogan 'only your party, not ours'. The host cities of Hamburg, Rome, and Budapest pulled out of their respective bids for hosting the 2024 Olympics due to similar widespread opposition. The Hamburg bid was cancelled after residents of the cities voted against it, the newly elected mayor of Rome decided against hosting the Games, and the enormous financial burden of the Games was cited as the reason for Budapest giving up on hosting the Games.

The anti-Olympic movement has also been a changing phenomenon in recent years. International solidarity against the Games has increased, which has been further enabled by social media. With a common theme, many groups from around the world are becoming united in opposition to the Games. Therefore, the aspect of reaching a consensus among those affected to host the Games has become very important. Locals must be informed of the need for and benefits of hosting the event. This process of convincing can be tedious and difficult. While a unanimous consensus in a democratic nation is neither possible nor desirable to reach, holding an open forum with relevant information and conversations on hosting such a mega-sports event is imperative to receive the support of at least the majority of the people, which is becoming increasingly necessary to host the event.

## Why the Olympics does matter for two Koreas

Because holding a jointly-hosted Olympics in the name of peace on the Korean Peninsula is important to both Koreas, the previous Moon administration actively worked to try to create a joint statement on and bid for the Olympics with the North. This effort began with the detente of the 2018 Winter Olympics held in Pyeongchang, and the various Inter-Korean summits held after. There was an agreement between President Moon and the Supreme Leader of North Korea Kim Jong-un to participate in the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo as one national team, and to jointly host the 2032 Summer Olympics (Chang, 2018.09.19). Afterwards, a letter of intent for the joint hosting was delivered to the IOC. On August 15th, 2019, the anniversary of Liberation Day, President Moon stressed the importance of a jointly held Olympics, by mentioning that the Olympics will be a ‘flare that opens an age of joint prosperity on the Korean Peninsula’ (Cheongwadae, 2019). However, diplomatic deterioration between the North and the United States meant the chances of such an Olympics were dashed once again.

The hosting of the Olympics may have far-reaching political, social, and economic effects, and may also affect the foreign relations of a nation. For a politically divided nation like Korea, there may be additional effects. According to Kim & Jung (2019), when looking at three case studies of Olympics held in politically divided nations (1972 Munich, 1988 Seoul, 2008 Beijing<sup>1</sup>), while there is some opinion that these Games further solidified the political division of these nations, in reality, they “provided an opportunity for the progress of inter-state relations” (p. 229). The 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang in particular was noted for being an event for Inter-Korean reconciliation. If an Inter-Korean Olympics were to be held, major exchanges between the two Koreas can be expected, and through this, a road towards peaceful coexistence can be opened. Additionally, while achieving the opening of North Korea to the world through such an event, a jointly hosted Olympics can have significant economic impact on North Korea. The event can help decrease the extreme economic gap between the two Koreas, and normalize North Korea’s position on the world

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<sup>1</sup> Broadly speaking, China claims sovereignty over Taiwan island, controlled by the Republic of China

stage. Therefore, there is a need to continuously work towards holding such a giga-sports event on the Korean Peninsula.

## **Function of the Media and Role of Sport Journalists**

It is generally acknowledged that the hosting of the Olympic Games is oftentimes a political decision. In shaping the political landscape, the news media plays a critical role; the agenda-setting function of the media cannot be overlooked. As Cohen stated, the media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (as cited in McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Therefore, it can be deduced that although “may have little influence on the direction or intensity of attitudes” (p. 177), setting the agenda for hosting such an Olympics could influence “the salience of attitudes” towards hosting the event.

In my previous research regarding the role of sports journalists to successfully realize the co-hosting of a Seoul-Pyongyang Olympics (Cho, Yoo, & Kim, 2021), five Korean sports journalists (three newspaper sports journalists, a broadcast sports reporter, and a sports television producer) were interviewed on their perceptions on co-hosting the Olympics. Their responses were as of the following: 1) the hosting of a joint Olympics would have positive political, economic, and social effects on both North and South Korea, 2) looking at past cases, an inter-Korean team contributed to a mood of reconciliation between the North and the South, and 3) it can lead to the opening of North Korea to the world, thereby establishing an atmosphere of peace on the Korean Peninsula. Of the sports journalists interviewed, one was affiliated to a general newspaper, the other to a sports daily, and another to an economic daily. Of the broadcast sports journalists, one was affiliated to one of the main commercial news broadcasts in Korea, and the other was a producer at a public broadcast. The general newspaper and the economic daily are classified as conservative newspapers.

Although the Korean media is notorious for its partisan divide, the proposal of hosting an Inter-Korean Olympics was mostly neutrally reviewed by the interviewed reporters, and a co-hosting of the Games from the perspective of improving Inter-Korean relations was positively reviewed. Therefore, despite differences in political leaning, jointly hosting the Olympics can be an agenda promoted by media of both political aisles.

## Conclusion

The Olympics is an event that can “instill in its own people national cohesion, national pride, and faith in the government” (Sun, 2002), and even among the diaspora as well. The journey to peaceful coexistence between the two Korean states can be aided by a joint-hosting of the Olympic Games, through opening an open forum on the hosting of the event and mutual cooperation to prepare for it. Unlike in the North, reaching a consensus of opinion in South Korea is important, and certain political groups in South Korean society will strongly oppose such an event between the two Koreas. Public opinion on the idea has shifted as well. In 2001, 88% of South Koreans surveyed positively evaluated hosting an Inter-Korean Olympics. However, in 2011, only 18% approved of it, due to deterioration in bilateral relations (Kim & Jung, 2019). These findings show that politics can have a strong effect on public opinion on such an event.

Because jointly hosting the Olympics can contribute to an atmosphere of peace and reconciliation, it is important to actively and continuously work towards promoting the idea. What's most important is to reach a public consensus first. For this, it is the job of the media (and the government) to develop an agenda that promotes the rationale and related benefits of an inter-Korean Olympics. Through promotion by the media, the citizens of the nation, especially those living near candidate host sites can be informed of the benefits of hosting the event. In the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, the two Koreas agreed to field a joint women's hockey team. This was a rare case of an inter-Korean team appearing on the international sports stage, and is therefore a cherished achievement. However, the South Korean government at the time failed to properly inform its own citizens on the plan, and the team therefore received limited welcome from South Korean citizens. Many South Koreans even raised the issue of the athlete qualification being unfair, as some South Korean athletes who trained with the team were unable to compete in the Olympics.

The agenda to promote such an event by the Korean media to Korean citizens would also be an effort to convince the international community to allow such an event to happen. The choosing of the host is ultimately up to the IOC members, and the choice of these members can be influenced by the narrative of the media of both their native countries and around the world. Therefore, it is the decisive role of the media, with its rationales and agendas, to create a global public opinion that looks favorably upon such an event.

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## **Sport Diplomacy and the Anglophone Mediation of Korean Peninsula Politics**

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### **Abstract**

Attempts to capture the ‘Western media’s’ treatment of North and South Korean relations at the Olympics and Paralympics (for brevity these events will be mostly treated as one here) should be treated with caution. This discussion is not designed to measure, via the empirical precision of quantitative content analysis, how certain media outlets engage with sport-related politics and diplomacy on the Korean peninsula. Instead, it selects relevant texts from Anglophone news ‘quality’ and tabloid news outlets in analysing some significant but inexhaustive ways in which Korea comes into the frame via sport mega events held on the peninsula as well as in other parts of the world. The paper addresses the relationship between sport diplomacy and the media coverage of the Olympics and Korean peninsula politics in Anglophone contexts. It concerns not just mediation – the reproduction of sport in the media with all its attendant meanings and uses – but mediatisation, a stronger process of changing the world that is mediated as a consequence of that mediation. It argues that, regarding the Korean peninsula, the Anglophone (and, no doubt, other world) media are drawn by sport mega event and attracted by sport diplomacy dedicated to peace and reconciliation, but prone to expect the easily digested results generated by sport encounters and conditioned to witness clear wins and losses within timeframes analogous to those of the sports tournament.

### **Introduction: Anglophone Media and Sport Diplomacy**

A consciously sceptical, idiosyncratic perspective might ask about the contexts in which the ‘two Koreas’, separately and together, receive coverage in Anglophone Western media (broadly defined). In recent times, South Korea has tended to be positioned as a Western-aligned democracy characterised by the ‘hi-tech’ diffusion of Samsung via mobile phones and televisions, and the global popular cultural ascendancy of K-pop that also registers in North Korea (Kim, 2019). There is generally little acknowledgement that it is a



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democracy that is barely three decades old – arguably accelerated by hosting the 1988 Summer Olympics (Bridges, 2008). Historical knowledge of the mid-20th century Korean War is often scant in Western media, including of the continuing presence of US forces on South Korean soil, and tensions with countries other than North Korea given little acknowledgement. In the field of sport there is not too far to look – the 2002 Korea/Japan FIFA World Cup was characterised by simmering political tensions between countries that have centuries of conflict and rivalry. Continued demands for Japanese compensation of forced Korean labour during World War II, and a current trade war (Khatouki, 2022), indicate persistent points of contention between the countries as the 2024 Gangwon Winter Youth Olympics approach.

In contrast, North Korea is, for obvious reasons, generally positioned as a geo-political-military threat by Western media, its missile testing news coverage accompanied by ‘newsified’ treatments of the kind of authoritarian Hermit Kingdom weirdness (Fitz-Gibbon, 2020) satirised by the film *Team America: World Police* (2004). Mega sport events like the Olympics, especially when they occur in East Asia, intermittently bring North Korea into the Western media spotlight, especially at times when there is anxiety over the latest rounds of weapons testing and aggressive, anti-Western rhetoric. There is little detailed attention to the policy architecture of sport diplomacy that many countries have adopted as a combination of public diplomacy and soft power strategy (for example, Australian Government, 2019). Instead, there are two primary reference points – traditional Olympic rhetoric about the movement’s

historical mission of enhancing international understanding in a way that reduces conflict, and the current state of relations between the hegemonic Western power (the United States) and its Eastern counterpart (China), and the ways in which their rivalry is played out in the Korean peninsula theatre. Although this arrangement is not consistently represented in the media as a proxy war involving client states or, at least, antagonists aligned with great powers, there is a persistent articulation in Western media of the perspective and role of its military and media superpower and its allies. While these media have been subject to many changes in the wake of nationalist assertion and digitisation in both hemispheres (not to mention another hemispheric division – the ‘Global North’ and the ‘Global South’), Anglophone (principally Anglo-American) media still exert substantial cultural and ideological influence on how the Korean peninsula is viewed from afar (Rowe, 2018).

## Anglo-American Media Worlds

It is now approaching half a century since Jeremy Tunstall's (1977) landmark book *The Media are American: Anglo-American Media in the World*. Its frontispiece photograph is of a woman in South Korea walking past a cinema advertising a film featuring Marilyn Monroe, *There's No Business Like Show Business* (1954). This 1955 image was captured just two years after the cessation of military combat in the Korean War. Tunstall's book is not concerned with sport, but its enduring lesson is that control over much of the production and distribution of hard news and media entertainment (both of which include sport) has important social, political, cultural and economic consequences, as does the capacity to induce imitation of production techniques and content genres. Tunstall (2008) has since written *The Media Were American: U.S. Mass Media in Decline*, but the Anglo-American media still wield considerable power in the West and beyond. The US broadcaster NBCUniversal has been the most important Olympics right holder since the 1964 Tokyo Olympics (and especially since the 1988 Seoul Olympics), despite the International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) Madrid-based Olympic Broadcasting Services acting as host broadcaster since the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The influence of NBC Olympics (Billings et al, 2018) resonates beyond its home country in the audio-visual representation of the Games, just as U.S. and other Anglo news media organisations, from the *New York Times* to the *Guardian*, and CNN to the BBC, are important in helping to set the agenda for how each Olympics is interpreted and judged.

Communication and media theory and empirical research have consistently debated the extent to which media messages, cumulatively and singularly, affect behaviour and thought. At the same time, the consistency and nature of the messages produced by media organisations in a range of contexts, both historical and social, has been continually interrogated. The former body of knowledge is necessarily more speculative than the latter, and the sphere of media sport is no exception in this regard. The most pressing question, whether sport is involved directly or otherwise, concerns not just mediation – the reproduction of sport in the media with all its attendant meanings and uses – but mediatisation. This stronger process involving the media means demonstrably changing the world that is mediated as a consequence of that mediation (Frandsen, 2020; Hepp, 2012).

## Mediating the Koreas at the Olympics

The sentiment that sport could unite a “divided world”, especially during a mega event, was particularly to the fore at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, at this event applying specifically to the Koreas rather than to South Korea-Japan relations, about which other Anglophone media were rather less sanguine (for example, Longman, 2002). I was present in the city and conducted research on the Games (Rowe, 2000; 2012), and there was considerable media interest in the Koreas. This was because the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Korea (South Korea), while competing separately, marched together at the Opening Ceremony under the unification flag. The symbolic gesture of a common flag for two nations at war provided another opportunity for Olympism to be conceptually linked to the practice of diplomacy.

The relationship between sport diplomacy and the media is not a simple one. Coverage of geopolitical issues through sport is not necessarily favourable to its use as a tool of diplomacy (Baum, 2016). But, if it is accepted that positive media coverage regarding a proto- or public diplomatic initiative by a major sport organisation like the IOC helps to advance diplomatic cooperation by sensitising wider publics to its possibilities, then its tangible effects should not be easily discounted. Thus, real time symbolic unification of the Koreas at a global media event (Roche, 2000), as occurred in Sydney at the ‘Millennial Games’, can exercise the kind of communicative power that might give impetus to negotiations between the relevant parties that take place beyond camera vision. In this instance, it created coverage in major mastheads like *The Guardian*, which took the opportunity to produce a special report on Korea and to interpret the joint Opening Ceremony march under a common flag as “a further sign of the blossoming spirit of detente on the divided peninsula” (Gittings, 2000) in its world news section.

