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IDENTITY POLITICS AND GLOBALIZATION:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOUTH KOREAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF
THE 2008 BEIJING OLYMPIC GAMES

by

Nakyoung Kim

A Doctoral Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of
The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

September, 2012

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School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the extent to and the way in which the contemporary political and socio-cultural context of South Korea, a divided, postcolonial and Northeast Asian nation is embedded in the national media coverage of global sport events, especially the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Attention is given to the implications of current state of international relations, politics and foreign policies between the R.O.K. and its geopolitical neighbours such as the U.S. and the D.P.R.K., Japan and China from the Northeast. The similarities and differences in the symbolic descriptions of Olympic athletes and delegates, and their achievements along with their identity markers such as national identity, regional identity, race and ethnicity are analysed. The global-national patterns and transformations in the power relations between hegemonic and ideological elements, such as nationalisms, racial/ethnic stereotypes, pan-Asian sentiments and Asianism, are examined. According to the characteristics of conservative or progressive, mainstream or sport-specific and print or television media coverage, the ways in which reporting style and tendency are distinctive from each other are clarified.

Data was collected from newspapers and television coverage in the period of Beijing Olympic Games and a week before and after the Games. Media content analysis, including thematic analysis, discourse analysis and visual/image analysis, is used to analyse the data in both quantitative and qualitative terms. The theoretical frameworks of identity politics, contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociological concepts of ‘personal pronouns’ and the ‘established and outsiders’ are applied. The research findings discuss the twin process of increasing varieties and diminishing contrasts and homogenising and heterogenising tendencies in the globalisation process, which was evident in the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and its opening ceremony.

Keywords: Globalization, Media, Olympics, Nationalisms, Korea, Identity Politics, Cultural Studies and Figurational Sociology.
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INTRODUCTION

1. Preliminary Observations

We are living in a world in which localities, nations and regions are bound together by the process of globalization. The preservation of local, indigenous traditions within the Westernised and Americanised global culture have been two sides of the same coin for people living their local lives within their regions and nations, which are part of ‘a single social space – the globe’ (Maguire, 1994, p. 400). People and nations are interwoven in a deeper and tighter interdependency network by the globalisation process, even if spatial and temporal dimensions appear different in each location. The contemporary context and changes of a location - a nation or locality - have interacted to create, maintain and reproduce an entity of hegemony and ideology. Referring to these issues, Maguire and Falcous observe:

‘Local and national identities, although sometimes represented as united, currently appear to be in a state of flux, yet, despite this, have tended to win out over other cultural sources of cultural identity. This dislocation is arguably connected to globalization processes’ (2005, p. 26).

Media coverage, in this fashion, plays a significant role in conveying the prisms of a nation’s dominant ideologies as defined by ‘power structures, cultural repertoires and politico-economic interests’ (Lee et al., 2000, p. 295). The media reflect the nation’s political and socio-cultural perspectives of other nations by defining international rivalries (Lee, 2007; Richards, 2000; Rosie et al., 2004). The mediated analysis of the Olympic Games, therefore, is closely linked to a nation’s contemporary conditions and changes and its relations with other nations in an interdependency
network within the globalisation process. A multi-causal and multi-dimensional examination of the implications of such an analysis is likely to prove informative.

Thus, this thesis focuses on the media sport complex as a tool to examine the contemporary sporting cultures and to analyse the South Korean media coverage of global sporting events sociologically. This thesis is original in terms of its specific focus on the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The originality of thesis is laid on the sociological examination of the relation between the venue for a sports mega event and its treatment by the media. As Beijing in People’s Republic of China was the place in which the 2008 Games were held as the third host nation from amongst Northeast Asian nations, my attempt to define and redefine not only national identity but also Northeast Asian identity will be taken into consideration in this thesis.

This thesis will examine the mediated trends that are reiterated, resisted and/or newly generated. A particular focus will be on investigating the ways in which hegemonic and ideological elements are intertwined, implicated, legitimated and disseminated with reference to contemporary political conditions and changes in the national media coverage of the 2008 Games. Especially, this thesis reveals the way in which the media coverage was influenced by changed relations between South and North Korea between 2004 and 2008. This thesis also examines the way in which the coverage was affected by the contemporary foreign policy and international relations with the U.S. and Japan. The conclusion will draw generalisable inferences about how contemporary sporting cultures are constructed and reproduced in response to the contextual conditions and changes in political and ideological dimensions. To do so, the characteristics of a divided, postcolonial and non-Western nation will be identified, and the impact of Westernisation and Americanisation will be taken into consideration
in the globalisation process. In examining this, four key research questions can be clarified.

First, the mediated identity politics of Olympic athletes and their achievements will be examined. This feature of reporting will be understood and discussed through the multiple identities, which the athletes lack, have or share, such as national identity, race, ethnicity and regional identity (e.g. being a Northeast Asian). This observation can contribute to revealing that the collective notion of an individual’s multiple identities functions as social criteria, to vary the way in which social institutions, like the media coverage, socially recognise, treat and represent individuals.

Second, this empirical research will identify the hegemonic content of the dominant ideology and other ideological elements, with which it is intertwined, in the media representations of the 2008 Games. The reporting styles, content and expressions, which express the hegemonic and ideological content, will be taken into consideration. Attention will be given to the media characteristics - such as progressive or conservative and public or commercial - in order to make sense of those features within that context.

Third, the mediated trends of power relations and transformation of hegemonic and ideological contents will be examined and discussed in depth. In doing so, the thesis focuses upon examining the contemporary, contextual conditions and shifts in political, historical and socio-cultural dimensions that draw the hegemonic transformation.

Fourth, the mediated events, with which the political and ideological debates opposed to the philosophy of Olympism are underlined and articulated, will be explored in depth. With reference to the historical review of South Korea, this thesis
will identify the contemporary political and ideological debates and examine the correlations between sport and diplomacy, ideology, nation-building and international relations between South Korea and its geopolitical neighbours, such as North Korea, Japan and the United States of America (U.S.), in depth. In doing so, the regional, nationalistic and ideological boundaries that define ‘I/we’ and ‘an established group’ from ‘they’ and ‘an outsider group’ will be discussed in detail.

This research will employ an inductive approach whereby theoretical ideas stem from data out of observation. With reference to Charmaz’s research (1997), grounded theory will be selected, reviewed, and used to analyse the data, then to generate theoretical ideas out of them. In applying this approach to this research project, the key concepts of this thesis will be conceptualised theoretically and practically in two chapters of literature review. The first of these chapters will firstly conceptualise identity politics, contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology as an overarching theoretical framework of this thesis. Secondly, the application of contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology to sport concerns in the media context and the Olympic Games will be outlined. In doing so, the chapter will demonstrate how to apply the theoretical framework of identity politics, power relations and changes between hegemonic and ideological contents, and figurational concepts of personal pronouns of ‘I/we’, ‘us/them’ images and ‘established and outsider relations’ to the sporting field. The second chapter of the literature review will describe and contextualise the historical background of South Korean sporting culture. Attention will be paid to examining the ideological accounts of sporting nationalism, racism, ethnicism and the notion of being Asian within that context. The
mediated chronological patterns and changes, both in general, and specifically with relevance to the Olympic Games, will be explored in depth.

The methodology chapter will delineate philosophical and methodological debates on quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. The methodological reasons for adopting interpretivism as the epistemological position and constructionism as the ontological position in the qualitative research paradigm will be explained. Put simply, by using qualitative research methods, hidden or manifest meanings of the media texts and visual images can be interpreted in a more in-depth and wider manner. More specifically, this will be evident in the discourse concerning the research paradigm and methods of contemporary cultural studies and figural sociological sociology. Then, the methods of media content analysis will be highlighted to clarify the ways of collecting and analysing data in both quantitative and qualitative manners.

Two broad methods, namely a review of secondary resources and empirical investigation, will be applied to this thesis. Relations between globalisation, global sport cultures, global mega sport events like the Olympic Games, identity politics, the media and South Korean sporting culture, nationalism, politics/diplomacy and ideology will be broadly reviewed. More importantly, an empirical investigation will be undertaken using the methods of thematic discourse and visual/image analysis in both quantitative and qualitative ways. This empirical investigation will be designed to examine the research questions highlighted above and practical methods will be employed for the in-depth interpretation of data. In conclusion, a theory based on ‘generalisable inferences out of observations’ will be drawn (Bryman, 2001, p. 9). In doing so, the next sections of the introduction will outline the general background to the research fields and highlight specific research questions and concerns.
2. Globalisation and Global Sport Cultures

Globalisation constitutes a process of mutual interaction among different power networks over a long period of time. Globalisation theory concerns itself with the multidimensional interrogation of these intercivilizational ‘encounters’ or interactions … (and) represents an attempt toward a more holistic understanding of the phenomena in question by incorporating cultural-ideological factors as autonomous or relatively autonomous forces in the making of the modern ‘global’ system (Roudometof and Robertson, 1995: p. 287).

Roland Robertson defines globalization in its most general sense as ‘the process whereby the world becomes a single place’ (1992, p. 135). The globalization process leads to a ‘greater degree of interdependence’ and an ‘increased awareness of a sense of the world as a whole’ (Maguire, 1994, p. 400). Similarly, Roberson refers to globalization as ‘the compression of world and intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole’ (1992, p. 8). Meanwhile, a ‘concomitant resurgence of the local/national’ coexists at the same time (Maguire, 1994, p. 400). The culture is not a homogeneous, whole entity but, has meanings as ‘a general mode of discourse about the world as a whole and its variety’ (Robertson, 1992, p. 133). Global sport culture is no exception.

In the early stage of modern sport, British zones of ‘prestige’ acted as magnets in terms of sport and games (Elias and Dunning, 1986). The diffusion of modern sport out of ‘its British/European heartland’ began to stir ‘an intensified global spurt’ (1870-1920) (Maguire, 1999; Maguire et al., 2002; Maguire, 2005, p. 3). The global processes, which enabled modern sport’s standardization, organizational development and global diffusion, were ‘being powered by the West and, as the twentieth century unfolded, by representatives of the US – in both the public and private sectors’
(Maguire, 2005, p. 3). The diffusion of modern sports, such as ‘Anglo/European’ and ‘Euro/American’, reflected and reinforced the diminishing contrasts between the West and the East or non-Western nations (Maguire, 1999, p. 58; Maguire et al., 2002; Maguire, 2005). The power geometry of globalisation and global sport, in doing so, draws ‘a complex, unequal balance within and between groups, nations and civilisations’ (Maguire, 2005, p. 4) and constructs the ideological formation of ‘prestige, emulation and/or resistance’ (Maguire and Possamai, 2005, p. 41). In this sense, Norbert Elias (1983) indicated that the process of ‘monopoly mechanism’, which enforces Western control over native peoples, is no longer possible (1983: p. 106) and non-Western people become active in resisting their incorporation. Such resistance becomes an integral part of the civilising process. Similarly, Wouters specifies:

‘When these intertwining and intermingling processes come to a phase in which many begin to experience themselves as located somewhere at the bottom of a Western ladder of social stratification, counter-movements in which old, indigenous traditions are emphasized and practised in new ways, may expand and become dominant’ (Wouters, 1990, p. 86-7).

This perspective can be applied to exemplify the process of globalisation in non-Western settings. The observation is distinguished from the globalisation process in Western settings that Alan Bairner notes,

‘If the world is becoming homogenised, then nationalism or national identities in all their manifestations are rapidly losing their social significance, if, however, one adopts [a] more sophisticated approach … then it becomes obvious that nationalism coexists alongside globalisation and is at times strengthened by it’ (Bairner, 2001, p. 163).

Thus, the significance of nationalism in the Western settings becomes weakened so that nationalism is reinforced by a homogenising trend of globalisation. However,
Mike Featherstone (1990) argues that global culture cannot be exemplified as a single homogenized culture. The social significance out of non-Western indigenous traditions, nationalisms and the local culture are possible to be exchanged, interpreted, and interpenetrated by the global culture, but it does not mean the former is dominated by the latter (Donnelly, 1996). Rather, the globalisation process is structured by an ‘interweave of homogenizing with differentiating trends’ in terms of the forms of solidarity, such as locality (Waters, 1995). As Waters notes:

‘The globalization of popular culture has apparently paradoxical, but actually consistent, effects in simultaneously homogenizing and differentiating. Certainly it can homogenize across the globe in that what is available at any locality can become available in all localities, but at any particular locality it can increase the range of cultural opportunity’ (Waters, 1995, p. 40).

This observation can be seen in exploring the global sporting development, in which the ‘homogenization and heterogenization processes - or diminishing contrasts/increasing varieties - are at work’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 58). The arguments surrounding global sport development are structured by several binary oppositions such as ‘homogenization versus differentiation’, ‘universalism versus particularism’, ‘integration versus fragmentation’, ‘centralization versus decentralization’, and ‘juxtaposition versus syncretisation’ (Maguire, 1994, p. 399). Similarly, Featherstone (1990) identifies the juxtaposing issues of ‘homogeneity/heterogeneity, integration/disintegration, and unity/diversity’ that structure the global culture. The global culture, however, cannot be fully analysed by such binary juxtapositions (Featherstone, 1990). However, the ‘multicausal, multidimensional analysis’ can be applied to understand the global sport cultures in examining ‘a homogenizing trend with differentiation’ (Maguire, 1994, p. 399). In doing so, ‘a balance or blend between intended ideological practices and unplanned sets of interdependencies’ (Maguire,
1994, p. 399), which structures globalization and global sport cultures, can be detected and considered in a more sophisticated manner. It is from this point of view that this thesis will approach the discussion of global mega sport events, especially the Olympic Games, and ‘the global media sport complex’ (Maguire, 2004). The next section will outline the relations between the global mega sport events and the sport media.

3. Global Mega Sport Events and Media Sport

Maguire (1999) states that the development of the global sport ‘system’ is bound up with the emergence of global media communications and that global media concerns are intertwined with the contemporary experience of sport. By the early 1990s, almost 200 countries were receiving broadcasts of the Olympic Games, the World Cup and the World Championships in track and field (European TV Sports Databook, p. 4). Amongst them, the Olympic Games and soccer’s World Cup are the most popular international sporting events, which are widely watched and mediated as the biggest TV media events (Tomlinson, 1996). The actual amount of sport coverage continues to grow on both satellite and terrestrial channels. The media coverage of sport has developed in terms of the sale of exclusive rights to specific events, tournaments or leagues and television advertising and merchandising. In particular, Whannel claims that ‘whatever else Olympic Games have been, they are now the ultimate media festival’ (1984, p. 30).

Attempts to make sense of the global media sport products clarify three themes, as Maguire observes:
‘Examination of the patterns of the ownership and control of global media companies, consideration of the meanings attached to global media sport content, and analysis of the images associated with media sport would lend itself to such an interpretation’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 145).

The global media sport products could be understood with reference to homogenisation/Westernisation/Americanisation. Thompson (1995) observes that the media, which play a significant part in the globalisation process, have been ‘American’. The concepts of ‘globalisation of consumerism, and the cultural logic of capitalism, all of which transcend the confines of the United States’ are dominant in an understanding of the global culture (McKay and Miller, 1991, p. 86). In this regard, Maguire (1999) argues that the degree of uniformity achieved is overstated by the assumptions of homogenisation or Americanisation and the ways in which global media content is considered and reinterpreted by people in different nations are underestimated. The global media sport products, therefore, may be misunderstood, resisted and/or recycled, so that they tend to be subject to a process of hybridization (Maguire, 1999). Given that, a figurational concept of ‘diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties’ can be applied to sensitize the seemingly paradoxical tendencies in considering the media sport content as a figuration in character (Maguire, 1993; 1994; 1999, p. 146). Examples of intended and unintended media practices can be examined by reference to identity politics and power relations and changes between hegemony and ideology in the contemporary political, socio-cultural and ideological dimensions.

In this light, the focus of this thesis will be given to examining how a mediated homogenising trend of Westernisation and/or Americanisation is intertwined with the indigenous/authentic traditions and locality of a non-Western nation. Especially, it
will focus upon examining the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games as an attempt to analyse the media sport complex within a non-Western setting. Various agents such as the media entrepreneurs, productions, contents and audiences that construct the global media sport complex will be delineated as a part of the literature review. The following two sections will illustrate the philosophy of Olympism as the myth of the Olympic Games and the political and ideological implications of the Games as a real, general phenomenon.

4. The Olympic Games and Myth: Olympism

We see a flock of doves flying around the Olympic stadium and/or the Olympic flame in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games. What do the flames and the flight of doves mean and what does the International Olympic Committee (IOC) seek to disseminate? Global sport is defined as a ‘thoroughly progressive and liberating phenomenon that opens up the potential for greater human contact, dialogue and friendship’ (UN Press Release, 2000, p. 5). According to the Olympic Charter, Olympism was invented by Pierre de Coubertin (Toohey and Veal, 2000, p. 51), to promote and distribute the messages of hope, dreams and aspirations, fair play and friendship, peace and joy in effort.

‘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 and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles. … The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of [man], with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity. To this effect, the Olympic Movement engages, alone or in cooperation with other organizations and within the limits of its means, in actions to promote peace’ (IOC, 2004, p. 9).
The Olympic Games are considered as a true celebration of humanity in expressing the very best of common humanity across every line of national identity, race, ethnicity, religion, gender and language (UN Press Release, 2000, p. 1). The athletes – on their own or as members of a team – play a significant role in setting new records and overcoming physical limitations thereby providing the world with a lesson in international understanding. Especially, the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games were said to promote ‘the spread of human rights and democracy’ and improve ‘inter-cultural understanding’ thus – in the marketing speak of the IOC – to ‘Celebrate Humanity’ (UN Press Release, 2000, p. 5). In this regard, Houlihan (1994) argues that international sport tends to be supported by a set of values, which identify excellence, merit, fairness and mutual respect in the political sphere. Many naïve participants in international sport, however, claim that sport and politics should not mix. For example, in response to the terrorist attack at the Munich Games, the IOC executive expressed strong feelings that any attempt to politicise the Olympic Games must be resisted (Houlihan, 1994). South Africa’s internal policy of apartheid was also considered as ‘a political rather than sporting issue’, which was irrelevant to the Olympic movement (Houlihan, 1994, p. 15). Contrary to this, a less naïve approach to the values of sport in international sport events has argued that sporting contact between nations is a key contribution to global stability and peace (Houlihan, 1994). Therefore, those arguments have resulted in controversial concerns about whether peace is a consequence of the greater mutual respect and understanding that international sport produces or whether it derives from a displacement of international rivalry from the battlefield (Heinila, 1985; Luschen, 1982; Illmarinen, 1982). Many researchers examine international sport matches, which prove that sport plays an important role in
building friendship between nations (Bairner, 2001; Guttmann, 1994; Maguire, 1999, 2005; Maguire et al., 2002; Miller et al., 2001; Van Bottenburg, 2001, 2003). However, the Olympics rarely live up to ‘the lofty ambition of serving as an oasis of peace, fair play and friendship in a troubled world’ (Drozdiak, 1999, B01). This could be exemplified by the past case of doping offences and Olympic boycotts of certain nations. The philosophy of Olympism, thus, still has been a far-distant goal to be achieved in the realm of Olympic Games. This thesis, from this point of view, will examine how the philosophy of Olympism is signified, represented and/or challenged in the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

5. The Olympic Games and Reality: Nationalisms, Politics and Ideology

When Olympic medal ceremonies play the national anthem and raise the flag of the victor’s country, when team sports are organized on national lines and when, at the opening ceremony, athletes march into the stadium nation by nation, then these practices are overtly creating nationalistic tensions, rivalries and pride (Toohey and Veal, 2000, p. 75).

This observation by Toohey and Veal shows that the Olympic Games are interwoven with the sporting relations between nationalism, politics and cultural ideology. In defining a sense of national boundaries with its emphasis upon international rivalries (Cho, 2009), the Olympic Games have established national or nationalistic functions as a crucial feature in the promotion of social cohesion, especially national cohesion, and ‘national image richness’ (Schaffer and Smith, 2000; Rivenburgh, 1992, p. 1). The super-nationalistic competitive nature of sport as featured in the Olympic Games attracts participants from more member-nations than the United Nations and wins TV audiences of almost half the world’s population.
(MacAlloon, 1981). Regarding ideological and political interference in the Games, the international rivalries between nations with National Olympic Committees have seen the Games being used as ‘a tool to advance their own agendas’ (Toohey and Veal, 2000, p. 75). The subsidization of training programmes, administration and transportation by national governments, has helped reinforce the nationalistic functions (Butterworth, 2007; Lee, 1990; Schaffer and Smith, 2000). In this fashion, the Olympics are seen as critical national and international events politically, economically and ideologically (Cho, 2009).

Sportspeople, especially national Olympians, have been considered as national representatives not only for sport but also for identity and ideology (Maguire, 2002). According to Jeremy MacClancy, the Olympic Games, as a world-wide athletic festival, have been transformed into ‘a deeply politicized arena where states vie with one another through the medium of sport’ (1996, p. 12). The national Olympians’ successes are popularly signified as upholding the nation’s political, social, and economic superiority (Warning, 1980). Any record-setting by an athlete is regarded as a product of striving for ‘collective excellence’ by the masses (Galliher and Hessler, 1979, p. 14). The individual success is seen as a demonstration of the effectiveness of ideological discipline (Houlihan, 1994). In representing these, sporting nationalism has acted as ‘an efficient cultivator of confidence and a sense of national prestige, whose narratives often emphasise national development or national pride by identifying the winning of sporting events with national victory’ (Cho, 2009, p. 349). The ideological account of sporting nationalism has popularly appeared as a dominant ideology, so-called hegemony, which supersedes all other ideological elements in the
Olympic Games (Lee and Maguire, 2009). However, nationalism has not been the sole dominant element to be interpreted as a social phenomenon of the Games.

According to the observation of Grant Jarvie (1991) on sport, racism and ethnicity, sport has been central to battles of popular resistance against dominant groups. The Olympics tend to be a field of play to express ethnic pride and feelings (Birbalsingh and Shiwcharan, 1988; Gorn, 1986; James, 1963; Shipley, 1989; Fleming, 1991). Consider ‘the Olympic Project for Human Rights’, which led to the ‘Black Power’ demonstration at the 1968 Mexico Olympic Games. When African-Americans Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who finished first and third in the 200 metre dash, made the ‘Black Power’ salute on receiving their medals at the 1968 Games, the Olympic victory stand was used as a forum to protest against racial biases and express a feeling of African-American pride (Riordan and Krüger, 1999; MacClancy, 1996). The ensuing protests by black athletes were conceived as ‘the cornerstone in the wakening of black America’ in many African Americans (Spivey, 1985). In addition to this, Barrie Houlihan (1994) indicates that the Olympics have been used as a forum for participants’ political expressions against their national governments and/or as a realm to attain non-participants’ further political purposes. The self-consciously political protests, like national popular protests during English cricket tours to the West Indies, could be an example (Jarvie, 1991). Thus, the issues of politics and cultural identities and ideology, such as racism and ethnicity in the realm of sport, tend to rely upon the matter of inequality as Jarvie indicates:

‘we might all be equal on the starting line, but the resources (political, economic and cultural) that people have and the hurdles that people have to leap to get there are inherently unequal. Sporting relations themselves are vivid expressions of privilege, oppression, domination and subordination’ (1991, p. 2).
One ramification would be the reflection of the nature of sport, which is defined as ‘ideologically contested terrain and a potential source of tension and oppression within a state’ (Houlihan, 1994, p. 16). However, much of the focus tends to be largely allocated to the sub-cultures of black athletes in equating race with black (Jarvie, 1991). The diversity of sport, by doing so, is reduced and other cultural identities such as those of Asians, Native Americans, Chicanos and Africans tend to be obscured (Jarvie, 1991). For example, there has been a lack of research into racial stereotypes of Asians or other skin-colour groups within the Asian nations. In this sense, this thesis will concentrate on examining the representations of racial stereotypes of Asian and other skin-colour athletes in the South Korean media coverage.

Regarding a regional identity, Dunning (1992) delineated the identification of Europe with the entry of an EC team in the Barcelona Olympics. Regarding this issue, Maguire notes:

As with European integration more generally, the sports process occupies contested terrain in which the defensive response of strengthened ethnic identities may yet win out over broader pluralising global flows (Maguire, 1994, p. 153).

The observation indicates that ‘the emergence of the European states as we-units happened generally and in stages’ (Elias, 1991, p. 206). There has been much research into a regional identity of ‘being European’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 184) and/or ‘pan-European identity’ in ‘men’s Ryder Cup and women’s Solheim Cup golf competitions where Europe play the United States of America’ (Lee and Maguire, 2009, p. 8; Maguire, 1994, p. 159). However, there has been a lack of research into a regional identity of being ‘Asian’ within the Asian context. In the light of this, this empirical
research examines the potential of a pan-Asian identity and/or the regional identity of ‘being Asian’, especially being Northeast Asian, in the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. As the People’s Republic of China is the third host nation from amongst Northeast Asian nations after Tokyo in 1964 and Seoul in 1988, a regional identity of being (Northeast) Asian and/or a pan-Asian identity is highly likely to be identified. This examination can contribute to proving whether the nationalistic trend, in which a national identity supersedes other cultural identities at the Olympic Games (Lee and Maguire, 2009), is reiterated, or whether the power relations between pluralizing identities are transformed or equalised within a nation.

As an attempt to contribute to clarifying the mediated identity politics of being South Korean, Korean and/or (Northeast) Asian, this thesis will examine the ways in which athletes and their achievements are represented and signified according to their identities such as national, ethnic, racial and regional. The focus will be to examine how the media is used as a tool to convey contemporary nationalistic, political and ideological perspectives during the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony. In doing so, the real phenomenon of the Olympics, which reflects the political and ideological disputes within a nation or between nations, such as the political posturing by blocs of nations or by individuals and the struggles of resistance against dominant groups (e.g. the former colonial ruler), will be taken into consideration. The next section will reveal South Korean sporting cultures and politics and identify research concerns in the realm of the Olympic Games and the national media.
6. South Korean Sporting Culture and Politics

Within the context of rapidly changing global politics, the relations between sport and diplomacy, nation building, and ideology are considered to be the main themes when assessing the role and significance of global sporting events (Houlihan, 1994, p. 205). Here, sport acts as ‘an exceptional mechanism for testing diplomatic relations between regions and nations’ (Maguire, 2002, p. 70). The analysis of sport expresses the relationship between the international relations, diplomacy and ‘the war on cultural globalisation, national identity formation and the media’ in the words of Roger Levermore and Adrian Budd (2004, p. 6). The analysis of the media contents serves to examine the political and socio-cultural perspectives of nations (Lee, 2007; Richards, 2000; Rosie et al., 2004). South Korean sporting culture, therefore, can be understood by examining the media practices that reflect a balance or blend of indigenous traditions, political implications and Westernisation and/or Americanisation at the Olympic Games, by using multi-causal, and multidirectional analyses.

South Korean sporting culture could be exemplified in two different civilizing blocs such as the Korean peninsula under Japanese rule (1910-1945) and ‘the establishment of the R.O.K. in 1948’ as a divided nation since the end of World War II (1945-48) (Kang, 2010, p. 4). The former era had been affected by the diffusion of modern sport between the late 1920s and the mid-1930s (Lee, 2000) with the latter era reflecting the postcolonial sporting context. As a good example of the former era,
members of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)\(^1\) baseball team in Hawaii moved to the Korean peninsula and inspired Korean ethnic groups to be committed to beating the Japanese team as a form of resistance (Lee, 2000). The pride and superiority of Korean ethnicity were emphasised when sporting victory over the former colonial ruler was achieved (Lee, 2000, p. 226). Similarly, when the gold and bronze medals were achieved by Korean track and field athletes Kijeong Son and Seungryong Nam at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, Japanese flags were raised for the medal presentation. However, these successes still played a key role in inspiring ethnic pride and assimilation in Koreans’ minds (Lee, 2000, p. 229). In the postcolonial era, global sporting events have been an effective mechanism to express South Korean nationalism whilst reflecting and reinforcing the South Korea-Japan rivalry (Mechikoff and Este, 1999; Gutmann, 2002; Park, 2008).

Regarding the inter-Korean relations, attempts to promote ethnic reconciliation between the two Koreas through sporting events began with the cheering by both sets of supporters of the joint inter-Korean team at the 1990 Beijing Asian Games (Kim, 1992, p. 371). On 11th October 1990, the first football tournament for the unification of South and North Korea was held in Pyongyang and athletes from both teams exchanged their uniforms after the tournament (Chosun Ilbo, 30 Sep 1990; Lee, 2000, p. 237). The tournaments were like the revival of Gyeongphyeonjeon\(^2\) (Chosun Ilbo, 20 Sep 1990) and acted as a springboard for the mitigation of ideological conflicts and hostile sentiments (Lee, 1991, p. 21; Lim, 1992, p. 271; 1993, p. 95). The

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1 Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) baseball team raised one dollar per person in Hawaii and brought the support and enthusiasm from American-Koreans to the Korean peninsula as a part of the independence movement against Japanese imperialism.

2 Gyeongphyeonjeon Football tournaments aimed at reducing ideological conflicts and building friendship between North and South Korean ethnic groups before the Korean War (1950-53) (Lee, 2000, p. 237).
ramifications have influenced the diplomacy and foreign policy of South Korea vis-à-vis North Korea.

However, the use of global sporting events for the purpose of ethnic reconciliation has been rarely visible since 2008 when President Myung-bak Lee declared a stop to providing the North with economic aid until they agreed to discard nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula (Bajoria and Zissis, 2009). The political relations between the two Koreas turned from friendly and favourable into frozen. The change of political climate affected the way in which global sporting events were organised, operated and consumed. Hence, this thesis attempts to identify the inter-Korean relations during the period of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, and to examine the ways in which they were embedded and expressed in the opening ceremony and at the Games. Regarding the recent political affairs such as the sinking of the R.O.K.’s Cheonan ship and the first artillery attack on a South Korean civilian area of Yeonpyeong Island by the Northern forces on 26 March 2010 (Yoon, 2011), this research can be further extended to examine the influence of the political climate upon global mega sporting events, national sporting cultures and the media.

Even though the core of non-Western cultures, such as the South Korean and Japanese, has been preserved by their non-Western character, the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation will be taken into consideration as an integral part of the civilising process and globalisation. The media sport content of a non-Western, postcolonial, divided nation will be considered as a figuration in the context of globalisation. In this sense, the main observation could be made in interpreting the representatives of distinctive traditions of civilization, which not only aim to express
and advance their own indigenous cultural traditions but also resist Americanisation and Westernisation (Maguire, 1999). As Maguire observes:

Non-Western cultures resist and reinterpret Western sports and maintain, foster and promote, on a global scale, their own indigenous recreational pursuits. While the speed, scale and volume of sports development is interwoven with the broader global flows of people, technology, finance, images and ideologies that are controlled by the West, in the longer term it is possible to detect signs that this is also leading to the decentring of the West in a variety of contexts. Sport may be no exception (Maguire, 1999, p. 93).

With the rapid political and social evolution of the Asian region, the work of Ernst Jokl, M. J. Karvonen, Jaakko Kihlberg, Aarni Koskela, and Leo Noro cited the possibility of ‘an increasingly noticeable rate of participation and of success of Asiatic populations in Olympic competitions’ in the near future (1956, p. 40). In grouping nations into ‘core, semi-peripheral and peripheral blocs’ along political, economic and cultural lines, some emerging nations, like South Korea, have been placed in the ‘sub-periphery’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 91). Even if it is ridiculous to say that sporting victory on the playing field has a significant effect on relations between nations (Houlihan, 1994; Maguire, 1999), there have been ‘profound differences’ that will ‘still divide states’, and might ‘be reflected in the sports they play’ (Houlihan, 1994, p. 364). In responding to this, the newly-generated trend, like the increase of sporting successes of a non-Western, postcolonial nation, deserves to be highlighted in the latest phase of the sportisation process as an integral part of the civilising process, which not only aim to express and advance their own indigenous cultural traditions but also resist Americanisation and Westernisation with reference to the shifting power relations and resources between Western and non-Western nations in global sport governance both qualitatively and quantitatively (Maguire, 2004). Based on this, this thesis focuses upon examining the ways in which the Olympic successes of national athletes over
rivals or allies are signified, represented and distinguished at national and trans-national levels. The ways in which the integration of indigenous traditions and locality and global cultures of Westernisation and Americanisation, and the contemporary political and ideological climate and their changes, are embedded and disseminated in the media coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games will form an in-depth discussion in this thesis.

7. **Concluding Remarks and Points of Departure**

This thesis is designed to both contribute to identifying the characteristics of a divided, postcolonial and non-Western nation and to examining the impact of Westernisation and Americanisation within the South Korean context. The media sport complex of global mega-sporting events such as the Olympic Games is considered as an efficient vehicle to convey a nation’s sporting hegemony and ideology with reference to political and ideological conditions and changes. In this sense, in analysing the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, four research questions can be identified as follows:

1. How are the identity politics embedded and manifested in the national media coverage?

2. What hegemonic and ideological contents and changes in their power relations are observed?

3. What boundaries for dividing ‘I/We’ or the established group from ‘They’ or outsider groups could be seen?

4. How do political and ideological conditions and changes influence the media sport contents?
In responding to these research questions, this research can contribute to exploring the academic realm of globalisation, global sport culture, global mega-sporting events and the media within the South Korean sporting context. National sporting cultures can be examined by reference to their indigenous traditions and locality with the global culture, whilst the generalisable inference of a homogenizing and differentiating trend will be drawn at the global and national levels. By using multicausal, multidimensional analyses, this research will concentrate on examining how a mediated, homogenising trend of Westernisation and/or Americanisation is intertwined with the indigenous/authentic traditions and localities within the South Korean context. The relations between the Olympic Games, global sporting cultures, the media and South Korean nationalism, politics/diplomacy and sporting ideology will be taken into consideration.
CHAPTER ONE

CULTURAL STUDIES AND FIGURATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

1-1. Introduction

This chapter is designed to review the theoretical background in the research field and to develop an overarching theory for this research project. To do so, this chapter will include two sections: the first section is conceptualising identity politics, contemporary cultural studies (CCCS) and figurational sociology. The second section is to apply these concepts to sport, the media/sport complex and the Olympic Games.

1-2. Conceptualising Contemporary Cultural Studies and Figurational Sociology

This chapter is designed to review a set of ground theories that can help interpret the data arising from this empirical research project. Firstly, the nature and characteristics of identity politics will be explored. Secondly, the theories developed by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham School (CCCS) will be highlighted. The reason why it can be an overarching theory for this thesis will be delineated. Thirdly, the theoretical concepts from Norbert Elias’s Figurational sociological theory including personal pronouns of ‘I/we, us/them’, and established and outsider figurations will be explicated, and the focus of the examination will be clarified.
1-2-1. Identity Politics

Given that this thesis is designed to examine the ways in which Olympic delegates and athletes are depicted by the media coverage in terms of their multiple and integral identities, the study of the nature of identity politics is very important. The study of identity politics has been mostly undertaken in the realm of identities, which are based on partial traits of individuals such as nationality, region, skin-colour, ethnicity and gender. This section will review the emergence of identity politics, the relations between identities and individuals, and the main roles of identities at political and social moments.

The study of identity politics was motivated by the political and historical backgrounds of the 1960s when the locus of power and authority and the access to political and economic goods and public spheres were limited to only western, ‘white’ and ‘heterosexual’ men (During, 2005, p. 168). Other disempowered groups such as women, homo-/bi-sexual groups, or marginalised ethnic/racial groups were rarely allowed access to the public spheres as well as political and economic goods, due to social ‘constraints imposed upon them by virtue of their identity’ (During, 2005, p. 148). With the increase in interest in the existence of social discrimination against particular identity groups such as racially-defined communities and women, the concept of identity politics was developed in the seventies. Therefore, as Michael Omi and Howard Winant observe, identity politics is defined as ‘a politics engaged on behalf of those with particular identities, usually historically disempowered ones’ (1986, p. 75).
Considering the sociological relations between identities and individuals, Simon During (2005) argues that individuals exist socially in and through their different, multiple, often mutable identities. Identities are corporeally inherited or socially/culturally chosen as arbitrary features that individuals possess such as a physical feature of body (skin colour), a genealogy (generation), a belief (national identity), socio-economic status or a cultural preference (ethnicity). Regardless of whether identities were inherited or chosen by individuals, all identities are socially placed, culturally inflected and determined by power relations in a community (During, 2005).

Yet, identities have been based on the principle of exclusion that ignores individuals’ own ‘self’ or ‘interiority’ that has no identity (During, 2005, p. 147). According to this, individuals’ particularities or individualities have been neglected either in cases where dominant identities are socially formed or in cases where identity-groups have taken on a politics of emancipation. Therefore, regardless of their individualities or internal differences, individuals have been regarded as agents rather than subjects, which are socially situated within larger ideological and social structures (During, 2005).

In addition, in understanding a collective notion of the multiple identities that an individual has, shares or lacks, an individual can be socially recognised and represented by others or social institutions like the media coverage (During, 2005). Even though an identity, like being a woman or an Asian, seems very important to demonstrate at a specific moment, individuals cannot be represented by only one particular identity. This observation connects to Stuart Hall’s theory of ‘unities in difference’ (1987, p. 45). In this notion, Hall (1987; 1992) emphasises that the politics
of process must focus upon not only what is shared and what is thwarted by any sort of monolithic culture but also what is different among members of one identity. Thus, Hall stresses the significance of the recognition of differences between individuals who share the same identity or identities.

An individual’s identities, moreover, never carry equal weight at a particular moment. Thus, they have different social consequences at different moments in different places (During, 2005). The nature of identities continually shifts across time and place. Therefore, as Diana Fuss (1995) states, the fit between individuals and identities, which is formed through a process of identification, is not structurally fixed. Instead, individuals differ in terms of the degree of intensity with which they link to particular identities at a particular moment.

A specific political or social movement tends to reinforce a specific identity (e.g. national identity), which is one of multiple identities owned by individuals. The specific identity has influence over increasing the intensity of group solidarity and fulfilling claims to rights (During, 2005). For example, the international sport competitions such as the Olympic Games and the FIFA Football World Cup have become a battlefield for specific political and social movements. The reinforced form of South Korean national identity was observable in the mediated patriotic behaviour of the Red-Devils, the official fan club of the South Korean football team (Choi, 2004; Lim, 2002). However, a specific identity was not only considered as a national identity but also as the ethnicity of being ‘Korean’ and the regional identity of being ‘Asian’. When South Korea encountered Italy in the second round of the 2002 FIFA World Cup Finals held in South Korea and co-hosted with Japan, South Korean football fans expressed the desire for the national team’s victory by disseminating the
message of ‘Again 1966’, which recalled North Korea’s victory over Italy in 1966 (Lim, 2002; Lee and Maguire, 2009). The attempt was to express a pan-Korean identity and unitary Korean nationalism, which were embedded in the South Korean citizens’ minds, and to reinforce the group solidarity of being ‘Korean’ (Kim, 2002). Meanwhile, when the South Korean team reached the semi-final match, the media described its national team as ‘the Pride of Asia’ so that a pan-Asian identity was detected (Kim, 2002). Thus, the consideration of a specific identity varies along with the identity markers of athletes and the social and political events, like the Olympic Games and the FIFA Football World Cup, which act as an efficient cultivator to reinforce the group solidarity of being ‘South Korean’, ‘Korean’ or ‘Asian’.

However, identities are neither negotiable nor able to be expanded to include those who do not share the identity (During, 2005). Thereby, identity politics can ‘lapse into rigidity and cause fragmentation of the shared ground’ within which politics can be required to operate (During, 2005, p. 150). This tendency is most marked when an identity is ascribed in terms of a culture. In this sense, the study of identity politics has been developed in the realm of cultural studies. Homi Bhabha (1994) argues that identities of ‘subaltern’ groups tend to be regularly articulated by those of the dominant faction. The term ‘subaltern’ originates from Gramsci’s work but now it refers to social groups with the least power of all, e.g. colonised people. The ‘subaltern’ identities are articulated ‘in signifying practices that imitate and displace concepts (or discourses) that have been articulated by the coloniser’ (During, 2005, p. 151). In this sense, cultural studies explain identity politics in covering two different sets of identities: the allied one with subordinated or marginal identities and another, which draws an aspect of hegemonic identities as the form of rigidity and
constraint (During, 2005). Sports, here, act as ‘vehicles of identity, providing people with a sense of difference and a way of classifying themselves and others, whether latitudinally or hierarchically’ (MacClancy, 1996, p. 2).

Turning to the concept of ‘hybridity’, identity politics has been rearticulated as ‘post-identity’ cultural politics (During, 2005, p. 149). The hybridity theory views ‘identity, not as a marker, a stable trait shared across groups, but as a practice whose meaning and effect is constantly mutating as its context changes’ (During, 2005, p. 151). Thus, identity can be clarified ‘not as a fixed marker’ but in terms of the continual ‘processes or performances by which identities are formed’ and by which all identities’ meanings and forces are in constant mutation (During, 2005, p. 151).

The theory of hybridity is the one most widely disseminated to explain the concept that the hybrid subaltern subverts the oppressor outside any formal political struggle and the hybridised identities lose their own rigidity in questioning the naturalness and legitimacy of hegemonic identities (Bhabha, 1994). The politics of representation, therefore, sheds light on discovering the way in which particular social groups are represented with political gains by resisting the representations where they are stigmatised and ‘the way in which representative politics disempowered specific interests and identities and reduced political agency, especially that of minorities’ (During, 2005, p. 23). In this light, the study of identity politics has contributed to assert and struggle to find spaces for minority groups in the public sphere and formal political systems ‘for wants and needs that they have by virtue of their marginalised identity’ (During, 2005, p. 148). Simultaneously, the consciousness, in which particular identities were marginalised and oppressed by the most powerful groups within a society, increased (During, 2005). As Charles Taylor (1994) argues, the
desire for consciousness extended to the desire for access, liberty and fair and unprejudiced treatment.

In this light, this thesis is designed to contribute to actualising the aspiration of fairness, equality and unprejudiced social treatment for identity-groups marginalised and undercut in a sporting world. To do so, this thesis will firstly identify which particular identities that athletes have were marginalised and trivialised in the media representations of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and then examine the form and seriousness of discriminative media practices.

1-2-2. Contemporary Cultural Studies

This section is devised to outline the theoretical concepts that help interpret power relations between identity-groups, and draws on those conducted at the centre for contemporary cultural studies (CCCS) or the University of Birmingham. It was established in the 1960s and initiated ‘the debate about the nature of social and cultural change in post-war Britain’ in the 1960s (Hall, 1900, p. 12). The debate mainly focused upon addressing ‘the manifest break-up at traditional Marxist culture’ and registering ‘the impact of the new forms of affluence and consumer society on the very hierarchal and pyramidal structure of British society’ (Hall, 1900, p. 12).

Cultural studies, first of all, critiqued the argument of traditional Marxist orthodoxy that ‘a contestation with the model of base and superstructure’ can explain the relationships between economy, culture and society. In the view of contemporary cultural studies, Marx seemed to over-emphasise economism and reductionism while, rarely talking about ‘culture, ideology, language, the symbolic’ (Hall, 1992, p. 279). Based on this, Marx’s arguments were regarded as ‘unending contestation with the
question of false consciousness’ (Hall, 1992, p. 279). Instead, the new forms of modernisation were generated through political, economic, and cultural mutations and historical developments in Britain (Hall, 1980). As a result, new forms of political and economic colonialism and imperialism emerged (Grossberg, 1989). Simultaneously, the increase of American influence in Britain helped establish mass culture (Grossberg, 1989). In addition, new attention was given to the existence of racism, the effects of consumer capitalism and the site of culture and ideology in power relations (Grossberg, 1989).

Raymond Williams (1961, 1965), who was vital in the founding of the CCCS, stressed the notion of ‘cultural materialism’, which was developed from a multifaceted critique of Marxian base and superstructure theory. Williams (1961, 1965) argues that changes in the superstructure of culture and ideology are generated from the particular possibilities available to cultural forces, which are more abundant than any references to the base of economic grounds. Therefore, the separation of the superstructure from the base must be required and both aspects must be understood in a larger social context in which they constantly interact with one another and continually mutate (Williams, 1961; 1965). In this light, the theoretical doctrine of cultural materialism in the CCCS has become the most concrete one to explain the relations between the political, the cultural and the economic (During, 2005).

Regarding cultural studies in general, Williams (1961, 1965) notes that societies are interrelated wholes insofar as all social practices are cultural studies that make collective meanings. This expanded notion of culture refers to a whole way of life (Williams, 1961; 1965). In addition, we are living through ‘a long revolution’, which is
‘a genuine revolution, transforming men and institutions; continually extended and deepened by the actions of millions, continually and variously opposed by explicit reaction and by the pressure of habitual forms and ideas’ (Williams, 1965, p. 10).

