

A Game Changer: Mega-Sporting Events,  
Illiberal Regimes, and Political Liberalization

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## **Abstract**

With global mega sporting events attracting greater participation, there is increasing competition among nations to host them. Hosting the two largest mega sporting events, the Olympics and the World Cup Finals, regularly draws the fiercest competition from many nations. Hosting global sporting events such as these increases national pride, supports infrastructural development, and potentially offers an economic boost. When selecting a host nation, the international sport governing bodies consider nations' ability and commitment to successfully organize and prioritize the sporting event. However, the honor of hosting does not come without concessions. Although the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) make a point of divorcing themselves from politics, both promote values of inclusion and respect for human rights through their charters and the associated requirements to host. The question this paper seeks to answer is whether hosting nations undergo any lasting political and civil liberalization as an incidental consequence of having to conform to the norms set forth by the sport-governing bodies. Detailed case studies of the Olympic Games in South Korea and China, and the World Cup Finals in Argentina and Mexico suggest that the values promoted by the two organizations can indeed have a liberalizing effect on illiberal host nations, but only if three factors are present and work in concert: substantial international pressure, focused media attention, and a high level of domestic activism/mobilization. South Korea experienced all three, and thus had the most significant liberalization in the years following its hosting of the Olympics. Similarly, media attention and international pressure contributed to Argentina's liberalization. In Mexico and China, however, where only one factor was present, few – if any – lasting liberal changes occurred.

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

With the ever-growing popularity of global sporting events, nations wishing to host them spend millions of dollars preparing a potential bid for the right to stage a glamorous and well-organized event. These events draw the attention and participation of almost every nation in the world. Hosting is an honor, and nations use these events as an opportunity to showcase their capabilities as a nation and their ability to organize a successful event. For emerging economies and global powers, it is like a debutant party with a geopolitical message that these nations are ready to be actors on the global stage.

The two most important of these events are the Olympics and the World Cup. They are governed by two global bodies, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). These organizations oversee every competition and enforce the rules by which nations must abide. In a manner similar to the U.S. constitution's separation of church and state, these governing bodies publicly say that sports and politics are separate in the context of these events. However, these governing bodies actively promote a set of norms and values they believe to be at the heart of sports and good sportsmanship.

The question this paper will seek to answer is whether hosting nations undergo lasting political and civil liberalization as an incidental consequence of having to conform to the norms set forth by the sport-governing bodies. The norms these governing bodies promote are grounded in socially liberal policies and an apolitical message of tolerance and diversity, and they can have an impact on host nations that are illiberal or in transition. In addition, opening up a nation to the scrutiny of the world's eyes gives otherwise unknown groups the opportunity to protest to an international audience on

governance issues, including human rights abuses, environmental concerns, gender imbalances, and government corruption. Once these issues are brought to light in the context of a hosting nation, many enact policy changes that they normally would not have. In this paper, I subsume these norms within a general norm of political tolerance and liberalization. I will consider whether host nations selected by the IOC and FIFA, in accepting these bodies' conditionalities, ended up accepting political and civic changes prior to and after hosting. If the changes are still in place five years after, I will consider my hypothesis to have been supported. With a focus on emerging global powers, I hope to demonstrate a gradual increase in hosting nations' adherence to political inclusion and civil liberties.

This paper will look at specific cases where illiberal states have hosted a global sporting event and the subsequent political inclusion and development of civil liberties within that nation. The case studies will include Argentina, Mexico, South Korea, and China. The questions I will answer are: after being approved to host, (1) did these governments adopt any policy changes? If so (2) do these changes still persist five years later? If a government only adhered to the changes while hosting, they will not be considered changes with a lasting effect.

With these events being inclusive by their nature, in the interest of unity, friendship, and non-discrimination, illiberal states will invite any one, from any nation, that qualifies. This fact, while no surprise to a host nation, shows the possibility of civility among hostile nations and peoples. After all, the event is about the athletes and the sports they play, not the nations they are from. This topic is significant to the field of international relations because these governing bodies promote norms in the name of

sports, and they can have great influence on host nations. Without accountability to anyone but their executive committees, these governing bodies are free to promote norms and values that fall under the auspices of their own charter. Thus, the IOC and FIFA are effectively changing state behavior by upholding and promoting norms that sports encourage, such as inclusion and liberalization.

The influence of global sporting events is an understudied area within international relations. Since 1972, 20 of the 24 Summer and Winter Olympic Games were hosted by democratically liberal nations in the Global North. Only four events were hosted by an illiberal nation (USSR 1980, Yugoslavia 1984, Beijing 2008, and Russia 2014). With respect to the World Cup, since 1972 only two events have been hosted in an illiberal nation (Argentina 1978 and Mexico 1986). Given that Russia will host the World Cup in 2018 and Qatar in 2022, the frequency of illiberal nations' hosting these events is increasing. The resulting effects, if any, merit greater understanding and study in the field of international relations. With more illiberal nations hosting, nations spending more financially than ever before for event preparation, and the IOC and FIFA spreading democratic values through sport, any incidental liberalizing effects on host nations deserve further study.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Research Design**

The number of states attempting to host a global sporting event is increasing, and this thesis will analyze if illiberal states chosen to host go through an incidental liberalization of political and civil behaviors, which may have a lasting effect. With increasing competition to host these games, the amount of attention and recognition given to host nations has increased. This thesis will consider aspects of liberalization as promoted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) organizations. To examine this question, I will assess any changes in political liberalization and civil rights in illiberal host nations from the time they were awarded the event to five years after the event.

One indicator I will use to demonstrate lasting political change is the Freedom House Index (FHI) scores for political rights and civil liberties. I will look at each country's score for the year awarded the event, the year the event took place, and five years after the event. This data will show if hosting had any lasting effect overall on the country. Freedom House scores countries on a scale of 1-7, with 1 indicating "free" and 7 indicating "not free." Scores in the range mid-range, 3 and 4, are termed "partially free."

The case studies will consider nations that were perceived globally as illiberal at the time they were awarded the event or at the time of hosting, including: Argentina 1978, Mexico 1986, South Korea 1988, and China 2008. This sampling will cover two World Cup hosts and two Olympic hosts. I will begin by discussing the history of the organizations and the political norms espoused in their charters, followed by a discussion of how these events are influential in terms of soft power. I will also analyze the motivations for nations competing to host such events. I will then discuss the changes in



political inclusion and civil rights that took place in my specific cases as a result of hosting either the Olympics or World Cup, paying specific attention to whether changes were lasting. I will end by discussing the policy implications this phenomenon has on future nations competing to host, and how nations that will host in the future – specifically Russia (2018 World Cup) and Qatar (2022 World Cup) – are currently being persuaded to abide by these norms.

### Definitions

For the purposes of this paper, illiberal states will be defined not by the type of government or regime but by the government's openness to political inclusion and civilian liberties. For examples, Fareed Zakaria, in his article *The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*, gives a good explanation of what liberalism is in the context of democracy. Zakaria writes that a liberal democracy is "a political system marked not only by free and fair elections, but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property."<sup>1</sup> The key distinction between liberal and illiberal states is that the latter routinely suppress or ignore the liberties listed above. Those liberties are the cornerstone of a liberal nation. Conversely, illiberalism is strategic behavior by a government to actively suppress personal freedoms of the individual or within civil society, namely the freedoms of speech, press, political opposition, and personal expression based on gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Therefore, this paper will look at illiberal nations that actively suppress personal freedoms at the time of hosting.

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<sup>1</sup> Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6 (November 1, 1997): 22–43. p. 22.

Both the IOC and FIFA promote the liberal values of political inclusion and respect for civil liberties, with specific reference to human rights and humanitarian values. While their charters may not explicitly use the same terms in this paper, their charters describe certain related ideals and the role these ideals play in sport around the world. Political liberalization is often discussed as a corollary to equality and inclusion, and the ideals promoted by both organizations are in line with the rights of the individual that liberal societies support and recognize, which include political inclusion and civil rights.

In the Olympic charter, the *Fundamental Principles of Olympism* articulates the same foundational elements of the ideals of political inclusion and civil rights. Principle 1, which clearly advocates for the promotion and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles, is often viewed as the IOC's democratic foundation and the principle through which it promotes and adheres to democratic values.<sup>2</sup> Democratic values are well documented within Olympic text and literature, and are further discussed in the next chapter as one key element of the IOC's overarching goals. Within the charter itself, these same ideals and democratic values are further explained in principles 2, 4, 5, and 6.

1. Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.

2. The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.

4. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of

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<sup>2</sup> International Olympic Committee, "Olympic Charter - Official IOC Document Downloads | Olympic.org," accessed February 23, 2014, <http://www.olympic.org/olympic-charter/documents-reports-studies-publications>.

any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

5. Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organisations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied.

6. Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender, or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement.<sup>3</sup>

The ideals promoted in the *Fundamental Principles of Olympism* serve both to further sport and the democratic values that are inherent within the charter. These principles state explicitly the norms that the IOC promotes: the preservation of human dignity; sport as a human right; good governance; and the inclusion of all peoples. It is clear to see that the overarching promotion of political inclusion and civil rights, while not a specific goal of the IOC, are a corollary to the IOC's values. Indeed, in 2014, formal accord was initiated between the IOC and the United Nations that furthers the promotion of these values, aligning them more directly with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the FIFA statutes state in articles 2, 3, and 4 similar provisions regarding political inclusion and civil rights. However, FIFA emphasizes an adherence to humanitarian values in the name of sport:

Article 2. Objectives: (a) to promote the game of football constantly and promote it globally in the light of its unifying, educational, cultural and humanitarian values, particularly through youth and development programmes;

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 11-12.

<sup>4</sup> "IOC and UN Secretariat Agree Historic Deal to Work Together to Use Sport to Build a Better World," April 28, 2014, <http://www.olympic.org/news/ioc-and-un-secretariat-agree-historic-deal/230542>.

Article 3. Non-Discrimination and stance against racism: Discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or group of people on account of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion, politics or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion.

Article 4. Promoting friendly relations: (b) in society for humanitarian objectives.<sup>5</sup>

Through its charter, as indicated in the articles above, FIFA promotes the notion of humanitarian values. Humanitarian values are attributed to the idea that “human life and dignity are essentially valuable and should be protected irrespective of gender, race, creed or political affiliation.”<sup>6</sup> The importance placed on humanitarian values within the FIFA statutes correlates directly with the promotion of political inclusion and civil rights. Again, without explicitly referencing political liberalization or the associated values, both organizations’ core values advocate for equality among all peoples, which is promulgated throughout liberal societies.

Based on the principles listed in both charters, the ideals of political inclusion and civil liberties are clearly laid out. Political inclusion is defined as the acceptance of all peoples and the participation of those peoples within a country, no matter their political, ideological, or ethnic origins. This notion also pertains to the acceptance of other political parties and the participation in politics by numerous individuals within the country. This means that any individual or any group has the opportunity to take part in the political system, whether that is by voting, forming a political party, or running for a political position: “Candidates for such inclusion are ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous peoples, women, the old, gays and lesbians, youth, the unemployed, the underclass,

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<sup>5</sup> “FIFA Statutes - Official FIFA Document Downloads | fifa.com.” p. 5-6.

<sup>6</sup> Joanna Macrae, “The Death of Humanitarianism?: An Anatomy of the Attack,” *Disasters* 22, no. 4 (December 1998): 309. p. 309.

recent immigrants, people exposed to environmental risks, and (if only by proxy) future generations.”<sup>7</sup>

In regards to defining respect for civil liberties, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides a clear definition for the purposes of this paper: “respect [for] individuals’ rights as members of civil society, such as rights to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, electoral rights, and rights to due process.”<sup>8</sup>

With these definitions, the promotion of political inclusion and civil liberties by both organizations can be seen in the articles and principles of both charters. Because all of these ideals are integral to the charters, the hosting of the events, which is a major undertaking for any country, inherently promotes these values. In addition, as these values are so closely linked to these organizations and these events, spectators expect to see these values in the host country.

It is also important to note a few differences between the Olympics and World Cup in an effort to more thoroughly understand each organization’s potential impact. First, while each organization promotes the above norms, both categorize them within their charter using different wording. The IOC uses the idea of *olympism* to describe the values needed to uphold the truest form of sport, while FIFA describes the same values as *legacies*. This paper will use both terms, and each term will be in reference to its corresponding organization; however, both terms have essentially the same meaning.

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<sup>7</sup> John S. Dryzek, “Political Inclusion and the Dynamics of Democratization,” *The American Political Science Review* 90, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 475–87. p. 475.

<sup>8</sup> Robert W. Hoag, “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,” in *Encyclopedia of Global Justice* (Springer, 2011), 544–45, [http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-1-4020-9160-5\\_533.pdf](http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-1-4020-9160-5_533.pdf). p. 544.

Secondly, while both mega sporting events rotate hosting among countries and both take place every four years, an important distinction is that the Olympics are divided into two separate events that take place every four years (the Summer and Winter Olympics), which are offset by two years. Therefore, an Olympic event takes place every two years, compared to the World Cup, which is every four years. This is important because the notion of olympism is disseminated much more frequently than the legacies of the World Cup.

Third, a country hosts the World Cup, while the Olympics are hosted by a city. The difference can be seen in the names of the events: Germany 2006 (World Cup); Beijing 2008 (Summer Olympics); South Africa 2010 (World Cup); Vancouver 2010 (Winter Olympics). This also influences the financing of the event, specifically for the Olympics because the bid to host is presented by the municipal government with authorization from the federal government; as where, the World Cup involves only the federal government. Thus, the majority of funding for the Olympics comes from the municipal budget rather than from the federal budget. Cities are more invested and take on a larger cost with a smaller budget.

Lastly, and this coincides with the third point above, the World Cup is hosted by a dozen or so cities and 10-12 venues, spreading the cost out more than with the Olympics, which is held in 4-5 venues and only one city. This is important to note because this means the olympism ideal that is promoted through the Olympics is disseminated and largely confined to one city; as where, the World Cup and the legacies promoted are disseminated in nearly a dozen cities. It is also important because the decision to host the World Cup, for example, is a federal government decision, meaning it may have been

rooted in a government's foreign policy goals and objectives. That said, the Beijing Olympics, in China's capital and in such a centralized state, was certainly agreed to by the highest levels of the federal government.

### Theoretical Review

The theory underpinning sports for peace as a concept is a liberal one. This concept of sport for peace is so central to liberalism that it harkens back to idealism, which precedes liberalism. Idealism was a utopian concept about bringing international organizations together to foster peace. Later, liberalism was separated from idealism and became its own theoretical framework. The core elements of idealism are "the changing norms of sovereignty, human rights, and international justice, as well as the increased potency of religious ideas in politics."<sup>9</sup> It is based on the idea that values and morality should shape state decisions and interests. International institutions such as the IOC and FIFA cooperate with states in an effort to promote values and norms in the name of sport, which is central to idealism. Equally, for states, hosting sporting events and cooperating with international institutions both serve and even further their interests.<sup>10</sup> As such, sport for peace is seen theoretically by both the state and institutions as an avenue of promoting their interests. Idealism, like liberalism, allows for a role for international organizations in global politics.<sup>11</sup> Within idealism is the notion that human nature is perfectible, and these sporting events bring nations together in an effort to work together, foster positive relations, and create a more interdependent and peaceful world. In this section I will bring

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<sup>9</sup> Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy*, no. 145 (December 11, 2004): 52–62. p. 54.