This optimism did not last. The tenor of much of the Olympic coverage of the Koreas (certainly in the British tabloids) between the end of the Sunshine Policy in 2007 and the first day of 2018 was pessimistic, at which point a political announcement by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un dramatically reignited the flame of Olympic diplomacy on the Korean peninsula.

## **PyeongChang 2018: Resurgent Sport Diplomacy and its Mediation**

As the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics approached, there was evident trepidation that North Korea, which had declined to participate, was testing missiles and exchanging threats with US President Donald Trump, would disrupt the event with a show of force (Brennan, 2017). North Korean leader Kim Jong-un then delivered a New Year's Day address that contained contrasting messages: "that he had a nuclear button on his desk and that the entire United States was within range of his weapons - but he also vowed not to attack unless threatened" while "he also struck a

conciliatory note, opening the door to dialogue with South Korea and saying he would consider sending a delegation to the Winter Olympics to be held in his southern neighbor in February" (Denyer, 2018). The latter suggestion immediately activated a desire for sport diplomacy in the face of a potential nuclear apocalypse that almost compulsively produces both excessive optimism and cynical dismissal.

There were certainly many outstanding sporting performances at PyeongChang 2018, including by member IOC countries like Norway and Germany, and individual athletes like France's Martin Fourcade, who won three gold medals in the biathlon, and South Korea's Choi Min-jeong, a double gold medal winning speed skater. But, a particularly striking finding of the content analysis of the selected websites (four East Asian and two Anglophone Western) was that, "Kim Jong-un was mentioned more in the overall sample than all of the athletes actually competing in the event. These results highlight how, in relation to North Korea and the Olympics, sport was overshadowed by the broader international politics and the more newsworthy leader of the nation" (English and Murray, 2022: 131). Therefore, the joint march under the unification flag at the Opening Ceremony; awkward non-recognition of US Vice President Mike Pence and Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong, at the same event; spectacle of the North Korean cheerleaders; integration of the women's ice hockey teams, and so on resonated in the media well beyond the sport contests between national team representatives (Lee, 2021).

In the Winter Olympics there are few sports that can claim to be global, but proxy state politics with materially catastrophic consequences are. Peaceable Olympic-related images seemed to bleed effortlessly into the media events (Dayan and Katz, 1992) of the three summits that followed between Trump and Kim. In this sense, sport diplomacy was manifest

as the pretext, with some inflated claim to cause. The Olympics can be viewed here as epiphenomenal or, more generously, as a site for projecting reconciliatory intent. But, beneath its myth-laden messaging is the exercise of contending power and the movement of political players with varying *modus operandi*.

## **Conclusion: Mediated Mega Events, Sport Diplomacy and Geopolitical Obduracy**

In the materially and symbolically kinetic world of geopolitics and diplomacy, the orthodox philosophical distinctions between appearance and essence, cause and epiphenomenon are particularly problematic. Demonstrating the efficacy of sport diplomacy as it relates to highly mediated mega sport events is as elusive a task as pinning down the meanings and applications of the images and comments themselves. To conclude by wildly invoking and adapting an old concept (Willis, 1978), there is something of a (dual) homology – or, more modestly, a parallel – between sport practices and sport diplomacy in the context of mega events like the Olympics. Just as elite sport involves a great deal of routine, unglamorous behind-the-scenes training followed by episodic performances captured and scrutinised by the media, Olympic-related sport diplomacy – like other forms of public diplomacy – combines spectacular globally mediated moments in public environments with much ‘backstage’ intricate, bureaucratic negotiation over substantive points of difference. While these political contact zones, like training and coaching areas, may be periodically visible and highly sensitive to the ‘optics’ (BBC, 2018b), most of the work is done off camera. This is also the case with what might be called everyday sport diplomacy ‘from below’ in off-field encounters between athletes, sport officials, lower and middle-ranking politicians, government bureaucrats, sport associations, civil society organisations, small-to-medium size business operations, and ordinary citizens. However, on the Korean peninsula, the Anglophone (and, no doubt, other world) media drawn in first by the sport mega event and then attracted by sport diplomacy dedicated to peace and reconciliation, are prone to expect the easily digested results generated by sport encounters and conditioned to witness clear wins and losses within timeframes analogous to those of the sports tournament. This gap between promise and delivery, so often evident in Olympian philosophy, is as much hindrance and help to the success of sport diplomacy under the demanding and often

blinker gaze of a global communicative sphere in which the Anglophone media apparatus remains a key ideological player.

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## **“And then there was one”. The role of sport in divided and unified Germany: from a tool of confrontation to a tool of cohesion**

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### **Abstract**

During the Cold War, sport was used as a tool to demonstrate political strength and create national identity in both parts of divided Germany. Even though through different organizational systems, both nations became leading global sporting powers. When Germany was reunited in the early 1990s, sport officials and politicians attempted to use sport again as a tool, this time to enhance national unity and solidarity in the newly reunited country. This paper discusses sport as a tool of social cohesion during and after the reunification process against the historical pretext of the two different political systems. The organizational level, national identity, and mass sport are addressed. It is argued that whilst sport eventually succeeded in uniting two different sport systems on the organizational level, the impact of sport to create a national identity remains limited. Moreover, the focus on elite sport in the reunification processes has had negative consequences for the development of mass sport, particularly in East Germany.

### **Introduction**

The role and use of sport as a political tool to create a national identity and for foreign policy goals has been discussed widely in the academic literature. Scholars have thereby often focused on cases of so-called “divided nations,” where broader political developments have led to the emergence of two nations as separate entities. The two Chinas, the two Koreas, the two Irelands, and the two Germanies often serve as examples for such studies (see for example: Bairner, 2017; Lee, 2016; Sugden & Bairner, 1995). The case of Germany stands out because the country underwent a reunification process following the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and today competes as one nation on the international sporting scene. Thus, an exploration of the German case can provide important implications to understand sport as a tool for social cohesion in a reunification and nation-building process as desired on the Korean

peninsula. This paper will look at the political division in Germany during the Cold War era and the subsequent post-Cold War situation to provide guidance for future reunification scenarios and the role of sport therein.

## **Division: Sport as a Tool of Confrontation**

Germany's economic and political reconstruction had been prioritised following the end of the Second World War and therefore it took until the late 1940s when increased efforts for the establishment of sport systems in East and West Germany emerged (Dichter, 2016). The International Olympic Committee (IOC) recognised the National Olympic Committee (NOC) of West Germany (or Federal Republic of Germany, FRG) in 1951 as representative organisation for the whole of Germany, resulting in two decades of political manoeuvring within sport organizations for the full recognition of East Germany (or German Democratic Republic, GDR) as an independent sporting country. The IOC required that athletes from East Germany be represented by the West-German NOC but through a joint team between 1956 and 1964. However, with increasing political tensions, two independent teams competed at the 1968 Olympic Games, though only from 1972 could the GDR use its own state flag and anthem (Balbier, 2009).

Importantly, the relationship between sport and politics within both German states could not have been more different. In East Germany, the communist political leaders considered elite sport success be a key avenue in promoting national consciousness and demonstrate political strength (Beamish & Ritchie, 2006). They openly imposed the ruling Socialist Unity Party view onto sport with clear political implications and adapted the sport system to a communist, centralised organisation, led by the German Gymnastics and Sports Federation (DTSB). Sport was used as an instrument of education and social organization in the hope of gaining international recognition by winning medals and therewith express an alleged socialist superiority over the capitalist enemy (Balbier, 2009). Schools and sports clubs all over the country were part of the sport system and had the task to identify talented children for specific sports. Scientific state institutions provided further support (Büch, 2002). The enormous investments in sport, including a sophisticated doping system, led the GDR to become a leading international sport nation. Between 1968 and 1988, GDR athletes won 519 Olympic medals, more than double the amount of West Germany (243).



The GDR's mass sport movement fulfilled a similar ideological purpose as the elite sport system. Mass sport was centrally installed to develop GDR citizens into good socialists and foster a strong identification with the state (Hinsching, 1998). Mass sport in eastern Germany was organized by institutions loyal to the regime, such as factories or special clubs offering company-facilitated sports activities. This state-led mass sport system meant that organizations and clubs were not independent and did not possess their own sporting facilities. Generally, the provision of mass sport was neglected in the GDR and deteriorated significantly throughout the last decade of the GDR's existence.

West Germany's sport system was also reorganised from scratch following the misuse of sport by the Nazi regime and sport was divorced from any political obligations (Balbier, 2009). Consequently, the autonomy of sport and the federal organisational structure of sport became central features of the West German sport system. However, latest by the beginning of the 1960s and the GDR's increasing successes on the global sporting stage, West German officials also developed a major interest in national representation through top level sporting performances, particularly in the form of Olympic medals, and investments into nationwide structures for supporting top level sport were made at considerable expense. For example, the federal training centres, the squad system, and the success bonuses for coaches stem from this time (Petry et al., 2008).

The autonomous sport system in West Germany resulted in different developments regarding leisure-time and mass sport. The foundation of sport and gymnastics clubs led to a rapid emergence of lively sport club environments that allowed social contacts beyond leisure time sporting activities (Krüger, 2017). Mass sport in the FRG was further overseen by the German Sport Association (DSB) and therewith also structurally separated from elite sport, organized through the National Olympic Committee. Moreover, in stark contrast to the GDR, the mass sport infrastructure in West Germany was developed continuously.

## **Reunification: Elite Sport as a Tool of Cohesion**

How do you practically merge an autonomous, freely-developed, commercialized, federally organized sport with a state-provisioned, scientifically supported, Stasi-supervised, mass sport neglecting state sport? Arguably the biggest challenges arose on the structural level. In the GDR the developments to reduce state subsidies for sport had already began at

the end of November 1989. A new government rejected a direct support to the central state sport body, the DTSB, and instead ruled that the financial support should go directly to the individual national sport federations. In parallel, discussions with the DSB started that led to an agreement about the GDR's mass sport integration into the West German sport system were held. It was decided to introduce federal structures and to transfer, privatize or close all organizations with former links to the GDR government. Those measures led to the end of the centrally steered sport structures and the introduction of the self-regulation of sport in East Germany. In December 1990 the DTSB was dissolved and the federal sport organizations in Sachsen, Thüringen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Brandenburg, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern added to the DSB (Volkwein & Haag, 1994).

In November 1990, it was further agreed to merge the two National Olympic Committees of East and West Germany. This meant that social mechanisms had to be introduced to support the almost 5,000 staff members of the DTSB that only dealt with elite sport. Only 600 of those were integrated in the unified German sport system. Three important institutions were kept for the development of elite sport in Germany: the research center (FKS), the institute for research in sport equipment (IAT), and the doping laboratory in Kreischa as continued international sporting success was considered an important means to create national unity within the population.

On the individual sport levels, all federations had to discuss potential mergers individually. In some sport, such as ice-hockey, those discussions went smoothly (already two East German teams played in the German ice-hockey league by September 1990), others took several years. In the most prestigious professional sport, football, two of the fourteen first-league teams in the GDR were accepted to play in the West-German Bundesliga, the highest football league. However, by that time, many of the best players had already joined West-German clubs for financial reasons. Moreover, the sporting infrastructures such as stadiums and training facilities were of poor quality in East Germany which led to a considerable competitive disadvantage and a significant decline of high standard football in East Germany for two decades. Only six clubs from Eastern Germany have ever played in the commercially driven Bundesliga since 1991, most of them only for a short time (Braun & Wiese, 2005).

In the immediate post-division environment, German sport continued to be successful at the Olympics. Thus, the concept of focusing on elite sport success appeared to

work to bind the nation together. At the 1992 Olympic Games in Albertville and Barcelona, the participation and success of the unified German Olympic teams triggered positive emotions and joined celebrations, particularly in Berlin. In Albertville, a German Olympic team focused on top of the medal for the first time since 1936. The 1992 European Championships in football almost delivered the same response, but the team consisting of three former GDR lost in the final to Denmark.

One particular noteworthy endeavour during the reunification process was Berlin's bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games. This initiative actually goes back to the year 1987, when a committee had been formed to oversee a potential bid (Alberts, 2009). With the Fall of the Berlin Wall, processes were speeded up as politics and sport officials considered Berlin's chances to increase considering the high symbolic value of the reunification and to unify people from the East and the West. However, issues with the organization and sport political matters in the IOC complicated the bidding process and in 1993 Berlin was outvoted in the second round with Sydney eventually hosting the Games.

Even more important to develop social cohesion was the opening of sport exchanges between clubs and individuals on the leisure sport level. This decision already came on 17 November 1989, only a few days after the Fall of the Berlin Wall when sport leaders from both sides agreed to allow for unregulated sporting exchanges. According to official numbers, more than 10,000 mass sport events took place in the first half of 1990 alone (DOSB, 2019a).

## **Sport in Unified Germany: Implications & Shortcomings**

Germany's international sporting success has significantly decreased since the "reunification years". This had an impact on the role of elite sport as a tool of social cohesion, particularly with regards to the Olympic Movement. Germany's winter sport athletes continue to be very successful, but this is also due to the lack of a competitive international scene for example in bobsleigh and luge. The summer Olympic Games tell a different story. In Rio 2016, Germany came fifth in the medal table with 42 medals, in Tokyo 2020, German athletes won 37 medals and finished in ninth place.

As a result, the elite sport system was reformed at various times. In 2006, the DSB merged with the German NOC to form the German Olympic & Sport Confederation (DOSB).

The latest change saw an adjustment of the financial support mechanisms to reflect the medal potential of individual. There are also discussions about the financial support system for elite athletes (currently often employed by the military, customs, or police forces) and improved salaries for coaches. Ironically, “movement checks” have recently been introduced at primary schools to identify talents already from an early age, a system that reflects the GDR’s early identification programmes.