In the Long Revolution, ‘particular cultures carry particular versions of reality’, which are interrelated to the economic, the political and the cultural (Williams, 1965, p. 34). Cultures carry different ‘rules’ through on a common basis of ‘the evolved human brain’ and ‘create their own worlds which their bearers ordinarily experience’ (Williams, 1965, p. 34). There is not only ‘variation between cultures’ but also ‘the individuals who bear these particular cultural rules are capable of altering and extending them, bringing in new or modified rules by which an extended or different reality can be experienced’ (Williams, 1965, p. 34). Thus, new areas of reality can be ‘created’ or ‘revealed’ and these can be communicated by ‘adding to the set of rules by the particular culture’ (Williams, 1965, p. 34). Taking over the role of Williams in British cultural studies, Stuart Hall states that ‘culture’ can be redefined not only as ‘texts and representation’ but also as ‘lived practices, belief systems and institutions’ (1980a, p. 23). The Williams’ concept of ‘the long revolution’ is re-demonstrated in Hall’s paper as shifting ‘the whole ground of debate from a literary-moral to an anthropological definition of culture’ (1980, p. 19). The anthropological definition of culture refers to the ‘whole process by means of which meanings and definitions are socially constructed and historically transformed, with literature and art as only one, specially privileged, kind of social communication’ (Hall, 1980a, p. 19). That is, in an attempt to interpret a pluralist, de-centred, ‘post-Fordist’ society, Hall reemphasises that different social and cultural fields are in persistent and constantly mutating interaction with one another (Hall, 1996, p. 44). Thus, as Sue Thornham argues, the
process of mutation has been regarded as ‘profoundly interactive’ and as ‘productive of a deeper cultural revolution’ (2000, p. 57).

Williams turned himself to the work of the pre-war Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, especially the Gramscian concept of hegemony, to problematise his early ‘organic’ culturalism (During, 2005, p. 21). The term ‘hegemony’ is regarded as a complete system of ideological dominance and plays an important role in maintaining the status quo between intricate and mutually-reinforcing ideological factors (Theberge and Birrell, 1994). Things ‘unresolved within the theoretical framework of grand theory - Marxism-’ were re-explored in the work of Gramsci, which includes things ‘about the modern world, in a number of ways’ (Hall, 1992, p.280). In doing so, Chantal Mouffe (1981) states, Gramscian work has become central to explicate social life formed by a hegemonic content of dominant ideology and power relations in the cultural context. For example, the notion of hegemony serves to view the power of dominant classes, which maintains ideological leadership undertaken throughout cultural processes (Hall, 1980a; Falcous, 2002).

Susan Birrell (2000) defines the term ‘power’ as an unequally distributed hierarchy throughout society. The power relations are formed in two dimensions (Theberge and Birrell, 1994). One is the structural dimension, which implies roles, rules, statuses and norms that shape the background of an individual’s everyday life. Another dimension is the ideological dimension as ‘a set of ideas that serve the interests of dominant groups’ (Theberge and Birrell, 1994, p. 327). The power relations are regarded as systematic, hierarchal, structures of privilege, wealth, dignity and jurisdiction for particular dominant identity-groups (Theberge and Birrell, 1994). The power relations, in addition, tend to be sustained through many intricate and
reinforcing forces, which vary from coercion and violence at one extreme to subtle forms of ideological indoctrination, socialisation and apparent consent at the other (Theberge and Birrell, 1994).

The nature of hegemonic content, in contrast, is not constantly fixed but able to be ‘transformed’ to another at a specific historical moment (Mouffe, 1981, p. 231). According to this, the power of hegemony is not a static form maintained by force or coercion but a subtle form of ideological dominance in social contexts (Birrell, 2000). In this sense, Richard Gruneau (1983) argues that the cultural constituents, including hegemony, are produced, resisted, transformed and renewed all along in a social context, in which it is created by the systematic relationships between power and ideologies such as national identity, race/ethnicity, gender, class, age, etc. Accordingly, hegemonic configurations of power are defined as a part of a continual process of change, which contains accommodation and negotiation (Williams, 1979). The discourse of hegemonic transformation is ascribed to the ‘fundamentally dynamic, relational and relative character’ of hegemony (Dunning, 1999, p. 227).

Using the notion of hegemony, Hall (1980a) developed a concept of ‘articulation’ to understand the dynamics of ideological struggles. John Storey claims that the result of articulation can refer to meanings in cultural texts and practices, as meaning is always expressed ‘in a specific context, a specific historical moment, within a specific discourses determined by a context of articulation’ (1996a, p. 4). Therefore, meaning is ‘social production’ and ‘a text, practice or event is not the issuing source of meaning, but a site where the articulation of meaning can take place’ (Storey, 1996a, p.4). Gramsci’s work indicates that ‘the intellectual and moral reform’ consists in a process of ideological transformation – aimed at creating a new form of hegemony -
and of ‘re-articulation of existing ideological terrain’ (Bennett et al., 1981, p. 229). In this sense, culture has been understood ‘as a key site for production and reproduction of social relations of everyday life’ or as a realm of ‘conflict and contestation’ in a specific political circumstance (Storey, 1996b, p. 2). Similarly, Lawrence Grossberg (1989, p. 114-115) summarises that

‘cultural studies is seen as an open-ended and on-going theoretical struggle to understand and intervene into the existing organisation of active domination and subordination within the formations of culture, then the boundaries of the tradition are themselves unstable and changing sites of contestation and practices’.

Overall, Gramsci’s work suggests ‘a practical example of how to live with constraints’ between ‘conditions and problems of developing intellectual and theoretical work as a political practice’ rather than giving us ways to resolve them (Hall, 1992, p. 281, 282). Cultural studies must shed light on recognising and revealing struggles, namely the struggle between agency (identity-groups or individuals) and constraint, the struggle between the dominant and the subordinate, and the struggle ‘between the cultural reproduction and the cultural transformation of power relations’ at a specific moment (Birrell and Theberge, 1994, p. 362).

These ideas and concerns of cultural studies have been applied to the sociological study of communication and media studies (Sparkes, 1992, p. 14). In the 1960s, the growth of mass media was heightened along with the increase of political concerns (Grossberg, 1989). Cultural studies sought to provoke and inspire an awareness of the ideological functions of media practices (Falcous, 2002). In this era, resistant subcultures emerged to demonstrate the struggles over the terrain of popular culture (Grossberg, 1989). Hall (1992) argues that the unfolding of cultural studies was ‘not part of an inter-unfolding general theory of culture’ but was ‘interrupted by a break,
by real ruptures, by exterior forces’ (Hall, 1992, p. 282). That is, Hall (1992) argues that there have been at least two influences on the work of the CCCS: the first around feminism, the second around questions of race. Linked to this, British cultural studies gave renewed attention to the dynamics of gender relations with ‘the radical critique and implications of feminist theory and politics’ during the 1970s (Grossberg, 1989, p. 117). The attention was also extended to ‘the critical questions of race, the politics of race, the resistance to racism, the critical questions of cultural politics’, which was ‘self a profound theoretical struggle’ (Hall, 1992, p. 283). British cultural studies spread around the world in integrating the traditions of the U.S., Canada, and Australia.

Mark Falcous notes that the prime feature emanating from these origins of cultural studies is the revelation of ‘the political purpose, which emerges from the recognition of imbalance of power, opportunity and resources’ (2002, p. 53). To do so, various research directions and theories have been incorporated and developed to explain this (Falcous, 2002). In adopting the contemporary cultural studies in this thesis, the way in which the political purpose and ideological debates are articulated in the mediated Olympic Games will be explored. The mediated trend of power relations and transformation between hegemony and ideology will be examined with reference to contemporary political, ideological, socio-cultural dimensions. The next section will specify the key theoretical concepts of figurational sociology and highlight the way to apply them to this thesis.
Norbert Elias’s figurational concepts include ‘his developmental account of European history, social development and national identity; his use of concepts such as ‘established’ and ‘outsiders’; his use of pronoun pairs (I/We, us/them) as a way of drawing attention to the emotionally charged character of relationships and identifications; the coupling of the concept of national habitus codes with the idea of multilayered identities and the placing of both identity politics (and the role that sport plays in this regard) within the context of globalisation processes’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). Elias’s study of established and outsider figuration raised one of problems that:

‘how and why human beings perceive one another as belonging to the same group and include one another within the group boundaries which they establish in saying ‘we’ in their reciprocal communications, while at the same time excluding other human beings whom they perceive as belonging to another group and to whom they collectively refer as ‘they” (Elias, 1994, p. xxxvii).

An individual refers to a human being belonging to an established or outsider group. A group of ‘we’ refers to an established group, and a group of ‘they’ refers to a group of outsiders, which is collectively excluded by human beings in the established group. Here, this section focuses upon exploring the personal pronouns of ‘I/we, us/them’ and established and outsider figurations.

**Germans and Personal Pronouns**

Using the pronoun pairs of ‘I/we, us/them’, Elias commented on the connection between these issues of identity and national character. Elias substantiated this linkage
in his work on the Germans (1996). According to Maguire, Elias examined the deeply latent aspects of German habitus, social structure, personality and conduct and the way in which the features (the I/we image of Germans) emerge out of ‘the nation’s history and pattern of social development’ (1999, p. 184). The image of the ‘nation’ become remained, internalised, and combined as ‘part of the second nature (the habitus) of its citizens, whose actions made and remade the national habitus anew’, so that it becomes constitutive of ‘a person’s self-image’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). ‘A person’s we-image and we-ideal form as much part of a person’s self-image and self-ideal as the image and ideal of him- or herself as the unique person to which he or she refers as I’ (Elias, 1994, xliii). However, the observations run counter to Elias’s traditional notions of ‘the individual, the nation and ‘national character’ – which conceptualise them as if they are separate entities’ as follows:

‘The concept of identification makes it appear that the individual is here and the nation is there; it implies that the ‘individual’ and ‘nation’ are two different entities separated in space. Since nations consist of individuals and individuals who live in the more developed twentieth century state-societies belong, in the majority of cases, unambiguously to a nation, a conceptualisation which evokes the picture of two different entities separated in space, like mother and child, does not fit the facts’ (Elias, 1996, p. 125).

In this regard, Maguire states that ‘the emotional bonds of individuals with the nations which they form with each other can have, as one of their levels, “sleeping memories”, which tend to crystallize and become organised around common symbols – national sport teams being one example’ (1999, p. 184). These symbols and sleeping memories influentially reinforce the notion of ‘I/we-relation’ and shape ‘the focal point of a common belief system’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). Therefore, examining these habitus codes allows ‘examination of why, for example, European integration at the level of political institutions is running ahead of the degree of identification’ that
many, perhaps the majority, of the citizens of European nation-states feel towards the notion of being ‘European’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 184).

‘The deeply rooted nature of the distinctive national characteristics and the consciousness of national we-identity closely bound up with them can serve as a graphic example of the degree to which the social habitus of the individual provides a soil in which personal, individual differences can flourish. The individuality of the particular Englishman, Dutchman, Swede or German represents, in a sense, the personal elaboration of a common social and in this case national, habitus’ (Elias and Scotson, 1994, p. 210).

These emotional bonds and I/we-images are not permanently fixed but go challenged. According to the combined aspects of the conceptualisation of Elias with that of Raymond Williams (1977), all nations have ‘dominant’, ‘emergent’ and ‘residual’ habitus codes. The layer of habitus code, the so-called second nature or social identity, which forms ‘national character’, is ‘like [a] language, both hard and tough, but also flexible and far from immutable’ (Elias, 1987/1991, p. 209). In this regard, Maguire defined ‘a blend of habitus codes’, as follows:

‘There is a blend of habitus codes that is related to the twin processes of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties, between homogenizing and heterogenizing tendencies. The interplay between these tendencies varies in intensity and scope over time and place’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 183).

Thus, the characteristics of habitus codes of a nation resemble those of cultural constituents, which are produced, resisted, renewed and changed all along in a social context (Gruneau, 1983). By examining the interplay and change between cultural constituents including hegemony and ideological elements, an analysis of habitus codes of nations helps interpret the homogenizing and heterogenizing social tendencies over time and place.
Established and Outsider Figuration

The concepts of ‘established’ and ‘outsider’ are explored in the account of a suburban community of Winston Parva.

‘The account of a suburban community … shows a sharp division within it between an old-established group and a newer group of residents, whose members were treated as outsiders by the established group. The latter closed ranks against them and stigmatized them generally as people of lesser human worth. They were thought to lack the superior human virtue - the distinguishing group charisma - which the dominant group attributed to itself. … in the small community of Winston Parva, … one can observe again and again that members of groups which are, in terms of power, stronger than other interdependent groups, think of themselves in human terms as better than the others’ (Elias and Scotson, 1994, p. xv).

In Winston Parva, two groups are not different with regard to their social class, nationality, racial or ethnic descent, religious denomination or their educational level but have ‘a marked difference in the cohesion of the two groups’ (Elias and Scotson, 1994, p. xxii). In the consideration of ‘difference’, an old-established group is considered as people with ‘superior power as a sign of their higher human value’ (1994, p. xxvi and xxvii) whilst, a newer group of residents refers to people of lesser human worth. The established group dominates social, cultural and economic capitals and forms ‘I’ and ‘we’ images (Lee, 2007; Maguire 1999). Accordingly, the established group distinguishes ‘themselves’ from the outsiders, which form the ‘they’ image with lesser power resources (Lee, 2007; Maguire, 1999). In this regard, the theoretical reference of the established group and outsiders can be explicated with demarcation of ‘us’ and ‘them’. The structural regularities of the established-outsider figuration are useful for discovering ‘us’ as the established group and ‘others’ or ‘them’ as outsiders (Elias, 1994; Maguire, 1999, p. 183, 186).
The ‘outsiders’ are often stigmatised as a group of human beings, ‘greatly inferior in terms of its power ratio, against which the established group can close ranks’ or who ‘emotionally experienced their power inferiority as a sign of human inferiority’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxx, xxvi and xxvii). The stigmatisation of outsiders was not due to their qualities as individual people, ‘but because they were members of a group which an established group considered collectively as different from, and as inferior to, their own group’ according to ‘the nature of interdependence’ between two or three groups’ (Elias, 1994, p. xx). The ‘stigmatisation of outsiders’ showed ‘certain features in a wide variety of established-outsider figurations’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxv). The actual concepts, which are ‘used by established groups as a means of stigmatisation’, can vary according to ‘the social characteristics and traditions of the groups concerned’ (Elias, 1994, xxiv and xxv).

The study of Winston Parva specifies that the established group’s self-image is ‘modelled on its exemplary, most ‘nomic’ or norm-setting section, on the minority of its ‘best’ members’ (Elias, 1994, p. xix). Meanwhile, the outsider group seems to be represented as an ‘anomic minority’ with ‘a whole (of) the ‘bad’ characteristics of that group’s ‘worst’ section’ in the view of the established group (Elias, 1994, p. xix). The account allowed the figurations of ‘praise-gossip’ about an established group and ‘blame-gossip’ against outsiders (Elias, 1994, p. xvi).

‘One encountered in this small community what appeared to be a universal regularity of any established-outsider figuration: the established group attributed to its members superior human characteristics; it excluded all members of the other group from non-occupational social contact with its own members; the tattoo on such contacts was kept alive by means of social control such as praise-gossip about those who observed it and the threat of blame-gossip against suspected offenders’ (Elias, 1994, p. xvi).
Thus, ‘this *pars pro toto* distortion in opposite directions enables an established group to prove their point to themselves as well as to others’ with evidence showing that ‘one’s group is ‘good’ and the other is ‘bad’’ (Elias, 1994, p. xix). However, the established and outsider relations are not simplistic, unidirectional, mono-causal relations, which imply that one group dominates others (Featherstone, 1990), but multidirectional relations, which are complexly interdependent of, and interconnected to, each other (Lee, 2007). The balance of power between the established and outsider groups is always in flux and the power ratio between the two can be narrow so that the power relations between them can be subverted at a specific moment. For example, even though the former established group, viewed as more powerful groups, can control the social relations in the short term by strengthening their group charisma and we-ideal, it is beyond their monopoly to manipulate the social process in the long term.

In view of this, this thesis applies the theoretical concepts of pronoun pairs of ‘I/we, us/them’ and established and outsider figuration as an overarching theory, and examines the ways in which the R.O.K.’s media coverage represented participants in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games as outsiders or members of the established group along with their multi-layered identities including national identity, national character of Northeast Asian nations, race and ethnicity. The media production and representations, concerning the changing power ratio and relations between the established and outsider groups in the context of globalisation, are investigated in this thesis.
1.3. Sport and the Media/Sport Production Complex

This section is divided into three subsections. First, the key ideological issues in sport will be examined with theoretical reference to contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology. Second, the relationship between the theoretical frameworks of contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology and the sport media complex will be examined. Here, attention will be paid to aspects of Olympism, nationalism, ethnic and racial stereotypes and other relevant sociological issues involved in the media sport production process, its content and its consumption. Third, the historically specific issues and changes in the media coverage of the Olympic Games will be highlighted.

1.3.1. Contemporary Cultural Studies and Sport

This section is designed to illustrate the main ideological, cultural issues in the realm of sport with theoretical reference to contemporary cultural studies. As Younghan Cho (2009, p. 348) notes, sport has become a very efficient device for constructing ‘collective identities’, which are based on ‘nation-state, region, race, ethnicity and even being a fan of a particular team or sports celebrity’. That is, sport functions to replace work, community and religion as the cultural bond of collective consciousness (Andrews, 2001). Sport has also been useful for defining and demarcating political or moral communities and therefore has become ‘vehicles of identity, providing people with a sense of difference and a way of classifying themselves and others’ (MacClancy, 1996, p. 2).
McKay, Messner and Sabo (2000) observe that a solitary ideological element tends to ‘vary in salience in different times and at different social locations’. The variable salience of an ideology is simultaneously operated at the level of ‘individual identity, group interaction, institutional structures and cultural symbols and discourse’ (2000, p. 9). Accordingly, the variable salience of an ideology must be explored within the wider interplay of other ideological systems of ‘difference’ and ‘inequality’ (e.g. national identity, regional identity, race, ethnicity, class and gender) over a specific time and place (McKay, Messner and Sabo, 2000, p. 9-10). In doing this, the tendency that falsely superimposes a simple analysis on a social phenomenon can be minimised. Therefore, questions of what and how various ideological forces that trigger social difference and inequality are embedded in the South Korean media coverage at the specific time of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games need to be examined in this thesis. Attention also needs to be given to reveal the reason why those ideological elements are mediated and highlighted in the media practice with a specific reference to the contemporary political and historical context of South Korea.

To apply this to a sporting world, the analysis of sportspeople’s subjective identities and these impacts on their social relations must be mainly explored (Bland et al., 1978, p. 35). The study of identities or identity politics should be continually updated within the mutable context of cultural hegemony and ideologies. It is subjected to the transformability from a single hegemonic content existing in one social situation to another hegemonic content at a specific moment. For example, a hegemonic element of dominant masculinity has often been transformed to or overlapped with another hegemonic principle like patriotism or nationalism at global sporting events like the Olympic Games (Mouffe, 1981). Sport, especially male team
sports, reflects the conjuncture between masculine hegemony and other dominant ideologies such as nationalism, racial/ethnic stereotypes and class hierarchy at a specific moment and transformation through it (Birrell, 2000). For example, baseball in the U.S. is developed and sustained by white males and reflects the racial and gender dominance inherent in the sport within that context (Maguire et al., 2002). The development of soccer in Britain becomes a reflection of the working class aspect of its society in the 19th century and for many decades thereafter (Maguire et al., 2002). The development of professional baseball in Japan is bound up with much of the traditional pattern of a strong group loyalty within that context (Maguire et al., 2002). The practice of firing managers and trading players in Japan, accordingly, is quite different from North America (McPherson, Curtis and Loy, 1989). Thus, as ‘people may have multiple identities either simultaneously, seasonally, or consecutively’ (MacClancy, 1996, p. 3) and have been treated in various ways each time, the way in which the media represent particular identity groups and their issues has been varied over the particular moment that sporting events were held.

Given that, this research is designed to examine the social reality of whether athletes are differently depicted in the media coverage of the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony along lines of their multiple identities and, if so, whether its patterns can be verified by the theoretical approach of contemporary cultural studies is a further area of investigation. By doing so, this research can suggest hints to reveal the contemporary state of social difference and inequality in the media practice and to look through the mutable pattern of power relations between hegemony and ideologies in the content of culture. The next section will explore accounts of figuralational sociology and sport.
1-3-2. Figurational Sociology and Sport

Elias’s studies on the Germans (1996), personal pronouns (1987/1991) and established and outsider relations (1994) have helped in making sense of ‘global sport and national identity politics’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). In applying this to the realm of sport, national athletes and a nation’s allies are treated as an established group or ‘us’ and described in human terms as ‘warm, fair and humane’ (Sabo et al., 1996, p. 18). Meanwhile, their rivals are stigmatised as outsiders or ‘they’ and often characterised in negative terms as ‘cheats, machine-like, inhuman and without feelings’ (Sabo et al., 1996, p. 18). The account of ‘stigmatisation of outsiders’ becomes significant in the global sporting match between the former colonial ruler and the former colonized. In the sportization processes between the third and the fifth phases, it is evident that English sporting victory over the former colonies, ‘increasingly an infrequent occurrence’, superficially rebuilds ‘a symbolic sense of stability and national pride’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 181). In contrast, the victory over their former colonial ruler is regarded ‘as a form of rite of passage’ in increasing successes of former colonies like India in the international cricket matches in the latest phase of the sportization process (Maguire, 1999, p. 181). For example, cricket was exploited as a means of spreading British/English ideology into its colonies and is viewed as representing quintessential Englishness. The former colonised nations like India often defeat English in cricket matches. Other sports like soccer follow a similar pattern. The emergence of non-Western countries’ power can be detected with reference to the changing power relations between Western and non-Western countries in global sport governance both quantitatively and qualitatively. Thus, it can be said that the shift of power balance
between Western and non-Western nations can be detected so that the wane of Western hegemony can be observed in the global sporting arena (Maguire, 1999; 2004). In this context, can the former colony be represented as the established group over its former colonial ruler in its national media coverage? The answer will be examined in this empirical research. In this context, it is worth noting that depending on who belongs to the established group - the demarcation of ‘us’ and ‘them’ – the identity of the outsiders can vary over time and place (Elias, 1994; Maguire, 1999, p. 183, 186).

The use of figurational concepts of pronoun pairs of ‘I/we, us/them’ is evident in the work of Maguire and Poulton (1999). The English media representation of Euro 96 Soccer Games expressed the intertwined tendencies of nostalgia and ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness. The notion of ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness became clearer as the Euro 96 tournament developed and the English team faced ‘a series of old European foes, specifically Scotland, Holland, Spain and Germany’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). The media representation showed ‘a part of an active construction of ‘fantasy group charisma’ that was grounded on both the ‘invention of traditions’ and the habitus codes, which underpin the ‘national character’ of European nations at a more enduring and deeper level (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). Does the media discourse become observable in the South Korean newspapers and television coverage? As an attempt to answer this question, this empirical research will examine the notion of national identity and national character of Northeast Asian nations reflected in the R.O.K.’s media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The media discourse will be explored in-depth with reference to the contemporary political conditions and conflicts in South Korea.
1-3-3. The Media/Sport Complex

This section will illustrate the way in which the media sport products are constructed, composed and consumed. These include the following sub-sections: the media sport production complex; the media sport production process; the media sport content, especially in focusing upon the issues of national identity, national character of Northeast Asian nations or regional identity of being Asian and race/ethnicity and the media sport consumption.

The Media Sport Production Complex

Sport and the media have been conceived as interdependent social institutions that play an important role in delivering the social heritage of a society constructed through human interaction from generation to generation (Lasswell, 1948). Analysing identity, politics and cultural studies, Douglas Kellner (1995) argues that the media culture has been the dominant form of culture, which provides concrete and ideological materials for identity formation. The role of media culture has been said to shape the prevalent views of the world by reflecting and reinforcing our dominant values, beliefs and ideas (Kellner, 1995). The symbols, resources and myths provided in media texts and images help to constitute an ordinary culture for the majority of individuals and to define the culture in relation to particular dimensions of power and control. The manifestations of media culture demonstrate ‘who has power and who is powerless, who is allowed to exercise force, and who is not’ (Kellner, 1995, p. 2).
In Maguire’s (1993) writings on the Media–Sports Complex, the media/sport flow interconnects globalisation processes and the transnational development of sports at the high-tech level as a vital mediator of the interdependent systems within specific global cultural flows. For example, there has been the connection between the development of the global sport ‘system’ and the emergence of global media communications as well as the intertwined relationship between the contemporary experience of sport and global media concerns (Maguire, 1999, p. 145). In addition, Maguire states that ‘the media sport production complex’ has come to serve as ‘vehicles for the expression of ideologies that are not only national in character but are also transnational in their consequences’ at global sport events like the Olympics (Maguire, 1993; 2000, p. 358). Hence, the media sport complex could represent not only national but also international athletes at the global sporting events in a manner which is interdependent on a political, cultural and economic realm (Maguire et al., 2002).

**The Media Sport Production Process**

Media sport products have been constructed at an intersection between the desire and potential for larger revenue derived from a larger audience and the values and interests of the media’s owners or controllers (Tuchman et al., 1978). To do this, the media sport production process focuses on the creation of an interesting and dramatic display in a sporting and non-sporting sphere rather than on the delivery of information concerning athletic performances, action and skill on the sporting field. Accordingly, the fundamental and natural context of sport has become transformed
into an artificial, but more interesting, form as a result of manipulation by the commercial interests of the media sport complex (Athelaide and Snow, 1979; Maguire, 1999).

Linked to this, the media sport production complex adopts special strategies in the audio-visual and narrative dimensions (Maguire et al., 2002; Stead, 2003). Firstly, in the audio-visual dimension, the visual (e.g. the camera angle and techniques, the framing of the image and body language) and auditory techniques (e.g. the use of music and the commentary) have been used. Secondly, the narrative dimension consists of the verbal commentaries describing events on the field of play (e.g. the specific terms and sentences). These techniques are carried out by the reconstruction of specific images and the representation of particular messages in today’s sporting world (Creedon, 1994). The audio-visual and narrative techniques are essential to go beyond the simple representation of the reality of sporting events and, instead, to centre on highlighted, selected, edited and reinterpreted sporting incidents, which are constructed to inform and entertain audiences (Whannel, 1992).

As Garry Whannel (1992) states, the nature or reality of sporting events and sporting individuals in the media portrayals has been reconstructed by the media interests in sport. These include; 1) ‘hierarchisation’, the process of pointing out that some events are more crucial than others; 2) ‘narrative’, the process of reporting events in the form of stories; 3) ‘personalisation’, the representation of some events according to their individualised aspects and 4) the placing of some events in the background of frames of reference (Whannel, 1992, p. 112-13). In a similar vein, Stead (2003, p. 195-6) mentions three key conditions; 1) ‘spectacularisation’ that offers ‘opportunities to add variety, colour and impact to enhance the entertainment
element and to provide a wealth of material for the ‘big build-up to the event’ (especially in the opening ceremony at the Olympic Games); 2) ‘personalisation’ that ‘individual sportspeople are highlighted, built up and examined, often in great detail’ (especially as heroes, villains and interpersonal rivals); 3) ‘dramatisation’ that builds up ‘story lines around the sporting event and the individuals involved’ (especially about suspense, conflict and confrontation). Given that, the focus of this thesis is given to examining the ways in which audio-visual and narrative techniques are used to describe sportspeople and events in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and its opening ceremony.

Consequently, the key techniques and requirements in the sport media production process tend to contribute to enhancing the marketable value of sport as a product and attracting a larger audience. This media interest in sport has stemmed from the sporting media’s goal of ‘low production costs and the potentially high audience ratings that can be achieved’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 154).

**Media Sport Content**

Media sport content is formed in the encounter where multiple forms of dominant ideologies such as nationalism, racism and ethnicism are integrally reflected with continual mutation. That is, according to the argument of Maguire (1999), the media sport content is not one which can be produced under the influence of only a monolithic ideology. Rather, more various cultural values and ideological spectacles in a society have influenced the production process of media sport content. According to this, when analysing the media sport content from the perspectives of cultural
studies, a variety of ideological-based and problem-centred issues covering national identity, race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality, social class, age, etc must be concerned (Wenner, 1989). However, even though the under-representation of the elderly in the telecast coverage was studied (Harris and Feinberg, 1977; Kubey, 1980), the studies of social class, age and sexual orientation are still quite marginal (Birrell, 2000). The figurational sociological perspective helps identify ‘a blend of habitus codes’, which includes the second nature or social identity, which forms ‘national character’ in the media portrayals (Elias, 1987/1991, p. 209). In this thesis, a mediated blend of habitus codes such as the national character of Northeast Asian nations, race of being Asian, ethnicity of being Korean, and national identity of being South Korean must be clarified. Therefore, this research focuses upon examining the issues of identity markers, which are embedded and articulated in the sport media content of 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The focus of this thesis is on revealing the way in which members of minority groups within the South Korean context are discriminately represented in the sport media texts and images in terms of their own minority identities. In addition, the particular trends of the media representations in reinforcing or challenging a hegemonic ideology at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games at a historically specific moment will be explored with theoretical concepts drawn from contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology.

Media Sport Content: Nationalism

Nationalistic sentiments or ideology, which is formed, concocted and promoted through sporting events, can be called ‘sporting nationalism’ (Cho, 2009, p. 349). It
tends to highlight the nation’s sense of belongingness, unity, competence and prestige (Lee, 1990). Cho elucidates that sporting nationalism is ‘an efficient cultivator of confidence and a sense of national prestige, whose narratives often emphasize national development or national pride by identifying the winning of sporting events with national victory’ (2009, p. 349).

Expressions of sporting nationalism have been core elements in the media sport coverage (Boyle and Haynes, 2000; Hargreaves, 1986b; Lee, 2007). The media practice may refer to the most effective mechanisms for constructing and reproducing nationalism (Lee, 2007). For example, when the media mediate international affairs to the public, media content tends to reflect the political and cultural perspectives of nations (Lee, 2007; Richards, 2000; Rosie et al., 2004). As one of the ways in which the media coverage reinforces and reproduces national identity, ‘domestication of media reporting’, which implies a representation and interpretation of global events from a nation-centred perspective, helps deliver a national prism to the audiences (Cohen et al., 1996).

In this process, national identity becomes considered as the most important constituent in media representations of international sport events. Emma Wensing and Toni Bruce claim ‘national identity overrides all other identity markers’ at large global sport events (2003, p. 388). That is, media practices have been less marked by biases and inequality, which are laid on the issue of particular identities such as race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, class and age. Instead, the coverage greatly celebrates national athletes’ victories with nationalistic comments (Wensing and Bruce, 2003). The media practice of international sport matches, that is, may differ from that of
daily sport, which pays attention to local and national matches and sportspeople’s victories.

Nationalistic media representations can be observed in comparing the media treatments of athletic achievements of national and foreign athletes at the global sporting events. Especially, the process of interchange and transformation between a hegemonic content of nationalism and other ideological elements varies at a historically specific moment like the Olympic Games. For example, the coverage of popular male team sports such as baseball and football tend to express a hegemonic content of nationalism and its interplay with other ideological elements such as racial/ethnic stereotypes. The power ratio and relations between the hegemonic and ideological contents can be changed at a specific sporting situation. This hegemonic shifting is based upon the nature of sporting nationalism, which is neither a fixed unit nor taken for granted (Cho, 2009) and rather is flexible, complex and multidimensional (Levermore, 2004).

In doing this, the media become largely engaged in clarifying its own nation’s historical accounts and framing historical perspectives, such as ‘what should be labelled historic and how it should be told, and what it means’ (Dayan and Katz, 1993, p. 104). Although the same event is mediated by the media, therefore, ‘distinct media representations by various nations through the prisms of their dominant ideologies as defined by power structures, cultural repertoires and politico-economic interests’ have been conducted (Lee et al., 2000, p. 295).

Thus, given that each nation’s media representations tend to reinterpret and mediate sporting issues such as a certain athlete’s victory in its own nationalistic perspectives, media representations of a certain sporting event have differed from one
nation to another. In this light, this thesis will focus upon exploring the way in which athletic issues of both national and foreign athletes (such as their athletic performance skills and achievements) have been represented in South Korean media practice as well as the way in which the sport/media coverage has reflected a sense of nationalistic superiority within the culture of South Korea. To do so, the question of how strongly and frequently nationalistic expressions have been used in South Korean sport/media practice needs to be examined.

**The Media Sport Content: Racism/Ethnicism**

Racism is the belief that ‘human species are constituted by a number of separate and distinct biologically discrete sub-species’ known as races (During, 2005, p. 161). In this regard, races consist of people joined by the sharing of the particular sorts of personalities, dispositions and values, bounded by particular body types and marked by skin colour rather than by biological traits (During, 2005). The kind of racism has caused hierarchies and apparatuses of oppression and discrimination (e.g. South Asian caste systems).

Racism can also work in purely ideological ways (During, 2005). Racism refers to a piece of ideology that has helped the dominant races (e.g. whites) to attribute imaginary superiority and freedoms to themselves (Frankenberg, 1997; Allen, 1994; Roediger, 1991). Inside a shared culture, ‘in most cases it works by distinguishing other peoples by virtue of their race, so that people ‘like us’ are unmarked by race’ (During, 2005, p. 164). In a similar context, ethnicity, which is a construct by which ‘peoples of the same ethnicity share not just cultures but a network of family relations, roots, a more or less primordial – if often mythical - connection to a particular home
territory’, is generally supposed to be ‘more simply a piece of ideology’ than racism (During, 2005, p. 161, 165). In other words, if race mediates between nature and society, ethnicity would mediate between culture and race. A key distinction between race and ethnicity is that, while ‘race is almost never a source of individual or group pride’, ‘ethnicity can be just such a source of pride’ (During 2005, p. 165).

Most races, ethnicities and cultures, in contrast, work in a hybridised way. In particular, globalised societies and cultures are seeking more varied ways to use race;

‘as a niche for marketing, as a source of commodifiable, imaginary representations which can energise popular cultures, as a way of dividing and weakening the transnational labour force, and as a source of identity pride especially but not only for the marginalised and unprivileged’ (During, 2005, p. 167).

Toni Morrison (1998) argues that races consist not of skin colour but a socio-cultural position. Therefore, racism, more typically and powerfully, organises certain stereotypes, given that races are referred to ‘groups of similar individuals who possess a narrow set of traits, usually, but not necessarily, negative traits’. Individuals, who are members and representatives of a race, are primarily imagined as a bundle of stereotypes and dispositions. Generally speaking, white athletes have been perceived as having superior intelligence and work ethic (Birrell, 1989; McKay and Jones, 1997; Billings and Eastman, 2002; 2003). Yet, black athletes have been depicted by focusing upon their natural athleticism including the naturally athletic, quick and powerful (Billings and Eastman, 2002; 2003). This presumption of black athletes, thus, tends to be contrasted to that of white athletes including the hardworking, intelligent and born leaders in team sports (Whannel, 1992; Eastman and Billings, 2001; Billings and Eastman, 2002; 2003). Contrary to the racial stereotypes, Ashley Montagu (1999) argues that as human intelligence can be achieved under both environmental and
genetic influences, it cannot be said that a particular cultural, ethnic/racial group has a much higher intelligence than another.

Racial/ethnic discrimination has not only been applied to black athletes but also to other racial/ethnic athletes. With reference to the study of Sabo et al. (1996) on the analysis of ethnicity in seven international sporting events, there was little bias against black athletes, but greater bias in the portrayals of Asian and Latino-Hispanic athletes. For example, there were racial stereotypes within the context of Britain’s school sports that ‘Asians are too frail for contact sports’ (Bayliss, 1989, p. 20), and ‘are, therefore, not expected to succeed at sport’ (Lashley, 1980, p. 5). Asian pupils ‘identify more readily with non-Asian sports stars from athletics and football but, they do so without ever expressing a desire to become a professional footballer’ (Jarvie, 1991, p. 52). According to the television documentary The Race Game (BBC, 1990), the sporting achievement of black athletes (African-/Caribbeans) is regarded as a ‘litmus test’ of a racist society but, Asians in Britain are influenced by societal racism for all minority groups (Jarvie, 1991). The reality, therefore, has been that ‘sport, popularly conceived of as providing minority groups with equal opportunity, is not only failing to integrate them, but is a vehicle for the expression of ethnic antagonism and racial tension and is consolidating and even exacerbating social division’ (Jarvie, 1991, p. 53).

In brief, the ideological blend of racism and ethnicism has been constructed and maintained in dividing peoples into dominant and subordinate groups by race and ethnicity identities and serving to carry on the hierarchal relation. The ideological ideas have become embedded in the sport media context. In this light, this research project must examine how the racial/ethnic hierarchy in the social network of South
Korea has been formed and how it has been differentiated from that of other nations. To do so, this research project will focus upon revealing the way in which the South Korean media identify athletes, who share a certain type of identity, and differently portray them in the media practice. In doing so, it can discover the way in which the racial/ethnic hierarchy within a socio-cultural network of South Korea has been shaped and influenced within the South Korean sporting culture and, more specifically, its media content. Attention will be given to examining the way in which racial/ethnic interests are closely related to a sense of ‘nationalistic prioritisation’ and, if so, of how both racial/ethnic and nationalistic sentiments are embedded in the media coverage (Stead, 2003, p. 194).

**The Media Sport Consumption**

The main discourse of media sport consumption focuses on ‘the impact of the mediated sport on the people who watch, read and hear about it and the degree of freedom and choice that audiences have as they consume mediated sport’ (Maguire *et al.*, 2002, p. 52). There have been two different ways to consume the media sport products providing experience and knowledge of sport.

One is that audiences are receiving the media sport products that they have freely chosen (Stead, 2003). This consumer behaviour is carried out by skilled consumers, who can make informed choices based on the knowledge-ability of the social factors while consuming the media products (Hargreaves, 1986a; Maguire, 1999). Accordingly, the skilled consumers prefer to make unfettered choices as a
preserve of their own autonomy and to move away from being cultural dupes (Maguire, 1999).

The counter-viewpoint, by contrast, claims that audiences are receiving their experience of sport based on mediated interpretations of the sport (Stead, 2003). However, the telecasts, which seem integral to framing, determining and influencing our picture of reality as key socialisation agents, have been constructed by a ‘reduction’ in first-hand knowledge (Stead, 2003, p. 197). This stage of reduction essentially entails the change of the nature and reality of sport events with the ability to construct highlights, manipulate camera angles and have access to facts and figures (Stead, 2003). In other words, as media sport consumption helps to distribute the information of sport events as reinterpreted by the media professionals to audiences, it has been hard for media sport consumers to gain accurate information of the reality and nature of sport events.

1-3-4. The Olympic Games

The Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup have become possibly the biggest and the most widely watched TV media events (Tomlinson, 1996). At the intersection at which governmental and commercial desires converge, the Olympics furnish more than simply sensuous and symbolic issues on a symbolic scale (MacAlloon, 1984). The Olympic Games also functions to promote and accelerate the process of globalisation (Hargreaves, 2000). Looked at more closely, the Olympic movement and the philosophy of Olympism have been promoted to elevate sport into ‘the leading edge of a broader idealistic and universalistic humanitarian mission’ (Roche, 2000, p. 194).
According to the Olympic Charter, Olympism is defined as ‘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’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 10). The philosophy of Olympism aims at placing ‘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’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 10). For example, the mediated image of ‘a flock of doves flying around the stadium’ conveys an idealistic message that ‘the Olympic Games are the event that promotes peace and fraternity between the participants’ (Lee, 2007, p. 132). Therefore, the principles of Olympism have been highlighted and displayed with symbolic metaphors such as the flame, flag and the flight of doves in the media representations of the Olympics, especially in the opening ceremony. In this atmosphere, media reports on the Olympic Games, and its opening and closing ceremonies, have been used to act as ‘a vehicle for promoting globalization’, through the practice of global fraternity, peace and universal humanism (Lee and Maguire, 2009, p. 6).

Every participant in the Olympic Games must have ‘the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 10). ‘Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 11). The fundamental principles of Olympism challenge the possibility that ideological
contents such as nationalism, ethnic/racial stereotype and gender bias are applied to sport. In other words, de Coubertin stressed both the cultivation of ‘patriotism, a love of one’s country and a desire to serve it’ and the reduction of ‘nationalism, a hatred of other countries’ at global sport competitions (Segrave, 1988, p. 153). In addition, the media enables people from all over the world to experience global/sport cultural events simultaneously, albeit differently, and then to develop both global sporting culture and the globalisation of the Olympic Games (Maguire, 1999; Miller et al., 2001, Lee and Maguire, 2009). As an objective of the Olympic movement stated in ‘Bye-law to Rule 48’, ‘the media coverage of the Olympic Games should spread and promote the principles and values of Olympism’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 90). However, in the media coverage of the Olympic Games, the reality has been far removed from practising the philosophy of Olympism.

The Olympics have thus not only a global purpose for actualizing global fraternity, peace and universal humanism but also a national role in promoting social cohesion – especially national cohesion – and mobilizing the masses (Schaffer and Smith, 2000). In particular, Eichberg (1984) argues that in signifying Olympism as a social pattern for the Westernisation of national and local sports as a form of colonialism, sport in subcultural sporting pursuits and activities can be viewed as a site for resistance through the success or evolution of subcultural and other, especially postcolonial, cultural developments. Therefore, the Olympics become not only international, but also a critical national event, politically, ideologically and economically (Cho, 2009). In this light, the media coverage of the Olympics tends to constitute a global nationalistic context in what seems a somewhat paradoxical process (Lee and Maguire, 2009).
In the global sporting flow where globalisation coexists with nationalism, the logic of mediated Olympic Games tends to be rationalised for a nationalistic taste (Tomlinson, 1996). Thus, the Olympic Games tends to be transformed into ‘a national ritual’ (Lee and Maguire, 2009) and is nationalistically mediated in terms of national anthems, parades and flags, the nationally-structured medal ceremonies, the nationally organised team sports, unofficial point-scoring system and the publication of medal tables (Segrave and Chu, 1981; Toohey and Veal, 2000). Even the opening ceremony sometimes operates as a symbolic battlefield ‘overtly creating nationalistic tensions, rivalries and pride’ (Toohey and Veal, 2000, p. 75). In this regard, Hwang and Jarvie (2003) argue that the nationalistic drift at the Olympics is partly due to the political purpose and actions of national governments. That is, there is no doubt that the Olympic Games have been utilized as a tool to achieve political goals, which are to promote patriotic attitudes among the public and to earn international recognition.

With regard to the mediated expressions of sporting nationalism, the national winner or medallist at the Olympics tends to be portrayed by the media as ‘a national symbol’ or a hero of the nation, who devoted his/her efforts to the enhancement of the nation’s ‘pride’, ‘dignity’ and international visibility (Wensing and Bruce, 2003, p. 391). Consuming this media coverage through broadcasting live sporting games in real time, broadcast network reports and newspapers, the public were enabled to feel a shared national consciousness, to support a national winner during the Games and to talk about his/her competition against their opponents afterwards (Cho, 2009). Thus, the media expressions of solidarity with national teams or players are closely connected to cultural nationalism (Bairner, 2005), which both internally bonds people and draws external boundaries against others. Therefore, sporting nationalism can be
regarded as an artificial and intentional outcome that is constantly reconfigured along with shifting contexts, both international and national, even if uniquely expressed in specific societies (Cho, 2009, p. 349).

The ideological interplay draws hierarchical relations between one ideology and another at a specific moment. For example, at the Olympic Games, national identity and nationalism seem to override all other identity markers, such as race/ethnicity and gender, and ideologies, such as racial/ethnic stereotypes and gender bias (Eastman and Billings, 1999; Tuggle and Owen, 1999; Wensing and Bruce, 2003). Thus, nationalism can be seen as a hegemonic force of an ideology that dominates all other ideologies in the cultural context of a nation - a hegemonic discourse. However, the hegemonic force remains neither static and constant nor applicable at any other time, place and/or situation (Birrell, 2000). Rather, the power relation between ideologies and hegemony stems from an interweaving of historical and contemporary events that can be transformed at a specific time, place and/or situation, so that the nature of hegemonic content is not constantly fixed but able to be ‘transformed’ to another at a specific historical moment (Mouffe, 1981, p. 231). In response to the contextual conditions and changes of a nation, therefore, a hegemonic force may become reinforced, maintained, weakened or even replaced with an ideological force over time, place and/or situation (Gruneau, 1983). When being replaced with another ideological element, the previous hegemonic element becomes weakened and a new hegemonic content arises due to its relational, relative and dynamic character - the discourse of hegemonic transformation (Gruneau, 1983; Mouffe, 1981; Williams, 1979; Dunning, 1999).
Sporting nationalism has intricately interplayed with racism/ethnicism in particular social contexts and those ideological elements have been embedded in sport media coverage. Along with reference to the racial/ethnic identity of athletes, the way in which the media mediate their athletic achievements and performance ability has been differentiated. Andrew Billings and Susan Eastman argue that in the sporting field, ‘Blacks were consistently identified as physically superior, while Whites were stereotyped as successful, because of their perceived stronger commitment’ (2002, p. 367). Therefore, the achievements of black athletes have been trivialised as effortless and less rewarding, compared to those of whites. Racial/ethnic biases have been more noticeable in the American media coverage of top athletes. Even though black athletes do rank highly, white athletes were mentioned over 1200 times more than blacks and these media biases remain consistent throughout the NBC telecasts (Billings and Eastman, 2002). This shows ‘how strongly such favouritism is embedded within the social network of American society and perpetuated by the media’ (Billings and Eastman, 2002, p. 367).

In short, there is no doubt that media representations of the Olympic Games take place in one of the most dominant and influential spheres, in which narratives that reflect contemporary cultural values and ideologies are configured and concocted (Cho, 2009; Maguire, 1999). In addition to being both constituted by and constitutive of different societal vectors (Gilchrist, 2007), representations of the Olympics have become regarded as the consequences of competition for hegemony among a broad variety of ideologies and social agents (Cho, 2009). Therefore, the analysis of the media representations of the Olympics is useful for discovering detailed characteristics of sporting ideologies including nationalism, national character of
Northeast Asian nations and ethnicism/racism in a particular society, as well as their shifts in response to contextual changes.