<sup>10</sup> James Lee Ray, *Global Politics*, 1992.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

together a theoretical framework to explain why nations host by using the following liberal concepts: constructivism, functionalism, supranationalism, and soft power.

Constructivism purports that global politics are socially constructed by the norms, beliefs, and behaviors within the international community.<sup>12</sup> These norms, beliefs, and behaviors could be adopted by states themselves, or by institutions active in the international community. Jack Snyder explains the link between liberalism and constructivism and its core beliefs by observing how “international politics [are] shaped by persuasive ideas, collective values, culture, and social identities.”<sup>13</sup> These identities are an important aspect of constructivism and are often ethnic, social, or religious communities. The role of identity in constructivism “emphasizes how ideas and identities are created, how they evolve, and how they shape the way states understand and respond to their situation.”<sup>14</sup> Identity promotion is also active on the state level between actors and institutions, and some theorists indicate that the two are of mutual constitution.<sup>15</sup> However, constructivists are not focused on the physical structures of institutions, but on the material structures in which they are given meaning by the social context of how they are interpreted.<sup>16</sup> This means that, it is not the material itself, but how others interpret the material that really matters. For example, states are not concerned about nuclear weapons, but instead about the states that have them. The United States is not concerned about any of its allies having nuclear weapons, but about the possibility of other states, like Iran, obtaining them. Constructivism offers several important insights as to why

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories.” p. 59.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 110 (April 1, 1998): 29–46. p. 41.

<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (1998): 324–48.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.



nations host. The idea that states are trying to conform and comply with certain norms shows a commitment to the values that these sport institutions are promoting. Equally, constructivists see these institutions as playing a major role in international politics by serving as a conduit for norm promotion among outlying or emerging states.

Functionalism is another liberal concept associated with the promotion of certain norms and values. Functionalism focuses on regional integration and a bottom-up-approach to integration through cooperation by states and non-state actors.<sup>17</sup> This theory describes the world as interdependent, with states relying on interactions on a number of different levels functioning together for peace and prosperity. International relations scholars see functionalism as a “steady evolution towards a refined, completed approach to international organization.”<sup>18</sup> Within functionalism, institutions and organizations formulate policy and become increasingly responsible for implementation. For example, with the creation of the United Nations came many agencies that focused on specific global issues, tackling them at a worldwide level rather than state-by-state. Agencies like the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) create standards for the treatment of refugees worldwide and ultimately implement these standards in many nations around the world. Epistemic communities are also an important aspect of functionalism. Epistemic, knowledge-based communities often focus on spreading norms based on a shared belief system within that community; therefore, it is easy to see that sports can be considered an epistemic community based on how good one is at sports.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ray, *Global Politics*.

<sup>18</sup> David Long, “International Functionalism and the Politics of Forgetting,” *International Journal* 48, no. 2 (April 1, 1993): 355–79. p. 356.

<sup>19</sup> Emanuel Adler and Peter M. Haas, “Conclusion: Epistemic Communities, World Order, and the Creation of a Reflective Research Program,” *International Organization* 46, no. 01 (1992): 367–90.

The ideals within sport (i.e. teamwork, cooperation, decision-making, etc.) bring together a community that promotes policies that encourage sportsmanship and fair play. For states seeking to host a mega sporting event, functionalism and epistemic communities explain how cooperation between states and the sport governing bodies results in the promotion of values found in the charters for both the IOC and FIFA. Given the amount of cooperation needed to host, functionalists see hosting as a potentially positive step for the integration of international politics, norm development, and peace.

Another concept relevant to this paper is supranationalism. Supranationalism, referring to an authority above the state level, is a concept closely linked with the idea of networks. These networks can create a unified community that brings nations together based on specific values: non-discrimination of nations, free transfer of regulations, permeability of borders, control over the otherwise uncontrollable outbreak of national interests, etc.<sup>20</sup> The European Union is a good example of a unified community as described by supranationalists. Some organizations can be considered supranational, given their role in the international community. Another example is the United Nations, which is also an intergovernmental organization (IGO) given that each member is also the representative of a government. However, FIFA and the IOC do not operate as IGOs but as supranational organizations, operating above the states and telling them what to do in regards to sport policy, hosting, and participation. This is an important distinction because it means that those organizations are not responsible to any one nation; rather, they report only to the executive committee of the organization itself. These supranational sport-governing bodies operate above the level of the state, and as this

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<sup>20</sup> Janusz Ruzkowski, "Supranationalism between the Nation-State and International Cooperation," *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research* 1, no. 1 (2009): 4–10.

paper hopes to demonstrate, incidentally influence host state behavior based on the values they promote.

One of the most important aspects of the liberal framework is soft power. Soft power, or co-optive power, is defined as the ability to influence another into wanting what you want by ways other than traditional military or economic pressures, or hard power.<sup>21</sup> This influencing is done through the soft power resources that each country has, including: cultural attraction, ideology, and institutions.<sup>22</sup> Soft power has emerged as a new and important form of power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While nations still have military and economic pressures at their disposal, soft power is now seen as a mechanism for coopting other states through diplomatic efforts and rewarding states that adjust accordingly. The soft power dynamic is complex and within international politics it is not utilized only by states. With the number of IGOs, IOs, and NGOs actively participating in international politics, both states and organizations use soft power to influence the behaviors of others. Joseph Nye asserts that states should use soft power more often, and sometimes in combination with hard power, in order to realize what he terms “smart power.”<sup>23</sup>

One concrete example of soft power is how international sport organizations influence nations who want to host. The organizations’ list of requirements forces bidding nations to conform to certain expectations that the IOC and FIFA have. Jonathan Grix, a professor in the area of sport policy and politics, notes the importance of understanding the soft power dynamics of hosting and what nations hope to gain:

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<sup>21</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., “Soft Power,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 80 (October 1, 1990): 153–71.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Public Affairs, 2004), [http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=sFNfYvNtw5AC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=Soft+Power&ots=7q\\_Y1795Jm&sig=Fc7jXaMm-O1B9kbl2M0DH-LM1jA](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=sFNfYvNtw5AC&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=Soft+Power&ots=7q_Y1795Jm&sig=Fc7jXaMm-O1B9kbl2M0DH-LM1jA).

Sport is clearly part of a ‘soft power’ strategy and hosting sports mega-events – especially the Olympics – is clearly considered by states to provide a major contribution in the process of improving their nation’s image, profiling, and showcasing themselves globally and ‘attracting’ others through inbound tourism, increased trade and a growing sense of national pride through the often experienced, but under-researched ‘feel-good’ factor that accompanies major sports event.<sup>24</sup>

Hosting *could* have the effect of increasing a nation’s soft power if the event is a success; however, the resulting effect could also be negative if host nations invite the scrutiny of the world, yet fail to produce a positive reaction within the global community.

Within this theoretical framework, there are realist dimensions for nations in search of power and prestige. A fundamental assumption within realism is that power is central to political life and states are driven by competitive self-interests. Realists see power and prestige as advancing a nation’s standing in the international community; ultimately increasing a nation’s capability within that community and furthering a nation’s interests. Hans Morgenthau, one of the founding fathers of political realism, asserts that, “Realism assumes that its key concept of interest defined as power is an objective category which is universally valid.”<sup>25</sup> State interests – whether social, economic, or diplomatic – all fluctuate relative to a nation’s power and prestige within the international community. Realism offers several important notions as to why nation’s host. Through hosting such an international event, states increase their prestige around the world, showcase the perceived superiority of their state, and demonstrate their competitive nature to win. This competitive nature is documented thoroughly by sport historians, and an article by statistician Nigel Balmer indicates that host nations are three

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<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Grix, “Sport Politics and the Olympics,” *Political Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (January 2013): 15–25. p. 17.

<sup>25</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, “Six Principles of Political Realism,” *Classic Readings and Contemporary Debates in International Relations*, 2006, 57–62. p. 60.

times more likely to medal at the Olympics, asserting their prowess and power through sports.<sup>26</sup>

With regard to the norms that these organizations promote, it is important to understand exactly what global norms are. The literature on global norms has increased in recent decades, as certain normative expectations become more universally accepted. Global normative behavior has evolved and developed along with the expansion of globalization, with the most powerful states and institutions often playing the role of norm maker. The norms that become accepted internationally generally follow from the progressive development of human rights in western democratic nations. The behavior of states is often influenced by external normative expectations and may contradict internal interests; however, if the cost of non-compliance is greater than that of internal interests, states will often comply. Rosemary Foot and Andrew Walter, attempting to theorize norm-consistent behavior, found: “When interests clashed with global normative requirements, interests trumped norms and associated rules unless the punishment for non-compliance was both credible and deemed costly to significant domestic actors.”<sup>27</sup> In regards to non-compliance with the norms that the IOC and FIFA promote, states wishing to host global sporting events attempt to merge internal interests with external normative requirements and see non-compliance as obstructing the possibility of winning the right to host. Therefore, compliance often and expectedly takes place.

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<sup>26</sup> NJ Balmer, AM Nevill, and AM Williams, “Modelling Home Advantage in the Summer Olympic Games,” *Journal of Sports Sciences* 21, no. 6 (2003): 469–78.

<sup>27</sup> Rosemary Foot and Andrew Walter, “Global Norms and Major State Behaviour: The Cases of China and the United States,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 2 (June 1, 2013): 329–52. p. 332.

## Topic Literature Review

There is some literature written specifically on sports and international politics.

While it is not something most academics are focused on, there have been a few articles written on the subject and they will be reviewed here.

Since the onset of the “modern” Olympics Games in 1896, sports and mega-sporting events have been used to promote peace, cooperation, and nationalism among participating nations.<sup>28</sup> Athletes compete under their national flag, embracing nationalism as much as possible. Even the IOC has taken up the idea, in the form of *internationalism*, by creating a flag, theme song, and anthem which all athletes recite during the opening ceremonies.<sup>29</sup> The same holds true for FIFA, which was founded soon after in 1904. Both institutions have a long history of promoting peace through sports and holding sports above politics. However, in the last 110 years these institutions have evolved into supranational governing bodies that dictate the rules of the game, those who may participate, and what is expected for hosts of the event. The rules and expectations for hosting have also evolved. The course of this evolution has largely been in line with the institutions’ strategic missions and charters, fostering certain ideals the event should instill in athletes, coaches, spectators, and the organizing nation itself.

The relationship between sport and politics, while under researched, is not a new discussion. Allen Guttman, a sports historian and one of the most well published authors on the subject, has written that the very origin of the modern Olympic Games in 1896

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<sup>28</sup> Stephen Wright, “Are the Olympics Games? The Relationship of Politics and Sport,” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 1977): 30–44.

<sup>29</sup> Peter Berlin, “Olympian Dreams,” *World Policy Journal* 29, no. 2 (June 2012): 9–15.

was political.<sup>30</sup> Many other sport historians have also noted the connection, even though the IOC and FIFA fervently try to maintain a separation between the two. Richard Espy accounts, “Throughout modern Olympic history, officials have labored under the contradiction inherent in their ideal, forever protesting the intrusion of politics in the Games and sport. Given the organizational structure of the Games, however, politics is not really an intrusion but is very much a part of the Games and of sport itself.”<sup>31</sup> Historians have published the majority of works on the subject; however, a few international relations scholars have entered the discussion, mostly in the context of theories related to soft power and the geopolitical aspirations of hosting.

Given that the majority of mega-sporting events have been hosted by western democratic nations, emerging nations see hosting as a geopolitical message demonstrating that they have taken their place on the global stage. By successfully hosting the Olympics or World Cup, emerging nations aspire to showcase the advancement of their culture, economy, and infrastructure. What better way than bringing the participating nations, delegates, athletes, heads of state, celebrities, the IOC executive board, international business leaders, and other political elites to one’s doorstep for a glamorous spectacle that highlights one’s achievements, organizing capabilities, and historical significance to the world? In addition, such events offer a strong likelihood that high-level individuals will see each other, offering the possibility to discuss other issues. As John MacAloon has pointed out, a mega-sporting event host showcases the capabilities of a nation and the macro-political forces that can result from such events.

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<sup>30</sup> Allen Guttman, *The Olympics: A History of the Modern Games* (University of Illinois Press, 2002).

<sup>31</sup> Richard Espy, *The Politics of the Olympic Games: With an Epilogue 1976-1980* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1981). p. 164.

“Nowhere else do such favorable conditions exist for otherwise difficult meetings – on an invisible, informal, and agenda-less basis – among such a total range of global political elites, including from nations at war or having no diplomatic relations with one another.”

<sup>32</sup> Illiberal nations attempting to host are sending powerful political messages to the region and the globe that they are ready, or are reminding the international community, to be taken seriously.

A few scholars have noted that these sporting events are increasingly going to new lands, namely emerging powers like the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) nations, a couple of which are considered illiberal.<sup>33</sup> One only needs to observe the selection of host countries from 2008 and on, where each of the BRICS nations have been awarded either the Olympics, World Cup, or the Commonwealth Games (often referred to as a precursor for hosting larger, mega-sporting events): Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics, South Africa 2010 World Cup, India 2010 Commonwealth Games, Russia Winter 2014 Olympics and 2018 World Cup, and Brazil 2014 World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympics. All of these hosts are rather new to the hosting scene, given that the vast majority of mega-sporting events have been hosted by western nations (approximately 27 of 39 mega-sporting events since 1972) and because all these events are taking place within a timespan of 10 years. Scarlett Cornelissen suggests, “[These] events are used to showcase economic achievements, to signal diplomatic stature or to project, in the absence of other forms of international influence, soft power.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> John J. MacAloon, *Politics and the Olympics: Some New Dimensions* (Institut de ciències polítiques i socials, 1997), <http://www.recercat.net/handle/2072/10632>. p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> Grix, “Sport Politics and the Olympics.”

<sup>34</sup> Scarlett Cornelissen, “The Geopolitics of Global Aspiration: Sport Mega-Events and Emerging Powers,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 16–18 (2010): 3008–25. p. 3010.



Each of these nations could be seen as hosting for political reasons, striving to send a geopolitical message that they are ready to be taken more seriously on the global stage. Most notably, the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) triad has recently begun to strengthen diplomatic, economic, and political ties to give credence to their status as leaders of the Global South.<sup>35</sup> Winning the bid to host important sporting events has contributed to this status. With so much pride, patriotism, and history associated with the Olympics and World Cup, it is not difficult to see why these events have garnered such sociocultural and political importance. Wars stop, conflicts halt, and the average person tends to go out of his or her way to view what could be a potentially historic moment for his or her nation. All this “point[s] to both the appeal and elusiveness of sport as a political force,” according to political scientists David Black and Janis Van Der Westhuizen.<sup>36</sup>

FIFA and the IOC continually try to quell connections between sport and politics with public statements, asserting there is a clear separation and the two should not be mixed. As previously noted, poor worker conditions as Qatar prepares for the 2022 World Cup have been condemned. FIFA has attempted to not get involved. FIFA Secretary General Jerome Valcke recently stated, “FIFA is not a United Nations. FIFA is about sport.”<sup>37</sup> He continued by saying that FIFA has no place interfering in national policies. Despite its apolitical claims, FIFA has appointed an executive board member to

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> David R. Black and Janis Van Der Westhuizen, “The Allure of Global Games for ‘Semi-Peripheral’ Politics and Spaces: A Research Agenda,” *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 7 (January 1, 2004): 1195–1214. p. 1195.