A good indicator for the population’s attitude towards elite sport are Germany’s bids for Olympic Games. A little studied benchmark provides Leipzig’s bid for the 2012 Olympic Games. The bidding process was overshadowed by public discussions on whether Leipzig represented the whole of Germany or only the Eastern part. The bid was indeed often presented as development aid project for East Germany (Tzschope, 2020). Whilst sport officials and politicians did not tire of highlighting that the entire nation stood behind the bid, public opinion was split. Further unsuccessful German bids for the 2018 and 2022 Winter Olympic Games (with Munich) and the 2024 Summer Olympics (with Hamburg) have demonstrated that sport’s acceptance within society, especially against the background of high spending, has lost considerable ground (Kurscheid & Prüschenk, 2020). The support for those bids in Eastern parts of the country has been significantly low.

Meier et al. (2016) further highlighted that there continue to be mentality and identification differences between people in the Western and Eastern part of Germany when looking at the sport of football. They found that despite an overall positive effect of the German football national team on integration, the team is less popular in former East Germany. This includes the time of the success of Germany at the 2014 World Cup. This is not a result of the lack of identification figures or economic factors. Rather, the finding was a result of less identification with unified Germany in the Eastern parts. This is even though sport in general is more important for general pride among East Germans due to the GDR’s sport-centered identity politics (Meier & Mutz, 2016). Thus, they pose the question whether the differences can be overcome at all and argue that the minority of German national supporters in East Germany are not a threat to the country’s unity overall but rather a consequence of Germany’s diversity because of the reunification (Meier et al., 2016).

Many observers criticize today that sport officials focused too much on top-level sport in the hope that international sporting success would contribute to a unified nation and social cohesion in the long-term. Whilst this goal was partly fulfilled, for example by Germany's World Cup win in 2014 or hosting the World Cup in 2006, the sport officials missed out to realize the extent of the difficulties with the East German mass sport system and failed to address it appropriately (Wheeler, 2019). Economic goals and the securing of unemployment was the focus throughout the 1990s, sport as a means to secure health, well-being, and social contacts was not prioritized by politics and sport. A "Golden Plan East" was installed in the mid-1990s to renovate sporting facilities such as sport halls, swimming pools, and other leisure sport grounds for fifteen years (Jacobi, 2022). However, it failed to reach the standards of sporting facilities in the West. It was estimated that 7 billion Euro were necessary to renovate the East German sporting infrastructure, but less than 1 billion was invested (DOSB, 2019b).

Today, there continues to be an urgent need to develop sporting facilities in the East German federal states. Moreover, there are large discrepancies in mass sport participation in East and West. Memberships in sport clubs saw a doubling of numbers in East Germany to around 15% but it is still comparably low (West Germany: around 30%). Demographic differences further endanger sport clubs' existence in East Germany where an older population constitutes the majority of sport clubs' membership (Breuer & Feiler, 2013). There is also a higher commitment to volunteering in sport clubs and associations in the Western parts than in the Eastern parts of Germany (Breuer & Feiler, 2019).

## **Conclusion**

Thirty years after Germany's reunification, academic interest on the developments towards the creation of an inner unity and the formation of a pluralist democracy remains high. This interest includes the role of sport to create social cohesion in a country that has been divided for over four decades. It appears that on the organizational level, sport has succeeded in its unifying efforts. However, differences continue to be visible in mass sport participation concerning the creation of a national identity through sport. This should not be surprising. Scholars have found that mentality differences and the impact of the socialism on the former

GDR population continue to influence citizen values. Campbell (2011; 2012) found that most (around 75%) individuals in East Germany still believe socialism is a good idea and have considerable doubts about the federal democratic political system in unified Germany. Thus, the road towards “inner unity” might not be as inevitable as had been anticipated and limits the impact of sport. That said, with barely any separation desire in the population, it is questionable whether such differences such be erased or whether they should rather be embraced instead.

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## **North Korean Sport Diplomacy and the Olympic Games**

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### **Abstract**

In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), also known as North Korea, sport is a highly political practice. The communist state tactfully exploits international sport as part of its foreign policy programmes. From diplomacy-through-sport to diplomacy-in-sport, the DPRK demonstrated skilful diplomatic strategies to maximise its political gains in the world of sport. From its foundation in 1948 to the end of the Cold War, North Korea's rivalry with South Korea profoundly influenced the nature of sport diplomacy programmes of the DPRK. Most notably, the discussion over the recognition of North Korea by the IOC and the argument over changing the official name of the North Korean NOC to the Olympic Committee of the DPRK reflect the uncomfortable relationship between the two Koreas. In the post-Cold War period, communist Korea often collaborates with its capitalist sibling in making a sporting union at the Olympics. The Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang presents a definitive example of this inter-Korean connection in sport. However, the DPRK also attempts to win diplomatic gains through such sporting collaboration. The diplomatic use of sport by this country is effectively calibrated, and North Korean sport diplomacy certainly deserves close academic attention.

### **Introduction**

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), also known as North Korea, frequently exploits sport strategically to demonstrate its identity and sovereignty to the international community (Lee & Bairner, 2017). Although the communist state refused to send its delegation to the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo officially due to COVID and was subsequently suspended from the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Beijing by the IOC for not taking part in Tokyo 2020, the DPRK has conventionally considered dispatching its delegation to the Olympic Games an important political project (Pound, 1994). In fact, the Olympic Games offers the communist state one of the few communication channels through which it can sustain its connection with the external world due to its relative economic and political isolation (Lee, 2010). North Korea has particularly made a meticulous effort to maintain its



close ties with the IOC largely because of its rivalry with South Korea within the organisation and the financial assistance that this global sport governing body provides (Bridges, 2012). In this paper, I intend to discuss North Korea's strategic sport diplomacy at the Olympic Games. Particular attention is paid to the national identity politics of the DPRK and its complicated relations with its southern sibling. These include the recognition of North Korea by the IOC and the argument over the legitimate name for the North Korean Olympic delegation. Then, I attempt to assess the diplomatic gains that North Korea made from forging a sporting union with the south at the 2018 Winter Olympics. Before analysing North Korea's statecraft at the Olympics, I briefly review key conceptual tools for this study and the sport and diplomacy nexus in the DPRK today.

## **Sport and Diplomacy in North Korea**

Recently, the diplomatic values and implications of sport have emerged as a distinctive field of academic research (Rofe, 2016). Two different types of intersection between sport and diplomacy can be identified here. First, the government and state actors use sport as means to achieve its foreign policy aims. As Strenk (1979) noted earlier, sport can be an important occasion for seeking international recognition as a sovereign state, especially for newly established nations. Moreover, a major sporting event often functions as a soft power exercise tool where the host country can demonstrate its merits and prowess to world audiences (Grix & Houlihan, 2014). The boycott of a particular sporting fixture can also be seen as a diplomatic gesture against the countries or regimes associated with that competition (Sarantakes, 2011). This political exploitation of sport by nation-states can be defined as *diplomacy-through-sport*.

Second, most sport organisations are fundamentally international institutions whose administration process frequently involves pseudo diplomatic protocols (Chappelet, 2008). Global sport governing bodies such as FIFA and the IOC often works as an international forum where its affiliated associations, which de facto represent each member state, converse, negotiate and cast a vote in order to set a new policy agenda and implement new regulations (Hassan, 2017). In this decision-making process often reflects the interests of a powerful nation. In fact, the *modus operandi* of an international sport federation is not immune to the existing

power structure in world politics. This institutional aspect of the international sport can be conceptualised as *diplomacy-in-sport*.

It appears that North Korea effectively utilises the instrumental value of sport in its international relations programme. The most prominent but episodic incident would be arguably Dennis Rodman's visit to Pyeongyang in 2014 and 2017. The current North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, is known as a fan of the NBA and has a strong initiative to develop basketball in the country. Kim sincerely welcomed the former NBA star and his basketball team to the capital city of the DPRK, and North Korean and American players held a friendly match in a fully occupied indoor arena in Pyongyang. The two men watched this game amicably seating next to each other in a VIP box. While the bond between Kim and Rodman raised some controversies in the US, the appearance of the American basketball player and his team in a North Korean stadium exemplifies how sport can function as a public diplomacy channel. This may indicate Pyeongyang's intention to retain ties with Washington despite the escalating tensions between them.

The DPRK regularly hosts international sporting competitions in order to attract foreign visitors and to acquire a close friendship with other countries and world leaders. In this regard, the Mangyongdae Prize International Marathon is its event diplomacy par excellence. This championship first started in 1981 in celebration of the birthday of Kim Il-sung, the Dear Leader and founding father of the nation. Since then, it took place annually until the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020. This competition is formally classified by the IAAF as a Bronze Label Road Race, and the DPRK's state-run travel agency, Koryo Tours, administrates international entry forms to this iconic athletic contest in Pyeongyang. Interestingly, the Olympic Channel released a documentary film on this marathon competition, titled "Running in North Korea", in 2019. This is a rare media content that depicts the experience of a Western runner who participated in this marathon contest in a natural setting. Through this sport documentary, not only is communist Korea able to present its image as a "normal" country to international audiences, but it also can promote this regular running event to the world. For the North Korean regime, this competition serves as a useful tool for diplomacy-through-sport when it comes to garnering international attention to the nation. The next Mangyongdae Prize International Marathon is provisionally scheduled to be held on 9 April 2023.

## **The North Korean Issue inside the IOC**

While Korea as a nation has a long history and distinctive cultural tradition, the DPRK as a modern nation-state was founded in 1948. From the outset, its fierce rivalry with South Korea, which was established only a few months before the foundation of the North Korean regime, characterised the DPRK's diplomacy, with its attempt to be recognised as the only legitimate Korean state being the primary goal. The development of the East Asian Cold War after the Second World War rendered North Korea's foreign policy and its relationship with the South in particular, more complicated. International sport aptly mirrored this political situation.

The Olympic Committee of the DPRK was founded in 1953 soon after the armistice in the Korean Peninsula. By that time, South Korea had already been a member of the IOC, and the Korean Olympic Committee in Seoul exclusively used "Korea" as the official name of its Olympic delegation. North Korea initially submitted its application for the IOC membership in 1956, but the governing body rejected it and requested northern Korea to cooperate with the South instead. At its 53rd session in 1957, the IOC provisionally recognised the Olympic Committee of North Korea on the condition that the two Koreas formed a single unified team for the Olympic Games. If the two failed to forge a sporting union, only South Korea could participate in the Olympics as it was an existing member. The two sides in principle acknowledged the importance of taking part in the game as one which would symbolise peace and reunification of the Korean nation. In reality, however, it was no easy task to build a unified Korean team as they severely mistrusted each other's intentions because of the traumatic memory of a brutal civil war only a few years ago (Bridges, 2012). The ideological and military tensions between North and South Korea utterly prevented them from reaching an agreement on the formation of a united Korean team at the Olympics. Subsequently, having realised the severe political challenges that the two Koreas were facing, at the 60<sup>th</sup> IOC session in 1963, the sport governing body permitted North Korea to participate in the Olympics as a separate entity. North Korean athletes were finally able to make their debut at the 1964 Winter Olympic Games in Innsbruck.

Nevertheless, communist Korea complained about the situation where its delegation was officially referred to by the term "North Korea" at the Olympics while the South Korean representatives were formally called "Korea". They insisted that North Korea should be

renamed the DPRK. South Korea opposed North Korea's demand for the correction because the formal approval of the title DPRK by the IOC could be viewed as international recognition of communist Korea as a sovereign state. This North Korean question simply worsened the political burden that the IOC was carrying for Korea was not the only divided nation at that time. The two Chinas and the two Germanys were also undergoing this nomenclature dispute at the Olympics in the 1960s. In fact, the official recognition of a country's name by an international sport association was often a politically loaded business, particularly when the world was divided into two ideological blocks, and the alliance of newly independent nations began to form (Houlihan, 1994). Despite this, North Korea resolutely urged the name change, criticising that the IOC politically discriminated against the communist country. In the end, at the 67<sup>th</sup> IOC session in 1968, the IOC sanctified the use of three new names which included the Olympic Committee of the DPRK, of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and of the Republic of China (Taiwan) at the future Olympic Games. After more than a decade of negotiations, North Korea finally rectified their position within the IOC, and this exemplifies DPRK's resilient diplomacy in sport.

## **North Korean Sport Diplomacy at PyeongChang 2018**

North Korea displayed its skilful sport diplomacy strategy at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang. At this event, the two Koreas demonstrated their unity and their desire to reunify the nation to the world (Lee, 2018). Surely, peace was one of the major themes at this competition. Yet, in this representation of inter-Korean connection, the DPRK also induced a diplomatic advantage which helped secure its national interests in the domain of both diplomacy-through-sport and diplomacy-in-sport.

First, the North Korean regime was able to revamp its image by offering a conciliatory gesture to South Korea amidst conflict a few months before the Winter Olympics. Particularly, its intention to support the winter sport competition to be held in the South Korean town and its willingness to form a unified team with the South despite ongoing political tensions between North Korea and America created an impression that the communist state is a reasonable dialogue partner. This sudden shift in their attitude understandably garnered international media attention (Rowe, 2019). Seemingly, North Korea utilised this publicity opportunity in full. The smiling face of Kim Yo-jong, the younger sister

of the North Korean leader, and her friendly demeanour in PyeongChang relayed the picture of a soft side of the communist regime to international audiences. The North Korean female cheerleaders, who were supporting a unified Korean ice hockey team with their highly choreographed movement in the Olympic arena, also amazed the world. Clearly, the appearance of North Korean political and cultural ambassadors in PyeongChang relieved tight tensions in the Korean Peninsula at least during the Winter Olympics. Their performance was arguably North Korea's charm offensive at its best.