1-4. Conclusion

This chapter clarified that with regard to the concept of ‘hybridity’, the meanings and effects of identities in those practices are constantly mutating in response to the contextual conditions and changes. Subaltern groups are allied with subordinated and marginal identities and dominant groups are associated with a part of hegemonic identities. The kinds of influential criteria and those weights to demarcate subaltern and dominant groups are also continually transformed. This shifting process, therefore, contributes to conducting and reproducing the systematic but subtle power relations between ideological and hegemonic forces. The form and relations of ideologies and hegemony inform nationalistic and racial/ethnic ideologies which are displayed in the media coverage of the Olympic Games.

Using cultural studies and figurational sociology as the over-arching theoretical framework, this discourse of identity politics and power relations between ideological and hegemonic elements has been highlighted. This theoretical foundation has been used to explore three main aspects of the sport media content, especially with reference to the Olympic Games. These include: 1) the way in which the media represent athletes and their achievements along with their multiple identities including national identity and race/ethnicity; 2) the way in which the principles of Olympism as well as cultural ideologies are embedded and mediated in the media practice; 3) the way in which nationalistic and racial/ethnic expressions are varied in the media coverage of the Olympic Games in response to contemporary political cultural
conditions and changes including the constant mutation of power relations between hegemonic and ideological forces; and 4) the way in which boundaries dividing ‘us’ and ‘the established group’ from ‘others’ and ‘the outsider group’ vary at a specific time, place and situation.

The next chapter is designed to understand the methods and themes found within South Korean sport media practice, especially at the Olympic Games, and how these practices have been historically shaped and reconfigured in response to the changing societal context of South Korea. To do this, the next chapter will embark on a historical review of South Korean sporting culture, its sports media pattern in general and the mediated trend of its representations of the Olympic Games in particular.
CHAPTER TWO

SOUTH KOREAN SPORTING CULTURE AND ITS MEDIA PORTRAYALS

2-1. Introduction

This chapter is designed to explore the historical roots of South Korean sporting culture and to review South Korean media representations of athletes and their achievements in domestic and international sporting events. Attention is given to the distinctive patterns of media portrayals of the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony. The first section will illustrate the historical events that highlight particular ideological forms of nationalism and racism/ethnicism within the social network of South Korea, including its sporting culture. The second section will elucidate the way in which the South Korean sport media coverage represents athletes, along with their multiple identities, at both domestic and international sport events, and explores its hidden ideological and hegemonic meanings in relation to the contextual conditions and changes of South Korea. The third section will specify the historical pattern of South Korean media portrayals of previous Olympic Games.

2-2. Historical Review of South Korean Sporting Culture

This section is designed to help understand how a particular set of ideologies was generated, interconnected and developed with reference to historical events and contemporary relations between South Korea and other neighbouring nations and how this was articulated and embedded in the national media coverage of global sport
events. To do this, the historical events that affected South Korean nationalism and ethnicism/racism will be explored. Attention will be given to a review of the historical context of South Korea as a divided, postcolonial, Northeast Asian nation with the impact of Americanisation, Western civilisation and Confucianism generated by China. Linked to domestic and international sporting events, the way in which a variety of ideological and hegemonic contents were constructed and developed in the context of South Korea will be also reviewed.

**Formation of Ideology: Nationalism and Ethnicism/Racism**

The context of South Korean sporting culture can be reviewed in terms of nationalism, ethnicism and racism. Nationalism in Korea has not been generated from a single or simple form, as Koreans have participated and belonged to a wide-range of nationalistic battles (Hart, 2008, p. 1775). However, all forms of Korean nationalism are symbolically signified in the category of ‘resistance’ (Hart, 2008, p. 1775). This tendency toward nationalistic resistance was grounded in historical events such as the Japanese colonisation of Korea; the division between the two Koreas; and American military occupation in South Korea. It was closely linked to racial/ethnic sentiments and perpetuated in response to political, economic, and social changes in South Korea. The nationalistic and racial/ethnic sentiments included viewing North Korea as a hostile state, continuing anti-Japanese feeling and unfavourable sentiments toward the American military presence (Hart, 2008).

When looking at the South Korean sporting culture, sporting nationalism that defines a sense of ‘national boundaries’, ‘both through its emphasis on international rivalries and through its exploitative overemphasis on us beating them’, has been
constantly observed through domestic and international sporting events (Cho, 2009, p. 349). Applying the theoretical concept of ‘established and outsider figuration’ in the context of South Korea, sporting victories over ‘outsiders’, such as the former colonial rulers or the occupier in terms of political and military power over South Korean territory, have been popularly used to boost national pride and the superiority of South Korea as an ‘established group’. These accounts have been based on national identity, and the international relations and political and ideological conflicts between South Korea and its neighbouring but rival nations such as North Korea, Japan and America. In a reflection of Eastern Confucianism, the indigenous traditions and culture such as the Confucian values and virtues of being modest and ‘tolerance’ and ‘politeness’ as part of the national character have been pervasive in the social network of South Korea (Crolley and Hand, 2006, p. 190). Sport has also been no exception. Emphasis is given to reviewing the recent South Korean sporting culture, which reflected the contextual conditions and changes in South Korea. The details then follow.

2-2-1. South Korean Nationalism and Ethnicism against North Korea

After being liberated from Japan in 1945 and then suffering under a three-year war, Korea was divided into two nations; South Korea (The Republic of Korea) and North Korea (The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) at the 38th parallel (Lee, 2007). As the division was caused by global politics, rival regimes and opposing ideologies, various forms of nationalism and ethnicism were expressed (Hart, 2008). These included viewing North Koreans as an outsider group, both hostile and antagonistic. Those ideological forms have influenced the whole structure and culture of Korean society, including its sporting culture (Hart, 2008). According to Cho’s
(2009) paper, in the 1960s, when a militaristic sport policy established by President Jung-hee Park was adopted, international sporting events tended to be mainly utilised by the South Korean government for two purposes: to divert the Korean public’s interest from political issues like authoritarian dictatorship to sports and to assert the superiority of South Korea by beating North Korean athletes or teams. Therefore, to display South Korean nationalism against North Korea, the government vigorously supported national athletes participating in international sporting events by constructing more elite sport facilities and providing training stipends (Cho, 2009).

The continuous economic growth of the 1970s and early 1980s, including the increase in both the public’s income and consuming behaviour, enabled South Korea to claim economic supremacy in the mid 1980s (Cho, 2009). Nonetheless, the antagonistic relations between the Republic of Korea (R.O.K.) and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K.) continued under the control of the military government led by the 11th and 12th President Doo-hwan Chun’s fourth Republic (Cho, 2009).

The nationalistic or ethnic sentiments of South Korea against North Korea, however, began to be reformed and reconstructed when the political climate between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. altered post Cold War (Lee, 2007). The antagonistic sentiments toward North Korea were reinforced during the Cold War era but were replaced by more favourable attitudes in the late twentieth century. This shift was evident in the context of the Olympic Games. At the 1968 Olympic Games, the request of North Korea to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for the designation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K.) was refused and finally resulted in its withdrawal from the 1968 Games (Cho, 2009). With regard to the use of the name ‘Korea’ as the established group, Cho highlights that ‘such antagonism and the
obsession with names effectively drew a national boundary through such concepts as who belongs to ‘our’ nation-state, what terminology accurately represents Korea, and promoted the conviction that South Korea was the ‘only legitimate Korea’ in the world’ (2009, p. 352). In this light, North Korea was the only country, along with Cuba, which declared a boycott before the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games (Lee, 2007). The antagonistic and hostile relations between North and South Korea were undoubted by the 1988 Games (Lee, 2007). Yet, the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games took a crucial role in leading to the end of ideological conflict between the two Koreas, as well as serving to enhance the national pride of South Korea (Lee and Maguire, 2009). After hosting the 1988 Olympics, the South Korean government decided to take several actions to ameliorate the conflict-loaded relations between the two Koreas (Lee, 2007). This was evident in several areas.

Firstly, the South Korean Government of President Kim Dae-jung’s Sixth Republic adopted a peace and reconciliation oriented ‘Sunshine Policy’ in supporting the diplomatic relationship with the North in 1998 (Oh, 2007, p. 58). The Sunshine Policy specifically aimed to ease the political tension between the two Koreas and to lead to political reform and an open economic system of North Korea. Secondly, the South Korean government established the ‘Berlin Declaration’ to help North Korean residents in poverty on 9th March in 2000 (Oh, 2007, p. 58). Thirdly, the 6.15 Joint Declaration³, which President Kim and D.P.R.K.’s Chairman Jung-il Kim signed on

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³ In the 6.15 Joint Declaration between D.P.R.K. and R.O.K, it is cited that ‘the North and South Joint Declaration mentions that ‘the North and the South agreed to … build mutual confidence by activating cooperation and exchanges in all fields, social, cultural, sports, public health, environmental and so on’ (the 6.15 Joint Declaration, 2000, cited in Lee, 2007, p. 268)
15th June 2000 in the ‘North-South summit’, was designed to assist in building confidence between the two nations (Cho, 2009, p. 357).

As a continuation of President Kim’s ‘Sunshine Policy’, South Korea’s 16th President Moo-hyun Roh set up a ‘Peace and Prosperity Policy’ and his Republic endeavoured to maintain the stable security environment between the two Koreas (Park, 2010). President Roh and the D.P.R.K. Chairman, Jung-il Kim, re-signed ‘the 10.4 Joint Declaration⁴ to continue the North and South Joint Declaration on 4th October 2007. By doing so, the hostile relations between two Koreas eased and were replaced by a new ideological movement that shows greater support and sympathy toward the D.P.R.K. (Oh, 2007). Through developing South Korea’s political base in this way, anti-North Korean sentiments could be weakened and a newly reformed ‘Pan-Korean identity’ could emerge (Oh, 2007, p. 58). This Pan-Korean identity stemmed from a new ideological movement that emphasised the need to show greater support and sympathy to the North (Oh, 2007). In this light, North Koreans were no longer regarded as the outsider group by South Koreans.

The political appeasement mood in the Korean Peninsula influenced the R.O.K.’s sporting field and enabled sporting exchanges between two Koreas to occur in a friendly, cooperative and supportive manner (Lee, 2007). For example, the two countries marched together at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Olympic Games (Cho, 2009; Lee, 2007; 2009; Oh, 2007) and even attempted to forge ‘a sporting union’ (Lee, 2007, p. 182). This Pan-Korean identity was also

⁴ In the 10.4 Joint Declaration, it is mentioned that ‘the North and the South agreed to build mutual development by activating cooperation and exchanges in all socio-cultural fields including history, language, education, sciences, culture, art and sports.’ The D.P.R.K. and R.O.K agreed that the Joint cheering party between the North and the South would participate in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games by using the train on the Kyung-yee line at first. (the 10.4 Joint Declaration, 2007)
detected, when South Korea played against Italy in the second round of the 2002 World Cup Finals. South Korean supporters hung a large banner that displayed the message ‘Again 1966’ at the end of the stadium, as a reminder of North Korea’s victory over Italy at the 1966 World Cup (Kim, 2002). By referring to North Korea’s World Cup success, South Korean football fans intended to unify the two Koreas under a new ideology of a unitary Korean nationalism (Kim, 2002). Declaring the South Korean football team to be the ‘Pride of Asia’ at the semi-final match of the 2002 World Cup, a Pan-Asian identity was also placed in South Koreans’ minds (Kim, 2002). Overall, the political and ideological reformation of South Korea between the mid 1980s and 2000s contributed to weakening anti-North-Korean sentiments and instead drew a unitary Korean nationalism or the national character of Asian nations with the establishment of a Pan-Korean and Pan-Asian identity.

However, the joint appearance between two Koreas’ Olympic teams at the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games was cancelled. This was entangled with political changes in the Korean Peninsula. Since the R.O.K.’s 17th President, Myung-bak Lee’s Republic started, its ultimate goal has changed from the maintenance of friendly relations between the two Koreas through the former two Presidents’ ‘Sunshine Policy’ to the denuclearization and reunification of the Korean Peninsula (Bajoria and Zissis, 2009). President Lee announced that the R.O.K.’s economic aid to the D.P.R.K. would no longer continue until the North agreed to the denuclearisation of their nuclear weapons through multilateral six-party talks5. This political change has negatively influenced relations between the D.P.R.K. and the

5 The multilateral ‘six-party talks’ began in August 2003 and are aimed at ceasing the nuclear programme of the D.P.R.K. through a negotiating process including the United States, D.P.R.K. and ROK, China, Japan and Russia (Bajoria and Zissis, 2009).
R.O.K. and inter-Korean relations have been frozen due to the unresolved conflict. These frozen relations have also affected sporting exchanges between the two Koreas.

2-2-2. South Korean Nationalism and Ethnicism against Japan

Before Korea was divided into two nations, the whole peninsula of Korea suffered from cruel and oppressive Japanese colonisation from 1910 to 1945 (Hart, 2008). The Japanese government threatened Koreans’ national identity and ethnicity with a series of brutal policies (Hart, 2008). Most Korean political movements (e.g. publishing Korean national newspapers) were prohibited, and patriots were forcefully sent to prison, tortured, and even sometimes killed (Hart, 2008). Koreans were not allowed to speak their own language but forced to use the Japanese language, textbooks and adopt names based upon Japanese warriors. These policies aimed towards the obliteration of Korean ethnic and national identity and resulted in reinforcing enduring anti-Japanese sentiments in South Korea (Oh, 2007). In view of this, the Japanese were recognised as the outsider group, immoral and vicious, by South Koreans. Even though both Japan and North Korea were included in the outsider group for South Korea, the long-standing rivalry between South Korea and Japan was differentiated from the ethnic relationship between South Korea and North Korea. With the emergence of ‘Pan-Korean identification’ in the 2000s, North Korea could be perceived as South Korea’s ‘half sister’ with their great support and sympathy, while Japan remained as the two Koreas’ ‘old foe’ or ‘cunning enemy’ that was struggling to manipulate the situation against the two Koreas (Oh, 2007, p. 225). Thus, due to the ethnic ties between North and South Korea, Japan tended to be
recognised by the two Koreas as a ‘significant other’ or the outsider group for Koreans, both North and South.

Despite the importing of Japanese cultural products (e.g. movies, soap operas, music, etc) in the late 1990s, the contemporary conflicts of ‘the territorial dispute over Dokdo Island’, ‘the East Sea Naming Dispute’, ‘the dispute over Japanese history textbooks’, ‘Japan’s treatment of the Korean comfort women’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4), ‘former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s repeated worship at Yasukuni shrine’, and his ‘unapologetic attitudes towards its colonial inhumanity’ (Oh, 2007, p. 59) have all fuelled the anti-Japanese sentiment in the R.O.K. In response to this, the Koreans’ fierce rivalry with Japan was even reinforced, and sport was used to display Koreans’ anti-Japanese sentiments and to bond them together (Lee, 2002). The anti-Japanese feelings were often exposed in Korea-Japan competition in popular sports such as soccer and baseball (Cho, 2009). It was evident in the excessively heated bidding competition between South Korea and Japan for hosting the 2002 Football World Cup (Butler, 2002), exemplifying the competitiveness of South Koreans against their former colonial ruler (Butler, 2002). At the South Korea-Japan sports competitions, Japanese teams were recognised as a group of outsiders, a ‘significant other’ or viewed as ‘the old enemy that must lose’ by Koreans (Elias, 1994; Oh, 2007, p. 59). In this regard, modern sports became a battlefield in which Korean nationalism – as a form of resistance to Japanese rule – and ethnocentrism could be expressed (Lee, 2002).

Since President Myung-bak Lee’s administration announced its goal as actualising the vision of becoming a truly ‘Global Korea’, in contrast, the R.O.K.’s foreign policy objectives covered ‘shaping new regional governance in East Asia, and

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expanding Korea’s Asian diplomacy’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). President Myung-bak Lee addressed ‘the launching of the ‘New Asia Initiative’ to expand economic, cultural and security relations with all parts of Asia including the South Pacific’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). Thus, President Myung-bak Lee’s administration has worked on constructing a pan-Asian identity and building a new regional governance. The R.O.K. and Japan formally normalized their relations by signing the Basic Treaty on Foreign Relations in 1965. Two nations worked for themes including ‘the maintenance of peace on the peninsula and the denuclearization of the D.P.R.K.’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4). Therefore, Japan tended to be not only treated as ‘an old foe’ or ‘a rival’ but also as ‘an ally’ in this case and a newly-generated notion of pan-Asian identity started to develop in the R.O.K. Thus, relations between the R.O.K. and Japan have become more complex due to the implications of a variety of identity politics.

2-2-3. South Korean Nationalism and Racism against the U.S.

Sung-hak Kang (2010) stated that the R.O.K.’s most influential ally has been the U.S. since the end of World War II. The U.S. assisted ‘the establishment of the R.O.K. in 1948’ and provided ‘the majority of UN forces during the Korean War (1950-3)’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4). Since the two nations were allied by ‘the 1954 National Defense Treaty’, the U.S. assisted the R.O.K.’s national economic recovery from the Korean War and helped build the R.O.K.’s forces with around 25,000 U.S. troops stationed in the R.O.K. (Kang, 2010, p. 4). However, there has been the opposite view of the process of Americanisation and Westernisation within South Korean territory. During the Cold War, the United States (U.S.) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) occupied the Korean Peninsula and American military began to be
stationed in the Southern part of Korea and to intervene in South Korea’s political affairs (Hart, 2008). Even though there has been an insight that Americans and South Koreans were joined together as ‘allies’ or ‘friends’ against the U.S.S.R. and North Korea since 1945 (Cumings, 2002, p. 11), the reality was close to the American military’s occupation of South Korea under the official guise of aiming to ameliorate the conflict-laden ideologies between North and South Korea (Hart, 2008). The post-Cold war settlement was to be temporary until 1948 when the national building project of South Korea began by renaming South Korea as the Republic of Korea (R.O.K.) and selecting Seung-man Lee as the first President. However, American troops have remained in the R.O.K. and have affected the political, social and cultural network, including its sporting culture (Hart, 2008). This resulted in one of the R.O.K.’s main problems; Americans in the R.O.K.’s peninsula viewed all events in the R.O.K. through the lens of the Cold War (Hart, 2008). This caused the American military, headed by General John R. Hodge, to occupy and govern, control and manipulate the R.O.K.’s territory using his own rules (Hart, 2008). In this process, American military troops sometimes took vicious actions against the R.O.K.’s citizens, suppressing indigenous movements (Hart, 2008). In response to this, tens of thousands of the R.O.K.’s citizens were killed by American soldiers and the R.O.K.’s police forces and hundreds of thousands were imprisoned (Hart, 2008). This political and cultural oppression finally stirred anti-American sentiments in the R.O.K. and Americans began to be recognised as an occupier group by the R.O.K.’s public, that is, as the R.O.K.’s elder brother (Kim, 1989, p. 754). In this regard, it could be argued that the U.S. and the R.O.K. ‘rarely think about each other as ‘allies or friends’, and
even more rarely do they actively compare each other on the same plane’ (Cumings, 2002, p. 11: italics added).

In 1989, as Jin-wung Kim notes, during the transition stage of Korea’s democratization, ‘new stirrings of nationalism, arising from their country’s rapid economic growth and political liberalization,’ was widespread in South Korean society (1989, p. 754). This new nationalism had provoked and promoted anti-foreign feelings, particularly against the U.S. (Kim, 1989, p. 754). For example, the importation of foreign goods, particularly American goods, was made compulsory by the R.O.K.’s government and the purchase of foreign imports was encouraged during the trade wars of the 1980s (Robertson, 2003). In doing so, consumer movements such as the campaign on the purchase of Korean products in the R.O.K., faced threats and anti-foreign, especially anti-American, sentiments were boosted among the R.O.K.’s manufacturers. Meanwhile, the consumer movement created obstacles to foreign imports. Thus, Gi-wook Shin (1996) argues that anti-Americanism was neither a refusal of American culture nor an ideological rejection of the U.S. as representative of modernity and capitalism, rather, national recognition and nationalistic concerns based on national identity became the prime political source of anti-Americanism in South Korea.

Since the late 1990s, new nationalistic and anti-American sentiments brought a significant advance in the South Korean politics of democratisation or ‘democratic deepening’ (Moon, 2003, p. 141). In contrast, despite this democratic growth in South Korea, the political power that the U.S. had seized sometimes resulted in frustrating South Korean efforts, in a wide variety of areas. This could be observed in the realm of international sport competitions between South Korea and the U.S. For example, at
the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games, the R.O.K. lost two gold medals in both short track speed skating team and single matches against the U.S., due to ‘the partial judgement in favour of the U.S. team and athlete’ (Kim, 2003, p. 31). In particular, when the U.S.’s ice skater Anton Ohno won the gold after the disqualification of the R.O.K.’s skater Dong-sung Kim, an outpouring of anti-American sentiments resulted (Robertson, 2003). According to the journal Sisa, 65% of respondents answered that the ‘unfair decision to award the gold medal to the American skater, Anton Ohno, was a reflection of American self-righteousness’ (Robertson, 2003, p. 5). The loss of the gold by Dong-sung Kim to Anton Ohno provoked anti-American protests in the R.O.K. and the Ohno affair was regarded as ‘symbolic of the perceived overwhelming U.S. assault’ on the R.O.K.’s national identity (Robertson, 2003, p. 5). In addition, the Games tended to be criticised as being used by the U.S., as the host country of the 2002 Olympic Games, for the political purpose of recovering their national pride and competence, which were undermined by the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 (Kim, 2003). South Korean short track speed skating teams and athletes tended to be viewed as victims of the U.S.’s political intentions. In addition, since two teenage girls were killed during a training exercise at the Yong-san military base in downtown Seoul by a United States Forces Korea (U.S.F.K.) tank and two American soldiers in June 2002 (Robertson, 2003), anti-American sentiments were explicitly provoked in the R.O.K. The crucial issue was the U.S.F.K.’s refusal ‘to release the two soldiers in order to be tried under South Korean jurisdiction after a request by the South Korean Justice Ministry’ (Robertson, 2003, p. 5). ‘Under the Status of Forces Agreement (S.O.F.A.),’ the U.S.F.K. was ‘not required to relinquish jurisdiction for incidents that occurred during the training’ (Robertson, 2003, p. 5). In this light, the U.S. could not
avoid being stigmatised by South Koreans as an outsider group or ‘suspected offenders’; politically powerful but ‘cunning’ and ‘self-partial’ (Elias, 1994, p. xvi; Robertson, 2003, p. 5). For ‘race relation’, Americans’ racial position was placed superior to that of Koreans, who were regarded as Asians (During, 2005). Therefore, it can be suggested that anti-American sentiments in South Korea tended to stem from the R.O.K.’s relative lowly position in terms of the political power ratio, international recognition and racial position (Kim, 2003).

President Myung-bak Lee’s Republic began to actualise the vision of becoming a truly ‘Global Korea’ in 2008 (Kang, 2010, p. 3). The main foreign policy objectives covered ‘diplomatic efforts to revitalise the South [Korea’s] economy, develop the R.O.K.-U.S. strategic alliance, and make substantial progress in the North Korean nuclear issue’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). Thus, President Myung-bak Lee’s administration has worked at developing the R.O.K.-U.S. strategic alliance. However, there has also been recent friction between the R.O.K. and the U.S. including ‘the discussions of American troop withdrawal from South Korea, adjustments of trade relations as well as the difference in the assessment of, and approach toward, North Korea’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4). Based on this, the political and military-laden conflicts deepened and fuelled anti-American sentiments in South Korea (Robertson, 2003; Hart, 2008). The most pervasive form of anti-American sentiment tended to be based on national identity (Robertson, 2003).

In light of this, the way in which South Koreans recognise each rival nation as an outsider group was differentiated in response to the historical, political and ideological condition and changes between South Korea and that nation. Yet, it has been common that the established group tends to prove their views to themselves as ‘good’ as well as
to others as ‘bad’ (Elias, 1994, p. xix). The view towards the outsider group by the established group has been subtle and changeable in response to the contextual political, economic and cultural changes. Therefore, South Koreans’ nationalistic and racial/ethnic sentiments must be understood and interpreted with reference to the historical review of South Korea’s multidimensional context.

2-2-4. The Application of Historical Review to This Research

Overall, the realm of sports has been an important cultural site where the most powerful forms of ideology such as nationalistic and racial/ethnic sentiments are generated in contemporary societies (Bairner, 2001; Hargreaves, 2000; Maguire and Poulton, 1999; Poulton, 2004; Lee and Maguire, 2009). Therefore, the exploration of a nation’s sporting culture has been of use in revealing the contemporary changing pattern of ideologies and hegemony such as the social system of patriarchy, anti-North Korean nationalism to Pan-Korean nationalism in South Korea and the enduring complex feelings toward the U.S. and, more seriously, Japan. Given this, the focus of this thesis is upon examining how the existing nationalistic and racial/ethnic sentiments have been maintained, reinforced, or transformed in the social, political and cultural networks of South Korea during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. To investigate this, the next section provides a view of South Korean media practices at domestic or international sporting events. In particular, attention is given to media representations of the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony, and how strongly hegemony-/ideology-laden media portrayals have been observed. Throughout this process, the contemporary general culture of South Korea as well as sporting culture will also be reviewed and reinterpreted.
2-3. South Korean Sporting Culture and the Media Portrayals

This section is designed to reveal how strongly nationalistic and racial/ethnic sentiments are embedded in the social network of South Korea, what kinds of shifts occurred in response to contextual changes in South Korea and how ideological favouritisms along with these shifts were mediated in media representations. Attention will mainly be paid to how the South Korean media coverage emphasise South Korean nationalism, ethnicism and racism at domestic and international sporting events. To do so, representations of athletes with multiple identities will be analysed, and the form of ideological and hegemonic forces and their shifting pattern embedded in the media coverage will be identified and understood.

In response to the political and cultural shifts of South Korea, the contemporary patterns of nationalistic and racial/ethnic sentiments against rival nations such as North Korea, Japan and the U.S. changed and those sentiments were constitutive of the media coverage. To begin with, the way in which the South Korean media coverage portrayed North Korean athletes or teams was negatively demonstrated by the mid 1990s, due to unbridgeable political and ideological conflicts between the two Koreas (Lee, 2007; Oh, 2007). However, with the emerging Pan-Korean identity or a unitary Korean nationalism in the contemporary culture of South Korea since the late 1990s, South Korean media coverage represented North Korean athletes or teams in a much more ‘positive’, ‘harmonious’ and ‘friendly’ manner (Oh, 2007, p. 58). On the other hand, Japanese athletes or teams were constantly depicted as ‘the old enemy that must be beaten’ by using hostile and antagonistic terms (Oh, 2007, p. 61). South Korean athletes’ or team victories over Japanese athletes or teams tended to prompt
vivid media-celebration with over-emphasis on the national athletes’ victories (Lee, 2007). Sports matches against Japan commonly connote ‘a war against the old enemy’ and show ‘the highest competitiveness for many South Koreans’ (Oh, 2007, p. 61). Thus, representations of South Korean teams or athletes competing against the Japanese were mediated by more nationalistic and ethnic expressions (Lee, 2007). Meanwhile, the fierce competitive edge of South Korea against Japan is often exaggerated at times when there is rarely any connection to the rivalry between South Korea and Japan (Oh, 2007). For example, the clash between Manchester United and West Bromwich Albion in the Carling Cup on 1st December 2005 was hyped in the South Korean media as a ‘Korea versus Japan’ match, only because South Korean player Ji-sung Park was playing for Manchester United, while the Japanese player Junichi Inamoto was playing for West Bromwich Albion (Oh, 2007, p. 62). Manchester United’s win was reported by the South Korean media with the caption ‘Ji-sung Park defeats Japanese Junichi Inamoto in the Carling Cup on 1 Dec 2005’ (1 Dec 2005, Sports Seoul, in Lee, 2007). Although both teams play in the English Premier League and consisted of many British and international football players, the victory of Manchester United was symbolically represented as the victory of Ji-sung Park over Junichi Inamoto. The victory of a member of the former colonised country over a member of its former coloniser at global sport events is taken to demonstrate that existing power relations between the two nations are symbolically reversed (Vidacs, 2003). That is, victory at international sporting competitions tended to be heavily influenced by a new hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism.

Meanwhile, the representation of the games between South Korea and the U.S. tended to depict American athletes and teams as in a more privileged position than the
South Koreans, because of their racial position, and U.S. political power and international recognition in the world (Kim, 2003). As a good example, a blend of South Korean nationalistic and racial sentiments against the U.S. was evident in media reports of the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Games, which reported the U.S. short track speed skating team and athlete’s victories as being the result of ‘the one-sided judgement in favour of the U.S. team and athlete’ (Kim, 2003, p. 31). Linked to this, the next section will explore the contemporary reporting patterns and detailed characteristics of South Korean media representations of the previous Olympic Games and those opening and closing ceremonies. Emphasis is given to examine the ideological background, generated from the contemporary sporting culture of South Korea.

2-4. South Korean Sporting Culture and the Olympic Games

This section is designed to show how the South Korean media historically mediated and constituted nationalism and ethnicism/racism at the Olympic Games. The focus of this research will be placed on revealing the changing natures of nationalism and ethnicism/racism, as configured in South Korean media representations. Especially, a view of how successful athletes or teams were represented by South Korean media on grounds of their nationality, race and ethnicity during the previous Olympic Games will be presented. Emphasis also needs to be given to the way in which the principles of Olympism, as well as a wide variety of cultural ideologies, were embedded and mediated in the media practices concerning the opening and closing ceremonies.
In light of the concept of Olympism, the South Korean media has tended to represent the Olympic Games as ‘a global festival that the whole world joins’, ‘a peace festival’, which unifies the whole humankind together, or as a ‘human-centred’ festival emphasising ‘human dignity’ at the opening ceremony of the 2004 Athens Games (Lee, 2007, p. 181, 184). However, Lee and Maguire (2009) argue that although the principles of Olympism are set out in the Olympic Charter, the Olympic Games hardly played a positive role in constructing a harmonious global community with mutual understanding. Despite the interplay between the global and the national, in particular, the media representations of the Olympic Games seem to repudiate the discourse of the harmonious global community and instead are replete with nationalistic expressions, which treat the global discourse as a myth (Rowe, 2003). The nationalistic discourse of the media portrayals has often been observed in the South Korean sport media. Research by Lee and Maguire (2009) and Maguire et al. (2002) indicate that the South Korean sport media tend to highlight nationalistic aspects of the Olympic Games, such as portraying the nationalistic symbolism like a national flag or anthem in the opening and closing ceremonies and celebrating the victories of national athletes.

This nationalistic media pattern started being observed from the coverage of the 1968 Olympic Games (Cho, 2009). The South Korean media strongly emphasised the national flag, which was waved by Korean spectators or worn on the bodies of Korean athletes, as the national symbol and praised the South Korean ethnic performances demonstrated for foreign ministers and Mexican officials (Cho, 2009). Simultaneously, South Korean coverage contributed to drawing national boundaries against rival countries. In particular, in 1968, North Korea became the greatest rival nation to
South Korea and was represented with ‘the oft-applied term North Monster, expressive of South Korea’s anti-communist policy’ in the South Korean newspapers (Donga, 12 October, 1968 in Cho, 2009, p. 352). Such heated antagonism against North Korea was due, in part, not only to existing ethnic conflicts between the two Koreas, but also to North Korea’s request to the IOC for the official title of D.P.R.K. in 1968. South Koreans felt the term D.P.R.K. to be intolerable because it might give the impression of two Koreas to the world (Cho, 2009). Such antagonism on names drew South Korea’s national boundary against North Korea through such notions as ‘who belongs to our nation-state’ and ‘what terminology accurately represents Korea’, (Cho, 2009, p. 352). In light of this, national athletes, who participated in the Olympic Games, were urged to compete with their best endeavours for the ‘national honour’ and as ‘warriors who represent the nation-state’ (Cho, 2009, p. 352, 353). When they advanced to the final matches, the media portrayed them as ‘a national ambassador’ and intended to demonstrate national capability through their victories in the world (Cho, 2009, p. 353). In response to this, such nationalistic allegories and metaphors in the media coverage of the 1968 Games could easily stir up Koreans’ emotional sentiments about their nation-state.

However, recognising the relatively superior performances of the foreign athletes as well as the poor record of the Korean teams, South Korean print coverage commonly described foreign athletes as heroes, albeit allegorically (Cho, 2009). The successful foreign athletes were also usually depicted not as national warriors but as ‘examples of great human achievement’ who challenged human limitation and existing world records (Cho, 2009, p. 353). This was evident in the South Korean representations of Jim Heinz, who broke ‘the barrier of 10 seconds for the 100 metre
race’. Special media attention was given to his photo which was placed on the front pages of newspapers (Chosun Ilbo, 16, October; Donga Ilbo, 15 October 1968 in Cho, 2009). It could be suggested that this generosity was due in large part to the general societal condition of South Korea as pre-industrialised and pre-modern and the status of sporting nationalism, which was neither intensive nor fully developed in the 1960s (Cho, 2009).

At the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games, when the first gold medal was won by a South Korean male athlete, the first response was to depict the national athlete as a national hero, based on athletic excellence (Lee, 2002). In addition to this, a telecaster commented ‘267 Tae-guk Warriors have been running the race pursuing only one dream’ (Lee, 2007, p. 198). It connotated that the South Korean media started regarding the winning of a gold medal as the only goal of all participants in the Olympic Games (Lee, 2007). Since then, South Korean media coverage has often portrayed the winning of a gold medal at all costs as the most valued goal (Coakley, 2003). At the 1984 Olympic Games, as the South Korean team marked an unprecedented national record, winning six gold, six silver, and seven bronze medals, nothing less than the impressive drama of sporting nationalism was constituted by the South Korean media and feverish public attention was elicited (Cho, 2009). In light of this, governmental actions expressed through the ‘the Ministry of Sport’ that supplied the increased budget for elite sport development, and by several supportive legislative measures (e.g. subsidies for medallists) became easily justified (Cho, 2009).

In this atmosphere, Min-seok Ahn (2002) argues that the national government exploited sport ideologically and politically to provoke and invigorate national integration in the domestic realm and to enhance worldwide international recognition.
Medallists were reframed as national representatives and their wins became generalised into national ones in the South Korean media representations, using particular national symbols and emotionally appealing headlines (Cho, 2009). By doing so, the government could finally proclaim national competence through media practice (Cho, 2009). This was more evident in the intention of the host country’s government (Ahn, 2002). Looking at South Korean coverage of the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, this state attempt was emphasised by producing, reproducing and distributing nationalistic messages that celebrated and highlighted the sporting excellence of South Korean athletes (Lee, 2007; Oh, 2007).

Such use of the Olympic Games for political, ideological purposes by the host country could also, on occasions, be depicted by the South Korean media in a negative way, in particular when the U.S. hosted the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games. Dong-sung Kim, a South Korean short track speed skating athlete, crossed the finish line of the 1500m final race first, but lost his gold medal to Apolo Anton Ohno, an American competitor, due to what was regarded as a partial judgement in support of the U.S. (Kim, 2003). For this issue, the U.S. short track speed skating association announced Kim’s rule infringement, that he threatened Ohno by coming too close to Ohno’s route in the final race, on the basis of Ohno’s complaint (Kim, 2003). In response to this, the South Korean media claimed that Ohno overreacted to intentionally penalise Kim (Hankyoreh newspaper, Joongang newspaper, 22 February 2002 in Kim, 2003) and consequently represented Ohno as lacking sportsmanship and the spirit of fair play (Joongang newspaper, 25 February 2002 in Kim, 2003). Ohno’s victory was often criticised in South Korean media coverage as a non-athletic outcome, influenced by the dominant political power of the U.S. (Kim, 2003). Thus,
the sport media practice of the Olympic Games has functioned as a set of communicative vehicles that represent a nation’s political and ideological purposes and ideas. This pattern of nationalistic representation has been changed to and replaced with a new form of representation in response to the ideological and political shifts in the context of South Korea. The evidence for this was provided by South Korea’s media representations of North Korea and Japan.

Looking at South Korean coverage of the 1984 Olympics, North Korea was neither disparaged nor received much attention, unlike in coverage of the 1968 Olympics. Meanwhile, Japan was depicted as ‘Korea’s most likely rival’ and even condemned in sensational and aggressive terms (Cho, 2009, p. 355). For example, representations of matches between South Korea and Japan featured exaggerated praise for ‘heroic Korean athletes’ and linguistic expressions meant to disparage Japanese opponents (Cho, 2009, p. 355). At a gold medal bout in Judo, South Korean coverage even mentioned Japan’s colonisation of Korea in the early twentieth century and openly fuelled anti-Japanese sentiments in support of Korean athletes (Cho, 2009). This anti-Japanese representation implicitly seemed to reflect South Koreans’ desire to surpass Japan’s position as a leading country in Asia (Cho, 2009). Hence, the representations of Japan, even as a major rival, were reinforced at the gold medal competition (Cho, 2009). However, the pattern was changed at the 2000 Games along with the shift in the South Korean public’s sport interests. The main focus of representations of the 2000 Games was laid on Korea-Japan matches in popular sporting events such as soccer and baseball, rather than possible gold medal matches such as wrestling and Judo (Cho, 2009). The general manager of the Korean baseball team expressed these nationalistic sentiments when he observed ‘that beating the
Japanese team made him happier than earning the gold medal’ (*Chosun Ilbo*, 28 September), and such comments arguably show that ‘anti-Japanese feeling was still prevalent, but its representation had changed’ (Cho, 2009, p. 359).

With the shift in the political landscape in the 2000s the relationship between North and South Korea became increasingly more peaceful, and unprecedented events between both Koreas were observed in the South Korean coverage of the 2000 Olympic Games (Cho, 2009). For example, for the 2000 Olympic opening ceremonies, athletes of North and South Korea entered the stadium hand-in-hand and marched together behind two flag-bearers raising a ‘Hanbando’ (Cho, 2009, p. 358). In this process, the national symbol of South Korea was replaced from ‘Taegukki’ as the national flag of South Korea to ‘Hanbando’ as the flag of the Korean Peninsula as well as a symbol of ethnic bonds between the two Koreas (Cho, 2009, p. 358). This shift provoked the image of (ethnic) ‘brotherhood’ between the two Koreas on a basis of a shared history, blood and future (Cho, 2009, p. 358). Such broad use of ‘Hanbando’ as a national symbol contributed to portending a futuristic national identity and to crystallising the way to solve South Korea’s modern struggles, such as ‘the separation after the colonial occupation (1910-45), the civil war (1950-53) and its underdeveloped condition for the past decades’ (Cho, 2009, p. 358). Research on the 2004 Olympic Games by Oh (2007) confirmed the emergence of a Pan-Korean identity as the futuristic national identity of South Korea in 2004. At the same time, the notion of a ‘unitary Korean nationalism’ that ‘both North and South Koreans belong to a single nation’ was emphasised and the South Korean sport media depicted the North Korean Olympic team with supportive and positive sentiments at the 2004 Games (Lee, 2007, p. 182; Lee, 2009, p. 21). In this light, Jae-kyu Han, a former
Korean ambassador to Greece, and In-suk Jeon, the KBS commentator, commented that the joint match between North and South Korea played a leading role in symbolising peace at the Athens Olympics and resuscitating the Olympic spirit (Lee, 2007). Therefore, representations of inter-Korean nationalism that demonstrated cooperation, fraternity, and goodwill between the two Koreas at the 2004 Athens Games could be an example that actualises the principles of Olympism and thus helps to build a harmonious global community (Lee, 2007).

Overall, the contextual shifts over the political and ideological dimensions of South Korea heavily influenced the way in which the South Korean coverage represented athletes and their issues during the Olympic Games and its opening and closing ceremonies in various ways. It connotes that the particular hidden meanings of media representations cannot be interpreted without an understanding of societal conditions and changes in South Korea. Given that, this empirical research focuses upon identifying the contextual changes in South Korea at the 2008 Olympic Games and its opening ceremony and revealing a new media pattern that is constituted and mediated under the influence of those contextual changes. This research will be explained using the notion of a transformation of subtle ideological and hegemonic forces along with the contemporary contextual changes such as the political reforms and the emergence of newly-generated ideology.

2-5. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a historical review of South Korean sporting culture and the way in which the South Korean media coverage variously portrays athletes at international and domestic sporting events. As mentioned earlier, media
representations have been differentiated by the sort of multiple identities which athletes possess. In view of this, the way in which athletes were differentiated by the media on the grounds of their nationality, nation character of Northeast Asian nations, ethnicity and race and the reasons behind this distinctive coverage for each (identity) group of athletes has been explored with reference to the historical discourse of political and ideological events in South Korea. This exploration was carried out in two main ways. First, an examination of how strongly nationalistic, ethnic and/or racial ideologies are embedded in media representations was undertaken. These tendencies were evident in media coverage of the power relations between hegemonic and ideological contents between South Korea and other rival nations, namely North Korea, Japan and America and those transformations in response to the contextual conditions and changes. Second, an analysis of the shifting pattern of media representations of athletes and their achievements at the previous Olympic Games was conducted. The reporting patterns revealed a blend of both the preservation of indigenous traditions and culture and the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation in the context of globalisation.

In light of this, the main themes of this research have been specified. Giving attention to the South Korean media coverage of the opening ceremony, the way in which the media exposes South Korean nationalistic sentiments in representing nationalistic symbolism (e.g. national flag) has been examined. In an attempt to reveal nationalistic, ethnic and racial expressions in the media practice of the Olympic Games, the way in which the symbolic descriptions of North Korean, Japanese, and American Olympians are distinguished from those of South Korean Olympians along with their national identity and race/ethnicity has been explored. In particular, the
main focus was given to the nationalistic and racial/ethnic terms or expressions which are used to represent the athletic successes of national or foreign Olympians and to reveal the hidden meanings behind these.

Overall, this chapter has reviewed the characteristics of South Korea, as a divided, postcolonial, Northeast Asian nation with the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation, and its sporting culture. This discourse can be understood through the theoretical concept of the identity politics; power relations between hegemonic and ideological elements resulting from an interweaving of historical and contemporary events in political and ideological dimensions; hegemonic transformation; and the variability of the boundaries dividing ‘us’ and ‘the established group’ from ‘others’ and ‘the outsider group’ at a specific time, place and/or situation. In this light, the theoretical insights of contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology will be used to interpret data out of observations. In the next chapter, the methodological approach to examining the South Korean media portrayals of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and its opening ceremony will be outlined.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3-1. Introduction

This chapter is designed to clarify methodological philosophies and empirical methods applicable to this thesis. However, it is not easy to set a suitable theoretical philosophy and methods, due to the long and complex academic debate on social research. This academic debate concerns whether research should be grounded on epistemological or ontological positions.

The epistemological position is one which examines ‘what is regarded as appropriate knowledge about the social world’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 3). Genuine knowledge has been gained out of observations about social behaviours and the meanings of social actors, and it can directly refer to the social world. Hence, the core question for epistemologists is whether a natural science model of the research process is suited to the study of the social world. In contrast, the ontological position focuses upon examining ‘whether the social world is regarded as something external to social actors or something that people are in the process of fashioning’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 3). Hence, the central concern of ontologists is the examination of whether the relationship between social actors arises out of observations and social factors that are external to them or whether social changes within the social construction are dependent or independent. Thus, ontologists regard the frame of social construction as the social world.
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Diagram One. The Epistemological and Ontological Issues: Adapted from Bryman (2001)

Based on this, the methodological arguments between quantitative and qualitative research paradigms on both epistemological and ontological positions become an important consideration in this chapter. The exploration of methodology includes seeking quantitative and qualitative research methods that are required to carry out empirical research on both contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology and the media studies. Last, how media research data are collected and analysed is briefly summarised and key themes, categories and questions that need to be investigated are highlighted.

3-2. Quantitative Research Paradigm

The quantitative research paradigm is grounded on a belief that social reality exists outside of human beings and that universal laws of social phenomena can be
examined by skilled social researchers (Deacon et al., 1999; Gunter, 2000). In doing so, social phenomena can be coded in terms of quantities and a subjective interpretation of the social world can be undertaken throughout statistical analysis (Deacon et al., 1999). The quantitative data of social phenomena, hence, have become objective and value-free in a numerical form (Bryman, 2001). The relationship between theory and research can suggest that the quantitative approach is associated with the deductive strategy that a hypothesis derives from the theory and is empirically tested (Bryman, 2001). This quantitative approach has been built upon the empiricist and rationalist standpoints and mainly applied to the methods of natural sciences (Littlejohn, 1983).

Positivism is one of quantitative research methods that ‘advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond’ from an epistemological position (Bryman, 2001, p. 11). Considering the five main characteristics of positivism in social research by Bryman (2001), one of them emphasises that only phenomena and knowledge confirmed by the senses can be warranted as genuine knowledge. Secondly, hypotheses must be deductively generated from theory, and tested, then explicated by universal laws. Thirdly, knowledge confirmed by scientific research must be a factor to discover the universal laws. Fourthly, the methods of scientific research must be value-free or objective. To do this, social researchers must keep detached from data collection to avoid adding their personal values to data (Gunter, 2000). Last, the scientific statements must be thoroughly distinguished from normative statements and a belief that cannot be confirmed by senses. Thus, positivists have regarded the social reality as a ‘physical knowledge reality’ verified by scientific means (Littlejohn, 1983, p. 20).
Objectivism is another method of quantitative research based on an ontological position. Objectivism has its main characteristics in common with the epistemological position of positivism. In Bryman’s definition objectivism is where ‘social phenomena confront us as external facts that are beyond our reach or influence’ (2001, p. 16). Objectivism, that is, implies that social facts of social phenomena and their meanings are independent of social actors and can be measured by the methods of positivistic research (Bryman, 2001).