<sup>37</sup> “FIFA ‘Not Responsible for National Policies,’” March 14, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/03/fifa-not-responsible-national-policies-2014314161858752545.html>.

facilitate all talks on the issue of labor rights with Qatar.<sup>38</sup> For an organization claiming apolitical motivations, this appointment indicates a clear recognition that the organization must be involved in national policies. IOC President Thomas Bach, in regards to politicians getting involved in matters of sport, stated, “The Olympics should not be used as a stage for political dissent or for trying to score points in internal or external political contests.”<sup>39</sup> Both of these statements serve as examples of how these sport-governing bodies continue to deny publicly the connection between sports and politics.

Even though these organizations continue to reiterate a disconnect between sport and politics, there has been a growing initiative pressing these institutions to use their power and influence to be directly involved in the development of global norms among their member states. Many human rights and environmental organizations have called for greater accountability by FIFA and the IOC in influencing member states, most notably host nations, which should only be selected to host if they comply with global norms. It has been suggested that these institutions incorporate community forums during mega-sporting events in which issues of global concern can be discussed, including human rights and environmental protection.<sup>40</sup> Following the suppression of protests by human rights groups during the 2000 Sydney Olympics, some scholars have suggested, “Instead of suppressing these groups, Games organisers in [the] future should examine ways of giving them a legitimate voice as part of a broader-based commitment to the promotion

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<sup>38</sup> “Ex-Co Backs FIFA’s Work to Help Improve Working Conditions in Qatar,” *FIFA.com*, March 21, 2014,

<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/bodies/news/newsid=2301310/index.html>.

<sup>39</sup> Stephen Wilson, “Bach Slams Politicians over Sochi Games,” *Yahoo Sports*, February 4, 2014, <http://sports.yahoo.com/news/bach-slams-politicians-over-sochi-155314657--spt.html>.

<sup>40</sup> John Milton-Smith, “Ethics, the Olympics and the Search for Global Values,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 35, no. 2 (January 1, 2002): 131–42.

of human values.”<sup>41</sup> If organizers commit to this, according to John Milton-Smith, the member states and participants could potentially identify the global human values that need to be asserted during these mega-sporting events, ultimately becoming the benchmark for future international relations.<sup>42</sup>

The conditionality implied by the governing bodies not only influences domestic policies, but also foreign policies. Governments that are not recognized by the international community have a place in mega-sporting events. For example, the IOC essentially conferred political recognition on East Germany and Taiwan, and more recently on Kosovo.<sup>43</sup> States hosting the games must also alter their visa and immigration policy to allow athletes from states that were previously barred from entering their borders for political reasons to enter for the duration of the sporting event. While some of these immigration policies are expediently retracted following the completion of the event, some countries may grow accustomed to certain policy changes. Specifically, changes in policy towards immigrant workers, economic liberalization (due to the commercialization of mega-sporting events), Internet and media freedoms, and human rights observances may change permanently.

While hosting nations may have laws dictating policies on all of the above mentioned issues, if the sophistication of the law is not to IOC or FIFA standards, then it must be changed for the time period before the event and while the event is taking place. This begs the question, what is the motivation for inviting such discrepancy into a nation’s national and international policy? The answer is that while hosting, the world’s

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 133.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Grix, “Sport Politics and the Olympics.”

eye will look upon that nation. While each nation may have a different type of government, the incorporation of FIFA and the IOC conditionality into domestic and foreign policies can facilitate the development of norms on certain issues. After four decades of failed Olympic hosting bids, China won the right in 2008. It was noted that in China, hosting the Olympics helped “with self-confidence recovering [*sic*] and growing prominence on the global stage, China’s leaders have shown an increasing willingness to abide by global rules.”<sup>44</sup>

Along with the age of globalization comes more access to information and a growth in economic multilateralism that has coincided with the growth of mega-sporting events. This change has also resulted in the growth and influence of FIFA and the IOC. The commercialization of mega-sporting events has fostered a new era in which the “marketing power” of a nation has overshadowed the true meaning behind the Olympics and World Cup.<sup>45</sup> Nations are lining up to host to show how globally dominant they have become. The political aspects of hosting are beginning to outweigh any other perceived benefit.

New literature suggests that the IOC and FIFA have become policy-making institutions.<sup>46</sup> Given the globalization and commercialization of the games, as well as the nationalism that goes along with hosting, the opinion and policies of FIFA and the IOC are placed in a high regard.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, their opinions on the matters of human rights,

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<sup>44</sup> Dali L. Yang, “China in 2001: Economic Liberalization and Its Political Discontents,” *Asian Survey* 42, no. 1 (February 1, 2002): 14–28.

<sup>45</sup> Black and Westhuizen, “The Allure of Global Games for ‘Semi-Peripheral’ Polities and Spaces.”

<sup>46</sup> Martin Polley, “The Politics of the Olympics: A Survey, Edited by A. Bairner and G. Molnar,” *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics* 4, no. 3 (2012): 447–51.

<sup>47</sup> J. Sugden and A. Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest for World Football: Who Rules the People’s Game?*, 1998.

environmentalism, security, and sustainability are injected into the societies that win the opportunity to host. Another logical topic of inquiry in the sports and politics nexus is whether supranational sports governing bodies can help liberalize host nations simply through asking host countries to adopt certain conditions in accordance with their charters.

With the cost of hosting either the Olympics or World Cup rising steadily, why any nation would want to attempt to host such events in the first place? A common assumption about hosting a mega sporting event is that it will create an economic windfall for the host nation. With the influx of tourism, money from sponsorship rights, and increased attention to the host nation, governments hope that successfully hosting an event will boost the overall economy. However, many economists have noted that the perceived windfall is not achieved due to the required expenditures for hosting such a specific sporting event.<sup>48</sup> A study by Anita Mehrotra shows that nations awarded the bid to host have invested much more than they have received from the event, and long-term econometric studies show a negative relationship between hosting and economic growth.<sup>49</sup>

For her study, Mehrotra collected financial data from every bidder and host of the Olympics from 1933 to 2010. Analyzing data from the World Bank, she studied the average normalized GDP per capita of the host vs. runner-up of all nations in IOC voting results. The results showed, “The long-run impact of hosting the Olympics is negative for

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<sup>48</sup> Richard Tomlinson, “Whose Accolades? An Alternative Perspective on Motivations for Hosting the Olympics,” *Urban Forum* 21, no. 2 (May 1, 2010): 139–52.

<sup>49</sup> Anita Mehrotra, “To Host or Not to Host? A Comparison Study on the Long-Run Impact of the Olympic Games,” *Michigan Journal of Business* 5, no. 2 (2012): 62–92.

host countries' GDP per capita in comparison to runner-up countries.”<sup>50</sup> With this data clearly indicating that the perceived economic growth effect is false, nations should not expect any economic benefit or growth as a result of hosting. In almost all cases, the monies spent on venues, security, infrastructure, accommodations, and other relevant expenditures are substantially higher than monies received, and substantially higher than originally budgeted.

On the political ledger, nations seek the opportunity to host to legitimize the government. Governments may think that if they can successfully host a global sporting event, the success will lend credibility to their regime. The legitimacy sought by governments could be for domestic or international purposes, and these influential and global organizations that confer the right to host could, as a result, further legitimize these states' regimes. For example, the 1986 Olympics were awarded to Mexico, a nation that at the time was ruled by a one-party system, which wanted to legitimize its rule.<sup>51</sup> Equally, the Beijing 2008 Olympics were thought by many to be an investment in China's global image in an attempt to urbanize and redefine the city of Beijing, while re-branding China's image in the world.<sup>52</sup>

Just like the USSR 1980 and Yugoslavia's 1984 Olympic Games, if the Beijing Games were a success, it would reinforce the notion to China's government that communism is superior to capitalism. The idea that success in the Olympics translates into one state's success over another goes back to the origin of the Ancient Olympics in 776 BC. “The Games quickly developed into a political tool, used by one city-state to

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>51</sup> John Hoberman, “Think Again: The Olympics,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 167 (July 1, 2008): 22–28.

<sup>52</sup> Tomlinson, “Whose Accolades?”

assert dominance over another.”<sup>53</sup> Just like in Ancient Greece, today’s international sporting events are an extension of the state and an attempt to assert dominance in the global political arena.

A country’s ruling elite may also seek to legitimize the state by hosting. In general, local political and business elites form coalitions to bid for a mega-sporting event to raise a country’s/city’s status, as was the case with the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Once Beijing won the right to host, “Beijing began reinventing both its physical landscape and international image to legitimate its claims to global city status. As a symbol of China’s emergence as a world leader, Beijing promised the best Olympics ever.”<sup>54</sup> Ruling elites often have control over many of the industries needed to construct and stage such events; therefore, the money that will be spent often goes into their pockets. Cronyism is a systematic problem in many illiberal states once they win a bid to host, and corruption is often rampant.

Ruling elites see hosting as an investment in urban entrepreneurialism, often aligning the private and public sectors for projects. The investment needed to revitalize and rejuvenate a city or cities capable of hosting such events straddles the private sector, local government, and higher levels of government funding. For example, in Barcelona (1992 Summer Olympics) the Olympic planning coincided with the city government’s strategic plan for promoting economic development and urban infrastructure projects.<sup>55</sup> This has widely been noted as an example of the positive urbanization effects that strategic planning for the Olympics can have on a city.

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<sup>53</sup> Mehrotra, “To Host or Not to Host?”

<sup>54</sup> Anne Broudehoux, “Spectacular Beijing: The Conspicuous Construction of an Olympic Metropolis,” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29, no. 4 (2007): 383–99. p. 384.

<sup>55</sup> Tomlinson, “Whose Accolades?”

In the following chapter I will first give some background on the IOC and FIFA and then present case studies to show the effect of hosting a mega-sporting event on the liberalization of political and civil rights in illiberal nations. The case studies will be discussed in chronological order: Argentina 1978 World Cup, Mexico 1986 World Cup, South Korea 1988 Summer Olympics, and China 2008 Summer Olympics.



### **Chapter 3**

#### **History of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)**

When American James Connelly won gold in the triple jump on April 6, 1896, he became the first Olympic champion in more than 1,500 years. The first celebration of the modern Olympic Games took place in Athens, Greece in 1896, and was attended by 14 nations with 241 athletes competing in 43 events.<sup>1</sup> This event was the brainchild of French aristocrat Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who is known as the father of the modern Olympics. The most recent Olympics – Sochi, Russia 2014 – demonstrates how the Olympic Movement has grown since 1896; in Russia 89 nations took part, with 2,850 athletes competing in 15 sports totaling 98 events.<sup>2</sup>

Coubertin established the International Olympic Committee in Paris on June 23, 1894, at a meeting of delegates from a few European countries. Since then, the organization has continued to increase in size and influence. Originally, the regulations Coubertin drew up stated that the IOC president should be from the country that will host the next Olympics Games. Thus, Demetrius Vikelas from Greece was the first President of the IOC from 1894 to 1896. However, that rule changed quickly, and Coubertin was president from 1896 until 1925.<sup>3</sup> Since Coubertin, there have been seven other IOC presidents, and currently the position is held by Thomas Bach, from Germany.

Coubertin saw sport as an avenue to create a more educated, well-rounded citizen. Other sport enthusiasts and educators from around the globe, in particular Dr. William

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<sup>1</sup> “Athens 1896 Summer Olympics | Olympic Videos, Photos, News,” accessed April 5, 2014, <http://www.olympic.org/athens-1896-summer-olympics>.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Allen Greene, “Sochi 2014: Winter Olympics by the Numbers,” *CNN*, February 14, 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/01/08/world/europe/russia-sochi-numbers/index.html>.

<sup>3</sup> “International Olympic Committee | About IOC Organisation | Olympic.org,” accessed April 5, 2014, <http://www.olympic.org/about-ioc-institution?tab=presidents>.

Penny Brookes and Thomas Arnold of Great Britain, influenced Coubertin by supporting the idea of creating an international sporting event. Coubertin had heard of two other Olympic movements in Great Britain and Greece but both athletic events were only open to nationals of their respective countries. Coubertin wanted an international sporting event. Dr. Brookes agreed with Coubertin, having already written to the Greek government in 1858 asking it to open its competition to non-Greeks, as the Greek event was more widely celebrated and popular than that of Dr. Brookes' Wenlock Olympian Games in Great Britain. Dr. Brookes saw sports as essential to mental and physical fitness and personal betterment, and he saw that physical education was necessary for the working class, not just the privileged. However, the Greek government denied the request and would not agree to any international participation for another 36 years. Instead, inspired by Dr. Brookes, Coubertin went on to found the IOC in 1894.

There is a debate among many historians as to who actually founded the IOC, with many accrediting Coubertin with the codification of the charter, and others arguing that the idea stemmed from Dr. Brookes' studies and experience with the Wenlock Olympian Games. Either way, both men had a great influence on the way the organization came into being, and both stressed the importance of physical fitness. Both men saw sport as an opportunity for all citizens to better themselves and their country, and their efforts resulted in what has become one of the most unifying events in all of international relations, the Olympic Movement.

For Coubertin, the reasons for the creation of the IOC were simple: bring nations together for friendly sport competitions in an effort to create a more peaceful world. He wrote extensively on the idea of sport as an international peace movement and developed

the theory on the “importance of character building through sport.”<sup>4</sup> He believed that if everyone could participate in sport, it would produce a moral elite rather than a social elite.<sup>5</sup> Given the development of sport in the U.S. and British education system’s at the time, Coubertin saw an opportunity for France to join the movement and bring those of similar values together. Thus, when the French government asked him to create an international sport association, the end result was the IOC. Over time, the structure of the IOC has changed, but the ideals on which the IOC was created are still evident in its charter.

The charter of the Olympic Movement lays out the three main constituents of the organization: the International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Sports Federations (IFs), and the National Olympic Committee’s (NOCs).<sup>6</sup> Also, each Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG) for each Olympic event is a part of the Olympic Movement. Within the IOC itself there are the Congress, Executive Board, President, and multiple Commissions.<sup>7</sup> The Congress is the supreme organ of the IOC, and it meets annually at what is called The Session. It has the powers to adopt or amend the Olympic Charter, elect members of the IOC and the President, elect the host city, expel NOCs or athletes, and resolve any other matters regarding the Olympic Movement.<sup>8</sup> There are currently 106 members of the Olympic Congress, and each member serves on one or a multiple of the 25 Commissions. Some of the Commissions

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<sup>4</sup> Alan S. Kornspan, “The Early Years of Sport Psychology: The Work and Influence of Pierre de Coubertin,” *Journal of Sport Behavior* 30, no. 1 (March 2007): 77–93. p. 78.