Second, the DPRK was able to promote its ski resort through the winter sport mega-event taken place in South Korea. In 2012, North Korea began to develop large-scale ski slopes and associated facilities in the northern part of Gangwon Province which was in close proximity to PyeongChang. The construction of this Masikryong Ski Resort was completed in 2013. It was not co-incident that the communist regime opened this ski resort while South Korea was building new winter sport facilities in preparation for the Olympics. In fact, Chang Ung, a North Korean member of the IOC proposed to host some of the Olympic ski competitions at Masikryong when PyeongChang was bidding for the Winter Olympics (Merkel & Kim, 2011). Additionally, North Korea also intended to boost its tourism industry through the operation of this luxurious winter sport complex. When the two Koreas announced their collaboration at the Winter Olympics, they agreed to arrange a joint training session at the ski resort in North Korea. This event took place a week before the commencement of the Winter Olympics, and international media were also invited to the joint training session. Particularly, an NBC journalist visited the site, and the American network globally telecasted the news about the ski resort and the inter-Korean sporting connection at Masikryong. This was probably the most effective way to enhance the visibility of the North Korean winter sport venue internationally.

Third, by making a sporting union with South Korea, North Korean athletes obtained the rights to compete at the Winter Olympics without passing through the preliminary contests. On 20 January 2018, the IOC and the NOCs of North and South Korea signed a declaration which notes that 22 athletes, 24 officials and 21 media representatives from North Korea would be approved to attend the Winter Olympics. This agreement allowed North Korean athletes to participate in figure skating, short track speed skating, cross country skiing, and alpine skiing at their own accord. Moreover, in order to forge a unified Korean ice hockey

team, the IOC and IIHF permitted the Korean delegation to include additional 12 players from the North without replacing the existing squad. This was an exceptional decision because none of the North Korean athletes had qualified for the Olympics before this declaration. The politics and diplomacy surrounding PyeongChang 2018 gave rise to extra places at this sport mega-event exclusively for North Koreans, and this was a direct benefit that the DPRK enjoyed through the inter-Korean collaboration at this Olympics. Evidently, this was the outcome of strategic North Korean diplomacy-in-sport.

## Conclusion

Sport in North Korea is a highly political practice, and it is no surprise that this communist country has tactfully been using international sport to defend and expand the interests of the nation since the 1950s. From the early stage of its foundation to the end of the Cold War, North Korea's ideological and military struggle with South Korea heavily influenced the scope and goal of its sport diplomacy programmes. In the post-Cold War period, the DPRK tends to exploit the initiative of inter-Korean sporting cooperation to maximise its political gains. More recently, socialist Korea utilises international sport to foster its relationship with external partners and to attract international visitors to the country. As a sport fan, the North Korean leader, Kim Jung-un is particularly keen to facilitate sport development programmes within the framework of its foreign policy. As a country that faces severe economic restrictions and political isolation, sport may be one of the few remaining channels on which the North Korean regime relies to maintain its international connection. This is probably the reason why communist Korea makes a strenuous effort to safeguard diplomatic interests by taking part in sporting competitions and undertaking negotiations with global sport institutions. The history proves that their diplomatic endeavour inside and outside of the stadium yields some fruits. While the profile of North Korean athletes may not demonstrate top-notch quality in the world, its statecraft through sport looks internationally competitive. Therefore, the DPRK's effectively calibrated sport diplomacy programme certainly deserves close academic attention.

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## 11

### **Sport in a Divided Scotland**

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#### **Abstract**

Scotland provides a fascinating case study for examining the links between sport and politics in contemporary society. With a Conservative government at Westminster committed to the Union and an SNP government in Edinburgh committed to independence, it is little wonder that sport - with all its symbolic properties - has become embroiled in UK constitutional politics. This paper briefly traces the roots of the relationship between sport and political nationalism in Scotland, before discussing in more depth how it was articulated at the London 2012 Olympics and Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. In terms of the latter event, it will also highlight how it symbolised wider divisions in Scottish society, notably social class. Political events out-with Scottish sport have combined with movements within the sector to encourage debate about sport's role in addressing social problems and shaping the international image of a progressive Scotland post-Brexit. This paper briefly discusses the strengths and challenges with both of these directions that speak to issues of communication and connections between Scotland and the world, and between Scots living in an increasingly divided society.

#### **Introduction**

The link between sport and Scotland's place within the United Kingdom has a long and turbulent history. The amalgamation of the Scottish and English parliaments with the Act of Union in 1707 created a united parliament of the Kingdom of Great Britain at Westminster (London) and the demise of Scotland as an independent and sovereign nation. This amalgamation did, however, reflect Scottish distinctiveness through the maintenance of an independent church, legal and education system, with this 'semi independence' (Whigham, 2020) extended by the codification of sports in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century which – often codified by British people – gave Scotland's 'stateless nation' (McCrone, 1992) independent national teams in sports thus potential contributors to a distinct Scottish 'nation' within the



United Kingdom (Whigham, 2020). With the decision to form a Union of Parliaments attracting support and disdain within Scotland, sport acts a vehicle for political arguments over whether the country's interests are best served through political independence or the union (Jarvie, 2016). To some, the country's most popular sport (football) has acted against political nationalism as fans of Rangers FC exhibit expressions of Protestantism, Orangeism, Conservatism and unionism, while fans of Celtic FC exhibit expressions of Irishness, Catholicism and republicanism (Kelly, 2011). Those critical of the constitutional status quo have bemoaned how sport acts as an outlet for Scots' nationalist outpourings – at Hampden (national football stadium) and Murrayfield (national rugby stadium) - which is not extended to votes for political independence (Jarvie & Walker, 1994). Of course, to supporters of the union, accusations that Scots were '90 minute patriots' ignored how existing constitutional arrangements offered 'the best of both worlds': economic benefits from pulling resources of the home nations and cultural benefits of being able to identify with a Scottish nation via sport (Whigham, 2020).

Given the focus on mega events within this conference, it is worth stressing that such occasions have encouraged debates over whether Scotland should separate or remain in the United Kingdom. The Scottish men's football team's poor performance in the 1978 World Cup in Argentina – they lost to Peru and drew with Iran - was used by opponents of home rule to question Scots' ability to run their own affairs in the run-up to the 1979 referendum on whether Scotland should have its own parliament (Jarvie & Walker, 1994). The referendum saw 52% of those voting – just 33% of the electorate - voting for the proposal and, because the then Labour Government stipulated prior to the vote that 40% of the overall electorate needed to support devolution, the proposal was rejected.

Scots' dissatisfaction with the union accelerated in the 1980s in response to many factors, including the election of Margaret Thatcher as UK Prime Minister whose authoritarian populism saw her embrace an English nationalism anathema to many Scots (Jessop, 2010). Her indifference to the social effects of deindustrialisation – as her neoliberal-inspired policies championed service sector growth over manufacturing industry – infuriated many Scots as they witnessed communities ravaged by unemployment and resulting social problems. During this time, it was Scottish pop stars and other cultural figures who were at the forefront of calls for constitutional change not sport stars (Hassan, 2002). After nearly 20 years of

Conservative rule, the election of a New Labour Government at Westminster shifted the UK's constitutional politics as it had a manifesto commitment to hold another referendum on Scottish devolution. This was held in September 1979 with the result showing overwhelming support for a Parliament and for it to have tax-varying powers. Both sides of the debate integrated prominent sport stars into their campaign to bolster their case, with the 'No Think Twice' campaign counting a Rangers FC vice chairman as a prominent member. While it is likely that sport figures' impact on people's voting preferences was minimal, the then SNP leader Alex Salmond argued that the Scottish men's football team qualifying for the World Cup may have had some influence on the referendum outcome (Whigham, 2020).

Sport was one of the areas devolved to the Scottish Government in 1999 under the Scotland Act (1978). The first two Scottish Parliament elections in 1999 and 2003 - held under a proportional representation system - delivered a Scottish Labour and Liberal Democrat coalition government. This electoral system - in opposition to Westminster's 'first past the post' electoral system - was felt likely to prevent an SNP Government and calls for an independent Scotland. However, the 2007 Scottish election saw the SNP emerge as the largest party, a situation encouraged by an unpopular Labour Party at Westminster rather than increased support for independence (Curtice, 2008). This electoral shift has continued to the present-day with the SNP winning the 2011, 2016 and 2021 Scottish elections. With the SNP in power at Holyrood and a Conservative and Unionist Party in power at Westminster, conditions were there for constitutional issues to dominate politics and for sport to play a part.

To supporters, devolution would usher in a 'new politics' less adversarial than that seen in the Westminster UK Parliament, capable of delivering 'Scottish solutions to Scottish problems'. It came as a surprise to some that the first constitutional tug-of-war between the Westminster and Scottish Government came, not from nuclear weapons berthed on submarines in Scotland's River Clyde, but the decision of a Westminster Home Secretary to grant a visa to the convicted rapist Mike Tyson to box in Glasgow in 2000 (Watson, 2000). Those surprised by this underestimated how the symbolic properties of sport could be used by the then opposition Scottish National Party (SNP) to communicate to the public what, to them, were the limitations of the original constitutional settlement which left immigration a responsibility reserved to Westminster. Opponents of the SNP felt that their opposition to

Tyson fighting in Glasgow was about 'borders not boxing' and their desire to use any issue to undermine the constitutional status quo.

## **The London 2012 Olympics**

Despite having a parliament reconvened in Edinburgh a First Minister (Henry McLeish) – himself a former professional footballer – argued that the country's hosting of major sporting events, such as the 2002 Champions League final, represented the psychological dimension of devolution (McLeish, 2004). To him, excitement needed to be part of the new constitutional arrangements to counter criticisms of a 'pretend parliament' lacking vision (Macmillan, 2003). The public nature of sporting mega events mean they are excellent vehicles for competing narratives about Scotland's place in the union. With Scottish athletes competing for Britain at the London 2012 Olympics the event represented the perfect stage for opponents of Scottish independence to use their success to highlight the benefits of 'Team GB' in a sporting and political sense (Whigham, 2020). Indeed, on the morning of the opening ceremony, the Prime Minister David Cameron gave a speech at the velodrome in London's Olympic Park in which he stated that 2012 'was the summer that patriotism came out of the shadows' (Spectator, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2014). By this he meant British not Scottish patriotism. The location of the speech appeared carefully chosen to lend symbolic weight to the message, with cycling one of 'Team GB's' most successful Olympic sports with many cyclists learning their trade at Edinburgh's Meadowbank velodrome. London 2012 marked a difficult time for supporters of independence, with the success of Scottish athletes like Chris Hoy, Andy Murray and Katherine Grainger promoting an upturn in British patriotism. Clearly mindful of this threat, Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond released a statement prior to the event wishing all athletes well, but encouraging Scots to cheer its own Scolympians (Johnson, 2012). Not content with this, when Scotland's Andy Murray won the gold medal for tennis, Salmond unfurled the flag of St Andrew while sitting in the Royal Box behind the UK Prime Minister David Cameron (Harris & Skillen, 2016). However, not all Scottish politicians sought to use the London Olympics to promote separation. One of the most contentious aspects of the event was the inclusion of a Great Britain men's football team which attracted criticisms from the SNP and Scottish Football Association for potentially threatening the independent status of

Britain's home nations. However, the then Scottish Prime Minister Gordon Brown supported the idea, encouraged by his unionist leanings and (possibly) the opportunity it gave him to curry favour with right-leaning media with an ear to 'Middle England' (Daily Mail, 24<sup>th</sup> August). Ultimately, the British team was made-up entirely of English players which said much for football's tribalism compared to rugby union where, to play for the British & Irish Lions, is the pinnacle of players' careers (Jarvie & Reid, 1999).

## **The Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games**

Two years after the London Olympics, concerns were expressed by unionist media outlets and politicians that the SNP would use the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games to bolster their case for a 'Yes' vote, given its staging just before the independence referendum (Whigham, 2020). This was because, unlike the Olympics, the Commonwealth Games is an event where Scottish athletes compete for their home nation. The former First Minister Jack McConnell called on both sides of the debate to call a 'truce' during the event, so athletes could be sure that their comments and/or athletic success would not be used by campaigners to bolster or refute the case for independence (BBC News 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2014). While the 'No' campaign recruited some retired Scottish rugby players for their side – which highlighted the danger to current athletes of expressing political views in a febrile media environment – the 'Yes' campaign attracted support from a former Scotland football manager and minor sporting celebrities (Whigham & May, 2017). As in the earlier case of Mike Tyson fighting in Glasgow, the aforementioned authors argued that the SNP used the loss of VAT receipts from the event to the UK Treasury as evidence of the need for more powers to Holyrood. By contrast, Scottish Labour highlighted the UK Government's financial support for the Games and how Scottish athletes' success was due, in part, to the UK sporting system to try and bolster their 'stronger together' political narrative. The most high-profile sporting intervention of the campaign came from the Scottish tennis player Andy Murray whose tweet on the day of the referendum urging Scots to 'let's do this' was seized upon by media on both sides of the debate. While Murray's intervention attracted much scorn on social media (Harris & Skillen, 2016), it was praised for highlighting that athletes are not passive in political debate (Jarvie, 2016). However, the combined efforts of such interventions was a zero-sum game

with Scots basing their decision on independence on more important matters like economic security, health and welfare (Whigham, 2020; Harris & Skillen, 2016).

It has been argued that sporting mega event opening ceremonies provide the perfect stage for nations to project a favourable image of themselves for soft power gains. This could be seen with Glasgow 2014 with the much-repeated narrative – some would say myth – of Scotland as a tolerant and caring country reflected in the opening ceremony which included a gay kiss and call for viewers to donate to the children’s charity Unicef. However, such tolerance sits at odds with the reality of 1 in 4 Scottish children living in poverty and recent research painting a picture of an increasingly divided sporting nation (Rowe, 2019) where poverty and material disadvantage devastate opportunities – including sporting - for over one million Scots (Kay, 2020). Decisions made in Scotland – not Westminster – to cut local government funding has seen local government sports provision being dominated by ‘the leisured middle class’ as price rises imposed by leisure trusts exclude the most disadvantaged (Jarvie & Birnbacher, 2018).