When a quantitative research paradigm is used to evaluate social phenomena, the criteria of reliability, replicability and validity become most prominent (Bryman, 2001). The term ‘reliability’ implies that ‘repeating the same procedure would be highly likely to generate nearly the same result’ (Priest, 1996, p. 87). The main concerns of reliability are on the question of ‘whether the results of a study are repeatable’ and ‘whether the measures that are devised for concepts in social sciences are consistent’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 28). For instance, when the same measure is repeatedly used to examine a specific research question but different results are derived from the same procedure, it implies that the research procedure lacks the quality of reliability. The issue of reliability is closely linked to another criterion of research, replicability. The term ‘replicability’ indicates that a research method that is used to examine a certain concept of social phenomena must be replicable by other researchers who explore similar concepts (Bryman, 2001).

As the most prominent criterion for evaluating research methods, validity refers to ‘the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 28). The quantitative research paradigm is mainly concerned with three types of validity, namely measurement validity, internal validity and external
validity (Bryman, 2001; Seale and Filmer, 1998). Measurement validity refers to a criterion to examine ‘a question of whether a measure that is devised of a concept really does reflect the concept that it is supposed to be denoting’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 28). That is, measurement validity is concerned with the degree to which a measure successfully adequately indicates a concept (Seale and Filmer, 1998). The assessment of measurement validity is undertaken on the assumption of reliability that a measure is reliable (Bryman, 2001). If a research measure is unreliable, therefore, the measurement validity simply can be neither evaluated nor attained. As another primary criterion to investigate the extent to which ‘a conclusion that incorporates a causal relationship between two or more variables holds water’, there is internal validity (Bryman, 2001, p. 28). Put simply, a causal factor, so-called ‘the independent variable’, results in an effect known as ‘the dependent variable’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 29). According to this, the causal relation between an independent variable and a dependent variable is observable. However, it is hard to say that a specific social phenomenon is absolutely attributed to a single factor. Therefore, when internal validity is concerned, the consideration of multiple variables that would affect a certain social phenomenon is essential (Seale, 1998). Last, external validity is a criterion to evaluate the question of ‘whether the results of a study can be generalised beyond the specific research context’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 29). In the view of positivists, a universal law of the social world can be discovered by trained researchers and the research outcomes of a representative sample of particular social setting can be applied to disclose natural social settings (Bryman, 2001). Based on this, the issue of external validity has become important in the quantitative research paradigm. Given that, this thesis adopts the quantitative research paradigm to identify and compare the
extent to which the research theme is configured the most or least. To do so, the images in newspapers will be coded in terms of quantities in categorising them into each research themes and interpreted through statistical analysis. A statistical comparison will help draw a general outline of a reporting tendency for research themes, a so-called subjective interpretation of the social world.

The quantitative research paradigm, however, has been criticised over the following issues. As the first critique, a social researcher him/herself is a member of the social world in question as well as a part of the research objects. Correspondingly, it is difficult to keep excluding a social researcher’s subjectivity from the research so that social research becomes inevitably examined through a value-added investigation (Marvasti, 2004). Secondly, Bryman (2001) stresses that the over-dependence on measurable tools and procedures obstructs the link between research and everyday life. In other words, relying too much on administrative instruments and procedures, quantitative research results seem to be less applicable to everyday contexts (Bryman, 2001). In addition, as research measures are not natural means but artificial devices, modification was inevitable to apply the quantitative research’s outcomes to everyday settings (Cicourel, 1982). As the third critique, the distinctions between natural objects and social institutions tend to be neglected on the basis of a positivist belief that, as social reality exists irrelevant to human agencies, all social phenomena that are the focus of observation can be investigated by the principles of the scientific method (Schutz, 1962; 1967). This results in ignoring the differences between the social and the natural world (Schutz, 1962; 1967). In fact, a (natural) phenomenon is caused by multiple social factors that rely upon human interaction and has distinctive social meanings at a special moment so that it must be interpreted rather than being
investigated (Gunter, 2000). In this light, if quantitative research is only applied to this thesis, the sociological meanings hidden in the media contents, which are conducted based on various cultural determinants of hegemony, ideologies and identity politics and human interactions in South Korea, can be too simplified or even ignored. This thesis, therefore, adopts a qualitative research paradigm that interprets a phenomenon in-depth in understanding a social construction of social realities and human interactions. The next section will delineate this qualitative research paradigm.

3-3. Qualitative Research Paradigm

The qualitative research paradigm connotes a research strategy that is mainly concerned with texts such as words, sound and images, which entail social meanings that can be interpreted (Bryman, 2001; Deacon et al., 1999). It differs from the quantitative methods that merely deal with numerical data that can be counted (Bryman, 2001; Deacon et al., 1999). However, as qualitative research data are less codified than quantitative research data, it has been more controversial to create philosophical orthodoxy for qualitative research (Bryman, 2001). But, such orthodoxy has been generally explored in demarcating two categories, namely interpretivism from an epistemological standpoint and constructionism from an ontological position.

Interpretivism is characterised as a philosophical viewpoint that relies on ‘the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 266). Interpretivists insist that the subject concerns of social sciences should not be merely investigated by physical or natural scientific measurements but, should be interpreted in an epistemological manner (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2003; Bryman, 2001). It has been suggested on
epistemological grounds that a social reality does not exist externally to the social world but is socially constructed in that world (Bryman, 2001). This belief is distinguished from the ontological belief of the qualitative paradigm that the social reality can be interpreted by understanding the (inter-)dependence between social actors, which is gained through observations and the social factors that shape social actors in response to social changes within the social construction and exist outside of them. The epistemological intellectual traditions of interpretivism have been developed in the academic realms of hermeneutics and phenomenology and popularly employed in social research.

Hermeneutics, which is derived from theology, is mainly used by many qualitative researchers with the theory and methods concerning the interpretation of human actions (Von Wright, 1971). Hermeneutics has been employed to serve the understanding of human behaviour and the discovery of the social meanings of human actions (Newman, 1994; Von Wright, 1971). In addition, hermeneutics is suitable to understand the socio-cultural context in which social actions are generated and to reveal the social meanings embedded in a particular social phenomenon (Ritzer, 2000). At this point, it is fundamental to understand both social actions that influenced the social phenomenon and the causal relations between them, as Max Weber (1947) using a Verstehen approach states. In other words, a motive, meaning, and intention of a social action by an actor should be exposed and the socio-cultural context, which leads the actor to the action, can be revealed by hermeneutics (Weber, 1949). In this light, by adopting the epistemological approach of hermeneutics in this empirical research, the social meanings embedded in the South Korean media portrayals at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and its opening ceremony can be revealed. The causal
relations between the social meanings and the socio-cultural context of South Korea, which had influence upon the media sport production process, can also be disclosed and interpreted.

Phenomenology, which is another epistemological tradition of interpretivism dealing with ‘the question of how individuals make sense of the world around them and how, in particular, the philosopher should bracket out preconceptions in his or her grasp of that world’, in contrast, is inappropriate for use in this thesis (Bryman, 2001, p. 13). The reason is based on a belief that social realities have a meaning for human beings and those are constructed throughout human behaviour and interactions, phenomenologists insist that the interpretation and exploration of human actions are significant in understanding a given culture and society (Bryman, 2001; Goffman, 1959; Schutz, 1967). Yet, this thesis does not deal with a human being’s behaviour, actions and interactions with others but, focuses upon the interpretation of social meanings embedded in media content. Therefore, by adopting hermeneutics in this thesis, the social meanings embedded in the South Korean media portrayals that represent the athletic performance and results of Olympians at the 2008 Olympic Games and in its opening ceremony can be examined. In addition to this, the causal relations between that meanings and the socio-cultural context of South Korea can also be revealed and described.

Ontological issues of qualitative research are characterised in association with some of the key functions of qualitative epistemological research. Unlike objectivism, which is an ontological position in quantitative research and supposes that social phenomena exist beyond the influence of individuals, constructionism as a qualitative ontological position implies that individuals construct social realities (Bryman, 2001;
Burr, 2003; Marvasti, 2004). Constructionists stress that every category that individuals apply to find out the natural and social world is not different from social products (Bryman, 2001). The social products have meanings within and throughout social interaction. For instance, ideological phenomena as expressed through nationalism, ethnicism and racism do not have a built-in essence, but their meanings are shaped in and through social interaction (Bryman, 2001; Foucault, 1976). Such social products and their meanings are being accomplished by subtle social actors in a constant state so that those are continually changed and revised (Bryman, 2001). In this view of constructionism, therefore, both the way in which contemporary social products are constructed through social interactions and reproduced in response to the contextual changes and their embedded meanings must be explored. To do so, this thesis gives attention to examining the way in which a variety of hegemonic and ideological forces that are interrelated and configured through social interaction and that are revised and reconfigured in response to the contextual changes of South Korea, are constituted and mediated in the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Games.

The qualitative research paradigm, including the philosophical orthodoxy of interpretivism and constructionism, is characterised by its specific features such as subjectivity, relativity and dependence on the cultural, ideological and situational spheres. First, a qualitative researcher’s subject standpoint toward a certain research topic serves the understanding of the culture and society in question (Garfinkle, 1967). In this sense, Marvasti states that subjective interpretations are not a determinant of bias, but ‘a piece of the empirical puzzle that helps us understand how people accomplish social reality’ (2004, p. 5). Therefore, qualitative research allows subjective interpretation of research concepts, unlike quantitative research. Second,
the understanding of the relativity of social phenomena is fundamental to understanding social reality in a more comprehensive manner (Burr, 2003). As the notion of relativity connotes that social practices, and their meanings, can be variously interpreted along with different situations, cultures and societies, qualitative research has been often used to disclose distinctive social meanings, embedded in each individual case at a specific moment (Marvasti, 2004). The process to reveal such social meanings has been influenced by qualitative researchers’ identities and cultural status. If a researcher attempts to examine a research topic that is irrelevant to his/her cultural background, it will be very difficult for him/her to provide an in-depth interpretation of the research concept. Meanwhile, with regard to the notion of involvement proposed by Norbert Elias, a research concept, which is relevant to a researcher’s cultural backgrounds or well-recognised by the researcher in terms of its cultural and historical specificity, can be more explicitly understood and interpreted in-depth (Stearns, 1995). Thus, researchers’ dissimilar cultural backgrounds and viewpoints can draw relatively various interpretations, despite analysing the same topic of social research. Thirdly, qualitative research tends to be mainly dependent on the examination of social issues in the ideological, situational and cultural context in question. The purpose of qualitative research is to discover socially latent meanings in a given society. The hidden social meanings are usually covered up by the established ideas or common sense in favour of a dominant group (Burr, 2003). In addition to this, research questions are closely associated with the interests of social researchers (Weber, 1949). Correspondingly, qualitative research can be regarded as such a value-laden research project.
Yet, Bryman (2001) argues that such specific features of the qualitative research paradigm have been criticised in terms of their subjectivity and the relative credibility of the research projects. In specifying this, qualitative research tends to depend too much on researchers’ subjective standpoints, when they distinguish a significant social action from other actions within a given society and culture. Such overtly undue intrusion of subjectivity on qualitative research could lead to research results that are quite far distant from social realities. In addition, due to the relativistic character of qualitative research, it would be difficult for social researchers to get replicable data and to generalise research results (Silverman, 2001). In particular, research findings of a particular social event at a specific moment (e.g. the Olympic Games) could not represent an entire society in general.

The features and critiques of the qualitative research paradigm have been generated from no single theory but various theoretical traditions that confirm the value of research (Bryman, 2001; Burr, 2003). Gubrium and Holstein (1997) note that there are four key theoretical traditions, namely, naturalism, ethno-methodology, emotionalism and postmodernism in a qualitative research. Firstly, naturalism is a theoretical perspective that implies the investigation of social realities of people and human interactions in natural settings and aims to understand a social reality in its own terms. Secondly, ethno-methodology mainly deals with a natural setting of social research and aims to understand the social reality of how social practices are created through interacting and talking with people of the society in question. Thirdly, emotionalism is mainly concerned with subjective analysis of the inner reality of human agencies (e.g. their personal biography) and provides hints to understand people’s experience in social settings. Fourthly, postmodernism refuses universal and
established ideas of the society and instead sensitively concerns itself with various ways that social realities can be constructed. Postmodernism supposes that every social value is relative and there is no absolute method to examine social practices or phenomena so any methods for the investigation of a given society can be allowed.

Linked to such theoretical traditions that advocate the relative nature of social realities, the issues of the reliability and validity of the qualitative research paradigm have become controversial concerns in the research methods disciplines (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). Positivistic and empirical social scientists argue that the concepts of reliability and validity of quantitative research cannot be applied to the practice of qualitative research. It is due to the fact that qualitative research is value-laden with subjective and ideological characters, unlike quantitative research from a value-free and objective standpoint. When carrying out qualitative research projects, therefore, precise standards to evaluate a certain social issue could not be determined (Flick, 2002). In this regard, alternative terms and ways to assess qualitative research projects have been suggested (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). For example, qualitative researchers propose a criterion of ‘trustworthiness’, which assesses ‘how good a qualitative study is’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 30).

The criterion of ‘trustworthiness’ includes four sub-criteria, namely ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’ and ‘conformability’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bryman, 2001). Firstly, ‘credibility’ is a similar criterion to internal validity of quantitative research, and is designed to examine a question of how credible are the findings. This relates to the assessment of the authenticity of the research process and research results, which is undertaken by an established institution within the research fields in question. Secondly, a criterion of ‘transferability’ is somewhat similar to
external validity in quantitative research, and assesses a question of whether research findings can apply to other social environments or contexts. Thirdly, a criterion of ‘dependability’ can be paralleled to reliability in quantitative research and evaluates a question of whether research findings are repeatedly gained at other times. To do so, this measure uses an auditing tactic, which records the entire research process in an accessible way, to collect data. The fourth criterion, which can be paralleled to objectivity of quantitative research, is ‘conformability’. ‘Conformability’ is devised from an agreement that, as it is impossible to reach complete objectivity in social scientific research, social researchers should be reminded and confirm that their values or theoretical biases do not too much intrude on their research projects.

Remembering all of those methodological concepts of the qualitative research paradigm, the next sections will delineate the research paradigm and methods in relation to the over-arching theories of this thesis such as contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology. This will be mainly specified in this thesis’s over-arching philosophical view of interpretivism from an epistemological standpoint, especially hermeneutics, and constructionism from an ontological standpoint in qualitative research paradigm.

3-4. Research Paradigms and Methods in Contemporary Cultural Studies

Social research which began to identify social phenomena of inequalities based on identities of difference such as nationality, race, ethnicity and regional identity was developed based on political thoughts and actions (Ali et al., 2004, p. 23). In other words, politics, identities, and experiences become central to ‘how we understand the social world and therefore to social research’ (Ali et al., 2004, p. 24). As a type of
social research, the research strategies of cultural studies stemmed from ‘a notion of power (and) an acknowledgement of the structural inequalities involved in and coming out of the process of making meaning’ (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 134). Therefore, research paradigms and methods in cultural studies should begin by exploring the concept of power in cultural texts.

The interest in power is very closely linked to the interest in texts of cultural studies within a political, social and historical context (Saukko, 2003). ‘The interest in power articulated cultural studies’ attempt to reformulate the Marxist notion of ‘ideology’, which interpreted culture largely in terms of a dominant ideology that distorts reality in a way that serves the interests of the powerful’ (Saukko, 2003, p. 100). Thus, cultural studies continue to examine the relation between culture and social domination. The use of cultural studies was not merely limited to examining the cultural texts of dominant products but extended to cover cultural texts of ‘popular culture products, not to be mere loci of domination’ (Saukko, 2003, p. 100).

Analysing texts such as words, sound and images, the research strategies of contemporary cultural studies have been developed to reveal the relation, status and changes between hegemonic and ideological forces embedded in texts and to disclose identities of each dominant and subordinate group and inequalities between them at a specific moment. The main attention of those theories has been given to interpreting the hegemonic diffusion and circulation in the historical, political and social context and its transformation to another dominant ideology at a specific time, place and/or situation. To do so, by adopting in the philosophical orthodoxy of interpretivism on a qualitative epistemological position, ideological and hegemonic forces embedded in the texts and those hidden meanings can be revealed and the causal relationships
between those meanings and social, political, cultural and historical contexts can be interpreted. On top of this, the philosophical orthodoxy of constructionism on a qualitative ontological position can be applied to infer the social reality of how the ideological and hegemonic elements and those meanings are constructed and constituted in the multidimensional context of a given society and how they react to its contextual changes. Constructivist researchers, in particular, mainly have paid attention to investigate the specific features in which ‘cultural texts emerge from, and play a role in the changing historical, political, and social context’, rather than examining the texts’ formal or aesthetic features (Saukko, 2003, p. 99). Thus, the approach of contemporary cultural studies has been based not on ‘textualism’ but ‘contextualism’ (Grossberg, 1997). As a result, the way in which texts and methods of cultural studies, especially contemporary cultural studies, are configured and reconfigured in the light of struggles for and changes in power within a political, historical, and social context can be discovered. Through the new generation’s analyses of ideology, ‘the nexus between texts, power and social context’ can also be examined as the old goal of cultural studies (Saukko, 2003, p. 113). In the process of textual analysis, researchers need to pay attention to consider the politics embedded in our subjective understanding of what cultural texts and interpretations are all about as well as the politics embedded in the content (Alasuutari, 1999; Saukko, 2003). In this light, specific texts and methods of cultural studies can be effectively analysed in the philosophical orthodoxy of interpretivism from an epistemological position and constructionism from an ontological position in the qualitative research paradigm.
3-5. Methodological Approaches to Figurational Sociology

This section aims to clarify the methodological issues of the figurational approach, which stem from the pioneering work of Norbert Elias. Elias and his followers have arguably produced a radical ground-clearing exercise in the way of seeing the social world (Elias, 1978; 1982; 1983; 1987; Goudsblom, 1977; Dunning, 1987; Rojek, 1985; Maguire, 1988). There have been four principles that researchers consider. Firstly, human beings are interdependent. Secondly, their lives evolve in the figurations which they form with each other. Thirdly, these figurations are continually in flux, accompanying changes of different orders, some superficial and quick. Fourthly, the long-term developments emerging in figurations continue to be largely unforeseen and unplanned (Goudsblom, 1977). In explaining the two primary units of figuration and development, figurations illustrate the webs of interdependence which enable and constrain the actions of individuals (Maguire, 1988). The concept of development explains ‘the complexity of figurations in flux’ (Maguire, 1988, p. 188). A developmental approach offers the possibility of analysing both the processes, which include movements toward lower or higher levels of integration and differentiation, and the connections between phases in such processes (Dunning, 1987). Therefore, figurational sociologists need to think processually in order to capture the dynamics embedded in a change of people’s thoughts and words.

Researchers from this perspective require an understanding of interweaving theory and evidence throughout the process of empirical enquiry and theory formation (Dunning, 1986). As such, researchers work on an empirical enquiry without dominating it with theory and, simultaneously, develop theoretical insights firmly
informed by evidence (Abrams, 1982). The dynamics of figurations and the enquiry of relative importance of particular features are investigated using empirical research in a developmental manner (Dunning, 1986). The research act requires a balance between involvement and detachment, which is the most important quality for the figurational sociological researchers (Elias, 1956; 1987). Elias states that these concepts are ‘complementary indicators of the direction of knowledge processes’ (Elias, 1987, p. xxi-xxii). As sociologists are considered as hominess aperti or ‘open human beings’, which live out their lives in interdependence with other people (Dunning, 1986, p. 10), the difficulties that they face are laid upon the fact that they are involved in the research field, unlike natural scientists, and the relative lack of liberation from interest groups. This perspective is distinctive from a view of homo clauses and Zustands-reduktion models, isolating individuals from ‘society’ and involving reducing processes to static variables (Rojek, 1985; Maguire, 1988, p. 188). The participation and involvement of sociologists are conditions for understanding either the problem they try to solve as social scientists or figurations, binding people together.

Meanwhile, sociologists must place him- or her-self in a position of ‘not knowing’, in Elias’s words (Elias, 1987, p. xxxvii-xxxviii). The position of ‘non-knowing’ is viewed as the quality of detachment from the research field. Making the effort of detachment serves ‘an increase in human capacity for observing nature, for exploring its structured processes for its own sake’ (Maguire, 1988, p. 190). In avoiding both imaginings and fears of one’s own involvement and the tendency towards short-term, ‘today-centred’ thoughts, a long-term developmental perspective must be adopted (Maguire, 1988, p. 190). The quality of detachment from the routine of daily occurrences is also required in order to be aware of how long-term
developments influence these everyday occurrences (Goudsblom, 1977). The process of self-distancing arguably entails the use of specific types of questions and the deployment of specific styles of writing. For example, Maguire (1988) notes that the analysis of relative adequacy of evidence is dependent upon the level of participation by observers of specific events in question and the pattern of conflict and tension evident in the relation between observed and observers. When a researcher is considered as an insider, the emotional resonance and minutiae of what is being researched can be sometimes inadvertently provided. The outsider’s account, meanwhile, is likely to offer a more detached view, but may show a lack of detailed knowledge. Therefore, researchers ideally need a balance between the insider’s and outsider’s accounts (Maguire, 1988). This perspective applies with respect to both short-term, small-scale interaction, including the detailed interdependence between the social and the personal, and long-term, large-scale developments (Dunning and Sheard, 1979). In terms of specific styles of writing, the identification of ‘we and they’ perspectives needs elaboration (Maguire, 1988, p. 191). The interpretation of the ‘we’ perspective of different groups allows an understanding of the sense in which particular actions are ‘meaningful’. The comparison of different ‘we’ perspectives probes that, no matter how sincere and sophisticated, the interpretation can be misleading. However, the adoption of ‘they’ perspectives shows the figuration from a greater distance and offers a more adequate viewpoint of how the actions and intentions of the various groups are interlocked (Goudsblom, 1977). In short, the figurational sociological perspective has been used to denote the relationship between inter-related, juxtaposing issues such as theory and evidence, observation and theory
formation, involvement and detachment and the adoption of specific types of questions and certain styles of writing (Maguire, 1988).

3-6. Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Media Studies

Media studies have been used to discover multidimensional accounts of what a media text (e.g. TV programme and newspaper report) contains and the way in which those accounts are configured and mediated in a fashion that can be reproduced by the media professionals, through qualitative and quantitative content analysis (Gunter, 2000). As the most conventional measure in a positivistic manner, quantitative content analysis has been used to gain ‘an objective, measurable, verifiable account of the manifest content of a message’ (Fiske, 1982, p. 119). Thus, it can be defined as ‘a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest contents of communication’ (Berelson, 1952, p. 18).

The quantitative content analysis has been conceptualised by its three key features: being systematic, objective and quantifiable (Kerlinger, 1986). Firstly, the systematic quality implies their ‘rules are clearly specified in advance for the assignment of the raw material (e.g. newspaper stories) to categories’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 182). That is, as a set of observation schedules or guidelines are noted by researchers and then applied to the research process of data collection and analysis, all media contents are coded and categorised in a systematic way. Secondly, objectivity means that the subjective or personal biases of researchers should be excluded from the process of data-finding (Bryman, 2001; Gunter, 2000). In this sense, if a content analysis is carried out, the same results should be obtained by different researchers and be proved in another research. This quality can be paralleled to replicability of
research (Riffe et al., 1998). Thirdly, the quality of being quantifiable implies that data for content analysis must be countable in terms of number, quantity or frequency (Gunter, 2000). Based on the data quantified, content analysis can be carried out so that it is crucial to manage the content quantifiably (Slater, 1998).

However, there are two main critiques of quantitative content analysis. One is that quantitative content analysis cannot answer ‘why’ questions. Hence, the reason of why the media text is produced, constituted and mediated at a specific moment and its hidden meanings cannot be discovered and explicated through quantitative content analysis (Bryman, 2001; Gunter, 2000). In addition, the use of quantitative content analysis sometimes results in atheoretical findings (Bryman, 2001). This outcome is caused by quantitative content analysis’s over-emphasis on measurement and it consequently stresses ‘what is measurable’ more than ‘what is theoretically significant’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 197).

In this sense, it is important to distinguish differences between quantitative and qualitative content analysis. According to Barrie Gunter, while quantitative content analysis stresses ‘a fixed meaning in media texts that can be repeatedly identified by different readers using the same analytical framework’, qualitative content analysis procedures stress ‘the capacity of texts to convey multiple meanings, depending upon the receiver’ (2000, p. 82). Quantitative content analysis, in addition, depends upon a particular term’s frequencies in media texts, while qualitative content analysis focuses upon the interpretation of hidden or underlying meanings of the media texts (Berg, 1995; Deacon et al., 1999; Gruneau et al., 1988). Thus, quantitative content analysis could serve to map out the direction of research but, may make it difficult to draw an in-depth interpretation on data. Meanwhile, qualitative content analysis has become
popularly used to interpret ideological meanings embedded in the media coverage in relation to the context of South Korea (Fowler, 1991).

Based on this, this thesis is going to adopt qualitative content analysis as the overarching method of media studies. Even though quantitative content analysis will be briefly applied to arrange all contents of the media texts into categories in a systematic way, qualitative content analysis will be mainly used to reveal and interpret ideological accounts and those hidden meanings in the media texts of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. To do so, the use of three research methods, namely, thematic analysis, discourse analysis and visual and image analysis will feature in this empirical research.

3-6-1. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis can be regarded as a preliminary method of data coding before interpreting the media texts. Thematic analysis is employed to deal with how to organise all the media contents and to identify relations between various and distinctive themes embedded in the texts (Deacon et al., 1999). To do so, the thematic analysis serves to classify each theme into each category and to examine each sociological account as analysing each category. In this thesis, key hegemonic or ideological themes, such as South Korean nationalism, racism and ethnicism, will be classified and explored by using the method of thematic analysis. The thematic analysis is processed through a multi-step procedure in an inductive manner, as in the following (Mayring, 2000).

Firstly, main research questions are generated from ground theories of the research before the interpretation of the media text. Secondly, some arbitrary
categories are set in association with the research questions. Then, throughout inductive reading, new categories are formed out of research material and numerous themes are identified in accordance with the categories developed. Some inadequate arbitrary categories that are made before the investigation can be deleted at this stage. When every one tenth of the research material has been analysed, a decision of whether the new categories reliably fit with a further question must be made. Relying upon the decision, the next procedure either returns to the first step or moves to the next step and then reviews the material. Until then definitive categories and themes are developed, these processes must be repeated. Once the final themes are categorised, the texts finally can be interpreted using several research methods such as discourse, narrative and visual analysis.

As can be seen from this multi-step procedure, thematic analysis plays an important role in preparing for a more effective investigation of the media texts. In view of this, qualitative content analysis methods, such as narrative or discourse analysis, must be conducted in combination with thematic analysis (Deacon et al., 1999). Linked to this, the media discourse analysis and visual/image analysis will be reviewed in turn.

3-6-2. Media Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is defined as ‘an approach to the analysis of talk and other forms of discourse that emphasises the ways in which versions of reality are accomplished through language’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 503). Particularly, discourse analysis is ‘an approach to language that can be applied to forms of communication other than talk’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 369). This approach implies that, even though the
usage of language does not reflect reality, it becomes included in the process that constructs social reality (Burr, 2003). Thus, discourse analysis can be clarified as a method which is devised to discover the way in which texts, talks or any forms of discourse are structured to produce a specific meaning and implication.

Linked to this, De Saussure (1974) argues that linguistic meaning should be understood as a system of signs. That is, the meaning comes from their location in a system of signs and their relations of sequence or difference with other forms in the system (Seale, 1998). In the linguistic structuralist and post-structuralist viewpoint upon language, a sign consists of two components, namely a signifier and a signified. A signifier implies ‘the sound or the images of a word like ‘cat’’, while a signified means ‘a concept that we attach to the signifier’ (Seale, 1998, p. 23). In other words, the signifier implies physical elements of a sign such as sounds, words, or images while, the signified stands for the mental concept that physical signs are recognised in a certain linguistic system (McQuail, 2000). Based on these relations between three concepts of a sign, a signifier and a signified, a triangular model of signification is established by De Saussure (1974) and it conceptualises the real objects of study to which the sign implies (Fiske, 1982) (See diagram two below).
Yet, De Saussur (1974) argues that there is no apparent link between the sign and the real object. Once the linguistic system works, it becomes fixed and people’s verbal performance also gets restricted by a predetermined arbitrary meaning system. Considering the arbitrary structure of language, post-structuralists shed light on the influence of power relations within the triangular system. The definition-making process of a specific concept in favour of the dominant group’s interests depends on the power relations. Thus, definitions of a specific idea or notion are not built upon their nature or truth, but they are all socio-culturally constructed in character (Bryman, 2001; Sarup, 1993). Burr (2003, p. 64) indicates that ‘discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together reproduce a particular version of events’. This discourse in circulation determines the meanings of concepts and events that reflect the interest of
a dominant group who holds more effective ways to circulate and articulate discourse upon the event (Fairclough, 2001).

Regarding the media discourse, Norman Fairclough (1995) states that the ideological work of media language contains particular ways of representing the world, like particular constructions of social identities or social relations. This sense relates to the constructionist viewpoint. Even though the media is involved in the construction process of social reality, the meaning does not denote reality. Hence, critical discourse analysis suggests that a radical constructivist approach to discourse analysis should be critically re-evaluated and a reflexive perspective of a discourse construction, which relies on interaction between a producer, a receiver and socio-cultural circumstances, should be concerned. Based on this, Fairclough (1995) suggests a three-dimensional model of communicative events such as text, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice (See diagram three below)

**A Framework for Critical Discourse Analysis as a Communicative Event**

![Diagram Three. A Framework for Critical Discourse Analysis as a Communicative Event (Fairclough, 1995, p. 59)](image-url)
Firstly, text implies both spoken and written forms that can be listened and read with or without visual aids throughout the media. The focus of text analysis is on revealing the specific trend of media representations of social practices, which contain and convey ideological meanings. In particular, this thesis sheds light on revealing the way in which athletes are represented in relation to the usage of terms, sentences, captions and expressions in the media texts at the 2008 Beijing Olympics based on identities such as nationality and race/ethnicity. Specific attention will also be given to discover and disclose the latest relations between hegemonic and ideological forces within the contemporary socio-cultural context of South Korea that influenced the media representations of the 2008 Games.

Secondly, discourse practice is mainly concerned with the way in which the media texts are conducted and consumed (Fairclough, 1995). Hence, it is important to identify both the process of encoding by the media institution and the process of decoding by audiences in their everyday settings. However, discourse analysis will not be entirely applied to this empirical research, because the process of decoding by audiences is beyond its scope. Instead, to get clues in the process of encoding by the media, this thesis will examine the questions of what media contents are conducted and mediated, how the contents are configured in the media coverage and what meanings are embedded in it to convey to audiences.

Thirdly, an analysis of socio-cultural practice brings the research into a particular event’s immediate situational context, into a wider context of the institutional practice through which the event is appreciated and into the broader socio-cultural atmosphere in which it takes place (Fairclough, 1995). Applying the analysis to this research, the media practice of the 2008 Games will be analysed in association with the specific
context of the 2008 Olympic Games, the general context of the sport media coverage and the socio-cultural context of South Korea. In doing this from a constructionist standpoint, the relation between the media texts and the institutional, socio-cultural context that influenced the production of the media texts can be elucidated and the changing trend of representations can be investigated in relation to the contextual shifts.

3-6-3. Visual/Image Analysis

Media and communication research has long focused on written and spoken language but paid relatively less attention to the visual/image effects of mass communication (Deacon et al., 1999). However, Martin Lister and Liz Wells argue that ‘it is seldom, if ever, possible to separate the cultures of everyday life from practices of representation, visual or otherwise’ (2000, p. 61). In particular, the analysis of culture would benefit from an interest in visual practice, experience and knowledge that in part comprises what culture is (Pink, 2007). However, visual representation of cultural studies is itself misleading (Pink, 2008). Therefore, to carry out the analysis of media representation and practice effectively, it has been suggested that researchers need to deal with ‘audio-visual representations or texts that combine visual and written texts’ (Pink, 2008, p. 131). To do so, the discourse analysis, mentioned above, and visual/image analysis can be applied to this empirical research at the same time.

As a way to approach the visual methodologies in cultural studies, ‘how visual approaches have developed in the disciplines that have generated the methodologies cultural studies draws on’ must be explored, as Sarah Pink states (2008). The visual
dimensions of newspaper and television have been analysed to investigate a comprehensive portrait of the contemporary mass media and its embedded ideological element in a systemic manner. However, the photographs and images in newspapers or televised programmes are characterised as neither innocent nor natural. Rather, the media coverage tends to provide a view of the world which the media prefer to reinforce and circulate in visual forms (Rose, 2006). In the same vein, Duncan (1990) stresses that photographs are not neutral rendering of images. As photographers continually impose their own cultural, aesthetic and professional viewpoints on images or photographs, the visuals become subjected to artificial procedures and social uses. In the case of video-recording or televised-recording, the camera functions as a catalyst to set visual angles and the ways of framing, as Cristina Grasseni (2004) emphasises. Therefore, the ‘collaborative process’ through which we learn the cameramen’s viewpoints of how they see their sporting worlds and how they interpret and evaluate what they see, video and photographs can be understood (Pink, 2008, 138). Thus, the media deal with images, photographs and video scenes as visual mediums with highly interpreted social reality (Duncan 1990; Mills, 1984). Such interpretations mainly denote the interests of the established or dominant groups. Thus, the visual media can be referred to as ‘the product of many influences’, which is ideologically powerful (Duncan, 1990, p. 24). Therefore, photographs and images need to be scrutinised through visual/image analysis, which is a sort of content or text analysis, to reveal ideological meanings embedded as well as manifested in those visual forms (Deacon et al., 1999; Silverman, 2001). Three methods of visual/image analysis that can be applied to this empirical research can be suggested. These include frame analysis, narrative analysis and subject position.
First, frame analysis is used to investigate the way in which photographs and images are placed and configured in the media coverage and represented to viewers (Emmison and Smith, 2000; Goffman, 1974). To do so, the context in which a photograph is placed and expressed in the media frame must be understood, because the context affects the form of the media frame that views or codes a particular photograph or image in relation to the socio-cultural accounts in a given society. The context affects the way in which viewers interpret the photographs and images from their viewpoints. Using this method of frame analysis in this research, the way in which images and photographs are placed, configured and represented by the South Korean media in relation to the socio-cultural context of South Korea at the 2008 Olympics Games and its hidden meanings can be examined.

Second, narrative analysis is used to interpret the storyline that photographs and images construct (Bryman, 2001). Both multiple photographs in historical order and a single image which clearly shows the portrayal of a future or past event can make a narrative (Emmison and Smith, 2000). The media use the storyline to foreground a valuable meaning of the event that they strive to convey to viewers (Barth, 1990). Accounts of narrativisation can often be seen from the media portrayals of a particular sport event and athlete. This narrativisation aims to attract viewers’ attention so that its process entails the deliberate editing of photographs and images, in order to draw a particular narrative meaning that the media intend to generate (Deacon et al., 1999). Based on this, this research can adopt narrative analysis to investigate the way in which various photographs and images make storylines in the Korean media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and meanings of narratives that the media intend to highlight.
Third, subject position implies the identity that a photograph invokes (Emmison and Smith, 2000). The photographs and images frequently portray people and the way they are described is obviously linked to their identities. In others words, the way in which people act in the photograph is associated with their identities such as national identity, race and ethnicity. Emmison and Smith cite that ‘determining the subject positions at play in a picture is often central to interpreting its meaning’ (2000, p. 68). Therefore, applying the method of subject position, this thesis is going to explore the way in which subject positions of Olympians in visual representations of the 2008 Olympic Games are organised along with their identities and the embedded meanings.

In addition to this, semiotics also can be applied to investigate photographs and images. In particular, the concepts of ‘visual metaphor’ and ‘metonym’ tend to be useful to reveal hidden and ideological meanings of images in the media. Firstly, ‘Metaphor’ is defined as ‘a word which is applied to an object and action (signified) to which it is not literally and conventionally applicable’ by tradition of literature studies (Fiske and Hartley, 2003, p. 31). The same logic can be applied to a visual text. For example, the media coverage of the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games often featured an image of ‘a flock of doves flying around the stadium’ (Lee, 2007, p. 132). As Jung-woo Lee states, the photograph of doves and the Olympic stadium is a metaphorical representation that implies ‘the Olympic Games are the event that promotes peace and fraternity between the participants’ (2007, p. 132). Although doves do not have a relation with the sport event, the doves have been represented symbolically as a messenger of peace.

Regarding metonym, Fiske and Hartley (2003, p. 31) note that it ‘is the application of a mere attribute of an object to the whole object’. That is, a small part
of the total object is characterised as if the part representative of the whole. As visual
metonym is more iconic than metaphor, it appears to be more realistic (Fiske, 1982).
For instance, an image of a group of athletes from different parts of the world, who
march into the Olympic stadium without a national demarcation at the Olympic
Games’ closing ceremonies, signifies that the sport event contributes to international
understanding (Lee, 2007). However, it is only a particular aspect of the Games and
such an ideal metonym is unmatched with the reality of the Games, which include
numerous corruptions and conflict-laden circumstances (Butler, 2005). Thus, the
metonymical portrayal often misleads readers. In this sense, Lee (2007) stresses the
necessity of a careful decoding process to acknowledge the ideological nature of a
visual metonym. This thesis is going to employ semiotic analysis to derive the
embedded ideological meanings from the visual metaphors and metonyms, which are
used in the media coverage of the 2008 Games. By utilising all methods of media
studies such as a thematic analysis, a discourse analysis (in terms of text, discourse
practice and socio-cultural practice) and a visual and image analysis (frame analysis,
narrative analysis and subject position, semiotic analysis), the next section will
describe the method of collecting the data.

3-7. Media Research Data

This research project is designed to examine the ways in which South Korea’s
nationalisms, which most frequently act as a hegemonic content of the dominant
ideology, and other ideological elements that are overlapping or intertwining with the
hegemonic content are implicated, legitimated and disseminated in its national media
coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and its opening ceremony. To do so,
using a qualitative research paradigm and the methods mentioned above, the way in which those ideological elements are configured and mediated in the media coverage should be examined. In particular, the focus of the research should be on revealing the way in which specific nationalistic and racial/ethnic expressions are used to represent Olympians and their achievements in the media coverage of the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony and its embedded hegemonic and ideological meanings. The research outcomes can be generated through the qualitative content analysis of how the South Korean media differently represent athletes and their achievements based on their multiple identities such as nationality, regional identity, race and ethnicity. Specific attention is also paid to the media representations that the political and nationalistic tension and conflicts are precluded to practice the principles of Olympism, especially in the opening ceremony.

To examine the research questions and themes, this research project collects data from both newspapers and television portrayals of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and its opening ceremony. The research samples include: ‘Korean Broadcasting System (KBS)’ as public TV broadcasters and ‘Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS)’ as commercial TV broadcasters, ‘Chosun Ilbo’ as a conservative quality newspaper, ‘Hankyorhe’ as a progressive quality newspaper, ‘Ilgan Sport’ as a conservative sport only newspaper, ‘Sport Seoul’ as a liberal sport only newspaper. Those samples will specifically focus upon the opening ceremony and several sporting events whose hegemonic and ideological accounts have been articulated and manifested in the media representations of Olympians and their achievements at the 2008 Games. The events include the 50m pistol, swimming and baseball. The media representations of the 50m pistol event will be examined to draw a national and ethnic discourse of the
two Koreas: South Korea and North Korea. The media representations of swimming and baseball matches will be investigated to generate a national discourse of the relation between South Korea and neighbourhood nations Japan and America. The main concern will be the examination of nationalistic and regional, racial/ethnic distinctiveness of the media portrayals in terms of the reporting terms, expressions and images. The reflection of contemporary political, socio-cultural conditions and changes in the media representations of the events will be considered. In doing so, this thesis will examine South Korean sporting culture embedded in the media coverage in the context of globalisation. To do so, this project will examine the extent to, and the way in, which the media representations of the events reflect a balance or blend of indigenous traditions, political implications, power relations and ratios between hegemonic and ideological elements and Westernisation and/or Americanisation at the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony.

The time-scale of the data collection was from 1st August to 31st August in 2008, including the period of the Beijing Olympic Games from the opening ceremony to the closing ceremony and a week before and after the Olympic Games. The data was collected through newspaper-cutting, TV-recording and the daily note-taking of important events in both qualitative and quantitative ways. In the process of data analysis, the reliability and validity of the research will be evaluated and confirmed in the qualitative research paradigm. To achieve the quality of reliability, most-mentioned or repeated information in the media portrayals of both televised broadcasters and four newspapers will only be considered as data for this research. In addition, the subjective position of the researcher, who is familiar with the cultural context of South Korea and has the linguistic ability to derive the hidden meanings
from the South Korean media representations, can serve to enhance the validity of this research. In this sense, data can be qualitatively analysed and interpreted with specific reference to contextual conditions and changes in South Korea in a more in-depth and insightful manner.

3-8. Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodological and philosophical debate on quantitative and qualitative research paradigms has been set out. The research paradigm and methods of cultural studies and figurational sociology have been elucidated and specific attention has been given to adopt a hermeneutics and constructionist standpoint in a qualitative research paradigm of interpretivism and constructionism for this empirical research. Next, the qualitative and quantitative methods for the analysis of the media portrayals for this research have been suggested: thematic analysis, discourse analysis and visual/image analysis. First, before interpreting the media portrayals, thematic analysis can be employed to set an inductive research setting. Second, the use of discourse analysis evaluates the examination of the main research themes. The main themes can be specified as a way in which athletes are represented based on their multiple identities with the use of terms, sentences, captions, and expressions by the media at the 2008 Beijing Olympics; the ways in which the media constitute and mediate hegemonic and ideological elements; the influence of contextual conditions and changes in South Korea upon the hegemonic and ideological meanings embedded in the media texts and the changing trends of the media representations in response to the contextual conditions and shifts of South Korea, including hegemonic and ideological transformations. Third, using visual/image analysis, the way in which
photographs and images are placed, configured and represented in the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Games and its opening ceremony, the way in which specific photographs and images are inserted or drawn in order to make a narrative, the way in which images of Olympians are differently represented along with their identities and the ideological and hegemonic meanings embedded in the visual mediums can be investigated. The next chapter is going to give the data findings that result from the data analysis.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF INTER-POLITICAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND
THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

4-1. Introduction

This chapter will analyse empirical data from the South Korean newspapers and telecasted media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games by applying the over-arching theoretical foundations of the power relations between nations. This chapter’s main focus will be an examination of the ways in which the significant distinctiveness is reiterated by the historical and political accounts of political division and ongoing cold relations between the Republic of Korea (R.O.K.) and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K.) in the R.O.K.’s media coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games. As the patterns of media portrayals are constantly reproduced in response to the R.O.K.’s contextual conditions and changes in the multi-dimensional nexus, the in-depth exploration of the newly-generated mediated trends in inter-Korean nationalisms requires updating. In doing this, the theoretical frameworks of hegemonic and ideological transformation and the established and outsider figurations will be applied.

As noted within the concept of De Saussure’s (1974) triangular model of signification, the term ‘signs’ stands for ‘a set of meanings, metaphors, representations,

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6 This Chapter is going to refer to South Korea as ‘the Republic of Korea (ROK)’ and North Korea as ‘the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K.)’.
images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together reproduce a particular version of events’ (Burr, 2003, p. 64) and reflects the interests of a dominant group that holds more effective ways of articulating and circulating the discourse surrounding the event (Fiske, 1982; Fairclough, 2001). In this chapter, the dominant group refers to the R.O.K.’s state government and its national Olympic committee, which concluded negotiations with the D.P.R.K.’s leader and Olympic committee, or the R.O.K.’s progressive political parties. In the consideration of the R.O.K.’s political standpoints on foreign policy vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K., the ways in which the dominant groups’ interests and power relations are implicated, legitimated and disseminated in the mediated discourse on the inter-Korea-related issues will be discussed in-depth.

This chapter will discuss in depth the sociological accounts of the complex construction and reproduction of Korean nationalisms in the R.O.K.’s media portrayals of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The general outline of inter-Korean nationalisms will be firstly drawn by examining the images of the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s leaders, officials and Olympic teams in the R.O.K.’s newspapers during the period of the 2008 Games and beginning a week before the Games. A major examination of how negotiations between the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. leaders and Olympic officials - including any failures - were reported and commented on by the R.O.K.’s print and telecasted media during the period under consideration will be undertaken. The ways in which the D.P.R.K.’s silver and bronze medal successes in the 10m air pistol and 50m pistol events were marked in the R.O.K.’s media coverage as those of a hero or a rival will be discussed in-depth. An overview of the three thematic sections, the up-to-date patterns and changes in the media portrayals of inter-
Korean nationalisms that reflect upon the R.O.K.’s contextual conditions and changes in historical, political and socio-cultural dimensions will be highlighted at the end of this chapter. To do so, the degree to which the R.O.K.’s traditional nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. is reinforced, maintained, weakened or replaced by a unitary Korean nationalism during the period of the 2008 Games will be taken into consideration. Specific attention is given to a clarification of any similarities and distinctions between the reporting styles and tendencies of the media when portraying identical, politics-laden, sporting issues.