<sup>5</sup> John J. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol: Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games* (Routledge, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> International Olympic Committee, “Olympic Charter - Official IOC Document Downloads | Olympic.org,” accessed February 23, 2014, <http://www.olympic.org/olympic-charter/documents-reports-studies-publications>. p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 40.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 41.

include the following: Sport for All, Women and Sport, Ethics, Anti-Doping, Sports and Law, Marketing, and Finance.<sup>9</sup> The members are volunteers who represent the IOC and the Olympic Movement; they are not necessarily the representatives of the NOCs. The structure of the maximum 115-member delegation is as follows: 70 individual members, 15 active athletes, 15 representatives of the IFs, and 15 representatives of the NOCs.<sup>10</sup>

Much scrutiny has been placed on the IOC and its members over the years, largely due to its perceived lack of transparency. Critics argue that such a powerful organization should have more oversight and be more transparent, especially in the areas of voting and finance. Many of the votes for President and host city are still done in secret, with only the winner being named and the number of votes cast. Given the length of time this organization has existed, many scandals have bruised its public image. However, no scandal has resulted in a reduction in participation or bids to host.

The values envisaged by the founders of the modern Olympic Games and of the Olympic Movement, as mentioned earlier, were to bring nations together in a mutual understanding of sport to foster better relations between nations and bring about a more peaceful world. Throughout the history of this organization, this ideal has remained its goal; however, other values have also been adopted. The idea of olympism is interwoven throughout the Olympics and its charter, but it also now invokes what the charter terms “democratic values.” These values are common to States and persons that respect human rights, and are also at the core of sports: equality, tolerance, respect, humanity, honesty,

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<sup>9</sup> “International Olympic Committee | About IOC Organisation | Olympic.org.”

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

fairness and liberty.<sup>11</sup> Through this important aspect of the charter, one can see that the common values of sport promoted through olympism are also used to promote democracy through sport.

### History of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association was created to formalize international soccer competition. With the Olympics growing in popularity and soccer being one of the most popular events, multiple soccer federations in Europe saw an opportunity to formally come together and create an umbrella organization to govern all matches and create uniformity among the participating nations. Thus in 1904, Dutchman Carl Hirschman formulated and proposed the idea to the secretary of the Dutch Football Association (FA). With its support, Hirschman then reached out to Robert Guérin of the Union des Sociétés Françaises de Sports Athlétiques in France.<sup>12</sup> Guérin was ecstatic about the idea and pursued fervently the formation of an umbrella organization. He contacted the English FA to obtain its support for bringing the nations together under an umbrella organization. Since the English FA was the oldest association, Guérin sought its approval first, hoping to garner its president's support for the proposal. While he was waiting for a response, other nations heard about the plan and began to express interest.

With the 1904 Olympic Games fast approaching, Guérin wanted an answer from the English FA so that the announcement could be made during the Olympics, allowing maximum impact for the announcement and ideally building momentum. The English FA replied negatively, indicating it would not take part. Therefore, on May 21, 1904,

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<sup>11</sup> Myriam Bouverat, Anne Chevalley, and Musée olympique (Lausanne), *Finding the Roots of Sport: Origins, Rites, Identities: Educational Kit* (Lausanne: Olympic Museum: Education and Development Foundation, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> "Classic Football History of FIFA," *FIFA.com*, accessed April 5, 2014, <http://www.fifa.com/classicfootball/history/fifa/foundation.html>.

members of sport associations from France, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland came together in Paris and formally started the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, or FIFA, and voted in Robert Guérin as its first president. Since this historic day, seven other men have reached the rank of president. The current president is Swiss man Joseph S. Blatter, who was elected in 1998.

FIFA was founded to “set and unify rules for international matches” by bringing together the best FAs in Europe under one authority.<sup>13</sup> At this first meeting, the FIFA Statutes were agreed upon: the reciprocal and exclusive recognition of the national associations represented and attending; the prohibition of clubs and players from playing simultaneously for different national associations; recognition by the other associations of a player's suspension once it was announced by an association; and the conduct of matches according to the Laws of the Game of the Football Association Ltd.<sup>14</sup> The original seven members (Germany, being the seventh, sent approval to Paris upon hearing of the May 1 1904 meeting) quickly expanded the following year with the inclusion of five more FAs, one of which was the British FA. FIFA expanded beyond Europe in 1910 when South Africa became a member, with Argentina and Chile following soon after in 1912. After the 1912 uniform rules were imposed, all FIFA members adopted the Laws of the Game developed by the British FA, which are still used to this day.

After a FIFA member won gold in every Olympics from 1908-1928 (1916 was canceled due to WWI), and the IOC declared that the 1932 Olympics in the U.S. would not feature soccer due to its lack of popularity in the country, FIFA decided it would

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<sup>13</sup> Michael A. Leeds and Eva Marikova Leeds, “International Soccer Success and National Institutions,” *Journal of Sports Economics* 10, no. 4 (August 1, 2009): 369–90. p. 370.

<sup>14</sup> “Classic Football History of FIFA.”

stage its own soccer championship.<sup>15</sup> The first World Cup took place in Uruguay in 1930, with 13 nations participating and the host country winning first place. Since then, participation grew quickly: 16 more nations joined in 1934; 24, in 1982; and 32, in 1998.<sup>16</sup>

At the first meeting of the FIFA Congress in May of 1904, the original FIFA Statutes were created, and they are largely still in place today. However, after 110 years the scope of FIFA has increased, as has its organizational size. According to the Statutes, FIFA is comprised of the following: the Congress (supreme and legislative body), Executive Committee (executive body), general secretariat (administrative body), and many standing and ad-hoc committees which advise and assist the Executive Committee.<sup>17</sup>

The Congress is comprised of all FIFA members, from each of the member FAs, and it:

- Decides whether to admit, suspend or expel a member.
- Decides on the location of FIFA headquarters (in Zurich since 1932).
- May award the title of honorary president, honorary vice-president or honorary member.
- Is responsible for amending the Statutes, the Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes and the Standing Orders of the Congress.
- May remove a FIFA Executive Committee member from office.
- Approves the balance sheet and income statement.
- Approves the Activity Report.
- Elects the president every four years.<sup>18</sup>

Essentially, the Congress is soccer's Parliament, and currently there are 209 members.

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<sup>15</sup> Leeds and Leeds, "International Soccer Success and National Institutions."

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> FIFA, "FIFA Statutes," *FIFA.com*, accessed April 6, 2014, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/statutes.html>. p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> "FIFA Congress," *FIFA.com*, accessed April 6, 2014, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/bodies/congress/thingstoknow.html>.

The Executive Committee consists of 24 members: one President, eight Vice-Presidents, and 15 members (appointed by the Confederations and Associations).<sup>19</sup> The Executive Committee's main functions are to oversee the different standing and ad-hoc committees within the organization, stipulate how FIFA is organized internally, and to appoint a Secretary General. The Executive Committee is also the body that elects the host nation for the World Cup. In recent years, Executive Committee members have been accused of accepting bribes in exchange for their vote for host nation selection. FIFA is still trying to move past the ensuing scandal, with many FAs calling for more transparency in the voting process.

The President's responsibilities include the following: implementing the decisions passed by the Congress and the Executive Committee through the general secretariat; supervising the work of the general secretariat; and overseeing relations between FIFA and the Confederations, Members, political bodies and international organizations.<sup>20</sup>

Of note, FIFA is organized into Confederations, essentially regions of the world that are grouped together to form a collection of FAs. There are currently six Confederations, and each Confederation is only allowed a certain number of teams to qualify for the World Cup. The Confederations are the umbrella organizations of the national football associations on each continent: the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) in Asia; Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF) in Africa; the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) in North and Central America and the Caribbean; Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol

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<sup>19</sup> FIFA, "FIFA Statutes." p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 29.



(CONMEBOL) in South America; Union des Associations Européennes de Football (UEFA) in Europe; and the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) in Oceania.<sup>21</sup>

One unique aspect of FIFA is that it recognizes the independent Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). The CAS attempts to resolve disputes between FIFA, members, Confederations, Leagues, clubs, players, and officials. The CAS works directly with the World Anti-Doping Agency to regulate and monitor performance-enhancing drugs within the sport of soccer. Given its independence from FIFA, the CAS also has the authority to audit FIFA practices and decisions. This is important because it essentially creates a watchdog for FIFA and its members.

Given soccer's popularity around the world, FIFA has evolved into a global business. Many critics complain about the amount of money FIFA takes in from the World Cup, even as nations are expected to spend billions of dollars in preparations, only to see minor economic benefits from hosting. Also, the issue of transparency is regularly brought up. A bribery scandal concerning the selection of the 2022 host resulted in two Executive Committee members being suspended before the vote. Investigations have shown that Khalid Electrical and Mechanical Establishment, a firm owned by Qatari FIFA representative Mohamed Bin Hammam, paid \$2 million in 2011 to Jamad Limited in Trinidad. Jack Warner, the former president of the CONCACAF Confederation, Executive Committee member, and FIFA Vice-President at the time, owns Jamad Limited.<sup>22</sup> Mr. Warner was one of the deciding votes that selected Qatar as host of the

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<sup>21</sup> "Football Confederations," *FIFA.com*, accessed April 6, 2014, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/confederations/index.html>.

<sup>22</sup> Holly Watt et al., "Qatar World Cup 2022 Investigation: On the Trail of Former Fifa Vice-President Jack Warner," *Telegraph.co.uk*, March 17, 2014, sec. football, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/world-cup/10703385/Qatar-World-Cup-2022-investigation-On-the-trail-of-former-Fifa-vice-president-Jack-Warner.html>.

2022 World Cup. Days after Qatar was selected, Jamad Limited sent another \$1.2 million invoice to Khalid Electrical and Mechanical Est. The full extent of the corrupt and fraudulent practices is still being investigated to this day.

Originally, the founders of FIFA sought to universalize and standardize the rules of the game, and foster the development of the sport by incorporating more FAs throughout Europe and the world. The Federation's goal was simply to unite the FAs for better international match coordination. However, over time soccer has become the most watched and played sport in the world. With soccer's increase in popularity, the scope of FIFA's mission has expanded, as it enshrined the values it believes are most important. The core values of FIFA today are, as described within its charter and many of its texts: authenticity, unity, performance, and integrity.<sup>23</sup> Each of these values plays an important role in the work that FIFA engages in:

Authenticity. We believe that football must remain a simple, beautiful game played by, enjoyed by and touching the lives of all people far and wide.

Unity. We believe it is FIFA's responsibility to foster unity within the football world and to use football to promote solidarity, regardless of gender, ethnic background, faith or culture.

Performance. We believe that FIFA must strive to deliver football of the highest quality and as the best possible experience, be it as a player, as a spectacle, or as a major cultural and social enabler throughout the world.

Integrity. We believe that, just as the game itself, FIFA must be a model of fair play, tolerance, sportsmanship and transparency.<sup>24</sup>

All of these values work in tandem with the three pillars of FIFA: develop the game; touch the world; and build a better future. These three pillars are what form the mission and values set forth by the organization, which focuses on the social responsibility that

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<sup>23</sup> "FIFA's Mission," *FIFA.com*, accessed April 15, 2014, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/mission.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

comes with being the overarching leader and authoritative body of such a popular and influential sport. Further, FIFA views itself as having a larger role through the development of soccer:

This responsibility does not end with organising the FIFA World Cup™ and the various other world cup competitions; it extends to safeguarding the Laws of the Game, developing the game around the world and to bringing hope to those less privileged. This is what we believe is the very essence of fair play and solidarity.<sup>25</sup>

The social and human development that FIFA focuses on is done “by strengthening the work of dozens of initiatives around the globe to support local communities in the areas of peace-building, health, social integration, education and more.”<sup>26</sup>

In line with these values, there has been a push for a governance reform process within FIFA, with some proposals being adopted by the Congress in 2011. The reform process is in relation to good governance, transparency and zero tolerance towards wrongdoing on and also off the pitch.<sup>27</sup>

In summary, FIFA has demonstrated a shift from its original objective of strictly match organization and uniformity to broader, more idealistic goals. FIFA’s new goals utilize the global popularity of soccer to focus on the advancement of the sport and the development of the individual, and to promote the values aforementioned. Through this,

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> FIFA, “FIFA’s Governance Reform Process: What Has Changed in the Past Two Years,” *FIFA.com*, May 31, 2013, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/bodies/congress/news/newsid=2089422/index.html>.

FIFA hopes to “give meaning and direction to each and every activity that FIFA is involved in - football being an integrated part of our society.”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> “FIFA’s Mission.”

## **Chapter 4**

### **Argentina: 1978 World Cup**

In 1966 when FIFA awarded Argentina the right to host the 1978 World Cup, little did it realize this event would come to be known as one of the most controversial World Cups in history. As a result of a military coup in 1976, a junta came to power and consolidated its rule by suppressing dissent. Among other things, the regime kidnapped, tortured, and often killed opponents, mostly political leftists and intellectuals. In total it is estimated that around 8,500 people disappeared between 1976-1980, (hence the name for them, *los desaparecidos*) but many believe that number is much greater, upwards of 20,000.<sup>1</sup> Many states and organizations publicly condemned the junta in an effort to raise awareness of the situation. There was even an attempt by the Dutch to have all fifteen qualifying nations boycott the 1978 World Cup for fear of violence during the matches, and as a political expression of solidarity with the Argentine people.

In addition to the political opposition, the Montonero guerilla group was a subversive group that had been in existence since before the junta came into power. It began in the early 1966 as a Peronist and Marxist movement against the authoritarian regime of General Juan Peron, who came to power a second time in 1974. Peronism, referring to the first presidency of Juan Peron (1946-1955) and his wife Eva “Evita” Peron, called for social justice, economic independence, and political sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> However, starting in 1970 the Montonero group began using kidnapping and violence in an effort to meet the movement’s political goals, which were “the creation of a nationalist and socialist Argentina, a just and equitable distribution of the nation's wealth... and

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<sup>1</sup> Kathryn Sikkink, “Human Rights, Principled Issue-Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America,” *International Organization* 47, no. 3 (1993): 411–41.

<sup>2</sup> “Since 1946 ... a Short History of Coups, Crises and Peronism,” *New Internationalist*, no. 463 (June 2013): 15.

control of the labor union machinery by younger elements, and the elimination of foreign economic interests from the nation.”<sup>3</sup> The Montonero group existed until 1981, although a military offensive in 1977 by the junta effectively ended the group.<sup>4</sup> Qualifying World Cup teams were worried about the Montonero group because of its often-violent forms of protest and use of guerrilla tactics to further its political agenda. Rodolfo Galimberti, leader of the Montonero guerilla group at the time, assured nations there would be no violence during the games, and all nations agreed to attend.<sup>5</sup>

The military junta of Argentina ruled from 1976-1983; however, the military was also active behind the scenes in the years preceding the take over, that is, during President Juan Peron’s time in office. Historians note that eventually, “The military felt forced to intervene, however, and instead of peace and order, they brought terror, political and economic instability, and led the country almost to its destruction.”<sup>6</sup> This time in Argentina’s history is characterized by high economic inflation, the rise of guerrilla movements, and the killing of opponents. Much of the mystery surrounding *los desaparecidos* still exists to this day. Many historians, and scholars in other fields, have written about the abuses during this time and documented the atrocities in depth.