A contentious issue in the run-up to the opening ceremony was the organisers’ decision to blow up some of Glasgow’s iconic Red Road flats as part of the show beamed to the audience at Celtic Park stadium. As one official commented ‘By sharing the final moments of the Red Road flats with the world as part of the opening ceremony, Glasgow is proving that it is proud of its history, but doesn’t stand still, a city that is constantly regenerating, renewing and reinventing itself’. It is often difficult to criticise mega events – even 2<sup>nd</sup> order megas like the Commonwealth Games – for fear of being labelled unpatriotic, however the decision to blow up the flats galvanised debate about the event’s top-down legacy (Mooney, 2014). To the aforementioned author, the decision reflected the local council’s attempt to belittle the whole idea of social housing as a fundamental aspect of a civilised society. After a public backlash event organisers reversed the decision on health and safety grounds. While government and the media were overwhelmingly supportive of the Commonwealth Games, activists and members of the local community criticised neoliberal processes of gentrification and displacement which operated to the detriment of many local disadvantaged residents who were forced to leave their homes to make way for event infrastructure (Paton et al, 2012; Gray & Porter, 2015). Such infrastructure included ‘world class’ sports facilities such as the Emirates Arena which, while providing facilities (e.g. a velodrome) of questionable benefits

to locals' health (McCartney et al, 2012), also challenged locals' sense of place as they lamented the closure of much-loved local sports facilities while visualising the new futuristic facilities as places of fear and exclusion (Madgin et al, 2016).

A non-sporting event with the potential to influence the politics of sport was the 2016 European Union (EU) referendum. The result of this was the UK's withdrawal from the EU, despite two thirds of Scots voting to remain. To the SNP and its supporters this has created conditions for another independence referendum, which the Conservative Government at Westminster has rejected. It is interesting to note that in Wales, another sub state within the UK, there is a recognition that, post-Brexit, there is a need to innovate in foreign policy to 'play to our strengths' on what differentiates the country from others, which includes developing a sport and public diplomacy strategy (Murray & Price, 2020). However, the Scottish Government has not yet grasped the potential of sport in its desire to be known internationally as a progressive country supportive of human rights. This is despite sport organisations already hosting representatives from many countries keen to see their innovative interventions in addressing educational inequality and food insecurity. With Scotland high in the international league tables of obesity, it is not surprising that sport is most closely linked to the government's health portfolio rather than its External Affairs Directorate (Jarvie, 2022). As the aforementioned author states, to make use of Scotland's sporting soft power assets requires government and civil servants to be less aloof about sport as a legitimate area of culture and less aloof about what constitutes foreign policy.

For sport to play a more central role in Scottish domestic and foreign policy it needs to come out of the margins of mainstream political debate (Grix, 2010). There have been recent attempts to shift the narrative of sport from a focus on participation numbers and medals at mega events, to maximising its use as a contributor to the SNP's public policy goals (Research Scotland, 2017). This shift towards embedding a 'sport for change' (Changing Lives) mindset alongside traditional sports development in the sporting system is being encouraged through the 'Changemaker' workforce development programme led by prominent sport social entrepreneurs. The latter practitioners are addressing the corrosive effects of poverty and material deprivation in Edinburgh, a city often overlooked in critical urban scholarship (Kallin & Slater, 2014). Their efforts show how locally respected sport organisations can provide belonging and acceptance for some young people marginalised by society (Morgan

& Parker, 2017). This informal inclusion aids (among other things) their ability to navigate the education system and obtain results deemed possible by their mainstream schools. Sport organisations act as cultural intermediaries between distant mainstream social services and local disadvantaged communities (Blackshaw & Long, 2005) by building trusted relations via a genuine ethics of care (Debognies et al, 2019). However, in an environment of operational insecurity where they are paid for 'results', this may prioritise the needs of the less 'hard to reach' (Kelly, 2012). Sporting interventions are not the answer to Scotland's divided society, but they could encourage discussions on how to redesign mainstream social institutions (e.g. schools) to promote academic attainment and wellbeing (Roy, 2020).

## Conclusion

It is clear from the above discussion that sport is used to champion and critique Scotland's position within the United Kingdom. The latter constitutional entity appears increasingly disunited than united after Brexit and Covid-19, thus it will be interesting to see if the Scottish Government, athletes and campaigners use sport as a platform to champion their preferred constitutional arrangement in the upcoming Birmingham Commonwealth Games and, should there be one, the next Scottish independence referendum. There is no doubt that sport organisations are playing an increasing – often hidden – role in addressing deep divisions in Scottish society, but it remains to be seen if the community spirit witnessed during the pandemic encourages sport organisations to 'build back better' along the lines of proportionate universalism (Marmot et al, 2010) or income generation. With the Brexit referendum potentially aligning Scotland to the values of a right-wing populist Conservative Government at Westminster, it is hoped that the SNP Government recognise that its drive to be a progressive beacon for human rights can be helped by adding sport to its foreign policy toolkit.

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12

**Building a Dream Team: A Marketing Perspective of Developing a  
Unified Sport Team between Two Koreas**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this brief essay is to review previous ‘unified’ teams of South and North Korea that competed in international sport competitions (e.g., U-20 FIFA World Cup in 1991, World Table Tennis Championships in 1991, Women's Ice Hockey team in 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics). When conducting a historical overview, we take marketing perspective to evaluate successes and failures of previous unified teams. In particular, we adopt 4Cs of Marketing Mix (4Cs: Customer, Cost, Convenience, and Communication) as a main framework to identify key factors relevant to the success of a unified team. Based upon our review, we propose that women’s football team presents the most viable option that will likely produce both tangible and intangible outcomes for various stakeholders. More detail overview of our analysis and our suggestions will be presented at the symposium.

**Introduction**

Athletes from two Koreas, where the two countries are technically still at war, have come together to form a unified team. From 1991 Table Tennis team to 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and Paralympics, two Koreas were able to negotiate and staged a unified team in international sporting competitions. Unified sport team between South and North Korean athletes exemplifies the peacebuilding capacity of sports in contested areas (Kim, 2011; Mitchell et al., 2022). While earlier joint sporting efforts (i.e., 41<sup>st</sup> World Table Tennis Championships and FIFA U-20 World Cup in 1991) resulted in good athletic performance as well as enhanced national stature, the sustainability of a joint team has received mixed views

after the unified women's ice hockey team during the Pyeongchang Olympics (Lim, Choi, & Lim, 2018). Assuming the joint effort between the two Korea to field a unified sport team will continue, we reviewed and identified several important considerations going forward by adopting a marketing mix perspective. In particular, we considered developing a unified sport team as a new product development and applied the 4C marketing mix (customer, cost, convenience, and communication) as a framework to offer several consideration sets when fielding a unified sporting team. Finally, we propose women's football team as an ideal candidate that satisfies the 4Cs of the marketing mix and maximizes competitive advantage when the two Koreas forge one team.

## **Unified Korean Teams in the Past**

The idea of having a unified Korean team started from the inter-Korea sports summit in Lausanne in 1963<sup>1</sup> (Kim, 2013). Since its first summit, there have been discussions between the two Koreas during and after the 1988 Seoul Olympics and the 1990 Beijing Asian Games, which led to the cooperation between two Koreas in sport (Mitchell, Gudgeon, & Kim, 2022). It did not start with a unified team from the beginning first but friendly football games in Pyongyang and Seoul facilitated inter-Korean sporting exchange and in 1991, table tennis and football teams were formed to compete at the 41<sup>st</sup> World Table Tennis Championships in Xiba, Japan, and the FIFA U-20 World Cup in Portugal. Both teams had remarkable performance as the women's table tennis team overcame the world champion China in the finals and the football team clinched to the quarterfinals by beating Argentina, one of the favourites.

Fast forward to 2018, another joint effort to field the unified team was during the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in women's ice hockey, which marked its first unified Korean team in the Olympics. While the joint effort was clear to build peace through sport, several scholars have documented controversies and challenges around fielding a joint Korean sporting team (e.g., Lim et al., 2018). We argue that fielding a unified sport team is a delicate persuasion process which could potentially yield substantial social cost. In this presentation, we take a marketing perspective to explore some important aspects that need to be considered when fielding a unified sporting team.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.donga.com/news/Sports/article/all/20180807/91416678/5>

## Marketing Mix as a Framework

We consider unified sporting team as a by-product of political and diplomatic negotiations between the two Koreas at the time of formation, but argue that it has a greater ramifications than just diplomatic gains. The governing body (i.e., FIFA, IOC) as well as media and organizing committee would welcome such peaceful gestures from two Koreas as they can enhance interests and publicity of the event itself and also exemplify peacebuilding through sport (Mitchell et al., 2022). Therefore, we argue that the process of staging a unified sport team is similar to a new product development which requires strategic decision making.

Marketing Mix is one of key marketing concepts includes multiple areas of focus as part of a comprehensive marketing plan. While there are several competing concepts of Marketing Mix, we take 4C – *Customer, Cost, Convenience, and Communication* as a main framework to evaluate previous teams and identify key factors that are important for the success of a joint sporting team effort. It is also important to note that modern marketing focuses on relationship building and sustainability rather than seeking one-time transactions (Keller, 2013). Accordingly, our review will be focusing on considerations that will make a unified sport team that will maximize its tangible and intangible outcomes.

## Fielding a Dream Team

### *Customer*

Good products address customers' needs and wants. It is important that the unified team generates sufficient interests among Korean people and beyond. Recent literature suggests political and generational gaps in fielding a unified team (Lim et al., 2018) which showed divisive responses to the women's ice hockey team during the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics. One way to address this issue is prioritizing a sporting success. On-field performance is vital for generating public and media interests. It is well documented in the social psychology and sport management literatures that people want to identify with winners and it is easy to leverage with a better performing team (End et al., 2002). In fact, this was the case for the 'Team Korea' at the 1991 World Table Tennis Championships and the 1991 FIFA U-20 World Cup. Identifying a sport that the joint Korean team can succeed in the international stage seems vital. Another important aspect of Customer is that the sport should

have a global appeal. In 2018, Korean judo team formed a unified team for the mixed event at the World Judo Championships in Azerbaijan. While the first-ever unified team in judo brought a bronze medal in the mixed event, it did not receive overwhelming interests from the public or from the media. Considering the popularity of the product, women's football presents an interesting scene where the imperialism and cold war are intertwined. It is one of few sports where China, Japan, U.S.A. are powerhouses where South Korea halted the U.S. women's national team's 22-game winning streaks in 2021.

### *Cost*

Fielding a unified team generates both tangible and intangible cost. Tangible cost could arise from additional logistics of training, travel, and personnel, while intangible cost could include resources needed to ensure there is a competitive balance between North and South Korean players. It is important that the joint effort between the two teams is synergistic rather than cannibalizing. Therefore, we argue that identifying a sport that has similar level of performance between the two Koreas is important in developing a more cost-efficient team. It is also important from a performance standpoint that the joint effort is mutually benefiting the growth and development of the sport. For instance, there were controversies when the South Korean government announced a unified women's ice hockey team for the Pyeongchang Olympics. Then coach and players from South Korea raised concerns (McKenna, 2018) as the level of performance was not competitively balanced between the two teams<sup>2</sup>. In addition, fielding a joint team for a single sport would be more cost effective than fielding a joint team for the entire events at the Olympics or at the Asian Games.

### *Convenience*

Convenience in marketing concerns the ease of distribution of new products to the target audience. In the context of unified sport team, we consider 'media' distribution potential of the newly formed team as a key aspect of Convenience. If one of the objectives of forming a unified team is to exemplify the peacebuilding capacity of sport, then the selection of the sport should be able to reach global audience. For instance, the 2019 FIFA Women's

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<sup>2</sup> According to the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), South Korea is ranked 18<sup>th</sup>, while North Korea is ranked 31<sup>st</sup> as of May 2, 2022.

World Cup was televised in 205 countries reaching over 1.12 billion viewers<sup>3</sup>. Consider fielding a unified Korean team in front of hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide. Thus, global media distribution potential is important to reach wider audience and increase awareness of peacebuilding effort. In addition to the media distribution potential, it is important that the event should take place in a geographically proximate location. The 41<sup>st</sup> World Table Tennis Championship in Xiba, Japan, and the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics are good examples. Logistics of team traveling become more manageable and from a production and consumption standpoint, little to no time difference helps programming and viewership during primetime. Moreover, if the joint effort is to co-host an international event with high stature, we propose that co-hosting the FIFA Women's World Cup would be most feasible considering the infrastructure of the venues.

### *Communication*

In Lim and colleagues' (2018) analysis on the media discourse of the unified women's ice hockey team, there was a divide in the Korean public's opinion. Much of it seems to have been the way the government (more specifically, the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism) communicated its process. The process seemed abruptly developed without having deliberate discussions between the associations, players, and coaches. The way then Prime Minister and the Minister of Culture, Sport and Tourism addressed the issue received a backlash and eventually had to issue an apology<sup>4</sup>. Going forward, it becomes very important to win the minds of Korean people regarding why the unified team is needed in the first place. With the diminishing sentiment of nationalism among younger generation (Lim et al., 2018) and the lack of interests in political staging of a unified team without sporting success, communication seems to be a vital aspect of the success of a unified team. For instance, the Team Korea table tennis team that won the championship over China in 1991 had months of discussions between the associations and planning leading up to the World Championships<sup>5</sup>. Therefore,

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<sup>3</sup> FIFA.com. FIFA Women's World Cup 2019™ watched by more than 1 billion.

<https://www.fifa.com/tournaments/womens/womensworldcup/france2019/news/fifa-women-s-world-cup-2019tm-watched-by-more-than-1-billion>

<sup>4</sup> Yahoo Finance (2018, January 19). "S. Korea PM apologises for gaffe on unified team"

<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/korea-pm-apologises-gaffe-unified-team-094641927.html>

<sup>5</sup> Kim, Donghun (2019, April 3). "28 년 전 지바탁구 단일팀 '코리아' 결승서 왜 리분희 뺏냐고요?"