4-2. The Media Portraits of the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Athletes and Team

Examining the photographs of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in the R.O.K.’s newspapers, the way in which the contents manifest the R.O.K.’s nationalisms, such as the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. and a unitary Korean nationalism, are configured and mediated will be outlined in this section. According to statistics derived from the empirical data, the R.O.K.’s newspapers reproduced a total of 33 photographs related to the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams and athletes. The images mainly covered the opening ceremony, women’s Judo competitions, women’s weight-lifting competitions and the men’s 10m air pistol and 50m pistol competitions. Amongst the 33 photographs, only 3 displayed any friendly relations between the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. medallists, especially in the men’s 50m pistol competition. The 3 photographs conveyed the thematic notion of a unitary Korean nationalism, however, the remaining 30 photographs hardly showed this notion, Figure 4-1.
Interestingly, one of the 3 photographs showed not only the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism but also that of the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. In other words, the dual meanings of the R.O.K.’s nationalism were conveyed. In the photograph, the action of the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s medallists shaking each other's hands was placed in its centre, meanwhile the D.P.R.K.’s silver medal winner looked unsmilingly severe. This photograph was attached to a caption:

‘Jong-oh Jin, the gold medal winner in the 50m pistol final match, is shaking hands with North Korean shooter Jong-su Kim, who took the silver by the narrow margin of 0.2 … ’ (Chosun Ilbo, 13 Aug. 2008: 3).

Thus, even though the action of shaking hands indicated a mood of reconciliation and friendship, the capture of Kim’s severe expression looks like an attempt to generate a mood of rivalry between the two Koreas’ athletes. That is, the photograph's presentation tended to convey the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism overlapped with the notion of the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. The use of qualitative content analysis is suggested as an aid to an in-depth discussion of the way in which a combined form of the R.O.K.’s nationalisms was mediated.
Of the 30 photographs that failed to express the concept of a unitary Korean nationalism, 11 showed only the R.O.K.’s Olympic teams and athletes, while 16 others captured only the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams and athletes. Although 4 of these 16 photographs positively depicted the D.P.R.K.’s athletes by focusing on their smiles, the remaining 12 failed to generate a mood of positive inter-Korean relations. The remaining 3 photographs tended to emphasise that the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. are two sovereign nations by placing the R.O.K.’s and the D.P.R.K.’s national flags in the centre of the photograph. Thus, the majority of the images, - 30 of 33 - seemed to stress the political division and contemporary cold relations between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K., see Figure 4-2.

![Bar chart](chart.png)

**Figure 4-2.** ‘Signifying the R.O.K.’s Nationalism *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. from the Images of the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. Olympic Athletes and Team’.

It was also evident when analysing only the 16 images related to the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team that only 4 images focused upon displaying the friendly relations between the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s athletes, while the remaining 12 images only focused upon reporting the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team, athletes and national flag. Therefore, the discourse on inter-Korean relations in the R.O.K.’s media representations would seem to reflect the R.O.K.’s nationalistic standpoint *vis-à-vis*
the D.P.R.K. The notion of a unitary Korean nationalism remained largely unreported in the R.O.K.’s newspapers, see Figure 4-3.

![Bar Chart](image)

Figure 4-3. ‘Signifying R.O.K.’s Nationalisms and the Two Koreas’ National Identities from the Images of the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Athletes and Team’.

4-3. The Media Portrayals of the Negotiations between the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Leaders and Officials

The media contents reflected both the political and cultural perspectives of various nations (Lee, 2007; Richards, 2000; Rosie et al., 2004). That is, the media coverage plays a significant role in conveying the prisms of the nations’ dominant ideologies as defined by ‘power structures, cultural repertoires and politico-economic interests’ (Lee et al., 2000, p. 295). In this fashion, this section is designed to examine the way in which unbridgeable political and ideological conflicts between the D.P.R.K. and the R.O.K. were implicated in the discipline of global sporting events and mediated in the R.O.K.’s print and televised media coverage. In this regard, the first sub-section will discuss the way in which the negotiations between the R.O.K.’s and
D.P.R.K.’s leaders and officials reflect how the diplomatic relations between the two Koreas are portrayed. Specific attention will be given to their style of speeches and reactions to each other. In the second sub-section, the way in which the final result of a failure to march as one team and enter the Olympic stadium together was concluded and mediated will be considered.

4-3-1. Inter-Korean Relations and Diplomacy

The politics of divided nations have implications for sporting events, especially global sporting events like the Olympic Games (Bairner and Sugden, 2000). Since the R.O.K.’s 17th President Myung-bak Lee’s Republic revised its foreign policy towards the D.P.R.K. and decided to stop offering the D.P.R.K. economic aid until they agreed to abandon their nuclear weapons in response to the multilateral six-party talks (Bajoria and Zissis, 2009), any type of friendly and favourable negotiations between the two Koreas on the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games became unlikely. The negative political shift not only influenced diplomatic relations between them but also any possibilities of sporting exchanges such as the joint appearance of the two Korean teams in the opening ceremony. In this light, this section focuses upon examining the ways in which the media portrayed the process by which negotiations for the joint appearance of the two Koreas’ teams in the opening ceremony were undertaken and concluded. According to the political characteristics of the print and telecasted media coverage, such as conservative or progressive, public or commercial characteristics, specific attention was given to explain the distinctive ways in which the media reported the negotiation process.
Before the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, specific attention was paid to whether the R.O.K.’s and the D.P.R.K.’s leaders would sit next to each other around a round table at the welcome luncheon hosted by Chinese President Hu Jintao. In reporting this news, progressive mainstream newspaper Hankyoreh paid attention to the issues which might be discussed by the two leaders. In this regard, Hankyoreh cited that an accident involving a D.P.R.K. guard which had lead to the death of an R.O.K. female tourist at the joint Mount Kum-kang resort\(^7\) was expected to be considered but any type of negotiations between the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s leaders was unlikely to take place (4th Aug. 2008: 1). In addition to this, ‘the two Koreas’ leaders could not even agree to sit next to each other around a table in the luncheon hosted by Chinese President Hu Jintao’ (Hankyoreh, 4th Aug. 2008: 1, Italics added). A proposed rearrangement of seats resulted in President Myung-bak Lee and Chairman Yong-nam Kim finally choosing to sit at the same round table but with three or four foreign leaders between them (Hankyoreh, 4th Aug. 2008: 1). This issue was also reiterated in the commentary of SBS and the text of Chosun Ilbo.

‘It seems unlikely that President Myung-bak Lee and D.P.R.K.’s Chairman Yong-nam Kim will sit next to each other during a luncheon hosted by Chinese President Hu Jintao.’ (SBS, 6th Aug. 2008, Italics added).

‘D.P.R.K.’s Chairman Yong-nam Kim felt uncomfortable to sit with R.O.K.’s President Lee around a round table … and requested the rearrangement of seats for the two Koreas’ leaders to Chinese authorities. They finally chose to sit around the round table together with three to four foreign leaders between them’ (Chosun Ilbo, 9th Aug. 2008: 4, Italics added).

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\(^7\) The R.O.K.’s female tourist was shot to death by a D.P.R.K.’s guard, when straying into a restricted area at a joint Mount Kum-kang resort on July 2008 (Hankyoreh, 4th Aug. 2008: 1).
SBS and *Chosun Ilbo* played a role in publishing the issue of the failure to sit next to each other during the luncheon and *Chosun Ilbo* tended to attribute the failure to the emotionally-made refusal of the D.P.R.K.’s Chairman Yong-nam Kim. This reporting tendency was more real in the TV news of the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS), which delivered the words of Hak-son Park, a D.P.R.K. official. KBS reporter, Sung-yoon Han, commented:

‘The D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Committee’s leader, Hak-son Park, suggested that *the full responsibility for the failure of the joint appearance of the two Koreas’ teams is laid on R.O.K. that broke the 6.15 Joint Declaration and the 10.4 Joint Declaration*’ (4th Aug. 2008, KBS: Italics added).

Thus, the KBS tended to generate a critical impression of the D.P.R.K.’s uncooperative and irresponsible behaviour, which attributed the full responsibility for the failure of the joint appearance of the two Koreas’ teams during the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games to the political shifts of the R.O.K.’s foreign policy *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. This report seemed to attempt to encourage the R.O.K.’s anti-D.P.R.K. sentiments in creating a mood that was critical of the D.P.R.K.’s dissatisfaction at the R.O.K.’s current foreign policy with/against the D.P.R.K. This reporting tendency was reiterated and detailed in the text of *Hankyoreh*.

‘Hak-son Park responded *in an exasperated voice* by asking back why they would question him about *something, which is seemingly being ruled out*’ and then, he *left the place urgently.*

Park: We came to the Olympics, but didn’t come here to be interviewed by R.O.K. reporters. Discuss the issue later. Why does R.O.K. ask us to make a joint appearance of two Olympic teams after breaking the 6.15 Joint Declaration?’ (*Hankyoreh*, 5th Aug. 2008: 8, Italics added).
In analysing the text, Hak-son Park’s unwilling, uncooperative and annoyed reactions were emphasised in his use of emotional and symbolic expressions such as ‘answered … in an exasperated voice’ and ‘left the place urgently’ (Hankyoreh, 5th Aug. 2008: 8). The overture, which refers to the joint appearance of the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams, was likened to ‘something which is seemingly being ruled out’. The text attached to a photograph that captured the discontented facial expressions of the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic staff and a caption saying that ‘when R.O.K. reporters were about to follow the D.P.R.K.’s staff to ask more questions, they looked discontented’ (Hankyoreh, 5th Aug. 2008: 8). Thus, the D.P.R.K.’s frozen political stance against the R.O.K. could be clearly examined by analysing Hak-son Park’s interview speeches and his reactions as mediated by the texts of Hankyoreh and KBS.

In this light, the mediated contents tended to articulate that the shift in the R.O.K.’s foreign policy vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. had adversely affected the political relations which had forged ‘a sporting union’ during the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games (Lee, 2007, p.182). In addition to this, the deteriorating political relations between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. subsequently precluded any possibility of negotiations between the two Koreas’ leaders and caused the sporting exchanges between the two Koreas to be suspended. The final effect was the failure to agree to a joint appearance of the two Koreas’ Olympic teams at the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Linked to this, the next section will examine the ways in which this failure was mediated and reported in the print and telecasted media coverage as an outcome of the process of negotiations. Specific attention will be given to interpreting the political and nationalistic meanings inherent in the mediated contents resulting from the failure to co-march.
4-3-2. The Failure to Co-march at the Opening Ceremony

The successful joint appearance of the two Koreas’ Olympic teams at the opening ceremony of the 2004 Olympic Games was regarded as a good example of the Olympic spirit’s ability to revive and create fraternity, co-operation and goodwill between the two Koreas along with the notion of inter-Korean nationalism (Lee, 2007) and was popularly celebrated in the R.O.K.’s media. However, this reporting tendency was hardly visible at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, as the suggestion for the joint appearance failed. As a reflection of the contemporary frozen political relations between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. since the shift of the R.O.K.’s foreign policy vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K., the mediated discourse of nationalistic tension and conflicts with/against the D.P.R.K. were popularly articulated. In particular, specific attention was given to the issue of the failure of the two Koreas’ Olympic teams to march together into the Olympic stadium and, in particular, the way in which the issue was reported with reference to the speeches, behaviours and attitudes of the two Koreas’ Olympic committee officials involved in the negotiations. In doing so, the outcome of the process of negotiations and key catalysts, which affected the process of negotiations and the final result, need to be taken into consideration.

To begin with, the result of the failure of the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. Olympic teams to co-march into the Olympic stadium was popularly mediated in the R.O.K.’s print and televised media. However, the reporting style was significantly differentiated according to the characteristics of each media, such as whether they were conservative or progressive. Looking at the text of Chosun Ilbo, the final result of a failure to co-march was simply and objectively reported without any comments
on the stage of negotiations. More importantly, *Chosun Ilbo* paid attention only to the R.O.K.’s march by citing that the ‘R.O.K. paraded as the 176th nation among 204 nations during the opening ceremony’ as a headline (9th Aug. 2008: 1). The non-R.O.K. nations were labelled as ‘the rest of the teams’ in a comment that ‘the rest of the teams will parade according to the stroke count of names of participant nations’ (*Chosun Ilbo*, 9th Aug. 2008: 1). In this sense, it was even more evident that the D.P.R.K.’s team was signified as one of ‘the rest’ or ‘others’.

The text was attached to a photograph which showed only the R.O.K.’s Olympic team marching into the Olympic stadium without any images of the D.P.R.K.’s team. In the photograph, the R.O.K.’s national flag of ‘Tae-kuk-ki’, raised by the flag-bearer, Sung-ho Chang, and its Olympic athletes were located in the centre of the image (Figure 4-4). The R.O.K.’s athletes were following the flag-bearer whilst waving small flags in their hands. According to Maguire *et al.* (2002), this scene tended to attempt to create a nationalistic climate with emphasis on the national flag and national representative athletes. In stating ‘Go go Tae-kuk warriors!’ in the emotionally appealing headline, it implied that the R.O.K.’s athletes were urged to compete with their best endeavours for the ‘national honour’, as ‘warriors who represent the nation-state’ (Cho, 2009, p. 352, 353).

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8 The stroke count means the number of strokes of a Chinese character. Here, the name of each country was written in the simplified Chinese character and the number of strokes of each Chinese character was counted to adjust the order among nations to march into the Olympic stadium.

9 ‘Tae-kuk’ is the R.O.K.’s national symbol that represents a specific Korean identity.
However, similarly but slightly distinctively, the SBS presenter, Seon-young Park, reported not only the final result of the failure to co-march but also the failure of a suggestion that the teams should march into the stadium one after the other, which was made at one stage of the negotiations. Here is the report.

‘The order in which the two Koreas’ Olympic teams march into the stadium was supposed to be one after the other, but changed into one apart from the other … along with the stroke count of names of participant nations’ (SBS, 6th Aug. 2008: Opening Ceremony).

A similar report was evident in the text of Ilgan Sports.

‘Even though the D.P.R.K. was supposed to march into the stadium one after the R.O.K. in the preliminary rehearsal on 5th August, due to the D.P.R.K.’s strong objection, it has been decided that the R.O.K. will parade as the 177th nation while the D.P.R.K. will parade as the 182nd in a real rehearsal’ (Ilgan Sports, 8th Aug. 2008: 2).

Thus, the commentary of SBS and the text of Ilgan Sports tended to express disappointment at the failure of the overture that the teams should march into the stadium in succession. In particular, Ilgan Sports even underlined the ‘D.P.R.K.’s strong objections’ as a major catalyst of the failure to co-march. The report was
enough to generate an impression that any tactics to re-forge a sporting union between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. during the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games were not acceptable. In this sense, the R.O.K.’s nationalistic sentiments towards the D.P.R.K., which stemmed from the R.O.K.’s irritation at the D.P.R.K.’s uncooperative attitudes, were observable.

The commentary of SBS attached to the visuals of the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. Olympic teams separately parading into the stadium for the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games did not include any scenes from the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games in which the two Koreas’ teams successfully marched together into the Olympic stadium. Thus, *Chosun Ilbo* and SBS tended to focus upon delivering the actual scenes of the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. However, *Ilgan Sports* attached the text to a photograph (Figure 4-5) that showed the rehearsal on 5th August, instead of the opening ceremony on 8th August 2008. In the photograph, the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s large national flags were located from the right side to the middle in a row together. The two national flags tended to signify two sovereign nations divided on the Korean Peninsula.

![Figure 4-5](image)

*Figure 4-5. ‘Failure in the Joint March of the Two Koreas’ Olympic Teams due to the D.P.R.K.’s Strong Objections’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 8th Aug. 2008: 2).*
On the next day, *Ilgan Sports* published a statement that reminded its readers of ‘the fresh memories of the co-march of the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. Olympic teams into the Olympic stadium at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games’ (9th Aug. 2008: 2). The statement was evidence of how desperately the R.O.K.’s Olympic team wished to continue to convey the symbolic meaning of the joint appearance of two Koreas’ teams that happened at the 2000 Sydney Games (*Ilgan Sports*, 9th Aug. 2008: 2). It also tended to attempt to disseminate a message that the R.O.K. was willing to cooperate with the D.P.R.K. and that it was the D.P.R.K. that was unwilling to do so. This reporting style was reiterated in the televised coverage of KBS, which displayed the joint appearance of two Koreas during the opening ceremonies of the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Olympic Games (Figure 4-6).

![Image](image.png)

*Figure 4-6. ‘The Joint Appearance of the Two Koreas’ Olympic Teams during the Opening Ceremonies of the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games’ (KBS, 7th Aug. 2008).*

In noting the difficulties in contact and negotiation with the D.P.R.K.’s leader and officials during the negotiation process, *Hankyoreh* and *Sports Seoul* still tended
to emphasise their disappointment and dissatisfaction at the failure of the overture to co-march. Here are the reports:

‘Two Koreas’ leaders could not even negotiate the issue of co-march of both R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympians into the Olympic stadium … and make an agreement to co-march into the stadium in the opening ceremony as the first after the lapse of 8 years [sic.]’ (Sports Seoul, 7th Aug. 2008: 8, Italics added).

‘Even though we (R.O.K.’s Olympic Committee’s Chairman Yeon-taek Lee and officials) did our best enough [sic.] to parade jointly with the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team, there seems to be nothing that we can do more in Beijing … there were difficulties in contact with D.P.R.K.’s Olympic committee’s officials or summit-level persons’ (Sports Seoul, 6th Aug. 2008: 6, Italics added).

The reports were in marked contrast to those evident at the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games where the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s teams often made joint appearances with the blue flag of the Korean Peninsula, the so-called ‘Hanbando’, which symbolised ethnic-nationalistic bonds between the two Koreas (Cho, 2009, p. 358; Smith, 1986). Linked to this, Hankyoreh highlighted that ‘the political relations have been frozen this year so that the sporting interchange between the two Koreas has also been frozen’. In other words, Hankyoreh tended to portray ‘the deteriorating relations between the D.P.R.K. and the R.O.K. since the R.O.K.’s President Lee’s Republic commenced’ as a focal key catalyst to explain the breakdown of any possibilities of re-forging a sporting union between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. (9th Aug. 2008: 1). This report was evidence to prove that ‘sport and politics, and nationalism in particular, have a close relationship, regardless of whether they imply positive or negative connotations’ (Lee and Maguire, 2009, p. 6).

In a similar fashion, Sports Seoul was disapproving of the current ‘extremely cold relations between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K.’, which had become too deteriorated to be eased by ‘the positive mediation of the International Olympic
Committee (IOC) and BOCOG’ (8th Aug. 2008: 6). *Sport Seoul* claimed that the overture failed due to the frozen inter-Korean relations so that all the endeavours of the IOC, BOCOG and the R.O.K.’s Olympic committee were in vain. In this light, *Sports Seoul* went on to report that ‘the co-march of both R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams … finally failed so that two Koreas paraded separately’ (9th Aug. 2008: 2). The issue of separate marches was also evident in the text of *Hankyoreh* and the commentary of the SBS anchor, Jin-ho Park. More interestingly, each march of two Koreas’ teams was significantly marked. Here are the reports:

‘The R.O.K.’s Olympic team marched into the Olympic stadium in the 176th turn while the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team marched into the stadium in the 180th turn. The R.O.K.’s team paraded on ahead and D.P.R.K.’s team marched into the stadium after three other teams had passed by. … D.P.R.K., which sent 130 Olympic team members to Beijing, paraded as the 180th, after the R.O.K.’ (*Hankyoreh*, 9th Aug. 2008: 10).

‘The R.O.K.’s Olympic team, led by a flag bearer, Judo athlete Sung-ho Chang, marched into the Olympic stadium as the 176th and the D.P.R.K.’s team marched into the stadium as the 180th (*SBS, 9th Aug. 2008: Opening Ceremony*).

This reporting style was differentiated from what was evident in *Chosun Ilbo* and *Ilgan Sports*. In other words, *Hankyoreh*, *Sports Seoul* and SBS paid attention not only to the R.O.K.’s Olympic team, but also to the D.P.R.K.’s team. Based on this, it could be said that the notion of nationalistic and ethnic bonds between the two divided Koreas was relatively more embedded in progressive newspapers such as *Hankyoreh* and *Sports Seoul* and the televised coverage of SBS than in the mainstream newspapers such as *Chosun Ilbo* and *Ilgan Sports*. In supporting this, *Hankyoreh* tended to remark on the importance of the Olympic spirit, as noting that ‘the co-march of the D.P.R.K.’s and R.O.K.’s Olympic teams into the Olympic stadium will be of
help to bring about world peace and global fraternity’ (8th Aug. 2008: 31). This text was attached to the interview speeches of the IOC President Jacques Rogge:

‘I am afraid that R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams will separately march into the Olympic stadium according to the stroke count of names of participant countries. … (But) I will wait for a message of commitment to a successful co-march between two Koreas’ Olympic teams into the stadium until the last minute’ (Hankyoreh, 8th Aug. 2008: 27, Italics added).

In the text of Sport Seoul, the first successful co-march of the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams at the 2000 Sydney Olympics was remembered and admired as an event ‘started with unstinted praise that was built upon the Olympic spirit of reconciliation and peace’ (8th Aug. 2008: 6). On the other hand, the sense of dissatisfaction at the D.P.R.K.’s successive refusals and uncooperative attitudes was significantly highlighted in the texts of Hankyoreh and Sports Seoul. Take the following reports:

‘The overture failed … by relinquishing a tradition that jointly paraded in the stadium in the opening ceremonies of the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Olympic Games successively … after the lapse of 8 years’ (Hankyoreh, 9th Aug. 2008: 1, Italics added).

‘The fact that the co-march could not last longer after the 2007 Jang-chun-dong Winter Asian Games, we felt painful again from going off the torch of peace and reconciliation [sic.]’ (Sports Seoul, 8th Aug. 2008: 6).

Thus, in reinterpreting and likening the failure of the co-march to a tragic event of ‘relinquishing a tradition … after the lapse of 8 years’ and ‘going off the torch of peace and reconciliation [sic.]’, Hankyoreh and Sports Seoul intended to provoke a feeling of disappointment at the breakdown of any chances for reconciliation in the Korean peninsula at the 2008 Olympic Games. In using the emotional term ‘painful’, Sports Seoul tended to create an impression of sorrow and sympathy about the frozen
sporting relations between the two Koreas. Thus, the reporting tendencies of progressive newspapers tended to be extended to convey the emotional accounts of not only disappointment at the D.P.R.K.’s uncooperative attitudes and the strong refusals of co-/successive marches but also admiration for a mood of reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula.

In this light, Hankyoreh published two deliberately juxtaposed photographs (Figure 4-7), which reported the separate march of the R.O.K.’s and the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic teams. Each country’s flag-bearer, who held up a huge national flag at the head of its Olympic team members, was located in the centre of each photograph (9th Aug. 2008: p.10). The rest of the Olympic team members were placed behind the flag bearer from the middle to the top of each photograph. Thus, the two images attempted to portray the D.P.R.K.’s national flag and Olympic team members in parallel with the R.O.K.’s flag and team members in a row. This photograph was attached to a caption.

‘The R.O.K.’s Olympic team is marching into the Olympic stadium as the 176th nation led by Sung-ho Chang holding up the national flag. The D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team is marching into the Olympic stadium as 180th nation led by (North) Korea Sports Council’s Vice-President Moon-il Bang holding the national flag at the head’ (Hankyoreh, 9th Aug. 2008: 10).

Thus, Hankyoreh extended its attention to the D.P.R.K.’s team and detailed the marching information of both the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. Olympic teams in terms of each team’s order in the parade and its flag-bearer. Differentiated from the image of Chosun Ilbo, therefore, both the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s national flags and national representative athletes tended to be relatively equally allocated and placed in the reports of Hankyoreh. More interestingly, a photograph attached in Sports Seoul captured only the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team marching into the Olympic stadium and a
caption detailed the marching information of D.P.R.K.’s team alone (Figure 4-8) (9th Aug. 2008: 3). Here is the report:

‘The D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team’s march into the Olympic stadium – the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic team is marching into the Olympic stadium being led by a flag-bearer, the D.P.R.K. sport committee’s official, Moon-il Pang’ (Sports Seoul, 9th Aug. 2008: 3).

Figure 4-7. ‘The D.P.R.K. and R.O.K. were Apart from Each Other at the Opening Ceremony Watched by Four Billion Spectators’ (Hankyoreh, 9th Aug. 2008: 10).

Figure 4-8. ‘The D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Team’s March into the Olympic Stadium’ (Sports Seoul, 9th Aug. 2008: 3).
Thus, the visual settings of *Hankyoreh* and *Sports Seoul* tended to place great emphasis on the inter-Korean ethnic bond in signifying that the march of the D.P.R.K.’s team was as noteworthy as that of the R.O.K.’s. This reporting tendency was even more stressed in refreshing the memories of past co-march successes during the opening ceremonies of the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games. In this light, it can be said that the notion of the R.O.K.’s nationalism *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. tended to be non-exclusive in reporting the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. as two separate sovereign nations, but the notion of a pan-Korean identity was relatively more evident in the mediated texts and images of *Hankyoreh* and *Sports Seoul*.

Overall, the notion of the R.O.K.’s nationalism *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. was prominently featured in the print and televised media coverage while the notion of an inter-Korean ethnic bond was relatively more visible in progressive newspapers. The connotations of both disappointment at the result of the failure to agree on a co-march and the desire for a re-forging of the sporting union on the Korean Peninsula were mainly manifested. Yet, the emotional connotations featured very little in the televised coverage of SBS and KBS and mainstream conservative newspapers. Therefore, according to the degree to which each print and televised media displays conservative or progressive characteristics, it could be seen that the reporting style, tendencies and context tended to be different when portraying a politically controversial issue. Next, in examining the ways in which the victory of the R.O.K. over the D.P.R.K. was marked in the print and telecasted media coverage, a national discourse about the relations between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. within the context of the R.O.K. will be explored.
4-4. The Media Portrayals of the R.O.K.- D.P.R.K. 50m Pistol Event

In the 50m pistol event at the 2008 Olympic Games on 13th August 2008, the gold was taken by an R.O.K. athlete, Jong-oh Jin, and the silver by a D.P.R.K. athlete, Jong-su Kim. In an attempt to assert the superiority of the R.O.K. by beating the D.P.R.K.’s athletes or teams (Cho, 2009), this medal standing was popularly mediated and circulated in the R.O.K.’s print and televised media coverage. Linked to this, this section will focus upon examining the ways in which the significance of the two Koreas’ athletes and their achievements were portrayed. Specific attention will be given to examining the way in which the notions of R.O.K. nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. and of unitary Korean nationalism were embedded in the media.

In doing so, the first subsection will examine the ways in which the victory of the R.O.K.’s gold medallist over the D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist, Jong-su Kim, was mediated and configured in the R.O.K.’s media. As the D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist was to face a doping ban three days after the Olympic medal ceremony for the 50m pistol event, the ways in which this issue was featured in the media will be discussed in the second subsection.

4-4-1. The R.O.K.’s Gold Medallist and the D.P.R.K.’s Silver Medallist

Analysing the media representations of the victory of the R.O.K.’s gold medallist over the D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist, the accounts of unitary Korean nationalism and the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. were often manifested, not only in a solitary form of R.O.K. nationalism, but also in a duplicated and combined form of
the R.O.K.’s nationalisms. It was evident that the two Koreas’ medallists were often depicted as ‘brothers’, ‘rivals’, or others. The details will be examined as follows:

After the 50m pistol event at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, the two Koreas’ athletes were often depicted as people, who ‘are close with each other, like brothers.’ (12th Aug. 2008, SBS: the 50m pistol event). According to the text of Hankyoreh, they were likened either to ‘an elder brother from the D.P.R.K.’ or ‘a younger brother from the R.O.K.’ and praised as ‘brothers, who are brave enough’ to win the gold and the silver (13 Aug. 2008: 7). The front page of Hankyoreh was covered by a photograph of the two Koreas’ medallists (Figure 4-9). In adding a caption citing that they were ‘talking with each other’ on the Olympic medal podium (13 Aug. 2008: 1), the main attention was given to the scene where they were putting their arms around each other’s shoulders side-by-side with a smile. Jong-su Kim’s facial expression, in particular, looked positive with a tiny smile, even though it could be flatter than Jong-oh Jin’s great smile. This scene was also mediated in the telecasted coverage by KBS. In adding a commentary that ‘Jong-oh Jin and Jong-su Kim are shaking hands and cheering with each other … and Jin is telling Kim ‘smile, smile’ … and then, hyung, you did a good job’ (KBS, 12th Aug. 2008: the 50m pistol event)’, KBS tended to attempt to emphasise their favourable relationship using terms such as ‘brotherhood’ and ‘sportsmanship’.
Both the national athlete Jin’s winning of the gold and the D.P.R.K.’s athlete Kim’s winning of the silver were popularly reported and celebrated. It was evident in the televised commentaries of KBS and SBS.

‘It looks really good that the R.O.K.’s athlete, Jong-oh Jin, and the D.P.R.K.’s athlete, Jong-su Kim, took the gold and the silver in a row’ (12th Aug. 2008, KBS: the 50m pistol event).


‘The scene where the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. athletes stood on the podium together,’ was described as ‘very beautiful and impressive’ in the text of Sports Seoul (13 Aug. 2008: 4). Adding a comment that ‘who cares about the colour of the medal’, KBS commentators did not stress the superiority of Jong-oh Jin over Jong-su Kim but, rather celebrated the achievements of two Korean medallists (12th Aug. 2008, KBS: the 50m pistol event). In addition, the D.P.R.K. athlete’s achievement of a silver medal was even celebrated as ‘another gift’ that ‘the God gave us (South Koreans)’ (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 4). Reinforcing this trend, the KBS presenter, Yu-jong Cho, commented that ‘it makes us feel much better to share the gold and the silver
between D.P.R.K. and R.O.K. in harmony’ (12th Aug. 2008: the 50m pistol event). Thus, the success of the D.P.R.K. athlete often seemed to be celebrated and marked as significantly as that of the R.O.K. athlete. The report tended to articulate the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism with the emphasis on the closeness of their friendship and brotherhood.

This feature of reporting became more obvious and explicit when portraying the bronze winner, the Chinese shooter Tan Jong-liang, with the two Korean medallists in the 50m pistol event. For instance, Hankyoreh cited that ‘they (Kim and Jin) took the gold and the silver in cooperation with each other’, and ‘pushed China out of the first and second places in the 50m pistol event’ (13 Aug. 2008: 7). Likewise, Sports Seoul reported that ‘the R.O.K.’s and D.P.R.K.’s brothers’ defeated ‘a potential gold medal winner, Tan Jong-liang,’ in the 50m pistol event and the power of brothers ‘let him stay with the bronze’ (13 Aug. 2008: 4). Thus, the R.O.K. and D.P.R.K. athletes Jong-oh Jin and Jong-su Kim were deemed to be an ethnically-bonded team of so-called ‘brothers’ while the Chinese shooter, Tan, tended to be considered as the rival of the brothers. In this regard, the notion of a pan-Korean identity tended to be underlined.

However, it did not mean that the superiority of Jong-oh Jin over Jong-su Kim was insignificant in the R.O.K.’s media coverage. In referring to them by the term ‘Nan-hyung-nan-je’, which means ‘hard to tell who is better between an elder brother and a younger brother’, because ‘they have nearly equal levels of skill’ (Chosun Ilbo, 13 Aug. 2008: 3), the rivalry between Jin and Kim was often underscored. In other words, Jin and Kim tended to be portrayed as ‘the rivals, who got used to smiling or crying (win or lose) by narrow margins every match’ (Hankyoreh, 13 Aug. 2008: 7).

As ‘Jin defeated Kim in all three successive 10m air pistol and 50m pistol matches’ at
the 2004 Athens and 2008 Beijing Olympic Games (Ilgan Sports, 13 Aug. 2008: 3), the report, noting the athletic superiority of Jin over Kim, became popularly embedded in the print and televised media coverage. Yet, ‘Kim’s past victories over Jin at the 2002 Busan Asian Games and the Croatia international shooting games’ tended to be marginalised (Ilgan Sports, 13 Aug. 2008: 3). Take the following example:

‘It has been interesting that Jong-oh Jin always surpasses Jong-su Kim in the total scores in spite of very narrow margins. … A younger brother Jong-oh Jin is always placed one more step higher than an elder brother Jong-su Kim at the end of the Olympic Games’ (Hankyoreh, 13 Aug. 2008: 7, Italics added).

‘Jong-oh Jin stood on the platform one step higher than Jong-su Kim every time. … Kim always would have to stay behind Jin at the Olympic Games. … Jin was stronger than Kim at the Olympic Games’ (Chosun Ilbo, 13 Aug. 2008: 3, Italics added).

‘The total scores of Jong-oh Jin always surpassed those of Jong-su Kim. … Jin and Kim shared the silver and the bronze at the Athens Olympic Games. At this Olympic Games, Jin took the gold and Kim took the silver again’ (9th Aug. 2008, SBS: the 50m pistol event, Italics added).

Thus, the texts tended to prove that the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. appeared more dominantly than the unitary Korean nationalism in reporting the victory of Jong-oh Jin over Jong-su Kim. However, the televised media tended to describe their relationship as ‘really awesome’ and a ‘special connection’ (12th Aug. 2008, SBS: the 50m pistol event; 9th Aug. 2008, SBS: the 50m pistol event). In this sense, it could be suggested that the dominant form of the R.O.K.’s national identity seemed to be intertwined and mediated with the subordinate form of a pan-Korean identity.
In addition to this, a narrative of nation-building became more evident in the report of Jong-oh Jin and Jong-su Kim standing on the top place of the Olympic medal podium at the 50m pistol event. In describing the scene at the Olympic medal award ceremony, SBS reporter Young-man Park celebrated that ‘R.O.K.’s national flag ‘Tae-guk-ki’ was raised and the national anthem ‘Ae-guk-ka’ was played’. This moment often showed Jin as ‘the best shooter in the world’ (12th Aug. 2008, KBS: the 50m pistol event). This report tended to stimulate nationalistic sentiments in reframing a national medallist as the best athlete in the world and generalising his victory into a national one, using nationalistic symbolism such as the national flag and anthem (Cho, 2009). On the other hand, Jong-su Kim’s achievement of the silver tended to be reported with a focus upon the disappointment of Kim’s failure to win the gold. In doing so, Kim tended to be depicted in the media as poor or pitiful, missing the gold by a very narrow margin. Such media coverage can be seen in the following passage:

‘If Jong-su Kim hits the mark of 10.8 or 10.9 in the 50m pistol competition of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, he could win the gold. But, by hitting the mark of 10.5 only, Kim stayed one step lower than Jong-oh Jin again on the Olympic podium by a narrow margin of 0.2’ (Ilgan Sports, 13 Aug. 2008: 3, Italics added).

Thus, Kim’s athletic achievement tended to be marginalized and underrepresented in comparison to Jin’s achievement. This reporting tendency was made more real by attaching it to a photograph that captured only Jin, wearing the gold on his neck on the front page of Ilgan Sports (13 Aug. 2008: 1) (Figure 4-10). In the headline, Jin’s victory was highlighted as ‘winning by a narrow margin of 0.2’ (Ilgan Sports, 13 Aug. 2008: 1). Yet, Ilgan Sports did not pay equal attention to the two Koreas’ athletes, which were often likened to brothers, but tended to focus its attention on Jin.
On the other hand, photographs in Chosun Ilbo and Sports Seoul showed the scene where the two athletes were standing together on the medal podium (13 Aug. 2008: 4). The photograph in Chosun Ilbo was attached to a caption that ‘Jong-oh Jin, the gold medallist, is shaking hands with the D.P.R.K.’s shooter Jong-su Kim, who would receive the silver’ due to Jin’s superior athletic performance (13 Aug. 08: 3). This image tended to generate an impression of the closeness of their friendship and mutual respect (Figure 4-11). However, Jong-su Kim’s achievement still tended to be marginalised and underrepresented with a focus upon Kim’s hardened facial expression and their awkward attitudes.
The above attitudes were also evident in the report of *Sports Seoul*.


Thus, the captions tended to generate a nationalistic mood in which the rivalry between Jong-oh Jin and Jong-su Kim when were announced the gold and silver medallists superseded and disturbed their friendship. It was more observable when commenting on the facial expressions and attitudes of one defeated by another. According to a caption in *Chosun Ilbo*, the reason why ‘Jong-su Kim could not hide his uncomfortable feelings’ was attributed to Kim’s strong desire to win (13 Aug. 2008: 3). In specifying this, since contemporary political circumstances in the Korean Peninsula have deteriorated, Jong-su Kim’s success could not only represent his own athletic career but could also be generalised as the outcome of the D.P.R.K.’s ‘war without weapons’ against the R.O.K. However, according to Olympic ideals, the motive of the Olympic Games emphasise not the winning itself but a spirit of fair play, friendship and reconciliation. Nevertheless, Jong-su Kim’s strong desire to win even led him to commit a doping offence. The way in which the issue of Jong-su Kim’s doping offence was mediated will be discussed in depth in the following sub-section.
4-4-2. The D.P.R.K.’s Medallist’s Doping Offence

This section is designed to identify the way in which the media coverage differently portrayed the issue of D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist Jong-su Kim’s doping offence and his being deprived of the two medals that he achieved in the 10m air pistol and 50m pistol events at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Analysing data, all the media coverage negatively portrayed Jong-su Kim’s doping offence in general and there was almost no reporting that symbolically depicted Kim as an elder brother of the R.O.K.’s medallist, Jin. The details are as follows:

Three days after the medal award ceremony of the 50m pistol event of the 2008 Olympic Games, the media coverage had one more tragic issue to report. This was that ‘the D.P.R.K.’s 10m air pistol bronze and 50m pistol silver medallist Jong-su Kim had tested positive for Propranolol’ (Chosun Ilbo, 16 Aug. 2008: 20). The issue reported in Sports Seoul was that, according to the IOC’s Giselle Davis, ‘a positive test for Propranolol had been confirmed from Jong-su Kim’s urine sample’ (13 Aug. 2008: 6). In this regard, Hankyoreh noted that ‘Jong-su Kim has damaged his athletic image, due to his positive test for Propranolol’ (16 Aug. 2008: 1).

Propranolol is ‘a kind of beta-blocker’, which is banned to ‘shooters and archers, who need the high power of concentration and have to suppress even a minute tremor’ (Chosun Ilbo, 16 Aug. 2008: 10; 20). As the beta-blocker has the effect of helping to ‘ease tensions by decreasing a taker’s heart rate and blood pressure … shooters or archers … can easily indulge in the drug’ and so benefit from a banned drug (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 1, 10; Chosun Ilbo, 16 Aug. 2008: 10, 20; 15 Aug. 2008, KBS: the 50m pistol event). ‘The elements of Propranolol could not be naturally generated
in a human body’ (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 10). Therefore, the IOC concluded that ‘Jong-su Kim was found guilty of deliberately taking a banned drug’ (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 10) and ‘was deprived of the two medals that he won at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, due to his positive test for doping’ (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 6; 16 Aug. 2008: 6). In this light, the texts of Chosun Ilbo and Ilgan Sports tended to criticize Jong-su Kim’s doping offence, committed with mixed motives against the spirit of fair play at the Olympic Games.

Linked to this, Ilgan Sports tended to explain the reason why Jong-su Kim admitted a doping offence as the pressure of competition-oriented sporting culture, which aims at winning the gold at any cost. Here is the report:

‘When falling into a temptation for admitting a doping offence due to a desire to be the best, he simultaneously got dishonour, being called an impostor for the rest of his life. … However, the wealth and fame, which will be followed by a good score, may let them succumb to temptation’ (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 10).

The ‘desire to be the best’, thus, led Jong-su Kim to succumb to temptation by ‘admitting a doping offence’ and be shamed as a ‘cheat’ (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 10). More interestingly yet, an R.O.K. marathon runner, Jin-il Lee, who committed a doping offence in 1995, was portrayed as ‘a victim’ in the text of Ilgan Sports. In specifying this issue, Lee tested positive for a banned drug, after taking a medicine to treat his cold, and was banned for four years from participating in any sporting competitions. That is, Lee’s doping offence stemmed from ‘the ignorance of a doping test’ (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 10). The report tended to convey a message that the recognition of the information on the doping test is vital to prepare for the participation in the Olympic Games (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 10). In this sense, the critique of Jong-su Kim’s doping offence tended to be extended to the critique of
the lack of preparation by the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Committee for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in the context of a doping test. It was evident in the text of *Hankyoreh*:

‘All national Olympic committees had thorough preparation for a doping test, which was even reinforced recently. … but, the D.P.R.K.ʼs Olympic committee might not seriously bear in mind the doping test’ (*Hankyoreh*, 16 Aug. 2008: 1, Italics added).

Thus, *Hankyoreh* claimed that responsibility for Jong-su Kimʼs doping ban should not only laid on Kim but also ‘laid on the lack of preparation of the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic committee for the 2008 Olympic Games’ (16 Aug. 2008: 1). On the other hand, in attaching to the text that ‘Jong-oh Jin did not take any medicine even though he had a cold … with the help of the R.O.K. Olympic committeeʼs experts’ (*Hankyoreh*, 16 Aug. 2008: 1), the thorough preparation of the R.O.K.’s Olympic Committee, which kept insisting on Jinʼs fair play, tended to be acclaimed and overemphasized in the mediated text. Thus, the logic of the doping incident was reported in a way that expressed R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalism (Tomlinson, 1996).

The critique of Jong-su Kimʼs doping offence was also evident in a commentary by KBS that ‘Jong-su Kim even reached the second place next to Jin in a 50m pistol match’ (15 Aug. 2008, KBS: the 50m pistol event). Thus, by using the cynical expression ‘even reached … next to Jong-oh Jin’, Jong-su Kimʼs previous winning of the silver and the bronze tended to be devalued (15 Aug. 2008, KBS: the 50m pistol event). On the other hand, SBS did not provide a critique of Jong-su Kimʼs doping ban but only commented on the change in the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic medal standing. According to the SBS presenter, So-young Yoon, it was telecasted that ‘the
D.P.R.K.’s medal standing has been lowered, because Jong-su Kim’s two medals - the silver and the bronze - were removed (by the IOC) because of the doping ban’ (SBS, 15th Aug. 2008: the medal standings). When she was telecasting this report, her voice tended to generate an impression of disappointment at the decline in the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic medal standing. This reporting style tended to emphasise the influence of the ethnic bond on the Korean peninsula and the conservative political stand of SBS, which seldom makes comments on any disputed issues between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K.

In brief, media coverage of the issue of Jong-su Kim’s doping offence overall rarely mentioned the notion of a pan-Korean identity. Rather, the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. re-appeared in criticizing Jong-su Kim’s doping offence and the lack of preparation of the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Committee for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in the context of a doping test. Yet, the R.O.K.’s mediated narratives on nation-building as superior to the D.P.R.K tended to emphasise Jong-oh Jin’s fair play and the thorough preparation of the R.O.K.’s Olympic Committee for the doping test.

4-5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the newly-generated patterns and shifts in the R.O.K.’s media representations of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games between the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. and the inter-Korean nationalisms that reflect the R.O.K.’s contextual conditions and changes in historical, political and socio-cultural dimensions have been discussed. Specific attention has been paid to the question of whether unitary Korean nationalism, which was popularly mediated at the 2000 and
2004 Olympic Games, had been weakened and replaced by the R.O.K.’s traditional nationalism *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. in the R.O.K.’s media portrayals of the 2008 Games.

Looking at the photographs presented in the R.O.K.’s newspapers, it was evident that the media portraits were mostly constructed as a reflection of the R.O.K.’s nationalistic standpoint *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. For example, the majority of photographs seemed to emphasise the political division and contemporary frozen relations between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. The notion of a unitary Korean nationalism remained largely unreported except where it overlapped the notion of the R.O.K.’s nationalism *vis-à-vis* the D.P.R.K. Thus, the quantitative analysis of media portraits tended to serve to provide a general outline of contemporary conditions and the changes of inter-Korean nationalisms in the R.O.K.’s media. To explore the mediated texts in detail, commentaries and images have been subjected to a qualitative content analysis.

As mentioned in the literature review, culture is defined as a realm of ‘conflict and contestation’ in a specific political circumstance (Storey, 1996b, p. 2). Based on this, the conflict and contestation between sport and politics and nationalism in the R.O.K.’s media discourse concerning inter-Korea-related issues is revealed in this chapter. In particular, the ways in which the interests and power relations of dominant groups - which refer to the R.O.K.’s own state government and its national Olympic committee or the R.O.K.’s left-wing political parties - served to articulate and circulate the inter-Korea-related issues in the R.O.K.’s media is explained (Hall, 1980a; Falcous, 2002). In responding to this, the extent to which the interests of the R.O.K.’s state government and its national Olympic committee were implicated,
legitimated and disseminated in the R.O.K.’s media, was more noticeable in the conservative newspapers and the public televised coverage than in the progressive newspapers and the commercial televised coverage.