This World Cup was also controversial because the host country of Argentina won the World Cup under suspicious circumstances, which are still being debated to this day. It is suspected that the junta influenced, and in some cases even fixed, specific

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<sup>3</sup> Charles A. Russell, James F. Schenkel, and James A. Miller, “Urban Guerrillas in Argentina: A Select Bibliography,” *Latin American Research Review* 9, no. 3 (October 1, 1974): 53–89. p. 63-64.

<sup>4</sup> David R. Kohut and Olga Vilella, *Historical Dictionary of the “Dirty Wars”* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Stevenson, “The Story of the 1978 World Cup,” May 18, 2010, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/jonathanstevenson/2010/05/the\\_story\\_of\\_the\\_1978\\_world\\_cu.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/jonathanstevenson/2010/05/the_story_of_the_1978_world_cu.html).

<sup>6</sup> Ayeray Medina Bustos, David Webb, and Gavin J. Fairbairn, “(Un)Covering the Silence During the Argentinean Coup d’Etat,” *Peace Review* 21, no. 2 (April 2009): 155–59. p. 155.

matches so that Argentina would make it to the final, most significantly the match against Peru. Many of the Argentine players still feel they were used politically to legitimize the junta and its practices.<sup>7</sup>

The World Cup was awarded to Argentina in 1966, weeks after a military coup had occurred. The military was in power until Juan Peron was freely elected in 1974.

The election of Argentina to host by the FIFA Congress was easy, as there was no other nation bidding. Many nations urged FIFA to reconsider its host election at a meeting in 1975; however, FIFA president Joao Havelange struck down any thought of a change of venue. FIFA delegates stated, "It is obvious Havelange wants the World Cup in South America in 1978 despite the lack of finance and stadia and the political instability in Argentina."<sup>8</sup>

When the junta took control in 1976, preparations for the World Cup became a priority. Juan Peron's administration had given too little money and time to the project for any real progress to be made. The right-wing, repressive junta therefore enacted many policies to fulfill its desire of hosting a superb and peaceful World Cup, veiling any negativity or dissidence. The military was eager to take advantage of the situation it inherited and use it as a force for legitimization and to repair a deteriorating international image. The junta, placing such political importance on this event, "invested in

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<sup>7</sup> Stevenson, "The Story of the 1978 World Cup."

<sup>8</sup> Alex Yannis, "Argentina Goes to Bat For World Cup Plans," *New York Times*, February 16, 1975, sec. Sports, <http://search.proquest.com/ccnyproxy1.lib/ccny.cuny.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/120470332/abstract/FEE97A3E1114561PQ/1?accountid=9967>.

construction services related to the World Cup... estimated at ten per cent of the national budget, or \$700 million, swelling the already unwieldy foreign debt.”<sup>9</sup>

One major innovation came in the form of the introduction of color television, a demand by FIFA in order to broadcast the matches to nearly a billion spectators around the world, mainly to U.S. and European viewers.<sup>10</sup> Demands by FIFA were mostly for training centers, comfortable accommodations that were in close proximity to the stadiums, and television equipment able to record all practices and matches. The financial investment by the military authorities can be seen, as noted by Knudson, as an ultra-liberal economic policy adopted by an ultra-conservative, statist-focused regime.<sup>11</sup>

In the run up to the World Cup, the military junta also began to restrict the press to writing and reporting only on approved topics. Censorship was a method often used by the junta, and dissidence was not tolerated. The Argentine press, a once very active and critical voice of the people, often against previous authoritarian dictatorships, was shrouded under a veil of silence.<sup>12</sup> In April of 1976, the government sent a memo to all newspapers in Argentina requiring news agencies to follow certain guidelines in order to stay in business:

As from today, 22/4/76, it is forbidden to inform, comment or make reference to subjects related to subversive incidents, the appearance of bodies and the death of subversive elements and/or of members of the armed and security forces in these incidents, unless they are reported by a responsible official

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<sup>9</sup> Raanan Rein, “Football, Politics and Protests: The International Campaign against the 1978 World Cup in Argentina,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, no. 5 (2009): 673–92. p. 674.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 675.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Jerry W. Knudson, “Veil of Silence: The Argentine Press and the Dirty War, 1976-1983,” *Latin American Perspectives* 24, no. 6 (November 1, 1997): 93–112.



source. This includes victims of kidnappings and missing person.<sup>13</sup>

Those who did not follow the above guidelines were subject to arrest, torture, and sometimes death. In all, 72 journalists disappeared, were jailed, or forced into exile, and around 400 fled the country.<sup>14</sup>

When the international press corps began to arrive for the 1978 World Cup, limitations regarding what could be reported were also extended to them, which led the 1978 World Cup to be nicknamed the “World Cup of the Press.” The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) even distributed leaflets to members of the British press traveling to the World Cup in an effort to educate and ready those who would be covering the event. They contained phrases in Spanish which the NUJ thought pertinent, including, “Please stop torturing me,” “My newspaper will pay you well if you let me go,” “How many journalists have you butchered this year?” and “Please deliver my body to my family.”<sup>15</sup> Thankfully, no international press corps members disappeared during the World Cup, even though one was detained for several hours after commenting negatively on the regime during the opening ceremonies. Some reporters even compared the junta’s political exploitation of the World Cup to Benito Mussolini’s actions in the 1934 World Cup and to Adolf Hitler’s during the 1936 Olympics Games.<sup>16</sup>

To highlight international disagreement about junta practices, movements were formed all across Europe by regular citizens to try to bring together a coalition of supporters to boycott the World Cup. Protests took place in France, West Germany, the

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<sup>13</sup> Bill L. Smith, “The Argentinian Junta and the Press in the Run-up to the 1978 World Cup,” *Soccer & Society* 3, no. 1 (2002): 69. p. 71.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 74.

<sup>16</sup> Rein, “Football, Politics and Protests.”

Netherlands, Spain, Israel, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, the U.S., and to a lesser extent in Mexico.<sup>17</sup> Raanan Rein notes that the protests were a “transnational solidarity movement which was successful in promoting a public debate in various countries on ties with [the] Argentine dictatorship, on issues of human rights and international relations, as well as on the use and abuse of sport for political purposes.”<sup>18</sup> While the Argentine people may have not benefited directly or immediately from these protests, the extra exposure of hosting the World Cup created an opportunity for people of many nations to stand behind an issue in solidarity and with one voice. These groups created a public space where discussions about what the junta was doing took place, which often would lead to members of the government being asked about the situation in Argentina. The protests in West Germany garnered so much strength that the Deutscher Fussball-Bund (DFB – German Football Association) voiced a more humanitarian attitude than the federal government, stating that if they saw any incidents of human rights violations during their time in Argentina, they intended to contact the German Embassy in an effort to try and help those afflicted.<sup>19</sup>

Once word spread via these protests and public debates, two players of the Dutch national team even decided to not play in or attend the World Cup. One of them, Wim van Henegem, was the team captain, and both were among the best players that would be attending the tournament. The French coach, Michel Hidalgo, also sought to inquire about 11 individuals who had gone missing, including two French nuns.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

In sum, the practices of the junta clearly violated the norms of political inclusion and respect for civil rights within Argentina. In leading up to the event, *los desaparecidos* increased from 359 cases in 1975 to 4,105 in 1976.<sup>21</sup> The kidnap, torture, and killing of individuals from other political parties violated inclusion and civil rights, while press censorship indicated an extreme disrespect for civil rights such as freedom of speech and expression.

Of note, the junta invited Amnesty International (AI) for an on-site visit in 1976, in an attempt to counteract international criticism of its human rights abuses. The report produced by AI a year later was a well-documented denunciation of the practices going on in Argentina at the time. “The AI report helped demonstrate that the disappearances were part of a concerted government policy by which the military and the police kidnapped perceived opponents, took them to secret detention centers where they tortured, interrogated, and killed them, and secretly disposed of the bodies.”<sup>22</sup> This brought more unwanted international attention against the junta, mainly from the administration of President Jimmy Carter, and the governments of France, and Sweden. It documented direct and specific actions being taken by the government to pacify any dissonance and the overall atrocities taking place in the country.

In the junta’s attempt to dispel what it called “a subversive anti-Argentine campaign” by international human rights organizations, it effectively created more enemies by attempting to placate organizations like AI by cooperating with certain organizations within the international human rights network while continuing its repressive practices at home. The report quite possibly may have increased the

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<sup>21</sup> Sikkink, “Human Rights, Principled Issue-Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America.” p. 427.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 424.

international scrutiny against the government, while building the support for Argentine citizens that led to the junta's removal from power in 1983: "The Argentine military government thus moved along the continuum from initial rejection of international human rights interventions to cosmetic cooperation with the human rights network, and eventually to concrete improvements in its human rights practices in response to international pressures."<sup>23</sup> According to Sikking, the junta eventually invited the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for an on-site visit in 1978. Once the junta realized the commission could not be co-opted or confused, cosmetic cooperation turned into actual cooperation. At a minimum, the barbaric practices by the junta significantly decreased by 1980 because of the attention created by the AI and IACHR reports, political prisoners began to be released, and some political participation was restored.<sup>24</sup>

The international pressures that coincided with hosting the World Cup strengthened the concerns of many nations about the junta. The scrutiny of the press corps, the coalitions formed in Europe against participating – which led to football associations and players becoming involved – and the actions reported by AI during its visit, were all factors that placed the junta on a trajectory that led to its eventual decay. Essentially, it was the act of hosting the World Cup, not requirements by FIFA, that led to incidental change in Argentina. Also, the practice of *los desaparecidos* dramatically declined in the same year of the World Cup, down from 3,098 cases in 1977 to only 969 in 1978.<sup>25</sup> Without the task of acting as host to such an important event, the junta may

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. 427-8.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 427.

have been able to fly under the radar a little longer, since they had a diplomatic ally in the Soviet Union, which blocked any possible UN consideration of the Argentine human rights situation. However, concerned states were able to sidestep this blockage by creating the UN Working Group on Disappearances in 1980, which sought to draw attention to the practices of disappearances around the world, not just in Argentina. Also, the United States agreed to release bank funds and improve relations with Argentina as long as the IACHR were allowed to continue on-site visits.<sup>26</sup>

The actions by protesters of the junta show an aspect of inclusion in a different way than what the World Cup normally attempts to create. These groups, coming together around the world to protest the military junta, capture in essence what inclusion is, and how it can be used in relation to mega-sporting events. While inclusion within the country may not have taken place, inclusion around the world took place in support of the Argentine people and what was happening to them. This ultimately brought enough pressure from international sources to influence the junta to reduce human rights abuses. Over the course of the next five years, Argentina saw a dramatic change on the political and military level, ultimately leading to free elections in 1983. This change was not just attributable to the World Cup but also to the misguided Argentinian intervention in the Malvinas Islands: “At the political level, the suppression of all political activity and the banning of democratic rights was the unvarying rule until 1981, when a political dialogue began. Subsequently the defeat in the Malvinas (Falklands) war forced the government to hold elections and relinquish power.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Marisa Arienza and Carlos A. Mallmann, “Argentina on the Road to Democracy: Comparisons with Chile and Uruguay,” *International Social Science Journal* 37, no. 103 (February 1985): 31–46.

As stated in my research design chapter, I will use Freedom House Index (FHI) scores to observe political changes in host countries. Observing the FHI scores in the case of Argentina, the scores clearly indicate that advancement and lasting change remained five years after hosting (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Freedom House Index scores for the year the event was awarded, the year hosted, and five years after hosting for Argentina, Mexico, South Korea and China.

Event	Host Year	Host	Year Awarded Event	Score on Year Chosen: PR, CL*	Political Rights	5 Years After	Civil Liberties	5 Years After
WC	1978	Argentina	1966	N/A**	6	2	5	2
WC	1986	Mexico	1983	3,4	4	4	4	4
SO	1988	South Korea	1981	5,5	2	2	3	2
SO	2008	China	2001	7,6	7	7	6	6

WC = World Cup

SO = Summer Olympics

\* PR = Political Rights; CL = Civil Liberties

\*\* N/A = Scores were not available for the date the event was awarded, FHI scores began in 1972.

Source: Freedom House Index <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world#.U2bEAlYuJiA>.  
The Freedom House Index scores range from 1-7: 1-3 is considered Free; 4-5 is considered Partially Free; and 6-7 is considered Not Free.

The scores clearly indicate an increase in liberalization in the years following the 1978 World Cup. Argentina's Political Rights score went from a six in 1978 to a two five years later, and its Civil Liberties score improved from a five in 1978 to a two after years later. There was a dramatic change from a designation of not free, to a designation of free within five years. The events that took place in the late 1970s moved Argentina toward liberalization and democratization, and ultimately towards the introduction of democratic reforms by the junta.

### Mexico: 1986 World Cup

Mexico was the first nation ever to host the World Cup twice, having hosted in 1970 and again 16 years later in 1986. It also had the honor of hosting the 1968 Summer Olympics, which was one of the most politically charged sporting events in history. It

was in Mexico City in 1968 that black American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their fists on the medal podium in a move of solidarity with African Americans involved in the civil rights movement in the U.S. and with the Olympic Project on Human Rights.<sup>28</sup> Their black-gloved political salute resulted in the athletes' removal and expulsion from the Olympics and the U.S. Olympics team as well as the retraction of their medals.

Modern Mexican political history begins in 1929 with the election of a civilian government controlled by a single political party, the Nationalist Revolution Party. The Nationalist Revolution Party was renamed the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, in 1946.<sup>29</sup> While it was an elected government, the regime was characterized by authoritarian policies and was led by individuals attempting to consolidate power. Most scholars classify the PRI-led government as a corporatist, centralized, one-party state that gave extreme amounts of power to the President.<sup>30</sup> The PRI effectively controlled Mexico for 70 years, and during those 70 years, the ruling regime instituted many repressive policies to control the population.

One of the notably repressive acts occurred in 1968, just days before the Olympics opening ceremony. The PRI-led government ordered army troops to open fire on students holding peaceful protests around the Tlaltelolco housing project in Mexico City. The government "officially admitted forty-three deaths, but knowledgeable

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<sup>28</sup> "Where Are the Champions of 1968?" *Ebony* 43, no. 11 (September 1988): 130–36.

<sup>29</sup> "Mexico Timeline - Mexico," *HISTORY.com*, accessed April 26, 2014, <http://www.history.com/topics/mexico/mexico-timeline>.

<sup>30</sup> Joy Langston, "Why Rules Matter: Changes in Candidate Selection in Mexico's PRI, 1988–2000," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 33, no. 03 (2001): 485–511; Henry Veltmeyer, "The Dynamics of Social Change and Mexico's EZLN," *Latin American Perspectives* 27, no. 5 (September 1, 2000): 88–110; Hubert C. de Grammont, Horacio Mackinlay, and Richard Stoller, "Campesino and Indigenous Social Organizations Facing Democratic Transition in Mexico, 1938–2006," *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 4 (July 1, 2009): 21–40.

observers suggest that at least three hundred to five hundred people were killed, over two thousand were wounded, and fifteen hundred to two thousand people were taken prisoner.”<sup>31</sup> The massacre garnered little international attention, with the IOC determining the Games should go forward as planned. Some scholars have asserted that neither the students nor the government made a connection between the massacre and the Olympics; the connection has only been made after the event.<sup>32</sup>

The Tlaltelolco Massacre was the most significant and defining event of the PRI’s lethal hand. However, in the 1970s and early 1980s, human rights abuses and a crackdown on political dissent continued on a smaller, quieter, and less public scale. The ruling regime used other illiberal acts to consolidate power: torture was routinely used to gather confessions from political prisoners; electoral fraud was rampant; and press censorship occurred often.<sup>33</sup> It is also estimated that in the 1970s nearly 500 people disappeared, ostensibly as part of a government led counter-insurgency campaign.<sup>34</sup> The regime effectively deceived the international community regarding its human rights abuses by being vocal advocates for human rights on the international level, often times having one of the most progressive voices at the United Nations Human Rights Commission. The international human rights networks at the time were also more focused on the atrocities taking place in other Latin American countries.