<https://sports.v.daum.net/v/20190424030602945>

having a consensus among players as well as gaining support from the public are vital for the success of the unified team. The Team Korea during the World Table Tennis Championship is a case in point. Rationale of the unified team was clear—to beat the world dominant China—and the mission was accomplished.

## Conclusion

Using the 4Cs of marketing mix as a framework, we briefly reviewed existing unified Korean sport teams in the past and identified several important considerations going forward as the two Koreas continue their joint effort to field a unified team. While the sample is small, after reviewing existing unified teams from 1991 and 2018, we contend that the unified sport team (1) should be relevant to the Korean public (Customer), (2) must be cost-efficient in fielding a team (Cost), (3) have geographical proximity yet have massive media distribution potential, and (4) win public support with a strong justification and storyline (Communication). Considering those 4Cs as main consideration sets, we propose that women's football team would make an ideal case for the joint effort in fielding a unified sport team. First, football is most popular in Korea and both North Korea (10<sup>th</sup>) and South Korea (17<sup>th</sup>) are highly ranked in the FIFA ranking. Competitive balance between the two teams would make the joint team more competitive, and thus can increase the chance to upset the powerhouses and arch rivalries in women's football (e.g., U.S.A., China, and Japan). Second, inter-Korean exchanges in football is not new. There have been exchanges between the two nations going back to the colonial era (Lee, 2017), and the unified team in 1991 had a successful run at the FIFA U-20 World Cup. It is certainly viable for the women's squad as they are even ranked higher than the men's teams. Third, the FIFA Women's World Cup presents the largest female sporting event with over 1.2 billion viewers worldwide. Staging the unified team in one of the biggest sport events will help leverage the peacebuilding effort between the two Koreas.

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## Sports Heritage and Inter-Korean Relations

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### Abstract

Building on a theoretical foundation of ‘heritage diplomacy’, the paper aims to explore the idea of sports heritage in inter-Korean relations. I follow Tim Winter’s distinction between ‘heritage *in* diplomacy’ and ‘heritage *as* diplomacy’, the latter which uses the language of a shared cultural past/heritage to erect bridges between nations and to foster inter-governmental collaboration. Arguably, heritage *as* diplomacy is also potentially more powerful than heritage *in* diplomacy. The paper brings up for discussion two themes in this context: Korean marathon and Korean sports heroes from the colonial period. By this, I hope to stimulate a discussion on an underexplored angle in inter-Korean relations. Sports heritage as diplomacy can manifest, for example, in jointly established and run sports museums, joint sports-themed commemoration/anniversary days, and joint sports history books. Indeed, the task is complicated and expectations should be put into perspective. Yet, I argue, if heritage *as* diplomacy is indeed that powerful, the outcome in terms of maintaining a productive dialogue and alleviating tension can be particularly rewarding.

### Introduction

As it usually happens under the leadership of progressive South Korean presidents, inter-Korean relations grew warmer following the election of Moon Jae-in in 2017. Notably, three summits were held during 2018. With regard to sports/martial arts, a North Korean taekwondo demonstration team visited South Korea – for the first time in ten years – for the World Taekwondo Championships in June 2017, and in April 2018 a South Korean taekwondo team performed in Pyongyang for the first time since 2002. In between, cultural exchanges and sports diplomacy took place around and during the PyeongChang Winter Olympics.

Against this background, two other meaningful initiatives took place in 2018. First, in November the two Koreas had successfully inscribed traditional Korean wrestling, *ssirūm*,

with UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. After years of submitting and registering different, but sometimes even similar, cultural items separately, ssirūm was the first, and so far is the only, cultural heritage jointly submitted by them. Second, a few weeks prior, a South Korean taekwondo demonstration team again performed in Pyongyang. This time the meeting ended in an agreement between South Korea's World Taekwondo and the North Korean-associated International Taekwondo Federation to, among others, integrate the two branches and to discuss the idea of a joint submission to inscribe taekwondo on UNESCO's aforementioned list. Building on a theoretical foundation of 'heritage diplomacy', I thus wish to explore the idea of sports heritage in inter-Korean relations. In this regard I focus on two themes which in some aspects are also interrelated: the marathon, and sports heroes from the colonial period. The logic behind these choices is explained in the respective sections and in the Conclusion. First, though, a distinction needs to be clarified between 'heritage *in* diplomacy' and 'heritage *as* diplomacy'.

## **Sports Heritage as Diplomacy**

Heritage matters to modern societies because they use it to construct their national identities. 'National cultures', McLean (1998, p. 244) maintains, 'construct identities by producing meanings about the nation with which we can identify, meanings which are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it'. National identity, then – which establishes a sense of belonging and solidarity, and which states employ to instil patriotism, loyalty, and commitment – depends on its connection to the past. Heritage makes this connection as it supplies the stories, the memories, and the images McLean refers to. Heritage is a process (Harvey, 2001; Smith, 2006), and, in Smith's (2006, p. 83) words: 'a range of activities that include remembering, commemoration, communicating and passing on knowledge and memories, asserting and expressing identity and social and cultural values and meanings'. Finally, heritage is political; meaning – it is subjected to the agendas, concerns, and needs of the present (Harvey, 2001; Smith, 2006). Given sports' particularly strong affective and emotive feature, it is a potentially attractive realm from which to extract powerful moments, artefacts, and figures for the heritage project.

States often take both sports and heritage seriously as they utilize them on the international stage too. Accordingly, sports diplomacy, which relies on the conception that sport is an important diplomatic tool for elevating the international prestige of the country and for engaging with foreign nations (e.g. Cha, 2009; Merkel, 2008; Murray, 2012), has been drawing considerable academic attention. Similarly, states have been using (their) heritage too as a means of soft power (e.g. Luke and Kersel, 2013; Nakano and Zhu, 2020; Winter, 2016). Winter (2015) defines this conduct as 'heritage in diplomacy'. In such cases, heritage 'figures into existing diplomatic ties' (Winter, 2015, p. 1009).

Yet Winter (2015) also distinguishes between 'heritage *in* diplomacy' and 'heritage *as* diplomacy'. In comparison with the first, the latter relies on 'the notion of mutual or shared culture as a mediator of relations' (Winter, 2015, p. 1010). Thus, in 'heritage *as* diplomacy' states use the language of a shared cultural past/heritage to build bridges between nations and to foster inter-governmental collaboration. Examples for recent studies in this context are Stuckey (2022), who examined interactions between Greeks and Turks around shared monuments, and Huang and Lee (2019) who explored cooperation between South Korea and China over colonial prisons. Most importantly, 'heritage *as* diplomacy', Winter (2015, p. 1011) argues, 'is considerably more potentially potent, than merely heritage *in* diplomacy'. By thus conceptualizing sports heritage and examining its possibilities *as* diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula, I hope to stimulate a discussion on this underexplored angle in inter-Korean relations.

## Marathon Heritage

Korea has a proud marathon tradition that extends back to the colonial period. The most noted athlete in this respect is Sohn Kee-chung, a world-class runner, and winner of the 1936 Berlin Olympics marathon. In that race Nam Sung-yong came third, thus the two were the first ethnic Koreans to win Olympic medals. Other top-level Korean marathoners from that period were Kim Ŭn-bae and Kwŏn T'ae-ha who finished 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, respectively, in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics. Finally, Nam Ki-yong (see Nam et al., 2019), brother of Nam Sung-yong, too was an accomplished runner who had earned a spot on the Japanese team for the (eventually cancelled) 1940 Olympics.

After the liberation and at the eve of the establishment of the Republic of Korea, Suh Yun-bok – coached by Sohn Kee-chung – won the Boston Marathon in 1947 clocking a world-best time. In that race, three years later, South Korean runners Ham Kee-yong, Song Kil-yun, and Ch'oe Yun-ch'il made history when they finished first, second, and third, respectively. They too were coached by Sohn. Years later, more South Korean marathon runners rose to fame. Hwang Young-cho won the race at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and the 1994 Asian Games, and Kim Jae-ryong finished 10<sup>th</sup> in Barcelona, 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 1993 Boston Marathon, and 4<sup>th</sup> in the Stuttgart World Championships the same year. Finally, Lee Bong-ju finished second in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, and won the 2001 Boston Marathon and the Asian Games in 1998 and in 2002. Regarding the hosting of international marathon races, in 1964 Seoul International Marathon was founded in its current format, and more races followed suit.

In North Korea too, a revered tradition of marathon running has been established. Ch'oe Ch'ang-söp is the first highly-successful North Korean marathoner and the greatest North Korean athlete of his time (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 492). In 1975 Ch'oe earned acclaim after winning the Košice Peace Marathon – one of the oldest marathons in the world – and in 1976 he finished 12<sup>th</sup> in the Montreal Olympics. Fellow runner Ko Ch'un-sön then contributed to this evolving tradition by winning the Košice Peace Marathon twice, in 1977 and in 1978. These accomplishments inspired the regime to establish the Pyongyang (Mangyongdae) International Marathon in 1981. From that point on, the most successful North Korean marathoners were women. Mun Kyöng-ae, who emerged in the late 1980s, has been compared to Ch'oe Ch'ang-söp (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 493). Dubbed 'the Rosa Mota of Asia' by *JoongAng ilbo* (1990), Mun won the Beijing Marathon in 1989 and came 6<sup>th</sup> in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. A few years later, Jong Song-ok achieved the biggest success to date in North Korean marathon history when she won the race at the 1999 World Championships in Seville, and, Ham Bong-sil came 8<sup>th</sup> in the 2000 Sydney Olympics and 1<sup>st</sup> at the 2002 Asian Games. Finally, Kim Hye-kyöng and her twin sister Kim Hye-söng, too, drew international attention: in the 2013 World Championships in Moscow they finished 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, respectively; Kim Hye-söng also finishing 9<sup>th</sup> at the Beijing World Championships two years later. In the 2016 Rio Olympics, the twins finished 10<sup>th</sup> (Hye-söng) and 11<sup>th</sup> (Hye-kyöng), crossing the finish line shoulder to shoulder.

In light of the above,<sup>1</sup> what makes marathon a relatively promising candidate to be used as sports heritage diplomacy in inter-Korean relations, is that it cuts across – and could conceptually and emotionally connect between – the colonial and post-colonial periods, and that it is rich and diversified in terms of moments and actors. These features might enable a productive marathon-heritage environment, which, once negotiated, would allow the two Koreas to jointly express ‘Koreanness’ through identification with a shared past, while at the same time to retain and acknowledge each other’s respective post-colonial marathon achievements.

## The Colonial Period and Its Sports Heroes

The temptation to resort to the colonial period for the purpose of constructing a shared Korean (sports) heritage is big as much as the task at hand is challenging. While the period has been fundamental in the national identity projects of the two Koreas, this shared past has been, at the same time, instrumental in accentuating the respective competing legitimacies. Yet heritage is a dynamic and oft-contentious process anyways, therefore I wish to very briefly point to the possibilities and challenges in colonial-era sports heroes as heritage diplomacy. Given the athletes involved, the theme is partially shared with the marathon heritage.

Stories of remarkable achievements by sports heroes have the potential to ‘galvanize public support and affection’ (Dashper and Fletcher, 2013, p. 489), and the colonial era is saturated with success stories of Korean sports (see Lee, 2016). Besides Sohn Kee-chung – whose current heritagization in Seoul sends a strong message about his colonial-period achievement ‘belonging’ to South Korea (Podoler, 2021) – and the other aforementioned marathoners, other mega stars were cyclist Um Bok-dong and all-around athlete Lee Young-min. In football, ‘the pride of colonial Korea’ (Lee, 2016, pp. 80-86), talented players such as Kim Yong-sik and Kim Yŏng-gŭn inspired their compatriots. And in boxing, Hwang Ŭl-su – who years later defected from South Korea to the North – and Sŏ Chŏng-gwŏn (‘Joe Tei Ken’) – who had an impressive professional international career in the US in the 1930s – were among a group of dominant fighters who demonstrated ‘the Chosŏn fist’ (Kim, 1982). Kim Chŏng-

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<sup>1</sup> This is by no means an exhaustive survey.

yun was another promising boxer who had won Japan's lightweight championship in 1930 but tragically died at age 20 the same year, shortly after a match that had left him unconscious.<sup>2</sup>

These and other athletes form a rich past of colonial-era Korean sports heroism. If negotiated by the two Koreas for the purpose of heritage, issues that most likely will be addressed include, for example, the question of which part of the Peninsula athletes were born in, and where they went and what they did after the liberation. Another consideration might be whatever stains they have regarding their personal lives – Um Bok-dong, for example, was put on trial twice for bicycle theft, and unflattering stories surfaced regarding Lee Young-min's family relations. But heritage, after all, is more about politics and power relations than about critical academic thinking.

## Conclusion

This short paper aimed to advance the idea of sports heritage *as* diplomacy in inter-Korean relations. To some extent, the practice of sports/martial arts heritage as diplomacy has already been taking place, as earlier mentioned, through ssirŭm and through taekwondo. In comparison, though, in this paper I wanted to direct attention to themes like 'marathon' and 'sports heroes' which are not uniquely Korean by definition (taekwondo's controversial origins notwithstanding). Inter-Korean joint heritages such as marathon and colonial-era sports heroes require much deliberation and adjustment. The manifestations can be, for example, jointly established and managed sports museums, joint sports-themed commemoration and anniversary days, joint sports history books, and more. The task is complicated and expectations should be put into perspective: it will take much more than either sports diplomacy or sports heritage as diplomacy to reunite the two Koreas. Yet if heritage *as* diplomacy is indeed that powerful, the outcome in terms of maintaining a productive dialogue and alleviating tension can be particularly rewarding.

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<sup>2</sup> Kim's last fight was against Filipino boxer Bobby Wills.