In the consideration of the mediated reports of the process by which negotiations for the joint appearance of the D.P.R.K.’s and R.O.K.’s teams during the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games were undertaken and concluded, the conservative, sport-specific newspapers and the public televised coverage of KBS tended to portray the inter-Korea-related issues as a reflection of the R.O.K.’s nationalistic tension and conflicts vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. Meanwhile, the progressive newspapers tended to generate an impression of unitary Korean nationalism that sometimes overlapped with the R.O.K.’s traditional nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. In criticising the deteriorating political relations between the two Koreas, both disappointment at the failure to agree on a co-march and the desire for a re-forging of the sporting union on the Korean Peninsula seemed to be often stressed in their use of emotional, poetic, figurative and subjective expressions. However, the negative or positive connotations were very little observed in the commercial televised coverage of SBS and the mainstream conservative newspapers such as Chosun Ilbo. Therefore, according to the degree to which each print and televised media displays conservative or progressive, public or commercial characteristics, it could be seen that the reporting style, tendencies and context seemed to be different when reporting a politically controversial issue.

The mediated patterns and trends of the 2008 Olympic Games were distinctive from those of the 2000 and 2004 Games. That is, the previous mediated trend of the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games, in which the R.O.K.’s traditional nationalism vis-à-
the D.P.R.K. became weakened and replaced by an alternative unitary Korean nationalism, shifted to one that reinforced the R.O.K.’s traditional nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K., meanwhile, a unitary Korean nationalism became relatively weakened. The contextual shifts of the mediated trend can be explicated by applying the theoretical framework of hegemonic and ideological transformation.

According to the theoretical framework of Gramsci’s notions of hegemony, the power relations between ideologies and hegemony stem from an interweaving of historical and contemporary events that can be transformed at a specific time, place and/or situation (Mouffe, 1981). Therefore, the nature of hegemonic content enables it to be ‘transformed’ into another at a specific historical moment (Mouffe, 1981, p. 231) and reinforced, maintained, weakened or even replaced with an ideological force over time, place and/or situation (Gruneau, 1983). Applying these ideas to this empirical research, the hegemonic content of the R.O.K.’s traditional nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. became reinforced so that the previously dominant ideological content of unitary Korean nationalism became weakened and intertwined or overlapped with the hegemonic content (Gruneau, 1983; Mouffe, 1981; Williams, 1979; Dunning, 1999). In doing so, the hegemonic and ideological transformation was observable in the R.O.K.’s media coverage of the 2008 Games.

The hegemonic transformation, due to the contextual shifts at a specific moment like the Olympic Games, tended to be undertaken when the hegemonic content of nationalism superseded all other ideologies. In this way, the media tended to play a significant role in conveying the nation’s dominant ideologies. For example, in depicting the R.O.K.’s gold medallist Jong-oh Jin as the best athlete in the world, generalizing his victory into national one, using nationalistic symbolism such as the
national flag of ‘Tae-guk-ki’ and the national anthem of ‘Ae-guk-ka’, a nationalistic climate was often created in the R.O.K.’s media coverage (Maguire et al., 2002; Cho, 2009, p. 352). On the other hand, the D.P.R.K.’s athlete Jong-su Kim’s achievement of the silver often tended to be portrayed with a focus upon his failure to win the gold. Thus, the athletic performance and achievements of Jong-su Kim seemed to be marginalized and underrepresented in comparison to those of Jong-oh Jin. In this light, the theoretical notion of the established-outsider figuration can be applied in identifying ‘themselves’ or ‘us’ as the established group with superior power resources and ‘others’ as the outsider group, relatively ‘inferior with its power ratio, against which the established group can close ranks’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxx).

In applying the theoretical framework of established-outsider figurations in this chapter, there was a mediated trend whereby the R.O.K.’s gold medallist, Jong-oh Jin, was marked as the established group, more superior than the D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist, Jong-su Kim, as the outsider group in terms of their athletic performance and achievements. This trend became even more evident when the media criticised Jong-su Kim’s doping offence and the consequent deprivation of his medals and the lack of preparation of the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Committee for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in the context of a doping test. The D.P.R.K.’s athletes and Olympic team, that is, tended to be stigmatised as ‘significant others’ with the ‘they’ image or the outsider group. On the other hand, Jong-oh Jin’s fair play and the thorough preparation of the R.O.K.’s Olympic Committee for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in the context of the doping test were acclaimed and overemphasized so that the R.O.K.’s superiority over the D.P.R.K. tended to be highlighted in terms of not only the athletic performance and achievements but also the thorough preparation of the
national Olympic Committee and the education in sportsmanship and sport ethics in the context of the doping ban. In this sense, there is no doubt that the R.O.K.’s athletes and team were largely depicted as the established group, with a superior power ratio compared to the D.P.R.K. The media portrayals of national athletes and team, therefore, were evident to convey the meaning of cultural nationalism (Bairner, 2005), which internally bonded people and draw their external boundaries vis-à-vis others.

However, the mediated discourse was not the only form of R.O.K. nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K., duplicated and combined forms were observable. For instance, before the D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist, Jong-su Kim, was accused of a doping offence, the progressive newspapers and the televised coverage tended to celebrate both the national athlete Jong-oh Jin’s winning of the gold and the D.P.R.K.’s athlete Kim’s winning of the silver. This feature of the reporting became even more manifest and explicit when reporting the bronze medallist in the 50m pistol event, the Chinese shooter Jong-liang Tan. In portraying the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. athletes Jin and Kim as an ethnically-bonded team of so-called ‘brothers’ whilst depicting the Chinese shooter, Tan, as the rival of the brothers, the notion of a pan-Korean identity was evident in the R.O.K.’s media coverage. This report can prove that the hegemonic force of the dominant ideology remains neither static and constant nor applicable over any other time, place and/or situation (Birrell, 2000). In other words, according to the logic of the incident and the specific event at a specific time and/or place, the hegemonic content of the dominant ideology can be transformed from a solitary form of the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. into a duplicated or combined form that overlaps with a unitary Korean nationalism due to its dynamic, related and relative characteristics.
In the next chapter, an analysis of the media portrayals of baseball and swimming matches at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games will be undertaken and used as critical case studies that will explore not only the R.O.K.’s nationalism directed against Japan and America, but also Northeast Asian nationalism against the West more generally. The notion of a Northeast Asian identity was observable in the media portrayals of the Olympic medal podium of the 50m pistol event, which was occupied by the three Northeast Asian winners Jin, Kim and Tan from the R.O.K., the D.P.R.K. and China respectively. The developing question of a pan-North East Asian identity will be explored in-depth in analysing the media portrayals of the athletic performance and achievements of the R.O.K., Japanese and Chinese swimming winners, Tae-hwan Park, Kosuke Kitajima and Lin Zhang, as they were portrayed as a newly-generated sporting union. Specific attention will also be given to the comparison of the media representations of the athletic performances and achievements between America’s swimming star, Michael Phelps, and his R.O.K. counterpart, Tae-hawn Park. Regarding the 2008 Olympic baseball matches, the ways in which the nine-inning straight victories of the R.O.K.’s baseball team over the American baseball team and Japan’s team were mediated and celebrated will be discussed in-depth. In doing so, an in-depth exploration of the R.O.K.’s nationalisms vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan will be undertaken in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF OLYMPIC BASEBALL GAMES

BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND JAPAN

5-1. Introduction

This chapter is designed to examine the ways in which the R.O.K.’s media coverage reflected the international relations and contemporary political currents between the R.O.K. and two of its allies, namely the U.S. in the West and Japan nearby in Northeast Asia. Linked to political and ideological relations between the R.O.K. and the U.S. and Japan, the conditions and shifts in the power relations between hegemonic and ideological forms of South Korean nationalism with/against the U.S. and Japan have permeated sport representations in the media. However, according to the fundamental principle of Olympism, ‘any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 11). The media coverage of the Olympic Games, according to the Bye-law to Rule 48 in the Olympic Charter, should ‘spread and promote the principles and values of Olympism’ (Olympic Charter, 2011, p. 90). Therefore, this chapter is designed to examine the extent to which and how the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games articulated and circulated the principles and values of Olympism or the opposite notions of nationalism, ethnicism and racial stereotypes. This chapter investigates the conditions and shifts in power relations between the
hegemonic and ideological content of the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan, pro- and anti-American sentiments and anti-Japanese sentiments. Attention is given to examining the mediated representation of the interplay of national identity with other identity markers such as race, ethnicity and regional identity. Data collected one week before and after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and during the R.O.K.’s Olympic baseball matches with the U.S. and Japan will be analysed. The theoretical frameworks of identity politics, hegemonic and ideological transformations and the figural concepts of personal pronouns and established and outsider figurations will be applied.

According to Sung-hak Kang (2010), the U.S. has been the R.O.K.’s most influential ally since the end of World War II. In the same fashion, Bruce Cumings stated that the R.O.K. and the U.S. seemed to be joined together as allies or ‘friends’ against the U.S.S.R. and North Korea after 1945 (2002, p. 11). Specifically, the U.S. assisted ‘the establishment of [the] R.O.K. in 1948’ and provided ‘the majority of U.N. forces during the Korean War (1950-3)’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4). Since the two nations were allied by the 1954 National Defense Treaty, the U.S. assisted the R.O.K.’s national economic recovery after the Korean War and helped support South Korean forces with approximately 25,000 U.S. troops stationed in the R.O.K. (Kang, 2010, p. 4), followed by the Americanisation and Westernisation of South Korean culture. Since President Myung-bak Lee’s administration announced its goal to actualise the vision of becoming a truly ‘Global Korea’, the R.O.K.’s foreign policy objectives have been aimed at making diplomatic efforts ‘to revitalise South Korea’s economy, to develop the R.O.K.-U.S. strategic alliance, and to make substantial progress on the North Korean nuclear issue’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). Further foreign policy goals covered
‘shaping new regional governance in East Asia and expanding Korea’s Asian diplomacy’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). In addition, the President addressed ‘the launching of the ‘New Asia Initiative’ to expand economic, cultural and security relations with all parts of Asia including the South Pacific’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). In this political context, President Myung-bak Lee’s administration had aimed at developing the R.O.K.-U.S. strategic alliance and constructing a pan-Asian identity in building a new regional governance.

In addition, the R.O.K. and Japan formally normalised their relations by signing the Basic Treaty on Foreign Relations in 1965. The two nations worked for themes that included ‘the maintenance of peace on the peninsula and the denuclearization of the D.P.R.K.’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4). The R.O.K.’s foreign policy reinforced the newly-generated notion of a pan-Asian identity in the R.O.K. Given these concerns, Chapter Five and Chapter Six focus on examining how strongly the regional pan-Asian identity identified above was reflected in the national media representations of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Maguire (1999) states that male sport, especially team sports such as soccer, rugby and baseball, plays a pivotal role in the production and representation of national identity. The mediated South Korean nationalism tended to be fuelled by the influence of contemporary political conflicts with the U.S. and Japan. The recent friction between the R.O.K. and the U.S. covered ‘the discussions of American troop withdrawal from South Korea, adjustments of trade relations as well as differences in the assessment of, and approach toward, North Korea’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4). By doing so, the notion of anti-American sentiment deepened and became evident in the media coverage (Robertson, 2003; Hart, 2008). In this context, Robertson (2003) states that
the most pervasive form of anti-American sentiment in the R.O.K. is based on national identity. The contemporary R.O.K.-Japan relationship, meanwhile, is a product of the Japanese colonisation of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945 before the division of Korea into South and North Korea (Hart, 2008). The notion of anti-Japanese sentiment, reflecting a long-lasting rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan, was a form of resistance to the former coloniser’s rule based on the R.O.K.’s sovereignty, national identity and ethnicity. Despite the start of a cultural exchange between the R.O.K. and Japan in the 1990s, the contemporary conflicts regarding the territorial dispute over Dokdo Island, the East Sea naming dispute, the dispute over Japanese history textbooks, Japan’s treatment of Korean comfort women (Kang, 2010, p. 4), former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s repeated worship at the Yasukuni shrine and his ‘unapologetic attitudes towards its colonial inhumanity’ (Oh, 2007), all reinforced anti-Japanese sentiments and a mood of rivalry with Japan in the R.O.K.

In this regard, the Japanese team tended to be represented as a group of outsiders, significant others or viewed as ‘the old enemy that must lose’ to the R.O.K.’s team in international sport competitions (Elias, 1994; Oh, 2007, p. 59). Cho (2009) noted that, after R.O.K.-Japan competitions in popular sports such as baseball and soccer, it became popular to express anti-Japanese feelings in the R.O.K. Therefore, this chapter examines the ways in which media representations of the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament reflected a number of political, ideological and sociocultural conflicts and tensions that were manifest in the R.O.K.’s history and contemporary politics. ‘Tracing the sportization process between the third and the fifth phases’, it is clear that the former colonial’s sporting success like ‘English sporting success, increasingly infrequent occurrence, restores, however superficially, a symbolic sense of stability
and national pride’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 181). In contrast, victory over their former colonial rulers was considered ‘as a form of rite of passage’ and ‘the general sense of the former colonial’s dislocation’ was compounded by increasing victories of former colonies in the latest phase of the sportization processes (Maguire, 1999, p. 181). Therefore, how do the victories of former colonies over their previous colonial rulers become considered and mediated at global sporting events? In analysing media representations of the 2008 Beijing Olympic baseball tournament, this chapter examines the ways in which the postcolonial media coverage described its victories over the former colony in its representations of global male sporting, team-sport events.

This chapter, then, focuses on examining the differences between media representations of the national team and its two rival teams from the U.S. and Japan in terms of their athletic abilities, strategy, performance and achievements. Attention is also given to examining the ways in which other participants such as the R.O.K.’s and U.S.’s umpire and manager were described and characterised in the R.O.K.’s print and television coverage in terms of personality, manner, strategy and effectiveness. In doing so, the ideological meanings embedded in the media representations can be extracted and discussed and linked to the contextual conditions and changes in the political and ideological conflicts between the three nations. The first section will examine the ways in which media portraits of national participants and those from the U.S. and Japan in the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament were configured. The second section will cover in depth the exploration of the mediated representation of South Korean and American baseball players in terms of athletic performance, abilities and achievements. The third section will focus on examining the symbolic descriptions of
the R.O.K. and Japan’s participants in the Olympic baseball tournament in terms of those criteria followed by the conclusion.

5-2. The Media Portraits of Olympic Baseball matches

This section examines a number of photographs of Olympic baseball matches between the R.O.K. and the U.S. and Japan that configured and mediated South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan. The R.O.K.’s newspapers produced a total of 13 photographs of South Korean and American players (Figure 5-1). Only two images in sport-specific newspapers such as Ilgan Sports and Sports Seoul focused on displaying a mood of rivalry between the R.O.K. and the U.S. Only one photograph in the progressive, sport-specific newspaper, Sports Seoul, tended to trivialise an American player’s performance by signifying his performance in a humorous manner. In doing so, this photograph expressed the thematic notion of South Korean nationalism against the U.S. using the technique of allegory. Therefore, a mood of rivalry between the R.O.K. and U.S. and anti-American sentiments were marginally manifested in the sport-specific newspapers, but those were seldom observable in mainstream newspapers such as Chosun Ilbo and Hankyoreh. Meanwhile, two images in the conservative, sport-specific newspaper, Ilgan Sports, displayed in a neutral manner an interview with the U.S. delegation and a training scene with U.S. President George W. Bush encouraging American team members. The remaining eight images focused on showing the R.O.K.’s baseball team members celebrating with each other. Those included three photographs in mainstream newspapers and five photographs in sport-specific newspapers. Among these eight images, only one image highlighted the R.O.K.’s national identity and ethnicity by placing the name, Korea, printed on the
uniform in the centre of photograph (Hankyoreh, 14 Aug. 2008: 8). However, seven photographs did not prominently display symbolic metaphors for national identity.

In examining a total of 34 photographs of the Olympic baseball matches between the R.O.K. and Japan shown in Figure 5-2, only two photographs represented Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, and his player, Darvish Yu, in a neutral manner. Six photographs reported a mood of rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan’s teams in displaying each participant from the R.O.K. and Japan in the competition. Twelve photographs showed the thematic notion of anti-Japanese sentiments, particularly the progressive, sport-specific newspaper, Sports Seoul, while the rivalry between the R.O.K. and the U.S. teams was portrayed in the conservative, sport-specific
newspaper, *Ilgan Sports*. Those photographs mainly covered Japan’s manager and players with an emphasis on their looks of disappointment in/after competing with the R.O.K.’s team (*Ilgan Sports, 28 Aug. 2008: 15; Sports Seoul, 23 Aug. 2008: 5; 27 Aug. 2008: 26*). More importantly, the notion of anti-Japanese sentiments was evident in mainstream newspapers *Chosun Ilbo* and *Hankyoreh*. A picture in *Chosun Ilbo* showed that the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, held a hat in his right hand when shaking hands with Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, with a kindly smile after the semi-final match, while Senichi was still wearing a hat and shaking hands with Kim. This photograph seemed to criticise Senichi’s manners and sporting etiquette (*Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 3; Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 4*) and implicitly illustrated the notion of anti-Japanese sentiments in the R.O.K. Meanwhile, a photograph in *Hankyoreh* demonstrated the R.O.K. and Japanese teams with their national flags and historical records between them (22 Aug. 2008: 21). The R.O.K.’s participants were visible in the left part of photograph while the Japanese manager and players were shown on the right side. A mood of rivalry between the two teams was noticeable. The R.O.K.’s manager and team members looked like they were communicating with each other in a passionate manner while Japan’s manager and his team members were not looking at each other but gazing elsewhere without communicating. Therefore, Japan’s participants tended to be trivialised by signifying them as less emotionally bonded, committed and communicative. By adding each team’s national flag and historic records in the past Games in the centre of the photograph, *Hankyoreh’s* photograph expressed the notion of anti-Japanese sentiments and the strong rivalry between the two teams. Of the 34 photographs, 14 covered the R.O.K.’s team members who were celebrating and shouting for joy after their victory over Japan.
Seven images out of 14 highlighted the R.O.K.’s national identity and ethnicity by showing the name of the nation printed on the uniform in the centre of the photograph.

![Bar chart showing the distribution of images highlighting the R.O.K. and Japan's national identity and ethnicity](chart1.png)

**Figure 5-2. Signifying the R.O.K.'s Nationalism vis-à-vis Japan in the Olympic Baseball Tournament**

Overall, the photographs in the R.O.K.’s newspapers of the Olympic baseball tournament rarely displayed pro-American or pro-Japanese sentiments. Instead, the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan was more popularly explicit than that of its nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. For example, the photographs exhibited the thematic notion of anti-Japanese sentiments by reporting two opposing views of the R.O.K.’s team with the joy of victory and Japan’s team with a sense of disappointment. Meanwhile, the thematic notion of anti-American sentiments was reported relatively rarely in the R.O.K.’s newspapers. On this basis, attention can now
turn to a consideration of how the rivalry between the R.O.K. and the U.S. teams was expressed in the media texts and comments. Likewise, how was the rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japanese teams made explicit in the media representations? To examine this, the next section will explore the ways in which the R.O.K.’s print and televised media coverage demonstrated the thematic notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan.

5-3. The Media Portrayals of the R.O.K.-U.S. Baseball Tournament

This section examines the ways in which the media coverage represented the R.O.K. team’s victory over the U.S. team and any relevant issues using symbolic descriptions and devices. The first sub-section explores in-depth the symbolic descriptions of the R.O.K.’s and U.S.’s teams and analyses the ways in which the R.O.K. team’s victory over the U.S. was reported and televised along with the national identity and racial stereotypes in the context of the R.O.K. The second section examines the way in which the issues questioning the umpires’ decisions in favour of the U.S. team in past competitions were featured in the media coverage of the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament.

5-3-1. The Victory of the Sub-periphery over the Core

In the Olympic preliminary baseball match on 13 August 2008, the R.O.K. defeated the U.S. by the narrow margin of 8 to 7. The media portrayed this victory as having much more meaning than a simple victory. An analysis of the R.O.K. media’s portrayals of this victory tended to express the interplay between hegemonic and
ideological contents such as South Korean nationalism, pro-/anti-American sentiments and the racial stereotypes in the context of the R.O.K. This interplay can be highlighted by examining the ways in which the media coverage described and characterised the R.O.K. and U.S. teams in terms of athletic abilities, performance and achievements and in the celebration of the national team’s victory.

Examining the symbolic descriptions of the R.O.K. and U.S. baseball teams, the U.S. team was often depicted as ‘the head of the baseball family’, ‘the strong nation of baseball’ and ‘the most powerful team in the world’ (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament; SBS, 13 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament; Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; Hankyoreh, 14 Aug. 2008: 8; Ilgan Sports, 14 Aug. 2008: 1, 2; Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4). In other words, the U.S. team tended to be regarded as the godfather of baseball or superior to the R.O.K.’s team by using the expression ‘the head of the baseball family’. The mediated descriptions of the U.S. team tended to implicate the political and ideological contents of American superiority, pro-American sentiments and the impact of Americanisation within the South Korean context. Meanwhile, the R.O.K.’s conservative newspapers and televised coverage often likened the R.O.K. team to a team on the sub-periphery of baseball (Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4) and one that played a ‘unique South Korean-style kickball’ (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament; SBS, 13 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament; Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; Ilgan Sports, 14 Aug. 2008: 2). In short, in a reflection of Confucian culture, baseball in the R.O.K. tended to be described using the modest and humble expression of playing kickball. By using the symbolic description of a unique South Korean-style, the expression ‘kickball’ tended to be portrayed as distinctive or highly qualified based on national identity. The reporting
style conveyed the hidden meanings of South Korean nationalism and national pride based on its sovereign, competitive, athletic prestige. Take the following examples:

The U.S.’s powerful baseball was defeated by the R.O.K.’s highly motivated kickball...The power of the R.O.K.’s team obviously lagged behind that of the U.S.’s team...Since the R.O.K.’s team was placed fourth at the WBC Games it started playing neither an American-style nor a Japanese-style baseball but a unique South Korean-style baseball. That was a kickball based on its high motivation and team play (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2).

At the last moment, the Korean-style kickball emitted light. Our team, which has a well-balanced batting power and mobility, gained the first victory in defeating the U.S. with only a one run margin (SBS, 13 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament).

Therefore, the U.S. team was depicted as exceeding the R.O.K.’s team in terms of the performance of individual players (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2). The R.O.K.’s team tended to be described as one that defeated the U.S.’s team in terms of high motivation, team play and ‘well-balanced batting power and mobility’ (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; SBS, 13 Aug. 2008). In other words, the national team was characterised as superior to the U.S. team due to an emphasis on its spiritual and ‘technological impetus’ (Guttmann, 1978). A similar reporting tendency was evident in the texts of Ilgan Sports and Hankyoreh. The R.O.K. team’s competitive prestige tended to be portrayed as a collective form created by the R.O.K.’s ‘veteran players’ which was ‘enough to beat the U.S.’s team’ (Ilgan Sports, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; Hankyoreh, 20 Aug. 2008: 22). Meanwhile, the U.S. team’s competitive prestige tended to be considered as each individual player’s ‘powerful’ performance (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2) and physically ‘strong batting power’ (Hankyoreh, 20 Aug. 2008: 22). Take the following example:

In consideration of the characteristics of the match that concentrate all the
teams’ energies on a match, the R.O.K., which has veteran pitchers, would be easier to defeat the U.S., which has each individual player’s strong batting power… (Hankyoreh, 20 Aug. 2008: 22).

The U.S. team tended to be portrayed only with the focus on individual form, while the R.O.K.’s team tended to be reported as emphasising a collective form of power achieved by ‘veteran pitchers’ (Orwell, 1970, p. 63). The reports tended to express the rivalry between the R.O.K. and U.S. teams and the hidden meaning of racial stereotypes of Western and Northeast Asian athletes in the context of the R.O.K. Reports from KBS and Sports Seoul also showed a reporting tendency in depicting the R.O.K.’s team as ‘we’ or ‘our national baseball team’ and commending its athletic abilities as ‘strong and competitive enough’ to beat the U.S. and with ‘sufficient power’ (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament; Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4). Take the following examples:

The counterpart is the U.S., which is calling itself the head of the baseball family, but we are strong and competitive enough (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament).

The U.S.’s team bowed the knee to our national baseball team … due to the competitive power of the R.O.K.’s team (Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4).

The reports depicted the U.S.’s team as ‘the counterpart’ or ‘they’, and the R.O.K.’s team as ‘we’, superior to ‘they’ in terms of the ‘competitive power’ of team members. In short, a mood of rivalry between the R.O.K. and U.S. teams tended to emphasise the hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. Overall, the hegemonic content of the R.O.K.’s nationalism overlapped with the ideological content of racial stereotypes of the Western and Northeast Asian athletes within the context of the R.O.K. and tended to be embedded and mediated in its
national media coverage. In this regard, the televised and print media portrayals based on national identity and racial stereotypes tended to portray the R.O.K.’s team as the established one, or ‘we’, with the U.S. team as the outsider, ‘they’, or ‘significant others’.

The photographs of the match (Figure 5-3), which showed the R.O.K. batter, Taek-keun Lee, celebrating with his team members, Seung-yeop Lee and Hyun-jin Lyu, were visible in the print coverage (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; Hankyoreh, 14 Aug. 2008: 8; Ilgan Sports, 14 Aug. 2008: 3; Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4). The visual images focused on conveying the R.O.K. team’s joy and tended to spread and promote the embedded meaning of national pride. In particular, an image from Hankyoreh highlighted the R.O.K.’s national identity and ethnicity by placing the name ‘Korea’, printed on their uniforms, in the centre of the photograph (14 Aug. 2008: 8). However, the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and anti-American sentiments was rarely observable in the photographs.

In contrast, the embedded meaning of nationalistic and anti-American sentiments could be readily observed in analysing the textual expressions of the R.O.K.’s victory over the U.S. Mainstream newspapers tended to express South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. by describing the R.O.K.’s team as superior to the American team. For example, the conservative, mainstream newspaper, *Chosun Ilbo*, stated that ‘the R.O.K. made the head of the baseball family cry’ (14 Aug. 2008: 2) emphasising the power of the R.O.K. team, whilst applying the emotional term, ‘cry’ to the U.S. team. Meanwhile, the progressive, mainstream newspaper, *Hankyoreh*, ran a headline that ‘the R.O.K. gave a lesson in baseball to the U.S., the head of the baseball family’ (14 Aug. 2008: 8) likening the R.O.K.’s team to a teacher with the U.S. team as the student. Thus, the R.O.K. team’s superiority over the waning American team was expressed. Reports in *Chosun Ilbo* and *Hankyoreh* tended to imply the nationalistic meaning that the power ratio between the U.S. as the occupier and R.O.K. as the occupied narrowed and the relation between the two was subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball competition. In brief, the mediated victory of the R.O.K. team over the American team tended to be over-represented as an event, a defeat of a powerful team considered ‘the head of the baseball family’, expressing a sense of rivalry, national pride and anti-American sentiments based on national identity. The ideological contents were also evident in sport-specific newspapers that depicted the U.S. as subordinate to the R.O.K. by using behaviour-oriented expressions. Here are two examples:

The head of the baseball family dropped its head to the unique Korean-style kickball (*Ilgan Sports*, 14 Aug. 2008: 2).

The head of the baseball family lost face because of its loss against the R.O.K. team in the sub-periphery of baseball. It, needless to say, was an unbelievable
game that the USA’s team bowed the knee to our national baseball team… *(Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4).*

The nationalistic expressions such as ‘dropped its head’ and ‘bowed the knee’ to the R.O.K.’s team dramatised the American team’s loss and overtly conveyed the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. *(Ilgan Sports, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4).* The conservative, sport-specific newspaper, *Ilgan Sports*, tended to admire the R.O.K. team’s performance, using the symbolic description of a ‘unique Korean-style kickball’ based on national identity *(14 Aug. 2008: 2).* Meanwhile, the progressive, sport-specific newspaper, *Sports Seoul* noted that the R.O.K. team was on the ‘sub-periphery of baseball’ *(14 Aug. 2008: 4)* and described the U.S. team’s performance as a demeaning loss of face. The U.S. team’s loss was also portrayed using symbolic, sarcastic and ironic expressions such as ‘the R.O.K. team hooked a giant fish’ and ‘the downfall of the knight full of patriotic spirit’ in *Sports Seoul* *(14 Aug. 2008: 4).* Therefore, *Sports Seoul* expressed nationalistic sentiments in objectifying the American team as ‘a giant fish’, emphasising the R.O.K.’s victory by using the term ‘hooked’, and dramatising its loss with an emphasis on the U.S.’s national identity. In doing so, the media portrayals tended to frame the meaning of the match in terms of the hegemonic transformation between the R.O.K. as the occupied and the U.S. as the occupier. Reports from *Sports Seoul* *(14 Aug. 2008: 4)* accompanied a photograph (Figure 5-4) and tended to portray the performance of an American player in a humorous manner. By using allegory, the photograph focused on portraying the side of a South Korean player’s body lying at full length on his stomach after narrowly making base, while intentionally placing the American player’s bottom in the centre of the photograph, evoking mirth.
With these framing devices, it could be stated that the hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and other ideological content such as pro-Americanism, anti-American sentiments and racial stereotypes of the Western athletes in the R.O.K. were reproduced in the media portrayals. This content was observable in analysing the symbolic descriptions used to represent the R.O.K. and U.S. baseball teams. The media representations of the R.O.K. team’s performance in the victory over the U.S. tended to be overemphasised based on national identity and the reversal of the occupied and occupier status of the R.O.K. and the U.S. The reporting overtly conveyed the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and tended to be expressed in the interplay of the triple notions of American superiority, anti-American sentiments and racial stereotypes of the Western players in the R.O.K. More specifically, progressive newspapers displayed anti-American sentiments in a more sarcastic and ironic manner than any other coverage while rarely referring to or implying the U.S.’s superiority over the R.O.K. Therefore, the thematic notion of anti-American sentiments was more explicit in the progressive newspapers than in the
conservative newspapers and televised media coverage while being absent or implicitly embedded in the conservative newspapers and televised media coverage.

5-3-2. The Questioning of an Umpire’s Decision in Favour of the U.S. Team

Before the Olympic preliminary match between the R.O.K. and U.S. started, the media coverage reminded readers of the historic record in competitions between the two teams and, in particular, the questioning of an umpire’s decision in favour of the U.S. team at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The coverage of these events in the progressive newspapers included the following texts:

The R.O.K. was defeated by the U.S. 2 to 3 due to the umpire’s misjudgment in favour of the U.S. in the semi-final of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games (Hankyoreh, 13 Aug. 2008: 23).

The case of the umpire’s misjudgment in the 2000 Sydney Olympic baseball competition between the U.S. and R.O.K. … The Japanese umpire’s tricks started in the eighth innings of the preliminary match. The Americans even laughed enough to say that the Japanese umpire was helping the U.S. … The umpire’s misjudgment continued in the semi-final. In the seventh innings, which the R.O.K. was leading the U.S. 2 to 1, the umpires’ successive misjudgments at the first and third bases disappointed the R.O.K. … In the end, a sacrifice hit allowed 2 to 2 then, the U.S. finally defeated the R.O.K. 3 to 2. The U.S., with the aid from the umpires, won the gold in the tournament. There was no doubt that the power of umpires greatly affected the U.S.’s victory (Sports Seoul, 12 Aug. 2008: 6).

The progressive newspapers attributed the 2000 Sydney Olympic baseball affair to the power of umpires and their decisions in favour of the U.S. In questioning whether the 2000 Sydney Olympics affair - which attracted strong criticism in the R.O.K. - implied the influence of political power, the progressive newspapers seemed to expose latent anti-American sentiments in the R.O.K. Therefore, the hidden
meaning of anti-American sentiments was marginally but explicitly expressed in the mediated texts and comments about past competitions with the U.S. team. Jeffrey Robertson (2003) stated that the most pervasive forms of anti-American sentiments in the R.O.K. were based on national identity, as can be confirmed from the following report:

The R.O.K.’s team, which aimed at remaining undefeated throughout the entire Olympic baseball matches, may have to compete with not only rival teams but also invisible umpires … The R.O.K. had plenty of questions of umpires’ decisions since the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games … It might become more serious this time than before, because the dispatch of our national umpire to the 2008 Beijing Olympic baseball tournament failed. It has been customary to deal at least with an umpire from a participant nation in the Olympic baseball Games but, the Olympic baseball organising committee dispatched the R.O.K.’s umpires (Sports Seoul, 12 Aug. 2008: 6).

Therefore, Sports Seoul showed its nationalist and anti-American sentiments by doubting the ‘special reason to dispatch the R.O.K. team’s umpires’ and warning of the ‘possibilities of questioning the umpires’ decisions in favour of the U.S.’ in the 2008 Olympic baseball Games with the U.S. team (12 Aug. 2008: 6). The reporting style of dramatization was not new, but it was a reiteration of previous articles relating to the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympics ice skating affair. The media coverage tended to attribute the disqualification of the R.O.K.’s skater, Dong-sung Kim, to ‘the unfair judgment in favour of the U.S. team and athlete’ and ‘the U.S.’s skater, Anton Ohno’s interference with Kim during a race’ (Kim, 2003, p. 31).

Anti-American sentiments poured out when Ohno won the gold at the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Games. SBS rebroadcasted the Ohno affair before the 2008 Olympic baseball match between the R.O.K. and the U.S. and introduced it as an ‘exasperating’ example from Olympic history. The telecast included the Olympic medal ceremonies, in which the American flag was placed in the centre and higher than the two other
foreign flags, and said, ‘How on earth can the U.S. do this? It does not make sense’ in an annoyed tone (10 Aug. 2008: the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic ice skating final event). The telecasted portrayals were linked symbolically to the 2000 Sydney Olympic baseball affair, which also provoked an outpouring of anti-American sentiments in the R.O.K. based on national identity (Robertson, 2003). Therefore, the media portrayals of both the 2000 Sydney and 2002 Salt Lake Olympic affairs involving the umpires’ decisions in favour of American athletes and teams were framed as part of South Korean nationalism against the U.S. Overall, the reports of the umpires’ decision in favour of the U.S. conveyed the theme of anti-American sentiments based on national identity. More interestingly, these were more evident in the progressive newspapers and SBS but rarely observable in the conservative newspapers and KBS.

5-4. The Media Portrayals of the R.O.K.-Japan’s Baseball Matches

This section is designed to examine the ways in which the long-standing rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan found expression in the R.O.K.’s print and television coverage. This section investigates how strongly the hegemonic and ideological contents of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan, anti-Japanese sentiments and regional identity were implicated in the media representations of two games that took place between the R.O.K. and Japan during the 2008 Beijing Olympic baseball tournament. The first sub-section examines the ways in which the media coverage portrayed the performance and achievement of the R.O.K. and Japan’s managers and team members before and after the preliminary match on 16 August 2008. The second sub-section explores the ways in which the R.O.K. and Japan’s managers and team members were represented in terms of performance, achievement, strategy,
personality and sporting manner before and after the semi-final match on 22 August 2008. The third sub-section examines the embedded meaning of the victory of the R.O.K.’s baseball team, moving from second in Asia to the best in the world.

5-4-1. The Preliminary Match: Japan’s Team as the Biggest Roadblock to Victory


Take the following examples:

The R.O.K.’s team, aiming at remaining undefeated throughout all nine baseball matches, competes against its old enemy, as well as rival, Japan… (KBS, 16 Aug. 2008: Baseball preliminary match between the R.O.K. and Japan).

The R.O.K.’s team must perform with stronger positions in the baseball match against Japan, which is highly likely to be the biggest roadblock (*Chosun Ilbo*, 11 Aug. 2008: 24).

Even if we lose to any team among all participants in the Olympic baseball matches, we must win in the match against Japan. The R.O.K.’s team will have a fight against its old enemy, Japan (*Ilgan Sports*, 16 Aug. 2008: 4).

Japan’s team is the biggest roadblock to remaining *undefeated throughout the Olympic baseball matches* (*Sports Seoul*, 11 August 2008: 10, italics added).
In addition, the match between the R.O.K. and Japan was likened to a ‘fierce battle in spirit’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 8 Aug. 2008: 5). Therefore, modern sport events such as the Olympic Games become a symbolic battlefield in which South Korean nationalism could be manifested as a form of resistance to Japanese rule (Lee, 2002). Also, ‘the recent sovereignty disputes between the R.O.K. and Japan over the Tokdo islets’ fuelled anti-Japanese sentiments in the R.O.K. so that those sentiments were evident in the following report:

The R.O.K.’s fans, who have anti-Japanese feelings due to the recent sovereignty disputes between the R.O.K. and Japan over the Dokdo islets, wish that the R.O.K.’s manager Kyung-moon Kim knocks the team of Hosino Japan down (*Ilgan Sports*, 16 Aug. 2008: 4).

The notion of anti-Japanese sentiments was also noticeable in the use of Japan’s manager Hosino Senichi’s first name only. According to Koivula’s analysis of comments and reporting by sports media, there is a difference in symbolism by naming ‘dominants’ who are more frequently ‘referred to formally by their last names’ while naming ‘subordinates’ ‘more informally by their first names’ (1999, p. 601). Therefore, by using the first name only to represent Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, he was described as a subordinate in the context of the R.O.K. The reporting style showed how strongly anti-Japanese sentiments were reflected in the media coverage.

Ahead of the preliminary match between the R.O.K. and Japan on 16 August 2008, the strong rivalry between the managers and teams from the two countries was manifested in the media coverage. According to *Hankyoreh*, in the interview before the preliminary match, ‘Japan’s manager, Hosino, irritated the R.O.K. with the sarcastic words that there are no players that we should have to watch out for in the R.O.K. but, we only hope that the R.O.K. do not make a double batting order’ (22
Aug. 2008: 21). As a response to Hosino Senichi’s speeches, the sport-specific newspapers reported his critique of the R.O.K.’s team. Take the following examples:

Japan’s manager, Hosino, claimed to block the R.O.K.’s team from attending the Olympic Games by saying that a team must be severely punished when they make a double batting order. … As a response to Hosino’s speeches, the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, questioned the timing of Japan’s games, which were all allocated in the evenings (Ilgan Sports, 8 Aug. 2008: 5).

As a response to Hosino’s speeches that a team must be severely punished when they make a double batting order, the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, answered that ‘Hosino, let’s play fair’ (Sports Seoul, 11 Aug. 2008: 10).

The media portrayals were enough to provoke the embedded anti-Japanese sentiment in the R.O.K. with an emphasis that Hosino Senichi ‘intended to disrupt the R.O.K.’s participation in the Olympic Games’ (Ilgan Sports, 8 Aug. 2008: 8). In this sense, Sport Seoul criticised Hosino Senichi for provoking ‘an intentional war of nerves’ (8 Aug. 2008: 8), and stressed the need for fair play (11 Aug. 2008: 10). After the R.O.K. defeated Japan 5 to 3 in the preliminary match on 16 August 2008, Ilgan Sports reported that ‘the taunt of Hosino perversely became a potent motivation for the R.O.K.’s team to boost their strong will to win’ and described the Japanese manager’s previous claim as ‘arrogant speeches’ and ‘Hosino’s taunt’ (18 Aug. 2008: 10). Thus, the Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, was severely or ironically criticised in progressive and sport-specific newspapers. The reports overtly expressed anti-Japanese sentiment in the R.O.K.
5-4-2. The Semi-final Match: The Miracle of Team Korea

Before the Olympic baseball tournament semi-final match between the R.O.K. and Japan, Young-sung Kim from SBS claimed that ‘Japan’s manager Hosino blamed himself as the very man who made the Japanese team lose in the preliminary match so that he became determined to redeem this loss in the semi-final’ (21 Aug. 2008). In response, the R.O.K.’s team were determined to ‘bet everything on the semi-final match with Japan’ ‘to make up for its loss in the semi-final of the 2006 World Baseball Classic after the two victories over Japan in the preliminary matches’ (SBS, 21 Aug. 2008: The Olympic baseball tournament between the R.O.K. and Japan; Hankyoreh, 22 Aug. 2008: 21). Therefore, the semi-final match between the R.O.K. and Japan was regarded as ‘a battle, which no one in both nations can concede’ to redeem their national pride (KBS, 17 Aug. 2008: The Olympic baseball tournament between the R.O.K. and Japan, italics added). The Japanese team was portrayed as the strongest rival ‘among all participants in the Olympic baseball matches’ (Chosun Ilbo, 20 Aug. 2008: 24). The competitive prestige of Japan’s team was viewed as similar to that of the R.O.K.’s team in terms of its ‘powerful mound’, ‘strong pitchers’ and ‘good defenders’ (Hankyoreh, 20 Aug. 2008: 22; 22 Aug. 2008: 21; Sports Seoul, 2 Aug. 2008: 3; 22 Aug. 2008: 12; KBS, 16 Aug. 2008). These comments in the media coverage reveal the strong rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan.

The R.O.K. team’s psychological impetus based on national identity and the Japanese team’s determination to win was articulated in an aggressive manner in the print media coverage. According to Chosun Ilbo, for example, Japan’s manager Senichi declared, ‘we will take revenge on the R.O.K. with the whole twenty-four
Hinomaru warriors in the fatal semi-final match’ (22 Aug. 2008: 20). This determination was delivered in an aggressive manner. In particular, the term ‘Hinomaru’ represented Japan’s national identity with the twenty-four Hinomaru warriors representing the entire nation of Japan (Hobsbawm, 1990). The expression ‘revenge’ was reiterated in reports that ‘Japan’s team will take revenge on the R.O.K.’ and ‘there must be no second mistake’ in Hankyoreh (22 Aug. 2008: 21) and Sport Seoul (22 Aug. 2008: 4). Meanwhile, Sports Seoul claimed that ‘the R.O.K. team’s highly motivated psychological/mental power of concentration and strong will to win’ was based on national identity (22 Aug. 2008: 12). Therefore, the mediated rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan’s teams was reinforced, and the meaning of the match between the two teams became a battle between two nations for national pride. In this regard, the national media coverage made the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-á-vis Japan explicit.

In Hankyoreh the claim that the R.O.K.’s team ‘aims at making up for [their] loss in the semi-final of the 2006 World Baseball Classic’ was accompanied by a photograph showing the R.O.K. and Japanese teams, their national flags, and a historical record of their past games (22 Aug. 2008: 21). In the photograph, the R.O.K.’s participants are visible on the left while Japan’s manager Senichi and his team members are on the right side, manifesting a mood of rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japanese teams. The R.O.K.’s manager and team members looked as though they were communicating with each other in a passionate manner while Japan’s manager was giving the field a blank stare without any communication and his team members were not looking at the manager but gazing elsewhere. In other words, Japan’s

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10 ‘Hinomaru’ is the Japanese national symbol and the name of Japan’s national flag.
participants tended to be trivialised and portrayed as less committed, communicative and spiritless. In adding each team’s national flag and historic records in past Games in the centre, the photograph expressed the notion of anti-Japanese sentiments and the strong rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japanese teams and exemplified the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan.

![Image of baseball players and scores]

**Figure 5-5. The Media Portrait of the Olympic Baseball Tournament Semi-final between the R.O.K. and Japan (Hankyoreh, 22 Aug. 2008: 21).**

The R.O.K. beat Japan 6 to 2 in the Olympic semi-final match on 21 August 2008, and the media coverage described the victory as a ‘thrilling come-from-behind victory vis-à-vis its old enemy Japan in the Olympic semi-final baseball matches’ (KBS, 21 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final; SBS, 23 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final). In particular, in attributing the R.O.K. team’s victory to ‘our manager, coaches and players who did their jobs well’ (SBS, 23 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final), the R.O.K.’s television coverage highlighted the outstanding performance of player Seung-yeop Lee, that ‘largely contributed to victory by hitting a two-run home run to snatch a come-from-
behind victory’ (KBS, 21 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final). In this sense, Lee was depicted as a national hero or a ‘heroic Korean athlete’ (Cho, 2009, p. 355), while the media portrayal of Japan’s pitcher, Hitoki Iwase, was contrasted with that of Lee. Take the following comments:

The hero, who led the R.O.K. team to its victory, was Seung-yeop Lee … The match was like a soap opera for Seung-yeop Lee. Despite his previous dull performance, Lee’s energetic swing finally sent a home run over the right-field fence. The ball hit by Lee was driven into the grandstands in the outfield, on which hung Japan’s national flag, Hinomaru, as if to show the people who used to look down on Lee (KBS, 21 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final, italics added).

Seung-yeop Lee sent the ball over the fence…Our left-batter…made Japan’s best pitcher, Hitoki Iwase, fall off twice … Even though Japan’s left fielder chased the ball, the ball was driven into the grandstands in the outfield. Four-fifths (4/5) of the spectators were Japanese in the stand, but we achieved a come-from-behind victory. We are the R.O.K. … They may have to change the pitcher. Japan’s representative Iwase is falling off (SBS, 23 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final, italics added).

Therefore, the match was over-praised by the use of expressions such as ‘like a soap opera for Seung-yeop Lee’ and national pride was conveyed by using the expression, ‘We are the R.O.K.’ Meanwhile, the athletic performance of a Japanese opponent, Hitoki Iwase, was downgraded by using the expressions, ‘Iwase is falling off’ and ‘they may have to change the pitcher’ (SBS, 23 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final). In this regard, the ‘us versus them’ scenarios were manifested by depicting the R.O.K.’s team as ‘us’ and Japan’s team as ‘them’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 186; Sabo et al., 1996, p. 18). The comments accompanied a photograph of Japan’s right fielder, Atsunori Inaba, standing beneath the Japanese national flag, Hinomaru, hung on the fence, seeming to gaze despondently at the ball flying into the grandstands in the outfield, where most Japanese spectators were sitting (Figure 5-6)

Other photographs in sport-specific newspapers (Figure 5-7) also expressed the theme of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan by portraying Japan’s manager and players with disappointed looks after losing to the R.O.K.’s team (Ilgan Sports, 28 Aug. 2008: 15; Sports Seoul, 27 Aug. 2008: 26). A picture in Ilgan Sports showed the
Japanese manager’s back while he walked away after losing the match (28 Aug. 2008: 15). A picture in *Sports Seoul* showed the Japanese players who ‘stood up in front of the dugout … dropping their heads [and] with disappointed looks’ (27 Aug. 2008: 26). The photograph in *Sports Seoul* was accompanied by a caption as follows.