In the 1980s, Mexico experienced a surge of pro-democratic voices after the 1982 debt crisis made many citizens wonder why they were supporting such a regime: “The

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<sup>31</sup> Sikkink, “Human Rights, Principled Issue-Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America.” p. 428.

<sup>32</sup> Heather Levi, “Representing the Nation: Sport and Spectacle in Post-Revolutionary Mexico (review),” *The Americas* 68, no. 3 (2012): 449–50.

<sup>33</sup> Sikkink, “Human Rights, Principled Issue-Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America.”

<sup>34</sup> Ellen L. Lutz, *Human Rights in Mexico: A Policy of Impunity* (Human Rights Watch, 1990).



governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) struggled to maintain the unity of its authoritarian coalition as government revenues fell sharply.”<sup>35</sup> This resulted in calls for political democracy by Mexican civil society and brought human rights abuses to the forefront of the agenda. In 1984 a group of intellectuals, activists, and politicians created the Mexican Academy for Human Rights, which sought to educate citizens and create a space for debates on human rights. This led to a proliferation of human rights based NGOs: “In 1984, only four human rights NGOs existed in Mexico, seven years later there were sixty, and by 1993 there were over two hundred independent human rights monitoring and advocacy NGOs.”<sup>36</sup>

The creation of the Mexican Academy for Human Rights facilitated international recognition of the abuses taking place. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International both published their first reports documenting cases of refugee abuses (HRW, 1984) and rural violence in Mexico (AI, 1986) after the expansion of domestic NGOs beginning in 1984. While the reports did upset the Mexican government because of its image as a human rights defender, the reports did not lead to any substantial changes in government practices.<sup>37</sup> However, during this time period the pro-democracy movement really began to gain popularity, largely due to the country’s financial issues:

For Mexico’s diverse social movements, demands for social and economic rights dominated the 1970s, but the call for political democracy filled many of Mexico’s principal plazas in the 1980s. The 1985 earthquakes were a watershed; an impressive citizen response contrasted sharply with the government’s initial incapacity. New social actors insisted on becoming legitimate players under new rules of the game. The state’s lack of

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<sup>35</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, “Pathways to Freedom,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, June 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/democratization/pathways-freedom/p30800>.

<sup>36</sup> Sikkink, “Human Rights, Principled Issue-Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America.” p. 430.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

accountability to society had long met largely with apparent resignation, but by the late 1980s broad sectors of Mexican society from across the political spectrum – even including important sectors of the ruling party – agreed that Mexico had to begin a transition to democracy.<sup>38</sup>

Hosting the Cup was never on the PRI's agenda. The original host, Colombia, had to concede the right to host in 1982 due to FIFA's new financial demands to expand the qualifying field from 16 to 24 teams, requiring additional facilities to host the Cup. In 1983, the FIFA Executive Committee selected Mexico, over Canada and the U.S., by unanimous decision.<sup>39</sup> The group of candidates was limited to only North and South American countries per the FIFA Statutes and the regional rotating method of host selection.

It is in this context of economic upheaval and the increasing political discontentment that Mexico hosted the World Cup in 1986. The World Cup itself was a success, with Argentina defeating West Germany in a splendid final that saw Diego Maradona scoring two of the most famous goals ever in World Cup history: his infamous "Hand of God" goal; and four minutes later recording what has been voted the "Goal of the Century." It is also where "the wave" was created. However, it seems that in this case FIFA turned a blind-eye to what it knew was going on in the country. In its final report on the 86' World Cup, the Mexico Organizing Committee Chairman Guillermo Cañedo stated, "[Mexico] wanted to show what it was capable of in spite of the world's skepticism," and the end result was better than expected.<sup>40</sup> Mexico "gave the World Cup

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<sup>38</sup> Jonathan A. Fox and Luis Hernandez, "Mexico's Difficult Democracy: Grassroots Movements, NGOs and Local Government" 17, no. 2 (1992): 165–208. p. 166.

<sup>39</sup> FIFA, "FIFA World Cup - Mexico 1986 Official Report" (Fifa.com, n.d.), [http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/technicaldevp/50/09/08/fwc\\_mexico\\_1986\\_en\\_part1\\_283.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afdeveloping/technicaldevp/50/09/08/fwc_mexico_1986_en_part1_283.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

the best possible setting, kept violence away from the stadia and transferred its enthusiasm and happiness about the accomplishments of its own team to football in general.”<sup>41</sup>

Other FIFA officials gave similar perspectives regarding the lack of violence. Hermann Neuberger, President of the FIFA Organizing Committee, stated that “The World Cup's absence of violence in a problem-ridden Mexico ... is but one of its many positive aspects.”<sup>42</sup> Both of these statements come from the *FIFA 1986 Official Report*, meaning that there must have been serious concern about violence in Mexico before the event.

The growth of domestic NGOs within Mexico from 1984 may be attributed to the international scrutiny brought on by the World Cup. Civil society in Mexico flourished in the years leading up to the World Cup, possibly because the government was too busy preparing for the event. And, within a year of hosting the first faction of the PRI broke away.

In Mexico, the overall severity of abuses was not on par with other examples cited in this thesis. However, the suppression of civil liberties and freedoms definitely occurred under PRI rule. It took an economic crisis to bring about the first wave of political backlash, which resulted in the first faction breaking away from the PRI in 1987 forming a new, pro-democracy, political party. This faction consisted of political and social elites that were tired of being subjected to the PRI's domineering practices; they therefore

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

established the National Democratic Front (FDN) and successfully ran an oppositional campaign for President, Governor, and members of Parliament the following year.<sup>43</sup>

The FDN lost the Presidential election to the PRI; however, there was massive election fraud: “The dimensions of the fraud revealed themselves in the days that followed [the election]: the press reported tens of thousands of pro-FDN ballots found burnt and discarded, tally sheets altered.”<sup>44</sup> The perception of the elections as illegitimate led the President-elect to support the creation of a Permanent Agrarian Congress in 1989. This paved the way for other political and social organizations to be created and actually be involved in politics, “For the first time, a PRI regime accepted non-PRI-affiliated organizations, including some associated with opposition parties, as valid interlocuters.”<sup>45</sup> It seems that hosting had a grassroots effect within Mexico. This in turn, eventually led to a larger movement that continues fighting for social and political freedoms to this day.

Observing the FHI scores in the case of Mexico, the numbers indicate neutral growth within five years of hosting. Based on the Table 4.1, Mexico’s Political Rights score actually moved further away from being considered free. The initial score on the year it was awarded the right to host was three, with negative growth resulting in a four by the time the event took place. Similarly, there was no change in the Civil Liberties score. Mexico’s civil liberties score remained unchanged in 1983, the year it hosted, and five years later. Both scores indicate that Mexico was considered partially free by the FHI. While substantial growth in the areas above did not occur within Mexico overall, the proliferation of NGOs in Mexico during this time period has been well documented.

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<sup>43</sup> Kate Doyle, “‘Forgetting Is Not Justice’: Mexico Bares Its Secret Past,” *World Policy Journal* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 61–72.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p. 63.

<sup>45</sup> Grammont, Mackinlay, and Stoller, “Campesino and Indigenous Social Organizations Facing Democratic Transition in Mexico, 1938-2006.” p. 28.

Overall, it seems that no lasting incidental liberalization took place in the areas of political inclusion and civil liberties due to hosting. However, several mitigating factors can be looked at in the case of the 1986 World Cup. First, Mexico was awarded the right to host only three years before the event was to take place. Many of the normal reforms that coincide with mega-sporting events did not happen. The shorter time frame meant that specific changes usually required by FIFA were hastily passed over, in an effort to ease the host country's burden. Second, the PRI's strong international human rights record did not suggest scrutiny. Therefore, nations assumed that Mexico's strong human right rhetoric at the United Nations did not call for international evaluations of its internal human rights policies. These mitigating factors decreased the likely-hood that substantial change could take place in Mexico as a result of hosting.

### South Korea: 1988 Summer Olympics

The 1988 Summer Olympics that took place in Seoul, South Korea were regarded as one of the most successful mega-sporting events in Olympic history at the time: a record-breaking 14,000 athletes and officials from 160 countries participated.<sup>46</sup> When Seoul won the right to host in 1981, narrowly beating out rival and former colonial ruler Japan, many commentators expressed concern about the political climate in South Korea because of the oppressive nature of the ruling military regime and the continuing deteriorating North-South relations since the Korean War ended in 1953.<sup>47</sup> However, the political protests during the Olympic preparations led the military regime to enact

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<sup>46</sup> Han Sung-Joo, "South Korea in 1988: A Revolution in the Making," *Asian Survey* 29, no. 1 (January 1, 1989): 29–38.

<sup>47</sup> David R. Black and Shona Bezanson, "The Olympic Games, Human Rights and Democratisation: Lessons from Seoul and Implications for Beijing," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 7 (January 1, 2004): 1245–61.

sweeping democratic reforms that resulted in a new, multiparty, electoral democracy.<sup>48</sup>

Korea's democratic reformation is one of the best examples of how hosting a mega-sporting event can contribute to a political and normative change.

The original architect of the South Korean bid to host was military General Park Chung-hee. A military coup in 1961 brought Park to power, and he immediately sought to suppress political dissonance and rivals by removing all other parties from participation in government.<sup>49</sup> Park also actively suppressed many social groups within South Korea at the time, including: scholars, students, various religious groups, workers, and journalists. His rule saw an increase in protests by all of these groups, and at times his regime used violence to subdue any dissonance. In 1971, to quell student protests against his third presidential term and newly-mandated military training for all, General Park issued a garrison decree that stationed military personal at all colleges in South Korea.<sup>50</sup> He also attempted to control the press by enacting the 1963 Media Law, which "gave the government the authority to monitor and censor any media publications as well as televised and radio news."<sup>51</sup> A revision of the law in 1973 gave General Park ultimate power over the media.

While many human rights abuses were taking place, Park also oversaw the greatest advancement of the Korean economy under his rule. Park instituted economic policies that saw the economy grow by an average of 9.7 percent per annum.<sup>52</sup> Scholars

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> BBC, "South Korea Profile," *BBC News*, June 7, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15292674>.

<sup>50</sup> Gi-Wook Shin et al., *South Korea's Democracy Movement (1970-1993): Stanford Korea Democracy Project Report* (Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 2007), [http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/22590/KDP\\_Report\\_\(final\)-1.pdf](http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/22590/KDP_Report_(final)-1.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p. 40.

<sup>52</sup> Black and Bezanson, "The Olympic Games, Human Rights and Democratisation."

consider these policies to demonstrate economic liberalization at a time when the political situation was becoming increasingly illiberal. With the economic growth, a growing middle class became increasingly tired of the repressive regime, and more protests broke out across the country. These protests continued and grew more intense in the late 1970s, until Park's assassination in 1979.

At this time, General Chun Doo-hwan took power, continuing the military regime's rule. In continuing Park's policies, General Chun did not allow any dissonance, and ultimately declared martial law in 1980. This enraged students in the city of Kwangju, who began an uprising that changed the course of South Korean history:

The contest between students and the state came to a head in the city of Kwangju on May 18, 1980 when students from Chonnam University clashed with the police. This confrontation quickly escalated into civil strife and several hundred civilians died in that incident. Following the Kwangju massacre, Chun Doo Hwan executed a strict policy of repressing any dissenting voices that would challenge his rise to power. Not only student protest, but all protest dwindled from 1980- 1984.<sup>53</sup>

Government documents state that around 500 protesters were killed, while human rights organizations estimate it could have been as many as 2,000.<sup>54</sup>

In 1981 Chun was indirectly elected to a seven-year term as president, ending martial law, and the government continued to strong-arm any dissent. "Politically, the country remained dominated by centralised, authoritarian and illiberal (though deeply anti-communist) governments. Under these governments, human rights abuses were widespread, corruption was rampant and suppression of opposition was almost certain."<sup>55</sup>

During Chun's first few years in office, the democracy movement of the 1960s and 70s

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<sup>53</sup> Shin et al., *South Korea's Democracy Movement (1970-1993)*. p. 25.

<sup>54</sup> Democracy Now, "25 Years Ago: The Kwangju Massacre in South Korea," *Democracy Now!*, May 18, 2005, [http://www.democracynow.org/2005/5/18/25\\_years\\_ago\\_the\\_kwangju\\_massacre](http://www.democracynow.org/2005/5/18/25_years_ago_the_kwangju_massacre).

<sup>55</sup> Black and Bezanson, "The Olympic Games, Human Rights and Democratisation." p. 1248.

was largely nonexistent out of fear that those involved would be put into prison, tortured, or killed.

According to Manheim, in 1981 when the IOC chose Seoul to host the 1988 Summer Olympics, the ruling military regime intended to use this opportunity to meet three objectives. First, the military regime sought to legitimize its rule by using the Olympics as a conduit to gain favorability among the rising middle class. South Korea had shifted from an agrarian to an industrial economy, and most of the middle class was leaving the countryside and creating a large workforce in urban environments. This in turn raised the standard of living among South Koreans, and the GNP was steadily increasing.<sup>56</sup> This resulted in economic freedom without political freedom, and the middle class was growing increasingly anxious to have a say in the political future of their country.

Second, General Chung wanted to raise international recognition of South Korea's economic emergence. In 1971, South Korea had to abandon plans to host the Asian Games as it could not afford to build the necessary facilities, which it considered a national and international embarrassment.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, the regime sought to burnish its international image by successfully hosting the Olympics: "In this context, the visibility afforded by a successful Olympic enterprise would proclaim to the world South Korea's new status as an industrializing country while providing a vehicle for credit-claiming at home."<sup>58</sup> The regime's desire to project a positive national image abroad became increasingly significant as the Olympic Games drew near as the regime attempted to deal

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<sup>56</sup> Jarol B. Manheim, "Rites of Passage: The 1988 Seoul Olympics as Public Diplomacy," *The Western Political Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (June 1, 1990): 279–95.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. p. 282.



with increasing unrest and accusations of human rights abuses. While news outlets around the world did not give much space to the complete disrespect for social rights in South Korea, there were a few reporters discussing the topic in the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times.<sup>59</sup>

Lastly, the government sought to renew awareness of the threat posed by North Korea.<sup>60</sup> Days after winning the right to host, North Korea demanded the right to cohost eight events and called the event “the Games of the XXIVth Olympiad at Pyongyang.”<sup>61</sup> The run up to the games became an endless back-and-forth between North and South Korea with threats, and acts of terrorism, most notably the bombing of South Korean Airlines flight 858 in 1987 by North Korean agents killing everyone on board.<sup>62</sup> By having the Olympics in South Korea, all participating nations would arrive and feel the effects of North Korean intimidation and aggression. It would also require substantial diplomatic work by the North Koreans to convince other nations to boycott a second Olympics after all communist nations had boycotted the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. North Korea’s efforts proved futile with 160 nations participating in the South Korean Games. South Korea also did not share any of its hosting duties with its neighbor to the north. In protest, North Korea decided not to participate. South Korea did successfully restore awareness of the North’s aggression and even recruited a few of North Korea’s allies, notably China and the USSR, into trade agreements.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Richard W. Pound, *Five Rings over Korea: The Secret Negotiations behind the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul* (Little, Brown Boston, 1994), <http://www.getcited.org/pub/103167717>.