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## **A Tale of Two Regimes: South Korean Sports Legacies from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024**

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### **Abstract**

Drawing upon the interviews with governmental officials and agencies, this paper investigates how the change of South Korean regime in 2022 may impact sport policy in relation to North Korea and in turn, a peace legacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024. Comparing the incumbent Yoon Suk-Yeol with former President Moon Jae-in's policy towards North Korea, the recent change of government shows two distinct features: 1) progressive and conservative regimes use different approaches to peace-building on the Korean Peninsula and in turn, this impacts on inter-Korean dialogue, exchange, and cooperation not only in politics, but in sports such as the Olympics; and, 2) under the Yoon government, we may also see some existing policies disappear. For example, the Sports Legacy Division (SLD) of the South Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is being downsized to Sports Legacy Team (SLT) eliminating the PyeongChang Legacy management function and the Team will be completely gone in 2025. Sport has occupied a significant position within South-North Korean relations; however, it is important to recognise that the sporting exchanges were intentional and politically motivated in order to achieve a predetermined political strategy.

### **Introduction**

The South Korea - U.S. alliance faced escalating North Korean provocations in 2016-17. Those provocations included a fourth nuclear test in January 2016, a fifth in September 2016, and a sixth in September 2017, as well as numerous missile tests of various trajectories from different platforms (Cha & Katz, 2018). On 10 May 2017 with tensions on the Korean peninsula remaining high, South Korean President Moon Jae-in came to power on the heels of conservative President Park Geun-hye's impeachment. Moon's politics are notably more progressive than Park's, including a record of pro-engagement policies with North Korea.



Against this backdrop, Kim Jong-un, the North Korean leader, delivered his 2018 New Year's Day address claiming that North Korea had the ability to hit any USA city with an intercontinental ballistic missile, but that he was ready to re-engage with the Southern sibling via participation in the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics (Lee, 2021).

An unprecedented level of sports diplomacy followed between the two Koreas. According to the South Korean Ministry of Unification spokesperson, Baik Tae Hyun, "It was the first time since the division of the Korean Peninsula that the constitutional head of North Korea and a lineal family member of North Korea's supreme leader came to visit the South. This shows that North Korea has a strong will to improve inter-Korean relations." He further claimed that North Korea's participation in PyeongChang 2018 was "a result of the consistent effort that the Moon Jae-in administration has made since its day of inauguration to restore inter-Korean relations and to establish peace on the Korean Peninsula" (Kim, 2018).

As a result, PyeongChang 2018 has been remembered, in part, for its role in easing tensions on the Korean Peninsula (Grix, Jeong & Kim, 2021). Peace and reconciliation emerged as a major theme of this event, and during the Games, South and North Korea enjoyed a moment of peace, with athletes from both sides of the Demilitarised Zone, marching together in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. The two Koreas also fielded a unified team, the combined women's ice hockey team, for the first time in Olympic history (Rowe, 2019). This political momentum eventually led to détente on the divided peninsula, with three historic inter-Korean summits and the Singapore summit, which marked the first-ever meeting between the leaders of the USA and North Korea.

Although inter-Korean reconciliation was the most prominent political impact of the winter sport mega-event, tensions between the two Koreas re-emerged shortly after the Olympics. North Korea cut off a hot-line in June 2020 in protest against the resumption of the joint South Korea-US military exercise and began testing new missiles and systems (Kim, 2020). Despite this uncertain political circumstance, the South Korean government remained eager to re-engage with North Korea. At this juncture, The Winter Youth Olympic Games Gangwon 2024 Organising Committee (GYOGOC) "proposed the co-hosting of Gangwon 2024 with North Korea in the hope that this joint project would revive the momentum of inter-Korean communication and collaboration" (Lee, 2021, p. 2073). Choi

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Moon-soon, the governor of Gangwon province, which spans the two Koreas, commented in the PyeongChang Peace Forum (Ahn, 2022):

I believe the 2024 Winter Youth Olympics will become a very important point for relations with the North to move forward... Co-hosting the Olympics will become the most powerful lever to maintain peace, and further prevent war.

In addition, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has supported co-hosting of the event, indicating that, under the right conditions, they would accept the Olympic Committee of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a partner in the organisation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Winter Youth Olympic Games (IOC, 2019).

However, following the election of Yoon Suk-yeol, the candidate of the conservative People Power Party, in South Korea's presidential election on 9 March 2022, there are signs of a radical change in policy towards North Korea. Under Yoon's administration, South Korea is expected to shift further towards the USA, while defining North Korea as a major adversary. During his campaign, Yoon pledged that his administration will strengthen the South Korea-US military alliance by invigorating joint military drills and deploying additional Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-missile launchers. One of the security hot flashpoints during the campaign was Yoon's remarks over a possible pre-emptive strike against the North (Shin, 2022).

The change of the South Korean regime in 2022 from the progressive to conservative may affect inter-Korean sport exchange and cooperation. More specifically, a mood of reconciliation has not lasted long because of the political and military conflicts from both Koreas. In other words, the tense political relations between the two Koreas deeply affect inter-Korean sport exchanges and cooperation. Therefore, the joy and grief of the sporting exchanges between the two Koreas has been reflective of changing political circumstances. In this sense, it can be argued that inter-Korean sport exchanges operate as a barometer of political decision-making at any particular time.

This paper will investigate how changes in South Korean political regimes affect the sport policy in relation to North Korea and in turn, the possibility of a peace legacy from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024. It draws on the interviews with governmental officials

from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, PyeongChang Legacy 2018 Foundation, and Korea Institute of Sport Science.

Following a short introduction, this paper reviews a range of policies in inter-Korean relations and examines the change of sport policies as a wider strategy to achieve the political goals pursued by the two Korean governments. In turn, it looks at how the new government's North Korean policy could change sports legacies from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024. Finally, the paper concludes by discussing the contribution of political power to (sports) legacy policies in inter-Korean relations.

## **Inter-Korean Relations: Sport as a Political Strategy**

Since the establishment of the separate governments in South and North Korea in 1948, inter-Korean relations have fluctuated. Scholars have pointed out that there are four main factors that have affected inter-Korean relations: (a) the political situation in the two Koreas, (b) the end of the Cold War, (c) the discrepancy in economic development between the two Koreas, and (d) North Korea's nuclear weapon issue (Chang, 2018; Heo & Roehrig, 2014; Jung, 2013).

Drawing upon these four factors, Chang (2018) asserts that inter-Korean relations can be divided into four different periods: (a) the antagonistic period (1953 to 1987), when ideological confrontation was at its height and, as a result, there were frequent military clashes between the South and North Korea; (b) the coexistence period (1988 to 1997), when the Cold War ended and the two Koreas joined the UN; (c) the engagement policy period (1998 to 2007), when inter-Korean relations were improved by the "Sunshine" policy, which "can be seen as a proactive policy to induce incremental and voluntary changes in North Korea for peace, opening and reform through the patient pursuit of reconciliation, exchanges and cooperation" (Moon, 2002, p. 27); and, (d) the conditional engagement policy period (2008 to 2017) when the presidents from the conservative party regarded the Sunshine policy as a failure and tensions in the Korean peninsula were escalated by North Korea military provocations such as the sinking of a South Korean warship and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island.

### ***Antagonistic Period (1953-1987)***

The antagonistic period lasted from the Korean War armistice of 1953 until the authoritarian regime of the Fifth Republic under President Chun Doo-hwan in 1987. Until the end of the 1960s, high-risk confrontation on the Korean peninsula continued to rise because neither South nor North Korea would relinquish military force as a tool to solve the issue of reunification. As a result, contact between South and North Korea had been virtually nonexistent. However, the global situation changed drastically in the early 1970s when Richard Nixon became the first US President to visit China (North Korea's closest ally), after the invitation of U.S.A. table tennis players in what became known as ping-pong diplomacy. Such a sudden change of American foreign policy influenced inter-Korean relations and in turn, led to face-to-face inter-Korean dialogue. Hence, the two governments constructed a secret channel for high-level contacts and the two sides finally agreed to peace talks via the joint communiqué of July 4, 1972, which included three principles for reunification between South and North Korea (Ministry of Unification, 2015). However, the mood of reconciliation between the two Koreas did not last long because rulers of the two Koreas wanted absolute power up until 1987.

Throughout the antagonistic period, sport was another political battlefield. Indeed, sport dialogues and exchanges between the North and South remained at the level of political propaganda for South and North Korea. For example, sport dialogues related to forming a unified team for the Olympic Games and co-hosting international sporting events, such as the 1986 Asian Games and 1988 Olympic Games held in Seoul, played a substantive role in political negotiation between the two Koreas, offering a unique space where they could display the supremacy of their respective political, ideological, and diplomatic systems. Therefore, the history of inter-Korean sport relations from 1953 to 1987 had some political success at different times despite the claim that sport was an apolitical or depoliticised site within society.

### *Coexistence Period (1988-1997)*

In 1988 inter-Korean relations unexpectedly changed for two main reasons: (a) the end of the Cold War and (b) the increased gap in economic growth between the two Koreas. The post-Cold War new world order paved the way for harmony between the Eastern and Western blocs and affected the Korean peninsula. In order to quickly and efficiently deal with

the situation, Roh Tae-woo, the political successor of the previous authoritarian leader in South Korea, Chun Doo-hwan, tried to build new and close ties with former communist countries, including the Soviet Union and China by proposing economic aid and exchanges, known as Nord Politik (Northern Policy). The Northern Policy helped to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and China in 1990 and 1992 respectively.

The new world order after the Cold War ended in 1991, and South Korea's dramatic economic development in the late 1980s made North Korea feel that the North's political ideological system had fallen behind the South's both domestically and internationally. For North Korea, therefore, there was no other option but to artificially have the inter-Korean sport exchange, which seemed a far less difficult political issue to manage when compared to the other political and economic crises. In other words, trying to improve inter-Korean relations through sport exchanges and talks provided North Korea with opportunities to overcome the international isolation and economic difficulties and to present a new image around the globe. Consequently, sport at that time was used as a common space where North Korea could escape from political and economic difficulties, and South Korea could lead inter-Korean dialogue based on their superior position based on their economic system.

#### *Engagement Policy Period (1998-2007)*

In February 1998, a long-time democratic South Korean activist, Kim Dae-jung, was elected the president of South Korea leading to vastly improved inter-Korean relations based on his Sunshine policy, which promoted greater engagement with North Korea (Moon, 2002). This policy had three "Principles" - peaceful coexistence, peaceful exchange, and peaceful unification" - and three "rules": "(a) no tolerance for any type of armed provocation, (b) no intention to harm or absorb North Korea and (c) to push reconciliation and cooperation between the two Koreas" (Heo & Roehrig, 2014, pp. 37-38). The principles and rules contributed to building trust between the North and South through reconciliation and cooperation. In addition, the Sunshine policy eventually led to the first summit meeting between the leaders of the two Koreas in Pyongyang.

The next president of South Korea, Roh Moo-hyun (2004-2008) also proclaimed that the policy toward North Korea would separate humanitarian assistance from political issues.

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As a result, the government provided \$385 million worth of humanitarian aid to the North, including food and fertiliser.

After the first summit meeting between the South and North in 2000, the most astonishing result in South-North sport exchanges under the two consecutive governments of Kim and Roh occurred. Specifically, it was the joint parade at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. Athletes and officials from the South and North Korea marched together hand in hand for the first time since the division of the Korea under the flag of the Korean peninsula, while both Koreas competed separately in actual sporting events. Following this historical event in Sydney, in 2002 another historical event occurred in inter-Korean sport exchanges. North Korea sent 318 athletes, 22 officials, and 355 cheerleaders to the 14th Asian Games held in South Korea. During the engagement period, there was increasing recognition that sporting exchanges between South Korea and North Korea were a big contributor to the improvement of inter-Korean relations, in part due to relatively minor political interference.

*Conditional Engagement Policy Period (2008-2017)*

Despite the huge improvement of inter-Korean relations under the leadership of Kim and Roh (1998-2007), the engagement policy of the next President, Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013), was regarded as a failure because of South Korea's unilateral concessions and North Korea's unchanged attitude. Indeed, North Korea's lack of reciprocity and unwavering stance in relation to the nuclear issue had been at the centre of the controversy regarding the engagement policy. Therefore, the Lee government announced a revised engagement policy, the so-called "No Nuclear, Opening, 3,000 Plan," demanding denuclearisation and emphasising reciprocity as an essential precondition for further inter-Korean cooperation and exchanges. In turn, Park Geun-hye, Lee's political successor, kept in step with Lee's policy toward North Korea.

Contrary to South Korean optimism, however, South-North relations were further aggravated by North Korea military provocations such as the second nuclear test in May, 2009, the sinking of a South Korean warship in March, 2010, the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island in November 2010 and the firing of a rocket and shells across the border into Yeoncheon county, which is close to the DMZ in August, 2015. As a result, during the conditional engagement

period, the relationship between the North and South descended to its lowest point since the end of the Cold War.

Changes to the political climate on the Korean peninsula, such as a new policy toward North Korea and its frequent provocations, significantly affected inter-Korean sport exchanges. During the conservative administrations of Lee and Park (2008-2017), there were no joint opening ceremony parades by the two Koreas at the Olympics. Indeed, President Lee cancelled an agreement on a unified team for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games between the Roh Moo-hyun government and Kim Jong-il regime and the unified Korean flag also did not make an appearance at both the Summer and Winter Olympics from 2008 to 2016. Notably, North Korea expressed its intention to send its athletes and cheerleaders to the 2014 Incheon Asian Games to improve the strained relationship with the South. In contrast to the 2002 Pusan Asian Games, however, there was no special treatment in the 2014 Incheon Asian Games which may reflect strained South-North Korean relations.

## **Regime Change and its Different Approach to Peace through Sport**

As discussed in the previous section, progressives and conservatives in South Korea adopted different approaches with respect to building peace on the Korean Peninsula. These two groups' distinct approaches have impacted on inter-Korean dialogue, exchange, and cooperation not only in politics, but in sports such as the Olympics. This period is discussed in more detail in this section by focusing on two issues: first, how the result of the South Korean presidential election held in March 2022 will affect sport policy and more specifically, peace policy, by comparing the Moon government's North Korea policy to Yoon's; and second, how the policy legacy of the previous government changes and/or disappears through regime change.