The performance of Japan’s baseball in the 2002 Sydney Olympic Games resembled that in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in many respects. Japan’s team was defeated by the R.O.K.’s player Seung-yeop Lee’s winning hit in both Olympic baseball tournament semi-finals (*Sports Seoul*, 27 Aug. 2008: 26).

The image and caption in *Sports Seoul* brought up Japan’s defeat in the 2002 Sydney Olympic Games and portrayed the R.O.K.’s victory over Japan through multiple photographs. The photographs included the R.O.K. team members raising both hands and shouting for joy. According to Emmison and Smith (2000), both multiple images in historical order and a single photograph that clearly manifests a future or past event can produce a narrative. Therefore, with the image of Japan’s manager Senichi, *Ilgan Sports* printed multiple photographs of the R.O.K. team members celebrating, wearing the gold medal with a big smile and waving the national flag of ‘Tae-kuk-ki’ after winning past matches against Japan’s team (28 Aug. 2008: 15). In addition, as for the size of photographs of *Ilgan Sports* and *Sports Seoul*, the mediated allocation for Japan’s team was much smaller than that for the R.O.K.’s team. The visual settings emphasised the R.O.K. team’s superior performance over Japan’s team in the 2002 and 2008 Olympic baseball Games. In showing Japan’s manager and team members as much less noteworthy and successful than the R.O.K.’s team, anti-Japanese sentiments were manifested in the visual settings and the meaning of the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalistic sentiments *vis-à-vis* Japan was clearly evident in the visual images.
Meanwhile, the media’s praise of R.O.K. player Seung-yeop Lee was conveyed by criticising Japanese manager Hosino Senichi’s comments on Lee’s previous performance. Progressive newspapers tended to stress that the Japanese team lost to both ‘the R.O.K. manager Kim, who trusted Lee and kept selecting him’ and ‘the R.O.K.’s player Lee, who Japan’s manager Senichi criticised’ (Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 6). Here is one example of such coverage:

Before starting the semi-final on 22nd August, Hosino made remarks aimed at the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, and his out-of-form player, Seung-yeop Lee. Hosino was cynical about Seung-yeop Lee and commented ‘who Lee is and how devoted to letting a batter, who bats badly, stay as a clean-up hitter’ in an ironic manner. However, the power to defeat Japan’s team in the semi-final ironically stemmed from both the R.O.K.’s manager Kim, who let the out-of-form batter stay as a clean-up hitter, and Seung-yeop Lee, the clean-up hitter (Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 6).

Sport-specific newspapers reported Lee’s home run as the key source of defeat for the team of ‘Hosino Japan’ (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 4; Sports Seoul, 23 Aug. 2008: 2). In addition, Hankyoreh said that ‘defeating the Japanese manager, Hosino,
who proudly said that the Japanese team deliberately selected the R.O.K.’s team as its semi-final opponents in the quarter-final against the U.S. ’s team, was jubilant’ (23 Aug 2008: 1, italics added). The report implied that Japan’s intentionally weak performance against the U.S. in the Olympic baseball quarter-final match was aimed at competing against the R.O.K. instead of Cuba in the semi-final, which seemed the easier path to the final. The following comments appeared in progressive newspapers:

To avoid Cuba, Japan and the U.S. acted a shocking play out to lose…It could be seen which team they preferred to compete against from their listless performances…At nil to nil in the ninth innings, there was a preposterous mistake by the right fielder, Atsunori Inaba, who missed an ordinary foul ball in the outfield (Hankyoreh, 21 Aug. 2008: 26).

Both the U.S., the Champion of 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, and Japan, the Champion of 2006 World Baseball Classic…mistook the out-count. Did they intend to lose in this ridiculous play? … Japan’s pitching was dull, and it led to the suspicious defeat (Sports Seoul, 21 Aug. 2008: 4).

Thus, progressive newspapers described the Olympic baseball quarter-final match between the U.S. and Japan, as ‘a shocking play out to lose’ with ‘preposterous mistakes’ based on a weak performance that aimed at competing with the R.O.K. team in the semi-final. Based on this, the R.O.K.’s victory over Japan was over-celebrated as reported in Sports Seoul arguing that ‘it is OK to forget the neutrality of journalists at the moment we beat Japan again’ (22 Aug 2008: 4). The R.O.K. team’s joy at defeating the Japanese team echoed the reporting of the 2000 Olympic baseball tournament between the R.O.K. and Japan when it was claimed that ‘beating the Japanese team made the R.O.K. team’s manager happier than earning a gold medal’ (Chosun Ilbo, 28 Sep. 2000, in Cho, 2009, p. 359). In light of this, anti-Japanese sentiments and South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan tended to be excessively expressed in progressive newspapers. The R.O.K.’s nationalistic and anti-Japanese
sentiments were manifested in the mediated coverage of the Japanese team’s defeat with the use of extremely dramatic and sarcastic expressions. Take the following examples:

Japan’s team, which chose the R.O.K.’s team as its opponent for the semi-final, dropped its head (*Chosun Ilbo*, 23 Aug. 2008: 1).

The R.O.K.’s team remained undefeated throughout the Olympic baseball matches and wounded the pride of Japan’s team, which crumbled unmanageably when the balance was broken (*Hankyoreh*, 23 Aug. 2008: 5).

Japan’s baseball, the so-called best in Asia, was severely beaten by South Korean-style ‘doenjang’ basebal and suffered the humiliation of missing a medal (*Hankyoreh*, 26 Aug. 2008: 23).

Japanese telecasters’ shoulders sagged while breathing a sigh, when Japan bowed its knee to the R.O.K. The pain in their seething minds seemed to be felt (*Sports Seoul*, 22 August 2008: 4, italics added).

The reports criticised the Japanese team’s strategy of choosing the R.O.K.’s team as its opponent for the semi-final and dramatised the national team’s victory, while under-representing the Japanese team’s pride and over-representing its emotional pain. The symbolic description of the R.O.K. team’s performance as ‘South Korean-style doenjang baseball’ was likely to express national pride based on national identity, sovereignty, indigenous traditions and locality. Nationalistic sentiments were also evident in the mediated comparison between the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, and Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, in terms of personality, sporting manner and strategy. The evaluation was based on the Eastern Confucian values and virtues of

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11 The term ‘deonjang’ means South Korean soybean paste, which is distinctive from Japanese soybean paste, miso. Therefore, deonjang signifies South Korean national identity.
being modest and ‘tolerance’ and ‘politeness’ as part of the national character (Crolley and Hand, 2006, p. 190). Two reports highlight the issues involved:

There is a respectful victory and a hateful victory. The difference between them is dependent on whether or not a person is modest. The R.O.K.’s team won in a modest manner while, Japan’s team lost in an arrogant manner (Chosun Ilbo, 27 Aug. 2008: 31).

After the R.O.K.’s team defeated Japan’s team, the print coverage reported that ‘Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, no longer had the look of a hot-blooded man’. When Hosino was admitting that ‘we shall have to recognise the R.O.K. as a strong team next time and not say the R.O.K. is weaker than Japan from now’, calling the R.O.K.’s team as weak was just what Hosino had been doing throughout the Olympic baseball matches … The indiscreet comments and warning against the R.O.K.’s team that Hosino made seemed rather uncomfortable (Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 4; Ilgan Sports, 23 Aug. 2008: 3, italics added).

Here, the Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, was criticised as ‘arrogant’ and ‘indiscreet’ in terms of personality and sporting manner, while the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, was acclaimed as ‘modest’ (Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 4; 27 Aug. 2008: 31; Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 6). This can be found in the R.O.K. manager Kim’s reply:

I do not think that we defeated Japan’s team, because we are much stronger than them … I think we could achieve the medal, because luck followed us in the game that a team must be disappointed … As a person who is engaged in the baseball field, Hosino is one of managers whom I respect (Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 4; Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 4).

The report portrayed the R.O.K. manager Kim as modest and moral in a positive manner, based on the Eastern Confucian virtues of being modest and tolerance and politeness as part of the national character. The report accompanied a picture, showing the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, holding his hat in his left hand when shaking hands with Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, with a smile after the semi-final
match (Figure 5-8). Accordingly, in a reflection of East Asian and South Korean sporting cultures, Kim was portrayed as one with ‘good’ manners while the mainstream newspapers criticised Senichi, which was still wearing a hat and shaking hands with Kim, as lacking sporting manners or etiquette (Chosun Ilbo, 23 August 2008: 3-4; Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 4). The photograph conveyed the superiority of the R.O.K. manager Kim over Japan’s manager Senichi in terms of sporting manners and etiquette (Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 4). The critique on the action of Senichi was also evident in the Japanese media coverage. With reference to the words found on the Japanese web site, Yahoo Japan, which said that ‘Hosino also lost in terms of sporting manners’, Chosun Ilbo printed the photograph on the next page and, by doing so, portrayed Japan’s manager in a negative manner (23 Aug. 2008: 3). Therefore, even though the mediated action of shaking hands with each other indicated a mood of friendship, the notion of anti-Japanese sentiments was implied in the photograph. Thus, Japan’s manager was stigmatised as the outsider group or ‘inferior’ than the R.O.K. manager in terms of sporting manners and etiquette by using ‘blame-gossip’ technique (Elias, 1994, p. xvi)

Figure 5-8. The Media Portrait of the Olympic Baseball Tournament Semi-final between the R.O.K. and Japan: The R.O.K. and Japanese Managers Shake Hands with Each Other (Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 3).
The mainstream newspapers praised the R.O.K. manager’s modest personality and courteous manners. In this regard, the media portrayals personalised the R.O.K. manager, Kyung-moon Kim, as ‘the hero of heroes, who lead twenty-four young lions’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 25 Aug. 2008: 3). The achievements of Kim and his players were portrayed as ‘the miracle of team Korea’, ‘which was attained by everyone including baseball players, fans and citizens’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 28 Aug. 2008: 4, italics added). In the same fashion, *Hankyoreh* stressed both the ‘cohesive power of players’ and the ‘unique strategy of the R.O.K.’s manager Kim’, and that ‘Japan’s arrogant baseball was defeated by the R.O.K.’s strong trust and faith between the R.O.K. ‘s manager and players in its baseball’ (23 Aug. 2008: 4, 5, italics added). Young-min Joo, from SBS, depicted the R.O.K.’s victory over Japan as ‘the reward of strong faith’ (SBS, 17 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament). Therefore, the R.O.K.’s team and its achievements were praised in terms such as ‘the manager’s extraordinary and unique strategy and his strong trust and faith in his players’ (*Hankyoreh*, 23 Aug. 2008: 5; *Ilgan Sports*, 25 Aug. 2008: 3; *Sports Seoul*, 25 Aug. 2008: 1; SBS, 17 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament). Meanwhile, Japanese manager Hosino Senichi’s strategy was criticised in reports that ‘Hosino showed weaknesses in his strategy twice by making either too late or too hasty decisions in the R.O.K.-Japan baseball match’ (*Chosun Ilbo*, 23 Aug. 2008: 4) and ‘Hosino immediately changed a pitcher to the other when his pitching seem[ed] unstable’ (*Hankyoreh*, 23 Aug. 2008: 5). Thus, the national media portrayed the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, as the established group or superior to the Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi in terms of personality, manner and strategy, while Senichi was stigmatised as belonging to the outsider group.
according to those criteria. The reporting style implied both the R.O.K.’s nationalistic fervour and also anti-Japanese sentiments.

Overall, media coverage described Hosino Senichi, and his team of ‘Hosino Japan’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 16 Aug. 2008: 4; *Sports Seoul*, 23 Aug. 2008: 2) in a sarcastic, cynical and ironic manner. In terms of sporting manner, etiquette, morality, modesty, teamwork and the manager’s strategy and trust in his players, national media coverage praised the R.O.K.’s team as superior to Japan’s team. Those criteria reflected the Eastern Confucian virtues of being modest and humble and tolerance and politeness as part of the national character. Media portrayals of the R.O.K. victory over Japan expressed the R.O.K.’s themes of national pride and nationalism *vis-à-vis* Japan. The national pride and nationalistic sentiments were largely observable in conservative newspapers and telecasted coverage. Their interplay with anti-Japanese sentiments was more overtly manifested in progressive newspapers than in the conservative newspapers and television coverage.

**5-4-3. R.O.K. Baseball: From the Second in Asia to the Best in the World**

The R.O.K.’s media coverage tended to highlight that its national team would remain undefeated throughout Olympics. The R.O.K.’s baseball was described as ‘masterpiece baseball that surprised the world’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 25 Aug. 2008: 4) and that ‘moved from second in Asia … to the best in the world’ (*Sports Seoul*, 25 Aug. 2008: 2). The following reports highlight this coverage:

The central axis of world baseball has been moved. The R.O.K.’s baseball team, which won a gold medal through straight victories in the nine games, is no longer the second in Asia. The R.O.K.’s team ... achieved successive straight victories against Japan’s team, which called itself the leader of Asian
In the scene where we surpassed Japan, the pride and status of South Korean baseball was upgraded one step higher (Ilgan Sports, 23 Aug 2008: 2).


It was the dramatic match showing that we are the best in Asia (KBS, 23 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final).

The R.O.K. team’s victory was portrayed as an event, which moved ‘the central axis of world baseball’ (Chosun Ilbo, 25 Aug. 2008: 4), and that ‘the world gave credit to’ the R.O.K. baseball (Sports Seoul, 25 Aug. 2008: 4). The media portrayals of R.O.K. team’s victory over Japanese team implied that the balance of power shifted toward South Korea, as the former colonised group, from Japan as its former ruler. Accordingly, the relation between the former established and outsider groups was subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament. Therefore, the match symbolised the hegemonic transformation between the R.O.K. and Japan. South Korean nationalism and national pride vis-à-vis Japan, which stemmed from surpassing Japan as the leading country in Asia, was overtly reflected in the conservative newspapers and KBS (Cho, 2009), while anti-Japanese sentiment was less visible in this case. That sentiment was evident in analysing expressions such as ‘the R.O.K. team is … no longer the second in Asia’ (Chosun Ilbo, 25 Aug. 2008: 4), ‘we surpassed Japan’ (Ilgan Sports, 23 Aug 2008: 2) and ‘we are the best in Asia’ (KBS, 23 Aug. 2008: Olympic baseball tournament semi-final).

Conservative sport-specific newspaper Ilgan Sports cited that the outpouring of anti-Japanese sentiments played a crucial role in stimulating the R.O.K. team to
become the best in the world (28 Aug 2008: 15). In this sense, Japan’s team acted as not only ‘an old enemy’ but also a well-intentioned rival or ally. There is one example of such coverage:

The R.O.K.’s baseball team … should have to compete with the team constantly to go forth into the world baseball league. We started learning how to play baseball from the U.S. but undertook to develop our performance when facing Japan’s team. Therefore, Japan’s baseball is both the R.O.K.’s enemy and its ally. This cooperation is essential to re-introduce the baseball game after its omission from the 2012 London Olympic Games (Ilgan Sports, 28 Aug. 2008: 15).

Therefore, Ilgan Sports represented Japan’s team as an ally when emphasising the need for cooperation with Japan ‘to re-introduce the baseball game after its omission from the 2012 London Olympic Games’ (28 Aug. 2008: 15). In emphasising the national character of Asian identity, Chosun Ilbo highlighted ‘the need for the kick-off and development of Northeast Asian baseball league’ (29 Aug. 2008: 30). Reports in the R.O.K.’s conservative newspapers expressed the latent notion of pan-Asian identity. Therefore, the thematic notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan, national pride and anti-Japanese sentiments was neither fixed nor stable but changeable and strongly evident in the R.O.K. media coverage. The conservative newspapers showed the interplay with the notion of pan-Asian identity in the context of the R.O.K.

5-5. Conclusion

This chapter has examined how the media coverage reflected the international relationships and contemporary political currents between the R.O.K. and two of its political allies, the U.S. in the West and Japan close by to the Northeast. Linked to
political and ideological relations between the R.O.K. and the U.S. and Japan, this chapter examined the conditions and shifts in the power relations between hegemonic and ideological forms such as the R.O.K.’s national pride, nationalism *vis-à-vis* the U.S. and Japan, pro-American and anti-American sentiments and anti-Japanese sentiments and pan-Asian identity in the context of the R.O.K.

Within the realm of global sport, national athletes and a nation’s allies often are treated as an established group and described in human terms such as ‘warm, fair and humane’ (Sabe *et al*., 1996, p. 18). Meanwhile, their rivals or foreign athletes are often stigmatised as outsiders and/or characterised in negative terms as ‘cheats, machine-like, inhuman and without feelings’ (Sabo *et al*., 1996, p. 18). This stigmatisation of outsiders showed ‘certain features in a wide variety of established-outsider figurations’ and has been manifested in the media coverage (Elias, 1994, p. xxv). Applying Elias’s theoretical concepts of personal pronouns and established and outsider figuration, this empirical research examines how the media coverage represented participants in the 2008 Olympic baseball Games as the established and outsider groups or ‘us’/’them’ along the line of multiple identity markers such as national identity, national character of Asian identity and race/ethnicity (Elias, 1994, p. xxxvii). Emphasis is given to examining the use of symbolic descriptions in terms of personality, athletic performance, abilities and achievements.

In analysing the photographs of the Olympic baseball matches between the R.O.K. and the U.S. and Japan, there are similarities and differences in the media portrayals that reflect South Korean nationalism *vis-à-vis* the U.S. and Japan. The media portrayals rarely expressed pro-American and pro-Japanese sentiments, but instead delivered the notion of South Korean nationalism *vis-à-vis* Japan more than
that of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. For example, the photographs of the match between the R.O.K. and U.S. teams conveyed the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalistic sentiments. However, the theme of anti-American sentiment and rivalry between the R.O.K. and the U.S. was rarely visible in mainstream newspapers such as Chosun Ilbo and Hankyoreh and only marginally evident in sport-specific newspapers such as Ilgan Sports and Sports Seoul. Meanwhile, the rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan and anti-Japanese sentiments was popularly manifested in all print coverage and overtly expressed in sport-specific newspapers. The media portraits reveal that Japan’s manager and team members were more stigmatised as significant others or outsiders than the U.S. manager and team members.

Examining the texts and comments in the media, the symbolic, respectful descriptions of the American team as the ‘head of the baseball family’ and the South Korean team in humble but significant terms as playing a ‘unique South Korean-style kickball’ expressed a mood of rivalry between the two nations and the impact of Americanisation within the R.O.K. The expression of a ‘unique’ style of South Korean ‘kickball’ highlighted the R.O.K. team’s competitive prestige, based on national identity, sovereignty and Confucian cultural virtues of being modest and humble in the R.O.K. When the national team defeated the American team, the media coverage portrayed this victory as defeating the head of the baseball family by a nation located at the sub-periphery. In this case, the South Korean media coverage tended to over-represent its national team as an established group or as superior to the American team. Meanwhile, the South Korean media portrayed Japan’s team as ‘the old enemy’, rival, or a group of outsiders that must lose to an established group. This symbolic description of Japan’s team can be attributed to the R.O.K.’s ethnicism and
nationalism and as a form of resistance to the Japanese rule that expressed a strong rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan (Lee, 2002).

The media representations of the national team’s victory over the U.S. and/or Japan implied a nationalistic meaning that the balance of power shifted toward South Korea, as the former colonial group and/or the occupied, from Japan as its former ruler and the U.S. as the occupier in the context of globalisation. Accordingly, the relations between the former established and outsider groups were subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament. The matches symbolised the hegemonic transformation in the power ratio and relations between the former established and outsider groups in a global and national nexus. Therefore, the South Korean media portrayed the R.O.K. team as an established group while American and Japanese teams were seen as outsiders.

The R.O.K. team was portrayed as highly qualified in terms of spiritual, psychological and ‘technological impetus’ such as high motivation, mobility and a collective form of power, such as team play (Guttmann, 1978). The R.O.K.’s victory over Japan was represented as the ‘miracle of team Korea’ in a collective form of team play, which was achieved by players, fans and ‘citizens’. A person’s ‘we-image and we-ideal’ of themselves as a member of Team Korea, which seized a chance of victory, shaped ‘a person’s self-image and self-ideal as the image and ideal of him- or herself as the unique person to which he or she refers as I’ (Elias, 1994, xliii). Therefore, a self image of a player, fan or a citizen was reflected in the notion of the we-image and we-ideal of Team Korea. The media, for example, described national players as valiant warriors, which did wonders for victory, in using the term ‘twenty-four young lions’ and their manager as ‘the hero of heroes, who lead twenty-four
young lions’ (Ilgan Sports, 25 Aug. 2008: 3). The self-images of citizens, fans, players and the manager were regarded as those ‘whose action[s] made and remade the national habitus anew’ and of being of assistance in constructing the image of a nation (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). Here, the link between the individual and the nation was ascribed to the sleeping memories, being organised by the emotional bonds between the manager, players and fans of sports teams and the nation (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). The sleeping memories and common symbols such as ‘team Korea’, which was made up of the manager, players, fans and citizens, reinforce the notion of I/we-relations and formulate ‘the focal point of a common belief system’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). Therefore, examining these habitus codes allows us to examine why South Korean integration at a national level runs ‘ahead of the degree of identification’ that the majority of readers and viewers feel toward the notion of being South Korean. During (2005) stated that a specific political or social movement like the Olympic Games tends to reinforce a specific identity. In this context, national identity was reinforced and influenced by increasing the intensity of group solidarity and fulfilling claims to rights (During, 2005). The notion of I/we relations, which saw the individual as ‘being South Korean’, can be challenged to explain the degree of identification that many people have about being Asian. This discourse will be detailed in Chapter Six. Using the R.O.K.’s manager, players and fans as the I/we-image, it was possible to explore the notion of us/them - the outsiders - as applying to the U.S. and Japanese teams (Maguire, 1999, pp. 183, 186).

In consideration of ‘the figurations formed by two or three groups’ such as the R.O.K., American and Japanese teams or, ‘the nature of their interdependence’ (Elias, 1994, p. xx), the stigmatisation of outsiders varied according to the use of terms,
expressions and visual settings. The U.S. team’s competitive prestige, for example, was trivialised and stigmatised with an emphasis on its individual form of power such as batting power. The media representation reflected the interplay between the hegemonic content of R.O.K. nationalism and the ideological content of the racial stereotypes of the Western and Northeast Asian athletes in the context of the R.O.K. Meanwhile, the team of Hosino Japan was described as a group of ‘inferiority’ in a sarcastic, cynical and ironic manner (Elias, 1994, p. xxiv). This media stigmatisation of Japan’s team as outsiders implied South Korean nationalism against Japan and anti-Japanese sentiments in the R.O.K. The stigmatisation of outsiders was not due to their qualities as individual people, but ‘because they were members of a group which an established group considered collectively as different from, and as inferior to, their own group’ according to ‘the nature of interdependence’ between two or three groups (Elias, 1994, p. xx).

According to Elias, ‘the actual concepts used by established groups as a means of stigmatisation can vary according to the social characteristics and traditions of the groups concerned’ (1994, xxiv and xxv). For example, there was the difference in the use of names of the managers from the R.O.K. and Japan as a means of stigmatising outsiders. The use of R.O.K. manager Kyung-moon Kim’s full name portrayed him as an established group. Meanwhile, the media only used the first name of Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, displaying him as a subordinate, who was ‘referred to more informally by [his first name]’ in the media coverage (Koivula, 1999, p. 601). Therefore, the media coverage portrayed Japan’s manager as one of the ‘low-powered outsiders’ by using his first name only (Elias, 1994, p. xxx).
The stigmatisation of Japan’s manager and the team as Hosino Japan was also evident in terms of their competitive prestige in the media (Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 4; Sports Seoul, 23 Aug. 2008: 2). The media coverage praised the R.O.K.’s manager in terms of his modest personality, courteous manners and extraordinary strategy based on his strong trust and faith in his players. Meanwhile, Japan’s manager was criticised for the use of arrogant and indiscreet words, hasty strategic decision-making when changing his players and the lack of sporting manner and etiquette in wearing a hat and shaking hands with South Korea’s manager. This stigmatisation reflected the Eastern Confucian cultural virtues of being modest, indigenous traditions and locality, and tolerance and politeness as part of the national character (Crolley and Hand, 2006, p. 190). Therefore, the media tended to ‘praise’ the R.O.K. manager as one with ‘superior human characteristics’ while Japan’s manager tended to be stigmatised in terms of ‘inferiority’ by using the ‘blame-gossip’ technique (Elias, 1994, p. xvi, xxiv).

In applying ‘a universal regularity of any established-outsider figuration’, the R.O.K.’s manager and team members were regarded as members of the established group and modelled as ‘good’, ‘nomic’ and ‘best’ (Elias, 1994, p. xix). On the other hand, Japan’s manager and team members were characterised as outsiders with terms such as ‘bad’, ‘anomic’ and ‘worst’, inferior to the established group in the South Korean media (Elias, 1994, p. xix). In the same fashion, the texts and visual settings of the Japanese team’s emotional disappointment at its defeat depicted a national team as an established group with ‘superior power as a sign of their higher human value’ than Japan’s team as a group of outsiders that ‘emotionally experienced their power inferiority’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxvi and xxvii). This ‘pars pro toto distortion in opposite directions enables an established group to prove their point to themselves as well as to
others’ with evidence showing that ‘one’s group is ‘good’ and the other is ‘bad’’ (Elias, 1994, p. xix), as a means of maintaining the R.O.K. team’s superiority and stigmatising the Japan team as an outsider, or ‘them’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxi). Here, the use of pronoun pairs of us/them emerges out of the R.O.K.’s history and post-colonial cultural continuity and change (Elias, 1994, p. xxxvii).

This stigmatisation of outsiders was evident in a wide variety of media. For example, in media representations of the events surrounding the umpire’s decision in favour of the American athlete and team at the 2000 Sydney and 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games, the umpires were stigmatised as outsiders or ‘suspected offenders’, politically powerful but ‘cunning’ and ‘self-partial’ (Elias, 1994, p. xvi; Robertson, 2003, p. 5). Media representations revealed latent anti-American sentiments in the South Korean context that stemmed from the recent political conflicts between the R.O.K. and the U.S., and the U.S.’s military occupation of South Korea. In the same fashion, media representations of the R.O.K. victory over the U.S. highlighted the victory in terms of the hegemonic transformation between South Korea, as the occupied, and the U.S., as the occupier. Therefore, the victory over the occupier was popularly represented with an emphasis on the reversal in power relations between the R.O.K. and the U.S. at a specific sporting moment.

The texts and visual settings of the Japanese team’s emotional disappointment at its defeat depicted the team as a group of outsiders that ‘emotionally experienced’ their power inferiority’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxvi and xxvii). Media coverage portrayed its national team as an established group with ‘superior power as a sign of their higher human value’ (Elias, 1994, p. xxvi and xxvii). In other words, the media depicted the national team as having a higher human value than Japan’s team. The figurations that
formed between the R.O.K. and Japanese teams emerge out of the post-colonial cultural context that resists the past relation between the former colonised country and its former ruler (Oh, 2007).

In contrast, the conservative print coverage extended its attention to report the need for cooperation between the South Korean and Japanese teams for the start and development of a Northeast Asian baseball league. The reports portrayed the Japanese team as an ally and conveyed the latent notion of pan-Asian identity. Therefore, the media representation of national pride, nationalism vis-à-vis Japan, and anti-Japanese sentiments was neither fixed nor stable but changed to that of a new ideological content such as a pan-Asian identity in the context of the R.O.K. at a specific sporting moment. Here, the reporting style of ‘pars pro toto distortion in opposite directions’ was rarely seen in this case.

Overall, the R.O.K.’s team was portrayed as an established group, or ‘we’ while the television and print media portrayed the American and Japanese teams as a group of outsiders, ‘they’ or ‘significant others’ based on national identity. The reports overtly conveyed the hegemonic content of the R.O.K.’s national pride, nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan and its interplay with ideological content such as pro-American and anti-American sentiments, anti-Japanese sentiments, and pan-Asian identity. More specifically, the hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism and national pride vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan was evident in all the media coverage. Its interplay with anti-American and anti-Japanese sentiments was more overtly manifested in progressive newspapers than in the conservative newspapers and telecasted media coverage. The notion of anti-Americanism was less obvious in the media during the 2008 Olympic Games than anti-Japanese sentiments. The ideological
content of racial/ethnic stereotypes and pan-Asian identity within the context of the R.O.K. could replace or be blended with the hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism in the national media coverage. The media representation of sporting events, particularly the Olympic baseball tournament, showed the interplay between South Korean nationalism and ideological content, such as regional identity of being Northeast Asian and racial/ethnic stereotypes. The hegemonic transformation in power relations between them was noticeable, along with the contextual conditions and changes in the R.O.K. The next chapter will examine the media production and representation of individual sporting events, especially Olympic swimming competitions.
CHAPTER SIX

THE MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF OLYMPIC SWIMMING MEDALLISTS

FROM THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA,

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND JAPAN

6-1. Introduction

This chapter is designed to examine the symbolic descriptions of the Olympic medallists from the U.S. and Japan, and, furthermore, from the West and Northeast Asian nations. In doing so, the analysis seeks to clarify the ways in which the South Korean media represented them along the lines of multi-layered identities such as national identity, race/ethnicity and regional identity. Therefore, this chapter will analyse the media representations of the Western, Northeast Asian, and national medallists in the Olympic swimming competitions in order to clarify the hegemonic and ideological contents and examine the ways in which those contents were blended with each other to create a new form of hegemonic transformation in the context of the R.O.K.

According to Maguire (1999), male sport, especially team sports such as soccer, rugby, and baseball, plays a pivotal role in the production and representation of national identity. The media production and representation of the Olympic baseball tournament, explored in depth in Chapter Five, reflected such national identity politics. In contrast, the media’s coverage of the Olympic swimming competitions, which are based on individual sports, reflected a unique and complex form of power relations between the hegemonic and ideological contents along the lines of national identity,
regional identity and racial stereotypes. The ramifications of this are supported by Maguire’s observations (1999).

Sports represent different individuals, communities, regions and nations, and a key feature of the global sport process is that it is used by different groups - those which are more established, as well as emergent or outsider group - to represent, maintain and/or challenge identities. But, in the context of globalization the role sport plays in identity politics has grown more complex (Maguire, 1999, p. 176).

In applying figurational concepts of pronoun pairs such as I/we, us/them, this chapter examines how media representations reflected ‘a part of an active construction of ‘fantasy group charisma’’ that was established in both the ‘invention of traditions’ and habitus codes that support the national character of Asian identity (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). This empirical research will examine the ways in which the national identity and national character of Northeast Asian nations was reflected in the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

This media discourse will be explored in-depth with reference to the contemporary political conditions and conflicts in South Korea. As mentioned in Chapter Five, President Myung-bak Lee’s Republic worked on developing a strategic alliance between the R.O.K. and the U.S. In addressing ‘the launching of the New Asia Initiative’ to expand economic, cultural and security relations in Asia (Kang, 2010, p. 3), President Myung-bak Lee’s administration aimed at ‘shaping [a] new regional governance in East Asia, and expanding Korea’s Asian diplomacy’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). Therefore, the notion of pan-Asian identity that treated Northeast Asian nations as allies was reinforced by the R.O.K.’s foreign policy. The U.S. was considered the R.O.K.’s official long-time ally, but the reinforcement of pan-Asian identity weakened pro-Western sentiments and promoted pan-Asian sentiments. The
racial stereotypes about the Western and Eastern athletes in the realm of global sporting events fuelled such Asian sentiments. Therefore, this chapter applies the theoretical frameworks of identity politics, hegemonic and ideological transformation, figurational concepts of personal pronouns and established and outsider figuration. Attention is given to examining how strongly the media representation of the 2008 Beijing Olympic swimming competition expressed the R.O.K.’s sense of nationalism, Asianism, the national character of Asian identity and racial stereotypes on White and Asian masculinity.

The first section will examine how the media portrayals of swimming medallists from the West, especially the U.S. and Northeast Asian nations, such as Japan and China, are configured. The second section will examine the symbolic descriptions applied to the South Korean and American medallists in the 2008 Olympic swimming events in terms of physical descriptors, athletic abilities, performance and achievements. The third section will examine how the media coverage described the national and Northeast Asian medallists in the swimming matches in terms of those criteria. The conclusion then follows.

6-2. The Media Portrayals of Olympic Swimming Competitions

By examining the photographs of the Olympic swimming matches, the R.O.K.’s newspapers reported 195 photographs of South Korean, American, Japanese and Chinese swimming medallists in total. Amongst the 195 photographs, 121 photographs covered Tae-hwan Park, a South Korean gold and silver medallist in the 400m and 200m freestyle competitions, 61 photographs showed the American gold medallist Michael Phelps in the eight swimming competitions, including the 200m
freestyle, and American bronze medallist, Peter Vanderkaay in the 400m freestyle competition. The remaining 14 photographs focused on reporting other Northeast Asian medallists. In detail, eight images showed Kitajima Kosuke, Japanese gold medallist in the 200m and 100m breaststroke races. The remaining five images covered Zige Liu, Chinese female gold medallist in the 200m butterfly stroke, and Lin Zhang, Chinese silver medallist in the 400m freestyle race (Figure 6-1, first diagram).

In analysing the second diagram in Figure 6-1, 42 photographs from *Hankyoreh*, 34 from *Sports Seoul*, 26 from *Ilgan Sports* and 19 from *Chosun Ilbo* reported the R.O.K.’s medallist. Therefore, the national medallist was portrayed more often in progressive newspapers, with 76 photographs compared to 45 photographs in conservative newspapers. Nineteen photographs in *Ilgan Sports* portrayed the American medallists while *Chosun Ilbo* printed 11 photographs. Visual images in the progressive newspapers - 15 photographs of *Hankyoreh* and 16 photographs of *Sports Seoul* - covered the American medallists. As for photographs of Japanese medallists, *Hankyoreh* reported on them the most while *Sports Seoul* printed the most photographs of Chinese medallists.
Looking at the 61 photographs of the American medallists in Figure 6-2, 28 photographs displayed Michael Phelps in a positive manner. Those photographs focused on portraying Phelps shouting with joy, wearing the gold medal with a kindly smile and shaking hands with the R.O.K.’s silver medallist Tae-hwan Park after the 200m freestyle race. Twenty-two photographs reported Michael Phelps’s interview and training scenes in a neutral manner. Meanwhile, nine photographs expressed a mood of rivalry between Park and Phelps in the 200m freestyle competition. Those photographs focused on the racial differences between the Western and Eastern athletes in terms of their physical frame, athletic abilities and historical records. Only one photograph displayed Park, wearing the gold medal, in the centre of photograph
while placing only half the face of an American bronze medallist, Peter Vanderkaay, in the periphery of the photograph (Sports Seoul, 18 Aug. 2008: 10). Therefore, the report tended to marginalise the image of Vanderkaay in a negative manner and display him as less important than the South Korean medallist. The visual setting expressed South Korean national pride and nationalistic sentiments.

Figure 6-2. Signifying the Media Portrayals of American Gold Medallists in the 2008 Olympic Swimming Matches

The media printed 13 photographs of Japanese and Chinese medallists in total (Figure 6-3), nine of which reported them in a positive manner. Those photographs covered the achievements of Japan’s breaststroke medallist, Kitajima Kosuke, and China’s butterfly-stroke medallist, Zige Liu, and the handshake between the South Korean medallist, Tae-hwan Park, and the Chinese medallist, Lin Zhang, in the 400m freestyle competition. Three photographs showed the swimming scenes of Kitajima Kosuke and Zige Liu in a neutral manner. In addition, a mood of rivalry between Tae-hwan Park and other Northeast Asian swimmers was rarely visible in the photographs. Only one photograph placed Park, wearing the gold medal and smiling, in the centre of photograph whilst displaying only half the face of China’s silver medallist, Lin
Zhang, without a smile in the periphery of the photograph (Sports Seoul, 18 Aug. 2008: 10). In displaying Lin in a negative manner, this report implied South Korean national pride and nationalism vis-à-vis China.

![Chart showing the number of images of Japan's and China's medallists in the Olympic swimming matches]

**Figure 6-3. Signifying the Media Portrayals of Northeast Asian Gold Medallists in the 2008 Olympic Swimming Matches**

Considering the positive images of Northeast Asian medallists in Figure 6-4, six images displayed Japan’s medallist while three showed those of China. The photographs tended to emphasise their national identity. More interestingly, unlike the reporting tendency for Japan’s baseball team reviewed in Chapter Five, Japan’s swimming medallist was seldom shown in a negative manner. The photographs of Olympic swimming races rarely expressed a mood of rivalry between South Korean and Japanese medallists, and instead generated a mood of friendship. Therefore, the photographs may have reflected a new notion of pan-Asian sentiments. The next section will examine the ways in which the R.O.K.’s print and telecasted media coverage embedded and mediated pan-Asian sentiments and the racial stereotypes of the Western and Eastern athletes in the cultural context of South Korea.
6-3. The Media Portrayals of the R.O.K. and the U.S. Medallists

This section is designed to examine how the South Korean media described the South Korean and American medallists in the 2008 Olympic swimming competitions. In the Olympic 200m men’s freestyle competition, South Korean athlete, Tae-hwan Park, won the silver and his American counterparts, Michael Phelps and Peter Vanderkaay, won the gold and the bronze respectively. The first section examines how the media coverage of the 200m men’s freestyle race represented the R.O.K.’s silver and U.S.’s gold and bronze medallists. Emphasis is given to the media production and representation of the interplay between national identity and racial stereotypes of the Western and Northeast Asian athletes. This section examines the symbolic descriptions applied to the R.O.K. and U.S. medallists in terms of physical descriptors, athletic abilities, performance and achievements. The second section explores how the media coverage portrayed American medallist Michael Phelps, who won eight gold medals in Olympic swimming competitions, in terms of those criteria.
6-3-1. The R.O.K. Medallist versus his U.S. Counterparts

In the 200m men’s freestyle swimming event, R.O.K. swimmer Tae-hwan Park competed with his Western counterparts and two American swimmers in particular. Park won the silver by ‘defeating the U.S. athlete Peter Vanderkaay by a narrow margin’, thereby ‘creating a new Asian record’ (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle). The American swimmer, Michael Phelps, took the gold. The media coverage often portrayed the athletic qualities and physical characteristics of the R.O.K.’s athlete, Park, in comparison with those of his American rivals, Vanderkaay and Phelps. For example, their heights and weights were measured and compared in the media coverage, saying, ‘Phelps’s height is 193cm and his weight is 91kg’ (Ilgan Sports, 18 Aug. 2008: 4), ‘Vanderkaay has a height of 193cm and weighs 95kg’ (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 2) and ‘Park’s height is 182cm and his weight is 74kg’ (Ilgan Sports, 18 Aug. 2008: 4). Reports highlighted Park’s natural disadvantage in terms of the size of his physical frame. More frequently, Park and Phelps were compared and contrasted in the media coverage along the lines of their physical characteristics, athletic qualities and historic records. The visual diagrams (Figure 6-5) and details are as follows:
As can be seen from Figure 6-5, *Chosun Ilbo* and *Sports Seoul* posted identical diagrams and featured the differences in the physical characteristics and training records between Park and Phelps in terms of height, weight, width of arms fully stretched, foot size, lung capacity and distance when swimming under water. The diagrams were explained in the reports as follows:

Michael Phelps has a relatively big physique with short legs, which is an ideal frame for swimming, and the lung capacity of 8,500cc and the distance when swimming under water is more than 10m while, the lung capacity of Park is about 7,000cc and the distance when swimming under water is 6m. Thus, Park’s statistics are far less than those of Phelps (*Chosun Ilbo*, 12 August 2008: 3).


Park has a relatively small build than Phelps (*Sports Seoul*, 12 Aug. 2008: 5).

The height of Tae-hwan Park is 183cm and his weight is 74kg. He is definitely the shortest among the top world swimmers … In comparing the width of arms
fully stretched and foot size … Phelps has a foot size of 350cm and the width of arms fully stretched of 201cm while, Park has a foot size of 270cm and the width of arms fully stretched of 196cm (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 2).

The diagrams and reports emphasised that Phelps has a bigger physique and lung capacity and higher and faster training records than Park. Ilgan Sports and KBS focused on the difference between the two swimmers’ historic athletic records (12 Aug. 2008: 200m men’s freestyle). KBS, in particular, used a visual scene in which Phelps raised his arms above his head with clenched fists and looked satisfied with his records while Park looked determined and partly raised his right arm with a clenched fist level with the bottom of his right ear. These images showed the rivalry between Park and Phelps. They were compared in terms of task-relevant issues such as the best record for the 200m freestyle, the first Olympic Games in which they competed, the number of Olympic medals they won and the swimming category in which they competed most frequently (Ilgan Sports, 12 Aug. 2008: 3). For example, the table from KBS showed that Phelps’s best record for the 200m freestyle was reduced from 1 minute 43.86 seconds to 1 minute 42.96 seconds and for Park from 1 minute 46.73 seconds to 1 minute 44.85 seconds through 2007 and 2008. In analysing those figures, Phelps broke the world record while Park broke the Asian record in the 200m men’s freestyle competitions in 2007 and 2008. The main focus was on the narrowing gap between their records, from 2.87 seconds in 2007 to 1.87 seconds in 2008. Sports Seoul reported that ‘the power, which stems from the height of Phelps, is his competitive advantage’ (12 Aug. 2008: 5). It was clear that the reporting style reflected the racial/ethnic stereotypes of Western white male athletes. Trivialising an athlete’s abilities and achievements by emphasising his natural athleticism is often
manifest in Western media coverage of black athletes; it was also noticeable in South
Korean media representation of white athletes (Billings and Eastman, 2002; 2003).

Meanwhile, even though Phelps defeated Park in the 200m men’s freestyle
competition, Park’s athletic abilities and performance were praised in the national
media coverage. The reporting tendency was evident in expressions such as ‘good
reflexes’, ‘speedy reaction at the start’, and his ‘rhythmic’, ‘smooth’ and ‘stable’
swimming stroke. For example:

The good reflexes and speedy reaction at the start of Tae-hwan Park could be
competitive enough with those of Michael Phelps … In terms of stroke-style,
Phelps uses his big physique and shows a powerful swimming style while Park,
who is shorter than his Western counterparts, shows a rhythmic swimming
style, which is smooth like a flow of water. The swimming sense and technique
of Tae-hwan Park outweighs those of Phelps and Park’s fast reaction at the
start was the best in the world (Chosun Ilbo, 12 Aug. 2008: 3, italics added).

Park makes up for his lack of power with his athletic abilities, which are based
on rhythmic sense and stable swimming style (Chosun Ilbo, 12 Aug. 2008: 22).

Park’s swimming is a masterpiece of swimming. Isn’t a swimming style, which
is smooth like a flow of water, great? (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m
freestyle event).

Ilgan Sports likened Phelps to ‘a large/medium car with a huge engine’ and Park
to ‘a strong/mighty small car’ (18 Aug. 2008: 4). Therefore, conservative newspapers
and KBS portrayed Park as having fewer physical advantages than Phelps, but a
superior swimming technique. In addition, Park’s performance was acclaimed in
terms of ‘the speed of development’, ‘increased endurance’ and ‘potential abilities to
succeed’ as ‘a short distance swimming racer’. Take the following as an example:

It is remarkable that a middle distance and marathon swimming racer, Tae-
hwan Park, won the silver in the 200m freestyle race. Park outweighs Phelps
in terms of the speed of development. The short-term and intensive training
assisted him to gain the medal achievement, because he had increased endurance in preparing for participation in the Olympic middle distance and marathon swimming competitions … Park showed his potential abilities to succeed as a short distance swimming racer (Chosun Ilbo, 13 Aug. 2008: 4).

Park’s athletic performance and abilities were seldom stigmatised but praised as being comparable with Phelps. Meanwhile, Park was portrayed as athletically superior to his American counterpart, Peter Vanderkaay. For example:

The reason why Tae-hwan Park was able to swim faster than Vanderkaay is based on Park’s strong spiritual/psychological power of concentration … and due to his personality and scientific training methods, he finally could beat Vanderkaay (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle, italics added).

Park’s victory over Vanderkaay was attributed to his personality, psychological concentration, and the ‘scientific training methods’ of the R.O.K.’s elite sporting system, which enhanced Park’s technical and athletic abilities and psychological concentration. The media representation of Park’s athletic performance and medal achievement varied across the media coverage of his achievement and that of his counterparts. Media coverage showed Park as an example of outstanding human achievements, having challenged his physical limitations by winning the silver medal when competing against his Western counterparts in the men’s 200m freestyle.

More interestingly, progressive newspapers and television coverage focused on Park’s silver medal as the medal achievement gained by an Asian male in the ‘Western male-dominated sporting field’, and thus breaking the boundary with ‘Eastern power’ and through ‘the Eastern Revolution’ (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 2, 3). Hence, Park’s victory was celebrated as ‘more precious than the gold’, because ‘it was achieved by Eastern power in challenging physical disadvantage’ (Hankyoreh, 13 Aug. 2008: 8). The details are as follows:
Min-sang Roh, the coach, said that ‘Park’s victory of the silver in the 200m men’s freestyle is more precious than the gold, because it was achieved by Eastern power … in challenging physical disadvantage’ … Park’s athletic performance was successful, because Park challenged his physical/natural limitations then beat the U.S.’s swimmer Vanderkaay and performed as competitively as Phelps (Hankyoreh. 13 Aug. 2008: 8, italics added).