<sup>62</sup> Giwoong Jung, “Sport as a Catalyst for Cooperation: Why Sport Dialogue between the Two Koreas Succeeds in Some Cases but Not in Others,” *International Area Studies Review* 16, no. 3 (September 1, 2013): 307–24.

<sup>63</sup> Sung-Joo, “South Korea in 1988.”

In analyzing the normative growth in South Korea from the early to late 1980s, what began as an extremely repressive regime turned into a regime that saw no other way to survive than to concede to certain public demands. Concerning the norms of political inclusion and respect for civil liberties, General Chung used military force to repress dissent against his own people (i.e. the Kwangju Massacre in 1980). This was a clear violation of civil rights, namely the freedom of speech and the right to peaceful protests. Also, the electoral system was clearly not inclusive and demonstrated no adherence to inclusion of other political parties. News censorship was a direct violation of basic freedoms afforded in a democratic society. However, as the Olympic Games approached, with increasing international scrutiny as athletes, press, and political members from all over the world arrived, the South Korean government made substantial concessions to retain the right to host and to diffuse the political crisis. “Rather than a pressure-point for sustaining the political status quo to maintain stability, [the Olympics] became a pressure-point forcing controlled change to maintain stability.”<sup>64</sup>

The military regime in South Korea was heavily invested in the successful hosting of the Olympics, and the pressure mounted by this was a catalyst that proved too much. Chung and his supporters knew that hosting the Olympics would make South Korea highly visible; however, they did not realize that hosting would actually bring about the democratization of their own regime. As a result of hosting the Olympics and the international scrutiny it brought upon itself, the domestic struggles for political change in Korea were highlighted and this “helped extract concessions from a government on its

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<sup>64</sup> Manheim, “Rites of Passage.” p. 291-292.

best behavior.”<sup>65</sup> So with mounting international pressure, General Chung changed the constitution to allow for direct presidential elections in 1986.<sup>66</sup> However, this was not enough to discourage Koreans from demanding more democratic changes, and protests continued into 1987.

Student unrest, coupled with international pressures, ultimately removed General Chung from power in 1987 and brought General Roh Tae-woo into office.<sup>67</sup> The continuing political instability worried the IOC and those due to take part in the Olympics the following year. To save the country’s reputation and not lose the right to host, General Roh granted more political liberalization and pursued an anti-corruption agenda. Even though General Roh was part of the old military regime, his June 29<sup>th</sup> Declaration paved the way for the first free parliamentary elections in 1988.<sup>68</sup> This brought in a new, freely elected parliament that was in favor of more democratic reforms, even though some members were part of the former military regime.

Observing the FHI scores in the case of South Korea, the scores clearly indicate advancement and lasting change took place, even before the event occurred. Table 4.1 indicates a dramatic change in South Korea between the years it won the right to host and the year it hosted. Initially it was classified as not free in both Political Rights and Civil Liberties with a score of five in 1981. Dramatic changes within South Korea occurred by the time the Olympics began. South Korea’s Political Rights improved to two in 1988, indicating a classification of free. That score remained the same five years later, indicating a lasting change. Similarly, South Korea’s Civil Liberties score improved to a

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<sup>65</sup> Black and Bezanson, “The Olympic Games, Human Rights and Democratisation.” p. 1253.

<sup>66</sup> BBC, “South Korea Profile.”

<sup>67</sup> Su-Hoon Lee, “Transitional Politics of Korea, 1987-1992: Activation of Civil Society,” *Pacific Affairs* 66, no. 3 (October 1, 1993): 351–67.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

three the year it hosted indicating partially free, and improved further to two five years after hosting. These scores point to lasting changes in South Korea.

The South Korean political transition from an authoritarian military regime to an electoral democracy is the best example of the influence that mega-sporting events can have on illiberal states, forcing them to liberalize. Ultimately, “It was the presence of the press, the negative image of South Korea it conveyed to the world, and the legitimacy it conferred on demonstrators and opposition politicians that ultimately forced the ruling party to make significant political concessions.”<sup>69</sup> The preparations for the 1988 Olympic Games became the necessary political context to enable reform of South Korea’s military dictatorship, giving voice and the right to vote to the protestors who previously had been silenced and only shown the barrel of a gun. The democratic reforms continued and in 1993 the election of the first civilian president and opponent of the military regime, Kim Young Sam, took place.<sup>70</sup>

### China: 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics

The 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics were both record-breaking and startling for many reasons. First, 204 nations were represented, the most in the history of any Olympics at the time. Second, it became the most-watched Olympics ever, and possibly the most-watched event in history, with approximately 70 percent of the world’s population tuning in to observe the festivities. Estimates put that number at around 4.7 billion viewers from every corner of the globe.<sup>71</sup> It was also the first Olympics to have global digital coverage, offering 153 million viewers the opportunity to watch via live

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<sup>69</sup> Manheim, “Rites of Passage.” p. 291.

<sup>70</sup> Lee, “Transitional Politics of Korea, 1987-1992.”

<sup>71</sup> Susan Brownell, “Human Rights and the Beijing Olympics: Imagined Global Community and the Transnational Public sphere1,” *British Journal of Sociology* 63, no. 2 (June 2012): 306–27.

broadcasts online in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Third, 100 international dignitaries, including 85 heads of state, attended the opening ceremony. This included the U.S. President, which marked the first time a U.S. President attended an opening ceremony not on American soil. Lastly, it was the most expensive Olympics at that time, totaling around US\$40 billion in preparation costs: more than all the Summer Games since 1984 combined.<sup>72</sup> Beijing 2008 truly was a global event.

However, staging the most expensive Olympics came at a cost to many Chinese citizens. International observers, including Amnesty International, recorded multiple human rights violations as a result of the Games. It is estimated that the preparations for the Beijing Olympic Games displaced 1.5 million people in Beijing alone. This was caused by massive evictions by the Beijing municipal government in low-income neighborhoods for the construction of stadiums/venues and villages that were used during the Games. “Due to the large-scale urban gentrification and stadium construction, the government, in order to establish these centrally planned zones, coerced residents out of their homes with little or no compensation or re-accommodation plans.”<sup>73</sup> This had a larger impact on the lower socioeconomic class and was an adverse aspect of the Olympic legacy the Chinese communist government was trying to create.

The People’s Republic of China grew out of the Mao Revolution that took place in 1949. The communist party, led by Mao Zedong, fought a 20-year civil war against the

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<sup>72</sup> Anne Broudehoux, “Spectacular Beijing: The Conspicuous Construction of an Olympic Metropolis,” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29, no. 4 (2007): 383–99.

<sup>73</sup> Chu Hao Chan, “The Role of Government in the Olympic Games: A Comparative Study of the Beijing 2008 Olympics and the Vancouver 2010 Olympics.” (Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin, 2011), [http://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/47790/Chan,%20Eric%20\(2011\).pdf?sequence=1](http://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/47790/Chan,%20Eric%20(2011).pdf?sequence=1). p. 29.

nationalist party that ended with the nationalists retreating to present day Taiwan.<sup>74</sup> Mao oversaw the Cultural Revolution that took place from 1966-76, which produced intense social, political, and economic upheaval. Mao ruled until his death in 1976, at which time Deng Xiaoping emerged as leader of the communist party. Many of Mao's practices and policies are still in place in some form today. Mao's illiberal regime used a firm, and often violent, hand to deal with dissidence or attempts to undermine the ruling regime.

Deng Xiaoping undertook far-reaching economic reforms, normalized relations with the United States, instituted the One-Child Policy to curb population growth, and continued the suppression of many minority groups.<sup>75</sup> Also, Deng instituted the Open-Door Policy for foreign investments and developed the private sector, which catapulted the Chinese economy to becoming the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in the world by 1992 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest by 2010, as reported by the IMF.<sup>76</sup> However, during Deng's rule, the historic Tiananmen Square protests took place that saw pro-democratic student protests and uprisings against the Chinese military.<sup>77</sup> Ultimately, the Chinese military suppressed the protests using lethal force. This shed light on, and resulted in, the worldwide condemnation of the human rights abuses taking place in China.

The next president, Jiang Zemin, took charge in 1989 as leader of the People's Republic of China. The communist party noticed Jiang during his time as mayor of Shanghai, in which he effectively dealt with student and professor protests while still maintaining control of the city. During his time as president, a meeting between the

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<sup>74</sup> "China Profile," *BBC News*, January 8, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13017882>.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Robert Gilpin, *The Challenge of Global Capitalism: The Global Economy in the 21st Century* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2000).

<sup>77</sup> "China Profile."

Shanghai Five (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) in 1996 agreed to cooperate to combat ethnic and religious tensions in each other's countries.<sup>78</sup> Jiang also cracked down on political dissent by banning the China Democratic Party in 1998. In contrast, he worked to help private entrepreneurs and incorporate them into the communist party. It was under Jiang's leadership that China bid to host the Olympics, winning the right to host in 2001. The IOC was concerned about the prospective host two years later when the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak occurred in China. However, officials felt China had enough time to address the outbreak and ensure safety for the Games in 2008. It was also in 2001 that Uzbekistan joined the Shanghai Five, creating the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and an agreement was signed to fight ethnic and religious militants in their respective countries while increasing trade and investment.<sup>79</sup>

Jiang Zemin was replaced in 2003 when the communist party members elected Hu Jintao as President. Hu was the leader of the party when Beijing hosted the 2008 Olympics, and he sought to develop more economic ties with Asian and African nations. Jiang continued the regime's previous practices of centralized authority and the repression of political dissidence. Growing international awareness of the human rights abuses in China began to create increasing calls for greater accountability by the Chinese government for the atrocities it was committing against its own people. From 2003-2008, Amnesty International published eight reports regarding the Chinese government's disrespect for social, human, worker, and immigrant rights leading up to the Olympics entitled the "Olympics Countdown." However, such reports were never released in China

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

because the phrase “human rights” is censored in China.<sup>80</sup> Media censorship is one method the Chinese government has used to keep its population, consisting of 20 percent of the world population, uninformed about global norms related to respect for individual rights.

The literature about the 2008 Beijing Olympics, emphasizes that the Chinese government’s motivation for hosting were the political importance and international-image building that occur for host nations: “The Beijing Olympics is first and foremost a political act and assertion. It is also a statement of national intent, the culmination of ideological effort going back to 1999 and the outcome of political, social, cultural and economic changes.”<sup>81</sup> In sum, China hoped to use global sporting as an avenue to achieve respect, esteem, and international recognition.

China experienced vast economic growth in the 1990s and had been categorized by many economists and other scholars as an emerging global power.<sup>82</sup> The government’s bid to host sought to rectify the prevailing image of China as a poor, developing country that many around the world still pictured. However, a large portion of the country still lives below the poverty line, and acts of political dissent result in apprehension and imprisonment of many activists. China wanted to utilize the Olympics to reinvent its image abroad by displaying a technologically advanced, modern, and unified image to the observers watching around the world. Also, some IOC members

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<sup>80</sup> Brownell, “Human Rights and the Beijing Olympics.”

<sup>81</sup> Lynn Minnaert, “An Olympic Legacy for All? The Non-Infrastructural Outcomes of the Olympic Games for Socially Excluded Groups (Atlanta 1996–Beijing 2008),” *Tourism Management* 33, no. 2 (April 2012): 361–70. p. 367.

<sup>82</sup> James F. Hoge Jr, “Global Power Shift in the Making-Is the United States Ready,” *Foreign Affairs* 83 (August 2004): 2–7.



hoped that by awarding the Games to China, the international pressure and scrutiny brought on the government would prompt liberalization.<sup>83</sup>

Beijing lost the bid to host the 2000 Olympics to Sydney. Many IOC members indicated that China was not ready for such an event, largely due to its human rights record.<sup>84</sup> There was also concern over the amount of smog and pollution in Beijing, ranked one of the world's worst cities for air pollution.<sup>85</sup> The Beijing Olympics theme of "One World, One Dream" was an attempt by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG) to secure its bid predicated on the agreement that all attendees, most notably journalists, would be accorded unfettered access throughout the country and would be able to report on any topic they wanted. The IOC saw this provision of the bid – which addressed the IOC's concern with the bid on the 2000 Games – as a concession by the Chinese government regarding certain stipulations that would restrict journalists and the reporting of human rights within China.<sup>86</sup> China also committed to host the most environmentally friendly Olympics ever, terming it the "Green Olympics." China sought to counter its renowned negative environmental record by using the most sustainable and eco-friendly materials for construction.<sup>87</sup> Both – the freedom for the media and commitment to green construction – were unparalleled moves by the Chinese government.

One serious point of contention on the issue of human rights was the exclusion and mistreatment of Tibetans. The Tibet issue was widely discussed among critics of the

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<sup>83</sup> Stefanie Beyer, "The Green Olympic Movement: Beijing 2008," *Chinese Journal of International Law* 5, no. 2 (July 1, 2006): 423–40.

<sup>84</sup> David Rowe, "The Bid, the Lead-Up, the Event and the Legacy: Global Cultural Politics and Hosting the Olympics," *British Journal of Sociology* 63, no. 2 (June 2012): 285–305.

<sup>85</sup> Kathryn Minnick, "Torch Smog," *Earth Island Journal* 22, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 25–29.

<sup>86</sup> Rowe, "The Bid, the Lead-Up, the Event and the Legacy."

<sup>87</sup> Minnick, "Torch Smog."

IOC's awarding China the right to host, and social activists around the world held protests along many stops of the Olympic Torch Relay in advance of the Beijing opening ceremony. Also, with China's close economic ties and political support to the Sudanese government, which has pursued policies of genocidal activities in Darfur, some journalists and activists termed the Beijing Games the "Genocide Games" or "Genocide Olympics" in an attempt to discredit the Chinese government during its global coming out party.<sup>88</sup>

As previously noted, the Beijing Olympics were the most expensive in history at that time. (The 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia now hold the record.) In preparation, the Chinese government built large, lavish facilities and venues for the Games. As part of this new construction, the Chinese government confiscated and bought land in urban environments. Most of the land was acquired well below market value, and millions of people were forced out of their homes with little to no compensation: "China's paradoxical status as a market economy led by an authoritarian state thus facilitated the demolition of entire city neighborhoods and mass eviction of residents for the Olympics."<sup>89</sup> Many citizens tried to fight their evictions and stay in their homes; however, developers employed eviction squads that forced citizens out of their homes in the middle of the night, with citizens watching their home being destroyed with their possessions still inside.