### ***Moon versus Yoon: Comparing Sport Policies and Approaches to Peace between two regimes***

I firstly, examine the Moon administration's "Korean Peninsula Peace Process" and focus on its sport policy that played a significant role in building peace on the Korean Peninsula. President Moon Jae-in, who took office in 2017, set five broader national goals, one of which was a policy towards North Korea, called the "Korean Peninsula of Peace and Prosperity." The Moon administration's policy prioritised solving North Korean issues. The

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government emphasised that the two Koreas should play a leading role as the parties directly involved in Korean Peninsula issues, based on mutual respect and trust between the two, just as Germany did in the past unification process (Park, 2019). In other words, the two Koreas tried to take the initiative to establish peace on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and cooperation, and then proposed to build a cooperative system with neighboring countries including the USA, Japan, China and Russia to ultimately contribute to peace in Northeast Asia as well as the rest of the world. Such a process for peace-building on the Korean Peninsula is well illustrated in the 'Korean peninsula Peace Initiative' delivered by President Moon in Berlin 2017 (Cheongwadae, 2017):

Germany's unification made us realise how important the process of peace and cooperation based on mutual respect really is. The German people made the decision of unification by themselves based on the trust that was built during this process... Likewise, I believe that to achieve peace and common prosperity on the Korean Peninsula, there should be continued cooperation that transcends partisan lines

In his speech, President Moon proposed to North Korea a specific project, PyeongChang Olympics, because he believed that 'PyeongChang 2018' must be a catalyst to build momentum which could contribute to peace on the Korean Peninsula through inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation without the help of neighboring countries. In other words, the President emphasised the key role of the two Koreas in resolving issues on the peninsula.

For President Moon, the biggest challenge was how to get North Korea to participate in Pyeongchang 2018. His first action to induce North Korea to participate in PyeongChang 2018 was cooperation with the World Taekwondo Federation (WT). The WT invited the North Korean Taekwondo Demonstration Team to the World Taekwondo Championships held in Muju, South Korea in June 2017. The visit of the North Korean Team, which was the first inter-Korean exchange since the inauguration of President Moon, served as a space for creating communication between the two countries. During the welcoming ceremony, he emphasised the role of sport and the significance of North Korea's participation in PyeongChang 2018 (Addend, 2017):



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I believe in the power of sport which has been creating peace. I am pleased that the first sport exchange cooperation between two Koreas of this new government has been accomplished through this event ... If the North Korean team participates in PyeongChang Winter Olympics, I think it will greatly contribute realizing the harmony of mankind and improvement of peace in the world which are the value of Olympics

Despite the efforts of the Moon government to create dialogue between the two Koreas, North Korea conducted its sixth nuclear test in September 2017, reigniting tensions between the two Koreas. However, the Moon government, together with private organisations and government agencies, made continuous efforts to encourage North Korea to participate in PyeongChang 2018 in order to promote a peace based Olympics (Government Performance Evaluation Committee, 2022). Consequently, on New Year's Day 2018, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un announced that he would send a North Korean delegation to PyeongChang 2018. The successful hosting of the PyeongChang Olympics played significant roles both domestically in strengthening inter-Korean relations and globally in conveying a message to the world that the two Koreas might jointly resolve issues such as denuclearisation and declaration of the end of war (Kang & Kim, 2019).

Shortly after the successful hosting of the PyeongChang Olympics, an inter-Korean summit was held at the Panmunjom, where the 1953 Korean Armistice Agreement was signed, declaring 'Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula', and emphasizing inter-Korean dialogue and exchanges in the private and sports sectors (Hemmings, Pardo & Kong, 2018). Through the Panmunjom Declaration, sport played a more important role as a spearhead of inter-Korean dialogue and exchange. For example, the two Koreas formed a unified team in the World Table Tennis Championships held in Sweden May 2018 and won a bronze medal (Yonhap, 2018). After that, in order to further develop inter-Korean relations, South Korea supported North Korea's participation in the 2018 Jakarta-Palambang Asian Games, and expanded the unified team, which was previously limited to the women's ice hockey team in PyeongChang 2018, to women's basketball, rowing, and canoeing (Kim, 2018). In February 2019, the two Koreas met in Lausanne, Switzerland to discuss the joint hosting of the 2032 Seoul-Pyongyang Summer Olympics although the result was not successful (King, 2021).

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In June 2020, the hotline that was opened between the leaders of the two Koreas in March 2018 was suddenly cut off and tensions mounted again on the Korean Peninsula (Lee, 2021). As a consequence, inter-Korean led dialogue and cooperation, which were central to the Moon government's North Korea policy, are currently under review and early signs indicate a perception that existing efforts are having no effect on peacebuilding and the specific goals of denuclearisation and a declaration of the end of war on the Korean Peninsula (Oh, 2022).

Yoon Suk-yeol, who was elected as the new president in 2022, has defined the Moon administration's North Korea policy as a complete failure and should be terminated. He believes that the existing inter-Korean dialogues and exchanges are unlikely to solve the nuclear issue. Rather it is necessary to recalibrate the Six-Party Talks as an institution implementing sanctions as resolutions adopted in the UN Security Council (Ko, 2019).

This is a completely different North Korea policy from the Moon administration, which emphasised the key role of the two Koreas in resolving issues on the Korean Peninsula. In fact, the Yoon Presidential Transition Committee has announced that its North Korea Policy consists of no direct dialogue with North Korea without complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and that this policy will be achieved through the cooperation with the USA and neighboring countries. Once the condition is fulfilled, the Yoon administration is planning to initiate direct dialogue between the two Koreas (Shin, 2022). Given Yoon's change in South Korean policy towards North Korea, it is anticipated that South-North sport exchanges will also weaken.

The contrasting regime policies are based on both political positions and perceptions of what is effective. For example, the Yoon administration regards "peace" achieved through the PyeongChang Olympics as a result of unconditional financial aid to North Korea during Moon's presidency. Therefore, rather than pursuing inter-Korean sport exchange through financial aid, the new government focuses on developing international peace by strengthening Official Development Assistant (ODA) projects to assist developing countries for Gangwon 2024. A manager of the PyeongChang Legacy Foundation described spending hundreds of millions of won on economic and cultural projects with its northern neighbour:

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Although the Moon administration's [financial] support of programs for North Korea, including sport exchanges, were carefully designed for mutual benefit, it is difficult to say that they contributed greatly to peace-building on the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, the Yoon administration seems to think that it is more necessary to establish peace through international cooperation that can actually benefit the national interest.

Recently, the Yoon government announced a new sport-related national policy that added an ODA project while excluding the sports legacy (inter-Korean sport exchange) project. This clearly shows how the Yoon administration's North Korea policy has changed. Moon wanted the world to see evidence of peace through North Korea's participation in PyeongChang 2018 which demonstrated that the Korean Peninsula is a safe place to host the Olympics. Conversely, Yoon views events such as Gangwon in 2024 can be recognised as a space of harmony by focusing on the ODA project displaying global peace (20<sup>th</sup> Presidential Transition Committee, 2022). This shows that Yoon's administration has a completely different approach to peace-building through sport compared with Moon's. Not only has the new regime changed strategy, Yoon's administration has publicly criticised Moon's legacy and effort to build peace on the Korean Peninsula through PyeongChang 2018 for being inefficient and unachievable. In short, Yoon's administration has made it very clear that a different approach is necessary.

Therefore, under the Yoon administration, we can see the pursuit of tangible legacies, such as the development of facilities, but it may be difficult to leverage any peace-related advances emerging from PyeongChang 2018 such as the emotional and physical togetherness of the two Koreas.

*In the new regime, while something will change, other will disappear*

As previously mentioned, changes in the Yoon administration's North Korea policy would inevitably affect sport policies. However, under the Yoon government, we may also see some previous policies disappear. The best example is that the Sports Legacy Division (SLD) of the South Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism has been downsized to become the Sports Legacy Team (SLT). This decision eliminates the PyeongChang Legacy management function and, ultimately the Team will be completely dismantled by 2025 (Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, 2022a).

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While a name change may seem insignificant, it signals status and priority that might not otherwise exist (Won & Hong, 2015). For instance, when the Ministry of Sports, established in 1982, was changed to the Ministry of Sports and Youth in 1991 and subsequently to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 1998, it ultimately weakened the status and priority of sport policies at the national level, and in turn, communicated to the public that sport are not important.

On July 25 after the end of PyeongChang 2018, the government suddenly established the SLD in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism which a) supports sports legacy management policy such as post-use of facilities for sport-mega events, b) designates and operates Olympic Winter Games Special Zones based on Chapter V of Special Act on Support for the 2018 PyeongChang OG and PG, and c) designates and operates Taekwondo promotion policy (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism 2022b). Although the role of the SLD was theoretically (although superficially) expected to manage and develop the legacies created through the Olympics, the actual purpose was to develop and leverage inter-Korean relations that showed signs of improvement during the Olympic Games. Consider the quote of a senior researcher of Korea Institute of Sport Science who has worked with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism:

The biggest issue [related to PyeongChang 2018] was the usage of huge [sport] facilities and ownership for them. Therefore, it was inevitable to have a division to solve the problems and to make sustainable sport infrastructure. However, there were a tangible legacy like facilities, but there was also a political legacy such as the improvement of inter-Korean relations through PyeongChang 2018. As far as I know, the government needed a comprehensive division to manage those things effectively.

However, the SLD played a similar role and function with other Divisions such as the International Sports Division that is responsible for the inter-Korean sport exchanges. Therefore, for the SLD, the task of managing the legacies from PyeongChang 2018 was insignificant. As a result, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism had a discussion on whether the division should be abolished or not. As soon as Yoon Suk-yeol was elected president, a decision was made that the role of the SLD would be reduced in July, 2022, and

abolished by 2025. Consider the perspective of a senior researcher of Korea Institute for Sport Science about downsizing the SLD:

The reasons are clearly mentioned in the evaluation report. While I was preparing the presentation and evaluation, participating in the TF team for the maintenance of the SDL, the judges repeatedly pointed out two issues. The first was heterogenous characters of the division. For example, Taekwondo and traditional martial art became dominant policy issues since the winter sport facilities found their owners. And second issue is ambiguity of the term 'sports legacy'. Nevertheless, I still believed that The SDL could be maintained, but after the [presidential] election, the atmosphere for the maintenance of the SDL was completely changed

In this regard, however, Lee Ki-heung, president of the Korea Sports and Olympic Committee and IOC member, expressed concern in an interview (Jang, 2022):

The 2024 Gangwon Youth Olympic Games will be held soon. I ask for your [a new president's] support so that this event can be held as a peace Olympics created by North and South Korean youths together inheriting the legacy of PyeongChang 2018

Despite the efforts of important figures from the field of sport, under the Yoon administration, we may be difficult to find any more peace related legacies from PyeongChang 2018. Although many scholars claim that sport was an apolitical or depoliticised site, at least as long as ideological and political conflicts continue on the Korean Peninsula, it is certain that sport may be a victim of the political conflict between the progressive and conservative regimes in South Korea.

## **Conclusion**

The political intentions and decisions of South and North Korea have affected sport exchanges and cooperation. More specifically, there has been a range of political strategies used in inter-Korean relations in an attempt by both countries to assert their dominance and superiority through sport. Thus, sport has been used as a part of wider governmental political strategies in inter-Korean relations.

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It is clear that inter-Korean sport exchanges have reflected wider political strategies. Indeed, the fluctuating political situations between the two Koreas tend to be mirrored through sport exchanges. In that sense, it could be argued that inter-Korean sport exchanges operate as a barometer of political decision-making at any particular time.

In addition, even though there has been research on the meaningful role of sport in politics and diplomacy, we must not overestimate the effect of sport on facilitating reconciliation and cooperation or creating conflict and tension. Sport did not bring about the South-North Korean exchanges through bottom-up processes (e.g., community and civil sector engagement between the two countries), but rather only after top-down governmental political decisions were made by one or both of the states. Indeed, sport was used instrumentally as a tool for fulfilling the political goals pursued by the South and North Korean governments. Therefore, in contrast to previous arguments that adopted a functional approach to sport's role in inter-Korean relations, it should be noted that sport exchanges have not been featured as the starting point to induce cooperation and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula. Rather, sport has been used as a tool for achieving the political strategies set by both states. Indeed, it is clear that sport has occupied a significant position within South-North Korean relations; however, it is important to recognise that the sporting exchanges were politically motivated and intentional in order to achieve a predetermined political strategy.

Lastly, I would like to conclude this presentation with an interview with a Director General of Sports Cooperation of the Ministry of Culture and Sports on successful legacies' delivery from PyeongChang 2018 to Gangwon 2024:

Me: is it possible for North and South Korea to co-host Gangwon 2024 or at least is North Korea participating in Gangwon 2024?

Director General for Sports Cooperation in the MCST: [Do you think] it is possible? As you know, the bid for the 2023 Seoul-Pyongyang Summer Olympics was an agreement between President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un at a summit in April 2018 in order to establish an everlasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, one of the most important legacies of PyeongChang 2018. However, as inter-Korean relations deteriorated in 2020 and the mayor of Seoul, one of the co-host cities, suddenly changed to a politician from the Conservative Party, the momentum for the event was lost. As a result, Seoul alone submitted a letter of intent to the IOC, and in the end, Brisbane was selected as the preferred bidder city. The next government hasn't started yet, so I can't predict it accurately,

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but [I think] we'll see something similar this again, because the Moon Jae-in government was trying to change the name of Gangwon province to Gangwon Peace Special Self-Governing Province as part of the balanced national development, but recently the next [Yoon Suk-yeol] administration deleted the term 'peace' and added the term 'economy' instead, and changed it to Gangwon Economy Special Self-Governing Province.

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