In regards to political inclusion and respect for civil rights, China has shown a clear disregard for all these in the exclusion and mistreatment of Tibetans; strict and violent government responses to certain ethnic; religious, and political groups; censorship

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<sup>88</sup> Rowe, "The Bid, the Lead-Up, the Event and the Legacy."

<sup>89</sup> Broudehoux, "Spectacular Beijing." p. 389.

of the media; and a strict One-Child policy that resulted in female infanticide practices for decades.<sup>90</sup> These are but a few examples of the practices that are out of alignment with global norms. Some human rights activists even claim that China's human rights record has actually become worse since hosting, noting that the Olympics "contributed to the country's anti-democratic environment, as the leadership forcibly moved millions of people to make way for Olympic facilities and placed new restrictions on ethnic and religious minorities."<sup>91</sup>

However, as a result, certain policies implemented by the Chinese government have curtailed some abuses, paving the way for a bit more freedom. Most notable are the free press policies that were instituted for the Olympics and the resulting impact on China's domestic media. Separate from the social, educational, environmental, and infrastructural legacies from the Beijing 2008, the IOC noted in its *Final Report of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad, Beijing 2008* that the extension of international media access rights for the Games "ended up being one of the great legacies of the Beijing Games, with unparalleled access rights guaranteed to the world media and maintained long after . . . some of these positive developments appear to have attained permanence."<sup>92</sup> This report also noted that several laws enacted for the Games remain in

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<sup>90</sup> Brownell, "Human Rights and the Beijing Olympics"; Elizabeth J. Perry, "Studying Chinese Politics: Farewell to Revolution?" *The China Journal*, no. 57 (January 1, 2007): 1–22; Julie Jimmerson, "Female Infanticide in China: An Examination of Cultural and Legal Norms," *UCLA Pac. Basin LJ* 8 (1990): 47.

<sup>91</sup> "Survey: Olympics Worsened China's Rights Record," *Tibetan Review: The Monthly Magazine on All Aspects of Tibet* 43, no. 2 (February 2008): 28–29. p. 28.

<sup>92</sup> Rowe, "The Bid, the Lead-Up, the Event and the Legacy"; International Olympic Committee, *Final Report of the IOC Coordination Commission, Games of the XXIX Olympiad, Beijing 2008* (January, 2010).

place regarding: anti-piracy measures; IP rights; and the Internet.<sup>93</sup> The enactment of these laws demonstrates that in preparation for an event of a global scale, and the fact that this was the first Olympics to have global digital coverage, Internet related issues and media restrictions had to be changed. While a few of the Internet related laws have since been retracted (due to a fear of the role the Internet played in the Arab Spring democracy movement), many of them are still in place today.

Another positive outcome from the Beijing 2008 Olympics is the environmental awareness and sustainability education that occurred among Chinese citizens. Beijing promised a green, high-tech and people focused Games, and part of that came true. With new policies being implemented and a large amount of funding earmarked for sustainable construction of the venues, this was a dramatic step forward in terms of China's environmental policies. "Of the estimated \$25 billion devoted to the Olympic preparations, nearly half has been designated for environmental improvement projects. A total of \$12.2 billion is earmarked ... [for] projects that range from changing energy policies, retrofitting high-polluting enterprises, and moving factories to improving infrastructure, reducing auto emissions and solid waste control."<sup>94</sup>

One such policy was the Environmental Impact Assessment Law (EIA) that requires all large construction projects to perform environmental and social impact assessments prior to beginning construction. This law, created in 2002 and revised in 2006 and 2012, requires companies to include public participation on all projects:

To enhance public participation in the EIA process, SEPA [State Environmental Protection Agency] promulgated the Provisional Measures on Public Participation in Environmental Impact

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<sup>93</sup> International Olympic Committee, *Final Report of the IOC Coordination Commission, Games of the XXIX Olympiad, Beijing 2008*.

<sup>94</sup> Beyer, "The Green Olympic Movement." p. 429.

Assessment (Provisional Measures), aiming to promote process transparency and ensure public access to information by imposing an obligation to disclose information on project proponents, EIA institutions, and environmental protection authorities.<sup>95</sup>

It seems that such laws and provisions are slowly beginning to make an impact, as SEPA has shut down many construction projects for companies that have failed to produce such impact assessments.<sup>96</sup>

The amount of money spent on the Olympics also had some benefits for the city of Beijing, “such as the encouragement of grassroots sports, the shaping of a national identity, the growth in environmental awareness, and increased sports participation among the young.”<sup>97</sup> However, it seems that outside of Beijing, socially excluded groups did not feel the benefit of the Olympics. A survey conducted by Lynn Minnaert found that hosting the Olympics might have actually increased social inequalities as opposed to reducing them. She notes that the lavish spending in Beijing actually made socially excluded groups feel worse off by the overt spending displayed by the privileged. However, she notes that, “social exclusion is not an often-used concept in China – it may not be culturally relevant.”<sup>98</sup> That said, while the Games did not produce a tangible benefit to some socially excluded groups, it did increase awareness of inequalities, which could position these groups to further political mobilization in the future.

Observing the FHI scores in the case of China, the numbers indicate neutral growth within five years of hosting. Table 4.1 shows no growth in China’s Political Rights and Civil Liberties scores for the years China was awarded the games, the year it

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<sup>95</sup> Yuhong Zhao, “Assessing the Environmental Impact of Projects: A Critique of the EIA Legal Regime in China,” *Natural Resources Journal* 49 (2009): 485–524. p. 499.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Minnaert, “An Olympic Legacy for All?” p. 367.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. p. 368.

hosted, or five years after. Within the span of 12 years, no growth in either category took place. These scores indicate that China remains ranked as one of the most un-free nations in the world.

In sum, while the 2008 Beijing Olympics facilitated advancement in some elements of Internet and media freedom, the development of Beijing citizens' awareness of environmental and health issues, and an inclusiveness among Beijing residents, it failed to expand some of these changes to all parts of China. And, while it may have increased awareness among socially excluded groups, it failed to result in meaningful advancements in the government's respect for social rights. While some of the IOC's hopes to use the Games as a catalyst for the liberalization of human rights fell short, the Games resulted in greater international scrutiny in and of China. The 2008 Beijing Games shows that the ideals of olympism, as translated into action by the hosting of the Olympics, have a definite but uneven impact on the advancement of global social norms and liberalization.

### Analysis

Has there been some liberalization in the host countries I have selected, that one can claim to be the result of the decision to host? Overall, to some degree yes but not necessarily with lasting effect.

In most countries, hosting has led to a free media (at least for the event) and inclusion of previously socially excluded groups into sporting activity. In addition, these events serve as a galvanizing force for international pressure, media scrutiny, and domestic activism/mobilization. Because the governing bodies and the events themselves embody the liberal ideals of inclusiveness and social rights, there is the expectation that

the host countries will uphold and respect these values. With that expectation comes pressure to conform to and uphold those ideals, which results in liberalization.

International pressure focuses on any negative practices conducted by the host nation; this could be in the area of human rights abuses, suppression of individuals or groups, corruption within the government, and a lack of general respect for citizens' rights. Examples of this are the large movement to boycott the Argentina World Cup due to its practice of "disappearing" opponents and the pressure applied by the international community on the South Korean regime for change prior to the Olympics.

Media scrutiny highlights the failures or troubles of the ruling regime. This media scrutiny mainly comes from the international press evaluating the hosting country. Examples of this include the reports produced by AI before the Beijing Olympics that highlighted the failures of the communist party on the Tibetan issue, and the role the press played in highlighting Chinese support for the Sudanese government.

Domestic actors mobilize against an illiberal regime during the lead up to, and actual hosting of, the event. This mobilization is amplified by the presence of the international press, which results in the development of an international network supporting the activists' agenda. An example is the increase in human rights based NGOs in Mexico due to attention received by the international press.

These three influences are interlocking. Individually, these factors may produce nominal adherence to political inclusion and the respect of civil liberties. However, these three factors combined have a larger and more instrumental effect on the liberalization process; global sporting events serve as a force-multiplier galvanizing these three factors.

As such, when these three factors work in concert, a country is more like to experience political liberalization.

In South Korea, all three factors were present (international pressure, media attention, and domestic mobilization), which led to substantial liberalization and ultimately to democratization: international pressure by the IOC and the countries attending the event highlighted the political exclusion of certain groups; media scrutiny regarding the regime's ability to prepare for the event showcased the nervousness surrounding the importance of the event for the regime; and a renewed domestic activism/mobilization took place in the years leading up to the event via pro-democratic student, labor, and religious protests. This was the only case in which all three factors were present, and it is also the case that experienced the largest change in political inclusion and respect for civil liberties.

Argentina also experienced more than one influence (international pressure, media attention), and while hosting may not have led directly to liberalization, increased international pressure as a result of media attention led to more domestic mobilization post-event. The international pressure placed on Argentina by the qualifying nations through a boycott campaign almost led to the cancellation of the 1978 World Cup. Similarly, the report by AI that highlighted the abuses taking place resulted in an increase in the international press in attendance, giving this World Cup the nickname of "The World Cup of the Press." This in turn had a substantial effect on the democratization of Argentina in the early 1980s.

In both Mexico and China only one factor was present. As a result of Mexico's hosting, domestic mobilization took place in the form of a growth in NGOs within



Mexico. The absence of international pressure and media attention to its human rights practices effectively held the PRI in place, and as such a slower process of democratization occurred. While there was a small advance in political inclusion that began just after hosting, the wider reform largely occurred later as a result of problems within the PRI and its handling of the Mexican financial crisis, not the hosting of the World Cup.

China saw the least amount of liberalization overall, as shown in the case study and by its Freedom House Index scores. China essentially only experienced increased media attention regarding its suppression of the Internet and press, which in turn led to a limited loosening up in these areas. International scrutiny over China's human rights policies began long before China hosted the Olympics; therefore, this was not a new factor attributed to hosting.

It seems that in both Mexico and China, several mitigating factors were present that reduced lasting liberalization. In Mexico, the significantly short prep time – three years versus twelve years – may have hindered the full development of international scrutiny and media attention. This in turn did not result in sustained pressure for many years prior to hosting, which was not enough time to allow international pressure to gain momentum. This may also have been in part because Mexico's international human rights policies were so different from its domestic ones; observers may have overlooked such domestic policies.

In China, no lasting liberalization took place during the event because the communist party held a stronghold on power in China. The ruling party had essentially no competition politically and had a tight grip on those in charge of the Olympics. The

regime sought to internalize Olympic success into Chinese success, making those who were against hosting or were impeding positive developments seem like disloyal persons. Therefore, the communist party's power overshadowed attempts by citizens to have the regime seen in a negative light.

Moreover, global events outside the realm of sport, can lead to the retraction of reforms initiated during hosting. In China, for example, the limited Internet and media reforms that took place during the Olympics were retracted in response to the Arab Spring democracy movement that began in 2010. The Arab Spring resulted in protective measures being taken by some illiberal, authoritarian regimes in order to maintain the status quo: "The Chinese Communist Party's pushback, which aimed to quash potential prodemocracy demonstrations before they even emerged, reached a crescendo in December [2012] with the sentencing of a number of dissident writers to long terms in prison."<sup>99</sup>

Hosting the Olympics seems to have a larger impact on liberalization than hosting the World Cup. Since the IOC is involved in a plethora of sports, and it is hosted every two years via the Summer and Winter Olympics, it seems there is a larger impact on host nations. The Olympics also have a greater association with human rights. Scholars have noted the effect that hosting the Olympics can have on host nations. According to Black and Bezanson, "...in the post-Cold War era, there is a sound basis for believing that the Olympics will be positively associated with human rights amelioration and/or democratization."<sup>100</sup> Manheim adds that, "In this context, it might be useful to view the hosting of the Olympics as a event highly dramatic, highly visible, quasi-historical,

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<sup>99</sup> Arch Puddington, "Freedom in the World 2012: The Arab Uprisings and Their Global Repercussions," *Freedom in the World*, 2012, 1–40. p. 2.

<sup>100</sup> Black and Bezanson, "The Olympic Games, Human Rights and Democratisation." p. 1246.

intermediate-length which possesses a sufficient dynamic of its own, under certain circumstances, to overwhelm those who would use or control it.”<sup>101</sup>

A study in 2010 found that protests held in connection with the Olympics from 1896 until 2008 have “grown substantially over time and evolved from a tendency toward state-based boycotts and domestic demonstration to a tendency toward protest over an increasingly broad range of issues [such as human rights, poverty, environment] by transnational networks and social movements.”<sup>102</sup>

With both IOC and FIFA events attracting such attention and viewership, it is easy to see why these organizations have been utilizing sport as a catalyst for change in host countries. According to news reports, “The 2010 World Cup final was probably seen by at least 1 billion people, though the 2008 Beijing Olympics opening ceremony appears to retain top spot as the most-watched televised event.”<sup>103</sup> This shows how important sport is to the everyday citizen, and if FIFA and the IOC use hosting as a platform to promote the democratic values within their charters, hosting could have far reaching implications in the future as citizens expect certain conditions to change in accordance with the values promoted.

## Conclusion

The case studies show that there can be an incidental liberalization of illiberal host nations when they host global sporting events. However, liberalization does not always take place and is determined by a multitude of factors. Under the right

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<sup>101</sup> Manheim, “Rites of Passage.” p. 293.

<sup>102</sup> M. Patrick Cottrell and Travis Nelson, “Not Just the Games? Power, Protest and Politics at the Olympics,” *European Journal of International Relations* 17, no. 4 (December 1, 2011): 729–53. p. 475.

<sup>103</sup> Associated Press, “FIFA: At Least 1 Billion Saw 2010 Cup Final on TV,” *ESPN.com*, July 11, 2011, [http://espn.go.com/sports/soccer/news/\\_/id/6758280/least-1-billion-saw-part-2010-world-cup-final](http://espn.go.com/sports/soccer/news/_/id/6758280/least-1-billion-saw-part-2010-world-cup-final).

circumstances, a nation can undergo significant liberalization if international pressure, media attention, and domestic mobilization occur. These factors mutually reinforce one another. On the other hand, preparation time, and the strength of the ruling regime are factors that work against liberalization.

FIFA has less of a political approach than the IOC, and therefore less of an impact, on furthering the democracy agenda. Jerome Valcke, FIFA Secretary General, stated in 2013 at a Symposium discussing the World Cup as an event, “I will say something which is crazy, but less democracy is sometimes better for organising a World Cup.”<sup>104</sup> He continued, “When you have a very strong head of state who can decide, as maybe [President Vladimir] Putin can do in 2018, that is easier for us organisers than a country such as Germany, where you have to negotiate at different levels.”<sup>105</sup> FIFA’s goal is to produce a profitable and memorable World Cup, it is not to advocate for liberalization. Nevertheless, my research and the work of scholars has shown that political change can be a byproduct of hosting the Olympics and World Cup simply because it accords with the norms of sport.

Future works could focus more on the conditions imposed by FIFA and the IOC on host nations. Currently, many of the required documents are confidential or only available at the headquarters of both organizations, both of which are located in Switzerland. As these reports become declassified, more information on the conditionality placed on host nations will become available, allowing scholars to assess what other factors led to, or could lead to, political – and social – liberalization in host nations.

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<sup>104</sup> “Too Much Democracy - Fifa’s Valcke,” *BBC Sport*, April 24, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/football/22288688>.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

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