The medal achievement was gained by a young Asian male in the 200m men’s freestyle, which had been the Western male-dominated sporting field … It was the first time that an Asian male athlete stood on the Olympic medal platform since the 1900 Paris Olympic Games. No Asian swimmer took a medal in this category. The medals were dominantly taken by athletes from the U.S., Australia and Europe … They were all the Westerners (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 2).

The medal achievements of the gold and the silver in the 200m and 400m freestyle can be called the Eastern Revolution. Japan may get surprised by Park’s victory of the silver in the 200m freestyle event (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 3).

Therefore, the men’s 200m freestyle event was portrayed as ‘the competition of the century between the East and the West’ (Hankyoreh, 12 Aug. 2008: 19). Television coverage portrayed Park as ‘a star in the world beyond the R.O.K.’ and Asia, claims that he rewrites ‘the history of Asian swimming’, based not only on his national identity but also on his regional identity (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic Games Men’s 200m freestyle; KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic Games Men’s 200m freestyle). For example:

It was not easy for Asian athletes to win in the men’s 200m freestyle. The athletes, who come from the U.S., Australia and Europe, have good physical frames and merely stood on the Olympic medal platform before because physical strength was required more than endurance to win in the short-distance swimming competitions. When Park won due to his inherent nature and the effects of scientific training, the Taiwanese media praised Park, as he rewrote the history of Asian swimming (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle).

It seems that Park has become popular in the world beyond Asia … We are
proud of Park, who is creating the history of the R.O.K.’s swimming again (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle).

Thus, progressive newspapers and television coverage portrayed Western athletes from the U.S., Australia and Europe as an enduring dominant group of winners while showing Park as a new Asian winner. In the Northeast Asian context, Park’s victory was described as one that might be impressive to other Northeast Asian nations, especially to the R.O.K.’s rival, Japan. Therefore, the media coverage focused on portraying a South Korean as an Asian male athlete’s entry into the core of world swimming, which had previously been dominated by Western male athletes. The media production and representation reflected the R.O.K.’s national pride, nationalism and national character as an Asian identity. In addition, the comment that ‘the Taiwanese media praised Park, as he rewrote the history of Asian swimming’ expressed the notion of a pan-Asian identity. Park’s medal achievement was not only celebrated as one by a South Korean athlete but also by an Asian athlete. The reporting discussed how Park proved that South Korean and Asian athletes have the potential to win medals in the men’s freestyle races (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 3; 18 Aug. 2008: 10; SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle). Take the following examples:

Park said that ‘I am very pleased to show that a South Korean athlete as well as an Asian athlete can achieve the medal’ (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 3).

Achieving the silver medal in the 200m men’s freestyle competition, Park proved the potential abilities of Asian athletes to win the medal in a short distance swimming race (Sports Seoul, 18 Aug. 2008: 10, italic added).

It was the first time that an Asian male athlete achieved the silver medal in the freestyle competition, which requires physical strengths. The foreign press reported that Tae-hwan Park confirmed the potential abilities of Asian athletes
to win the medals (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle).

Park’s competitive prestige was highlighted in reports that noted: ‘Phelps perceives Park as a rival’ (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle; KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle), and that ‘if Phelps is called the Olympic heroic father, Park would be named as the Olympic heroic son … Can he catch up with Phelps during the coming years? Park is the R.O.K.’s best blue-chip swimmer’ (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle). The media portrayals were meant to praise the athletic performance and achievements of successful Western and American athletes while stressing the potential of an athlete’s future development based on national identity and national character as an Asian identity.

Overall, the media coverage reflected both the R.O.K.’s sense of national pride and also racial stereotypes of Western and Asian athletes. Its interplay with the pan-Asian identity and national character of Asian identity was evident in the progressive newspapers and television coverage. In this sense, Park’s medal achievement was praised as one gained not only by a South Korean athlete but also by an Asian athlete while Western, American athletes were described as his rivals, or ‘them’. Amongst them, the gold medallist Phelps was portrayed as athletically superior to silver medallist Park, but bronze medallist Vanderkaay was stigmatised as athletically inferior to Park. More importantly, Park was praised as being competitive with Phelps in terms of athletic performance and abilities, but the media coverage underrepresented Phelps and Vanderkaay’s athletic abilities with an emphasis on their natural athleticism and the size of their physical frame. Therefore, Western, American athletes were portrayed as outsiders in the media, and the ways in which outsiders were stigmatised varied over coverage, time and situation. The next section will
examine how the media coverage praised or stigmatised Phelps with reference to the eight gold medals he won in the Olympic swimming events.

6-3-2. The U.S.’s Eight Gold Medallist: Admiration or Trivialisation?

Since Phelps won gold medals in subsequent events, media coverage no longer trivialised Phelps’s athletic performance by focusing on his natural athleticism and Western masculinity. Media coverage started praising Phelps’s athletic abilities and performance as ‘wonderful swimming’ and ‘the best swimming in the world’, achieved through Phelps’s ‘unwearied physical strengths, psychological power, and perfect pace-control’ (Hankyoreh, 14 Aug. 2008: 21, 24, 25; Ilgan Sports, 16 Aug. 2008: 5; 18 Aug. 2008: 5; 25 Aug. 2008: 10; Sports Seoul, 18 Aug. 2008: 6). Media coverage also started depicting Phelps as ‘the great athlete, who deserves to be recorded in the history of the Olympic Games’ (SBS, 15 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m individual medley final), ‘the most legendary Olympian, who keeps breaking the world records’ (Chosun Ilbo, 18 Aug. 2008: 2), ‘the Olympic hero’ and ‘the most remarkable hero among all Olympians’ (Hankyoreh, 25 Aug. 2008: 22). Therefore, Phelps was represented as ‘the most remarkable hero’ among all the Olympic athletes, including South Korean athletes. The reporting focused on Phelps’s successive victories giving him eight gold medals, the most to be won by an individual in the history of Olympic swimming.

In other words, the more gold medals Phelps won, the less his athletic abilities were naturalised or trivialised and the more his athletic performance and abilities were celebrated and acclaimed in the media coverage. This reporting style demonstrates how, compared with the less remarkable records of national athletes, the relatively
superior athletic performances and achievements of foreign athletes were over-represented or celebrated as heroic or epic achievements, albeit allegorically (Cho, 2009). In this way, successful foreign athletes were usually depicted not as national warriors but as ‘examples of great human achievement’ who challenged human limitations and broke world records (Cho, 2009, p. 353). This reporting tendency can be seen in the South Korean media representations of Jim Heinz, who broke the 10-second barrier for the 100m race, placing Heinz on the front pages of newspapers (Chosun Ilbo, 16 Oct. 1968; Donga Ilbo, 15 Oct. 1968, in Cho, 2009). Similarly, visual images of Phelps were frequently inserted in the print media coverage (Figure 6-6).

![Photographs in the mainstream newspapers highlighted Phelps’s athletic performance and celebration, while the sport-specific newspapers focused on his heroic looks when posing for photographs with his eight gold medals. Visual images portrayed Phelps’s athletic performance and achievements in a positive manner.](image)
In contrast, symbolic descriptions often objectified Phelps as a fish or a monster. The reporting tendency was evident in the symbolic descriptions such as ‘the phantom of swimming’, ‘the monster of swimming’ or ‘Phelfish’, a compound of Phelps’s name and ‘fish’ (*Chosun Ilbo*, 14 Aug. 2008: 24; *Ilgan Sports*, 18 Aug. 2008: 5; *Sports Seoul*, 21 Aug. 2008: 8). The nickname ‘Phelfish’, in particular, likened the precision of Phelps’s athletic performance to that of a fish, but it led to a ‘machine-like, inhuman’ image (Sabo *et al.*, 1996, p. 18). In short, the media portrayals of American gold medallist Michael Phelps rarely trivialised his performance and achievements but the symbolic descriptions objectified him as a superhuman, mechanical and ‘anomic minority’ in view of South Korean media sport consumers (Elias, 1994, p. xix).

6-4. Media Portrayals of Northeast Asian Medallists versus Western Medallists

This section will examine the symbolic descriptions applied to the national medallist and the medallists from Northeast Asian nations, including Japan and China. In the Olympic 400m men’s freestyle event, South Korean athlete Tae-hwan Park won the gold and China’s athlete, Lin Zhang, won the silver. The bronze was taken by the American swimmer Peter Vanderkaay. Japan’s medallist, Kitajima Kosuke, won two gold medals in the 100m and 200m men’s breaststroke competitions and China’s medallist, Zige Liu, won the gold in the 200m women’s butterfly competition. These achievements were articulated and mediated in the media coverage. In this regard, the media representations of the Northeast Asian swimming medallists are examined, along with their regional identity, race and national identity. This section explores how the media coverage paired the achievements of the South Korean 400m freestyle,
Japan’s 200m breaststroke and China’s 200m butterfly gold medallists during the 2008 Olympic swimming competitions with the notions of a pan-Asian identity, a national character with an Asian identity and its interplay with national identity. The media representation of Park’s victory over his Chinese and American counterparts at the 400m men’s freestyle competitions will be examined along with national identity as the most powerful identity marker.

South Korea’s gold medallist in the 400m freestyle, Tae-hwan Park, and Japan’s 200m breaststroke gold medallist, Kitajima Kosuke, and their athletic achievements were compared and articulated in the media portrayals along with their national identity and national character with an Asian identity. As can be seen in the mediated text of Chosun Ilbo, ‘Tae-hwan Park is in the R.O.K. while, Kitajima is in Japan’, the two athletes were described as ‘swimming heroes which resemble each other’ (12 Aug. 2008: 22, italics added). In the media, their athletic achievements were over-emphasised as examples of ‘great human achievement’ (Cho, 2009, p. 353) that challenged physical and natural limitations by ‘advanced swimming techniques and psychological concentration’ (Chosun Ilbo, 12 Aug. 2008: 22). For example:

Kitajima has a relatively small physique, in fact his height is 178cm and his weight is 73kg, but he became the top athlete in harmony with perfect swimming technique and balance. Kitajima … challenged his physical limitations by [using a] new swimming technique (Chosun Ilbo, 15 Aug. 2008: 21, italics added).

When Japan’s swimming athlete Kitajima Kosuke won two gold medals at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, we acclaimed and cheered Kitajima’s victory even though he is a Japanese athlete, because he is an excellent Eastern athlete. Kitajima achieved the gold even in a physically disadvantaged position. Now, we are proud of Park’s achievement. We also achieved a victory (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: women’s 200m freestyle competition, italics added).
The media portrayals demonstrated racial and ethnic stereotypes of Western or white athletes and Eastern or Asian athletes and their interplay with national identity and pan-Asian identity in the R.O.K. Therefore, Park and Kosuke were depicted as ‘two rising stars in Asia that surprised the world’ (*Chosun Ilbo*, 12 Aug. 2008: 22). This tendency was also evident in *Hankyoreh*, which represented Kosuke as ‘the star of the stars’ (15 Aug. 2008: 22). In addition, *Ilgan Sports* dramatised Kosuke’s victory by reporting that ‘Kitajima has a relatively small physique … but, he has a gift for swimming. He experienced a harsh slump but overcame his injury by his indomitable willpower’ (12 Aug. 2008: 8). When China’s female athlete, Zige Liu, won the gold in the 2008 Olympic Games women’s 200m butterfly, SBS added that ‘it is remarkable to recognise that Japan was not the only Northeast Asian nation, which competed with Western nations in the field of swimming … the R.O.K. and China joined this time’ (12 Aug. 2008: Olympic Games women’s 200m butterfly). In the same fashion, *Hankyoreh* praised the successes of Northeast Asian athletes as follows:

*The yellow hurricane* from three Northeast Asian countries including the R.O.K., Japan and China is surprising the world … Japan’s athlete, Kosuke, performed remarkably and won two gold medals in the 200m breaststroke and China’s athlete Liu got the gold in the 200m women’s butterfly. Park and China’s athlete, Lin Zhang, also took the gold and the silver in a row in the 400m men’s freestyle and achieved the brilliant feat of Asian swimming … China showed its potential abilities by achieving the medals throughout the 1988 Seoul Olympic and 1991 World swimming competitions … and reached to the level, which threatens the Western nations in the short distance swimming races … Japan lead by Kitajima entered in the list of powerful swimming nations (*Hankyoreh*, 15 Aug. 2008: 22, italics added).

The use of terms and expressions such as the ‘brilliant feat of Asian swimming’ and ‘yellow hurricane’ expressed the pan-Asian identity and its interplay with racial and ethnic stereotypes. Japanese and Chinese athletes and their achievements were positively portrayed in *Hankyoreh*, based on pan-Asian identity, and despite their
national identity. However, the symbolic description of China as a nation that ‘threatens the Western nations’ and Japan as one that ‘entered in the list of powerful swimming nations’ portrayed Western nations as significant others or rivals of Northeast Asian nations. This tendency was even more obvious in reports about Northeast Asian gold medallists, that ‘Asian otters wounded the pride of Western athletes’ (Hankyoreh, 12 Aug. 2008: 21). Likewise, Sport Seoul suggested a hegemonic transformation in power relations concerning the Western domination of world swimming:

Asian nations, which had stayed on the sub-/periphery since the late twentieth century, emerged at the core of the world throughout the 2008 Olympic swimming competitions (Sports Seoul, 18 Aug. 2008: 10).

The report celebrated ‘the sudden movement of Asian swimming from the sub-periphery to the core in the world’ and represented it as ‘a great advance of Asia in the swimming races’ (Sports Seoul, 18 Aug. 2008: 10; SBS, 10. Aug. 2008: Olympic Games men’s 400m freestyle). Therefore, the report explicitly expressed the hidden meaning of Asianism vis-à-vis the West in the context of the R.O.K. The reporting style was not new, but recently reinforced. Looking at Christopher Finlay and Xin Xin’s article in the Global Times (2010, p. 893), ‘Asians are Pride of Olympic Medals’, both China’s and Japan’s victories were viewed as ‘contributing to Pan-Asian success’ and suggested that ‘the whole of Asia should act together in order to compete with Europe and North America in sport’. The reporting linked China and Japan as part of a pan-Asian identity, ‘us’, with Europe and North America as ‘significant others’. The notion of a pan-Asian identity has previously been evident in the media representations of inter-continental sporting competitions (Lee and Maguire, 2009).
In portraying the achievements of South Korean and Japanese medallists, the notion of Asianism overlapped with the theme of South Korean nationalism and the interplay between the R.O.K.’s sense of nationalism and Asianism became evident in the media coverage of the 2008 Olympic swimming competitions. For example, Kosuke’s victory in the men’s 200m breaststroke was marginalised by reporting that the breaststroke competitions require relatively less power, strength and endurance than the freestyle competitions, while Park’s achievements in the men’s 400m and 200m freestyle competitions were portrayed as more difficult to achieve by an Asian athlete than Kosuke’s victory. For example:

It would be less difficult for Eastern athletes, who have relatively smaller physical frames than Western athletes, to achieve the medal in the breaststroke and butterfly competitions than in the freestyle competitions (Hankyoreh, 15 Aug. 2008: 22).

One of four heroes making 48,000,000 South Korean people excited, Tae-hwan Park achieved the gold in the 400m men's freestyle competitions and rose above the limitation of Asia. Although Japan's athlete Kitajima achieved two gold medals at the 2008 Olympic breaststroke competitions, the freestyle competitions were even more difficult for Eastern athletes to win the victory than the breaststroke and backstroke competitions. A Japanese swimming racer achieved the last gold medal amongst the medal achievements of Asian athletes at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games and then, Park’s victory led the revival of Asia after the lapse of seventy two years (Ilgan Sports, 25 Aug. 2008: 6, italics added).

Having few medal achievements of Asian athletes in the swimming races was due to the lack of their natural athleticism, physical characteristics and power in comparison with those of Western athletes. Top Asian swimming racers like Kitajima could win the victory in the breaststroke competitions, which require less energy consumption than the freestyle competitions. However, it was not easy for Eastern athletes to achieve the victory by swimming faster than American and Australian swimming racers with power and endurance in the freestyle and short distance backstroke competitions. However, Park's achievement in the 200m freestyle competitions, which emerged at first in Asia, proved the potential abilities of Asian athletes to win … even in the short distance freestyle competitions (Sports Seoul, 18 August 2008: 10).
The Easterner could not think of winning a victory in the freestyle competition. It was possible for the Easterner to win the gold in the breaststroke or other stroke-style. However, the R.O.K.’s Tae-hwan Park has done a great thing in the freestyle competition … Park wounded the pride of White athletes (KBS, 10 Aug. 2008: Olympic Games men’s 400m freestyle, italics added).

Therefore, the media coverage emphasised both Park’s victory as more difficult to achieve than Kitajima’s, as well as issues of national identity. The nationalistic sentiments could also be seen in the use of the R.O.K.’s athlete Tae-hwan Park’s full name whilst only using Japanese athlete Kitajima Kosuke’s first name. More importantly, the use of expressions such as ‘Park … rose above the limitation of Asia’, ‘Park’s victory led the revival of Asia’ explicitly conveyed the implicit meaning of hegemonic transformation in power relations between the R.O.K. and Japan. The expression ‘Park wounded the pride of White athletes’ expressed the notion of Asianism vis-à-vis the West. His victory was framed in terms of the hegemonic transformation of the Asian athletes’ entry into the world swimming, dominated by western males. The reports reflected the theme of national character and of Asian identity, Asianism vis-à-vis the West and its interplay with the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalistic sentiments that tended to highlight an ‘I’ image of a national medallist Park amongst the ‘we’ images of the Northeast Asian medallists against the ‘they’ images of Western athletes. Visual images (Figure 6-7) reinforced this commentary. For example:
In terms of visual metaphors, *Chosun Ilbo* published two photographs showing Kosuke, who raised his right arm over his head with a clenched fist and looked proud of his victory, and Liu with surprise at her record performance (15 Aug. 2008: 21). These two photographs of Kosuke and Liu were also repeated in *Hankyoreh* (15 Aug. 2008: 22). *Ilgan Sports* also printed a picture showing Park and Zhang talking to each other and shaking hands with a smile (11 Aug. 2008: 3). Those visual images showed the attention of the media coverage to Northeast Asian medallists.

More interestingly, *Hankyoreh* posted a picture of three Northeast Asian athletes and their national flags accompanied by a caption, ‘the representatives from the R.O.K., China and Japan’ (26 Aug 2008: 23). The visual image placed Park and the R.O.K.’s national flag, Tae-kuk-ki, in the centre of the photograph, Japan’s athlete Kosuke and Japan’s flag on the left, China’s table tennis athlete Marin and China’s flag on the right. Interestingly, the image shows the national flags as though they are connected with each other, without any boundaries, and with three Northeast Asian athletes standing shoulder to shoulder. In this sense, the notion of a pan-Asian identity
was symbolically emphasised in the visual image. In applying figurational concepts of pronoun pairs of I/we, us/them, this photograph implied ‘fantasy group charisma’ that was established in the ‘invention of traditions’ and ‘the habitus codes’ that support the national character of pan-Asian nations (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). However, the image of Park raising his arms above his head was placed in the centre of the photograph and posted in a slightly bigger size than that of other Asian athletes. This image conveyed the symbolic meaning of the R.O.K.’s superior performance and by doing so, exemplified the notion of the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalism vis-à-vis Japan and China and its interplay with pan-Asian identity.

Meanwhile, Sports Seoul posted an image that placed Park - wearing the gold medal and smiling - in the centre of the photograph while placing only half the face of Vanderkaay and that of Lin without a smile in the periphery of the photograph (Figure 6-8) (18 Aug. 2008: 10). The visual setting, emphasising the image of a national gold medallist with a great smile and marginalising the images of his American and Chinese rivals, overtly expresses the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalistic sentiments.

![Figure 6-8. The Print Media Portrayals of the R.O.K.’s, China’s and America’s Olympic Medallists (Sports Seoul, 18Aug. 2008: 10)](image)

This tendency was also evident in the television coverage:
The national hope, Tae-hwan Park, presented his nation with the first gold medal in the 400m men’s freestyle competitions in the swimming events of the R.O.K.’s history…The R.O.K.’s national flag, Tae-kuk-ki, was raised higher than China’s national flag, Oh-sung-hong-gi, and America’s national flag, Sung-jo-gi. It was the day for the R.O.K. (SBS, 10. Aug. 2008).

The R.O.K.’s national pride and patriotism were observable in the expressions, ‘Park presented his nation with the first gold medal’ and ‘the day for the R.O.K.’ The nationalistic sentiments vis-à-vis China and the U.S. became evident in the expression, ‘Tae-kuk-ki, was raised higher’ than the other national flags. In this sense, the symbolic description of China’s and America’s national flags tended to signify China and the U.S. as the R.O.K.’s ‘significant others’. Therefore, a ‘fantasy group charisma’ based on the ‘national character’ of pan-Asian nations including South Korea and China was relatively less expressed in this comment.

Overall, the media coverage celebrated the achievements of national and Northeast Asian medallists and exemplified the notion of hegemonic transformation between the East on the sub-periphery and the West in the core of the global sport. Therefore, they were highly likely to consider Northeast Asian medallists as ‘us’ based on national character of Asian identity and pan-Asian identity while viewing Western medallists as ‘them’ or ‘significant others’ with an emphasis on Asianism vis-à-vis the West and the racial stereotypes of Western athletes in the context of the R.O.K. However, the media production and representation of national medallists could be differentiated from those of Northeast Asian medallists based on national identity. The performance of national medallists, for example, tended to be represented as superior to that of other Northeast Asian and Western medallists and, by doing so, conveyed the notion of national pride and nationalistic sentiments. Therefore, the media coverage of the Olympic swimming competitions expressed the
interplay between hegemonic and ideological contents such as the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalism, as well as in the notions of pan-Asian sentiments, Asianism vis-à-vis the West and racial/ethnic stereotypes on White and Asian masculinity in the context of South Korea.

6-5. Conclusion

The collective notion of multiple identities possessed by an individual requires them to be socially recognised and represented by social institutions such as the media (During, 2005). With this in mind, this chapter examined how the media coverage represented the national medallist and medallists from the U.S., as representative of Western nations, and the Northeast Asian nations, including Japan and China, along the lines of their national identity, race, ethnicity and regional identity. The main focus of this chapter was examining how the media production and representation of the Olympic swimming competitions exemplified the notion of a pan-Asian identity, the national character of an Asian identity, Asianism vis-à-vis the West and racial stereotypes of Eastern and Western medallists along with their interplay with the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalism.

Analysis of the photographs of the Olympic swimming competitions reveals that media portrayals mainly tended to express the notion of pro-American and pan-Asian sentiments as well as national pride in the context of the R.O.K. In other words, the U.S. and Northeast Asian medallists were described mainly in a positive manner. Meanwhile, a mood of rivalry showed in the media representations of the U.S. medallist only. Only one photograph placed an R.O.K. medallist, standing on the Olympic medal platform, wearing the gold medal and smiling, in the centre of the
photograph whilst showing only half of the face of the Chinese silver medallist and the American bronze medallist on his left and right. The visual setting overtly showed the thematic notion of South Korean national pride and nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and China. Therefore, the media portrayals of individual sporting events such as the Olympic swimming competition described the medallists from Northeast Asian nations including Japan and China as ‘allies’ while portraying the U.S.’s medallists as ‘rivals’.

Examining the media portrayals of the R.O.K.’s athlete, Park, and the American athlete, Phelps, they tended to show a particular type of race relations that can distinguish an established group and an outsider group in terms of physical difference and natural athleticism. According to Elias, ‘what one calls ‘race relations’ are simply established outsider relationships of a particular type’ (1994, pp. xxix-xxx). In this case, the media coverage displayed a unique form of race relations that Phelps, as a Western or white athlete, was described as superior or advantageous in terms of physical frame and natural athleticism while the media representations stressed Park’s athletic superiority in terms of psychological and technical impetus. Those media representations were based on constructed notions of national identity. Park, a national athlete, was portrayed as an example of ‘great human achievement who challenged [his] physical disadvantage by a superior swimming technique and ‘perceived stronger commitment’’ (Billings and Eastman, 2002, p. 367), while Phelps’s athletic abilities in the men’s 200m freestyle were trivialised with an emphasis on his physical frame and natural athleticism. Unlike the Western media coverage, which characterised White athletes as hardworking and intelligent while stereotyping Black athletes as physically advantageous with emphasis upon their natural athleticism (Billings and Eastman,
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2002; 2003), the South Korean media coverage showed a unique form of race relations, which stereotyped White athletes with emphasis upon their physical advantages and natural athleticism.

The reporting tended to express a unique form of race relations in the context of the R.O.K. and exemplified the theme of nationalism and racial stereotypes of Western or white athletes in media portrayals. In addition, Park’s image tended to constitute the image of Asian nations. In portraying him as ‘a star in the world beyond the R.O.K.’ and Asia, who has rewritten ‘the history of Asian swimming’, the reports emphasised the potential of Asian athletes to win medals in the men’s freestyle competitions and, in so doing, tended to enhance the image of Asian nations in sport. The media representations reflected the R.O.K.’s sense of national pride, nationalism and national character as an Asian identity.

However, the media portrayals of Phelps’s successive victories no longer trivialised his athletic abilities. Instead, Phelps’s athletic performance and abilities were celebrated in the media coverage as ‘examples of great human achievement’ that challenged human limitations and broke world records (Cho, 2009, p. 353). However, the media representation sometimes objectified Phelps as an inhuman object by likening the precision of his performance to a machine. In emphasising the potential abilities of a national athlete’s future athletic development, a mood of rivalry was expressed in the media portrayals of Park and Phelps.

The foreign policy of President Myung-bak Lee’s Republic reflected the media production and representation of the Northeast Asian medallists’ achievements. The media coverage celebrated the victories of the R.O.K., Chinese and Japanese medallists and highlighted a ‘fantastic group charisma’ of ‘being Asian’ based on the
national character of Asian identity. The achievements of Northeast Asian athletes including a South Korean medallist, Park, a Japanese medallist, Kitajima Kosuke, and Chinese medallists, Zige Liu and Lin Zhang, were depicted as a ‘yellow hurricane from three Northeast Asian countries’ and as a ‘brilliant feat of Asian swimming’. They were praised as examples of the great human achievement that challenged physical disadvantages and the reports overtly expressed the notion of a pan-Asian identity. More interestingly, Park and Kosuke were often described as ‘heroes’ and ‘stars’ in Asia against their Western counterparts. In this regard, the notion of Asianism vis-à-vis the West was also observable in the media representations of the Northeast Asians Park and Kosuke as ‘us’ with the Western athletes as ‘significant others’. Here, the mediated symbols and sleeping memories reinforced the notion of the I/we relationship along with Asian identity (Maguire, 1999, p. 184).

In contrast, an individual’s identities never carry equal weight at a particular moment, because the nature of these identities continually shifts across time and place (During, 2005). As a good example, Park’s victory in the 400m freestyle competition was often portrayed as more important than Japanese and Chinese achievements based on national identity. Thus, the notion of I/we relations, which saw the individual as ‘being South Korean’, could be challenged to explain the degree of identification that many people have about being Asian. The report showed a nationalistic trend, in which a national identity supersedes other cultural identities at the Olympic Games (Lee and Maguire, 2009). However, the social meanings and effect of identities vary as the context changes so that a sophisticated research, examining the degree of difference and its shift in the power ratio between a national identity and other identity markers at a specific moment, place and situation, is required. According to Hall’s
theory of ‘unities in difference’ (1987, p. 45; 1992), the politics of process must focus upon not only what is shared and what is thwarted by any sort of monolithic culture but also what is different among the members of one identity. Thus, the significance of the degree of difference amongst Northeast Asian medallists who share the same Asian identity or racial characteristics could be observed based on national identity. Therefore, the ways in which the achievements of medallists from Northeast Asian nations, including the R.O.K., Japan and China, were represented could be varied, despite sharing an identical regional identity and race.

Overall, the media production and representation were meant to show the interplay between hegemonic and ideological contents such as the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalism, as well as in the notions of Asianism vis-à-vis the West and racial stereotypes in the context of the R.O.K. The power of hegemony is not a static form maintained by force or coercion but a subtle form of ideological dominance in social contexts (Birrell, 2000). In this sense, the identification of both recently-reinforced hegemonic contents and recently-weakened or newly-generated ideological contents and the interplay and changes in power relations between them was required in a sophisticated manner. The intensity of hegemonic content (e.g. sporting nationalism) weakens at a specific time and place so that the research should focus upon revealing the extent to and the way in which the hegemonic content is replaced by or blended with the newly-generated and/or recently-reinforced ideological contents such as pan-Asian sentiments, Asianism vis-à-vis the West and racial/ethnic stereotypes on White and Asian masculinity in the context of the R.O.K. For example, the increase in intensity of those ideological elements led to enhance the extent to which Western athletes were portrayed as ‘significant others’ or ‘them’ while, other
Northeast Asian athletes were described as ‘us’ in the media coverage of the 2008 Olympic swimming competitions. The reporting style suggested a claimed hegemonic transformation in the power ratio and relations concerning the shift from the Western domination of world swimming to the emulation between the Western and Northeast Asian nations with more equally-allocated power resources. The social phenomena of hegemonic transformation would be ascribed to the nature of hegemonic content, which is not constantly fixed but can be ‘transformed’ to another at a specific historical moment (Mouffe, 1981, p. 231). Therefore, it could be found that the R.O.K.’s cultural constituents, including hegemony, were produced, resisted, transformed and renewed all along in a social, political and cultural context, in which it had been created by the systematic relationships between power and ideologies (Gruneau, 1983). The twin process of increasing varieties – in terms of a number of ideological elements – and diminishing contrasts – in terms of antagonistic sentiments between nations or regions – could be observable in the media representations of the 2008 Olympic swimming competitions. The reporting tendencies of the South Korean media coverage in the twin process of increasing varieties and diminishing contrasts and between heterogenizing and homogenising trends in the context of globalisation will be mainly discussed in the Conclusion.
CONCLUSION

1. Introduction

This research began with efforts to answer a question about how contemporary sporting culture within the South Korean context was articulated and embedded in the media representations of global sport events. This examination was undertaken in defining South Korea as a divided, postcolonial and non-Western nation with indigenous traditions situated in Northeast Asia and which had experienced the impact of Westernisation and Americanisation as part of the globalisation process. Based on this, this thesis has focused upon examining significant similarities and differences in the way in which the reporting pattern in the national media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and its opening ceremony is articulated, reiterated, resisted and newly-emerged.

With reference to historical, political and socio-cultural dimensions, the focus of this thesis was to analyse the ways in which the media reflected the identity politics, power relations between the changing hegemonic and ideological elements and the variability of the boundaries dividing ‘us’ and/or ‘the established group’ from ‘others’ and/or ‘the outsider group’ within the context of South Korea. This thesis will draw a generalizable inference about the significant similarities and differences that are embedded in a unique South Korean sporting culture that is part of the globalisation process – ‘a homogenizing trend with differentiation’ (Maguire, 1994, p. 399).

This empirical research provided a general outline of the thematic notions embedded in the media contents by an initial use of a quantitative research paradigm.
In addition, the application of a qualitative research paradigm, especially an epistemological approach of hermeneutics and an ontological approach of constructionism, allowed the interpretation of the social meanings embedded in the media practices of the relations amongst the thematic notions and those changes in response to the contextual changes at a specific moment, place and situation. The next section summarises the data analysis undertaken in the earlier chapters. The third section will discuss micro and macro perspectives using the theoretical frameworks of identity politics, contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociological concepts. The fourth section will outline the strengths and limitations of this empirical research. The fifth section will suggest further research directions.

2. Summary of Findings

This thesis highlighted that media contents reflect not only the relation between a nation and other relevant nations in a transnational manner but also both the political and cultural perspectives of the nation (Lee, 2007; Richards, 2000; Rosie et al., 2004). The media representations of global sport events between South Korea and its geographical neighbours such as North Korea, Japan as well as the U.S., were a reflection of the contemporary foreign policies in that nation. In providing empirical evidence, the first section will summarise the findings from the data concerning the media representations of inter-Korean sporting issues and athletic results in the Games’ opening ceremony and the 50m pistol event. The second section will summarise the media representations of the Olympic baseball tournaments between South Korea, the U.S. and Japan with a focus upon the meanings embedded in the symbolic descriptions of the medallists and their achievements. The third section will illustrate
the significance embedded in the patterns of reporting the Olympic swimming medallists from South Korea, Japan and China in the Northeast Asia and the U.S. More specifically, the first section focuses upon identifying the reporting pattern along with the national identity of being South Korean and the ethnicity of being a Korean. Meanwhile, the second and third sections concentrate on revealing the implications of the interplay between multiple identity marks, such as national identity, the national character of being Asian, the regional identity of being Northeast Asian and racial stereotypes of ‘White’ and Asian male masculinity in the media. Each section pays attention to analysing both the symbolic descriptions of the Olympic delegates and athletes and their athletic results and the significance of the style and pattern of reporting, as compared to Western media coverage. By considering South Korea and Japan as ‘sub-peripheral’ nations, with the U.S. as the ‘core’, this thesis summarises the similarities and differences that might be generated in grouping nations into ‘core’, ‘semi-peripheral’ and ‘peripheral’ blocs (Houlihan, 1994, p. 364).

2-1. The Media Portrayals of the Opening Ceremony and 50m Pistol Event

The research reveals the way in which the inter-Korean ethnic bond and South Korean nationalism are embedded in the media representations of the opening ceremony and events of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, as a reflection of contemporary inter-Korean relations and the two countries’ foreign policies. The quantitative analysis of the media portraits revealed that the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis North Korea was dominantly expressed as the hegemonic content. Meanwhile, the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism remained largely unreported, in comparison with the media representations of the 2000 and 2004
Olympic Games, and/or often coincided with the hegemonic content. Unlike the political appeasement mood in the Korean peninsula due to President Dae-jung Kim’s 15th Republic’s ‘Sunshine Policy’ and President Moo-hyun Roh’s 16th Republic’s ‘Peace and Prosperity Policy’, the reports tended to reflect the inter-Korean foreign policy of President Myung-bak Lee’s administration, aiming at the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, as the focus of the multilateral six-party talks (Bajoria and Zissis, 2009). The media content mainly covered both politically controversial issues, including the interests and power relations of dominant groups such as the R.O.K.’s own state government; left-wing political parties; the national Olympic committees; the negotiation for the joint appearance of the two Korean teams in the opening ceremony and the athletic results of two Koreas’ participants in the Olympic 50m pistol event.

Interestingly, the reporting style and tendencies differed according to the conservative or progressive, public or commercial characteristics of the print and television media coverage. For example, the conservative mainstream newspaper Chosun Ilbo and the commercial televised coverage of SBS rarely showed the positive or negative connotations in reporting both disappointment at the failure to agree on a joint-march during the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games and the desire for a re-forging of the sporting union on the Korean Peninsula. Meanwhile, the conservative, sport-specific newspaper, Ilgan Sports, and the public, televised coverage of KBS explicitly revealed the nationalistic tension and ideological conflicts on the Korean peninsula through their hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis North Korea. In particular, this was evident in reporting the negotiation process for the joint appearance of the two Korean teams. The progressive
newspapers generated an impression of unitary Korean nationalism where it coincided with the R.O.K.’s nationalism vis-à-vis the D.P.R.K. This was expressed via the use of emotional, poetic, figurative and subjective expressions. The reporting style was based on praising the first successful joint-march of the two Koreas’ Olympic teams at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and noting the importance of the Olympic spirit of ‘reconciliation and peace’ (Hankyoreh, 8th Aug. 2008: 6) and ‘world peace and global fraternity’ (Sports Seoul, 8th Aug. 2008: 31). Therefore, the ideological content of the South Korean nationalism and a unitary Korean nationalism were implicitly observable in the conservative, mainstream newspaper, Chosun Ilbo, and the commercial television coverage of SBS. The notion of South Korean nationalism was overtly stated in the conservative, sport-specific newspapers, Ilgan Sports, and the public television coverage of KBS whilst the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism, which coincided with the notion of South Korean nationalism, was significant in the progressive newspapers. Based on this evidence, it is clear that the reporting style and tendency varied according to the characteristics of the print and television media coverage.

The media portrayals of the 50m pistol event showed the shift of social meaning and the effect that an identity marker generates as the context changes. For example, when the national athlete, Jong-oh Jin, won the gold and the D.P.R.K.’s athlete, Jong-su Kim, won the silver, the progressive newspapers and the KBS television coverage portrayed them as an ethnically-bonded team of so-called ‘brothers’. Meanwhile, regardless of the potential possibility of having both a (Northeast) Asian national character and a pan-Asian identity, the Chinese bronze medallist, Jong-liang Tan, was portrayed as a rival, who was defeated by the ‘Korean’ brothers. The reports
expressed the notion of a pan-Korean identity within the South Korean context. However, the South Korean gold medallist Jong-oh Jin’s victory over the North Korean medallist Jong-su Kim was generalised into a national one in the media. With the use of nationalistic symbolism such as the national flag ‘Tae-guk-ki’ and the national anthem ‘Ae-guk-ka’, nationalistic sentiments and national pride were obviously expressed (Maguire et al., 2002; Cho, 2009, p. 352).

The symbolic description of an ethnically bonded team of ‘brothers’ was no longer used in the media portrayals, which criticised both Jong-su Kim’s doping offence and the consequent deprivation of his medals and ‘the lack of preparation of the D.P.R.K.’s Olympic Committee’ for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in the context of a doping test (Hankyoreh, 16 Aug. 2008: 1). Instead, the notion of nationalistic sentiments and national pride tended to be emphasised, when reporting a national medallist’s performance and achievements, fair play and the thorough preparation of the R.O.K.’s Olympic Committee for the doping test. Therefore, the changing relation between hegemonic and ideological elements was observable in the South Korean media coverage before and after the announcement of the issue of the North Korean athlete Jong-su Kim’s positive doping test. Thus, the philosophy of Olympism in pursuit of ‘peace, fair play and friendship’ as a Western-oriented sporting ideology and the contemporary political conditions and ideological tension and conflicts in South Korea affected the media representations of inter-Korean sporting issues in the Games’ opening ceremony and the 50m pistol event (Washington Post, 14 February 1999, B01 in Drozdiak, 1999). Based on this, it was shown that both the social meanings and impact of identity markers and the ways in which the hegemonic and ideological elements are constituted and mediated, vary
according to the logic of the incident and the particular event at a particular time and/or place.

2-2. The Media Portrayals of Olympic Baseball Tournaments

The media portrayals of Olympic baseball tournaments between the R.O.K., the U.S. and Japan were a reflection of the international relations and contemporary political currents between the R.O.K. and two of its political allies, the U.S. and Japan. Initially examining the media portrayals of the match with the U.S. team in a quantitative manner, the notion of the R.O.K.’s national pride and nationalistic sentiments was dominantly expressed. In the consideration of the characteristics of the newspapers, the theme of anti-American sentiments and rivalry between the R.O.K. and the U.S. was rarely visible in mainstream conservative and progressive newspapers and only marginally evident in sport-specific newspapers. Pro-American sentiments were rarely expressed.

The qualitative analysis of the symbolic descriptions of the South Korean and U.S. teams and their athletic results helped interpret the interplay between hegemonic and ideological elements such as national pride, nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and pro-/anti-American sentiments in depth. The qualitative data highlighted the ways in which the indigenous traditions and locality, Eastern Confucian cultural virtues and values, and the contemporary political, socio-cultural conditions and changes in the international relation with the U.S. were evident in the media. For example, the U.S. team was depicted as the godfather of baseball by using the expression ‘the head of the baseball family’. The feature of the reporting was a reflection of pro-American sentiments and U.S. superiority and the impact of Americanisation within the South
Korean context. Meanwhile, the athletic performance of the R.O.K. team, being placed as a semi-peripheral nation, was depicted through the use of the modest and humble term ‘kickball’ in terms of the significance of traditional, cultural values such as Confucianism. The reporting style was evident in the conservative newspapers and televised coverage, which portrayed South Korean baseball as ‘playing neither an American-style nor a Japanese-style baseball but a unique South Korean-style … kickball’ (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2). The reporting style tended to emphasise its sovereign, competitive, and athletic prestige based on national identity and indigenous traditions within a South Korean context.

The symbolic description of the competitive prestige of each team tended to express the rivalry between the R.O.K. and U.S. teams, between the semi-peripheral and the core nations, and the hidden meaning of the racial stereotypes of Western and Northeast Asian athletes within a South Korean context. The conservative newspapers described the U.S. team’s competitive prestige as ‘physically powerful’ performances of individual players (Hankyoreh, 20 Aug. 2008: 22; Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 2). Meanwhile, the R.O.K. team was portrayed as highly qualified in terms of spiritual, psychological and ‘technological impetus’ such as high motivation, mobility and a collective form of power achieved by ‘veteran pitchers’, such as team play (Guttmann, 1978). Thus, the U.S. team’s athletic abilities tended to be marginalised and trivialised in emphasising each individual athlete’s natural athleticism and the media representations of the R.O.K. victory over the U.S. revealed the profound differences that divide states (Houlihan, 1994, p. 364), based on national pride and nationalistic sentiments. The media representations of the R.O.K. team’s performance in the victory over the U.S. tended to emphasise the power balance shifting toward South
Korea. That is, South Korea’s victory over the U.S. was reinterpreted as the victory of the semi-peripheral over the core based on national identity and considered as the newly-generated trend towards the increase of sporting successes of non-Western, postcolonial nations in the latest phase of sportisation processes.

The mediated R.O.K. team’s victory was overemphasised as a powerful team’s defeat or the sub-periphery’s victory over the core of world baseball and, in doing, was expressing a sense of rivalry, national pride and nationalistic sentiments in mainstream newspapers such as Chosun Ilbo and Hankyoreh. Meanwhile, sport-specific newspapers dramatized the American team’s loss by using nationalistic expressions such as ‘dropped its head’ and ‘bowed the knee’ to the R.O.K.’s team, overtly conveying the notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. (Ilgan Sports, 14 Aug. 2008: 2; Sports Seoul, 14 Aug. 2008: 4). The thematic notion of South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and the rivalry with/against the U.S. was relatively more evident in the progressive newspapers, especially in the sport-specific newspapers, than the conservative newspapers and televised media coverage. The media portrayals implied a nationalistic meaning that the power ratio between the U.S. as the occupier and R.O.K. as the occupied narrowed and the relation between the two was subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball competition. The meaning of the match tended to be framed in terms of the hegemonic transformation between the R.O.K. as the occupied and the U.S. as the occupier.

The notion of anti-American sentiments was also more evident in the progressive newspapers and SBS but, rarely observable in conservative newspapers and KBS. For example, Sports Seoul expressed anti-American sentiments by its use of symbolic, sarcastic and ironic expressions such as ‘the R.O.K. team hooked a giant fish’ and ‘the
downfall of the knight full of patriotic spirit’ (14 Aug. 2008: 4). The notion of anti-American sentiments was more explicit in doubting the ‘special reason to dispatch the R.O.K. team’s umpires’ and warning of the ‘possibilities of questioning the umpires’ decisions in favour of the U.S.’ in the 2008 Olympic baseball Games with the U.S. team (Sports Seoul, 12 Aug. 2008: 6). The reporting style of dramatization was not new but a reiteration of previous articles relating to the 2000 Sydney Olympic baseball affair and 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympics ice skating affair, which provoked an outpouring of anti-American sentiments in the R.O.K. based on national identity (Robertson, 2003).

Interestingly, there was a significant difference in the extent to which South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis the U.S. and/or Japan was embedded and articulated in the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic baseball tournaments. The crucial cause, which stimulated a mood of rivalry between the R.O.K. and Japan and anti-Japanese sentiments, could be found in the postcolonial, socio-cultural context of South Korea. Despite the start of a cultural exchange between the R.O.K. and Japan in the 1990s, the contemporary conflicts regarding the territorial dispute over Dokdo Island, the East Sea naming dispute, the dispute over Japanese history textbooks, Japan’s treatment of Korean comfort women and former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s repeated worship at the Yasukuni shrine tended to provoke anti-Japanese sentiments and a mood of rivalry with Japan (Kang, 2010, p. 4; Oh, 2007). As a reflection of this, the media portraits of Olympic baseball tournaments tended to express South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis Japan more explicitly than that towards the U.S. The theme of anti-Japanese sentiments and a mood of rivalry with Japan were manifested in progressive newspapers more than in conservative newspapers.
The notion of rivalry between South Korea and Japan was observable in comparing the symbolic descriptions of the two teams in terms of the manager’s name, personality and coaching strategy and the athletic performance and achievements of team members. For example, Japan’s team was described as the strongest rival ‘among all participants in the Olympic baseball matches’ in all print media coverage and public televised coverage of KBS (Chosun Ilbo, 20 Aug. 2008: 24). In terms of the symbolic descriptions of the name of each team’s manager, the media only used the first name of Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, whilst the R.O.K. manager, Kyung-moon Kim, was portrayed with the use of his full name. In this regard, Japan’s manager tended to be given a low status of ‘subordinate’ by being ‘referred to more informally by [his first name]’ in the media coverage (Koivula, 1999, p. 601).

The mediated comparison between the two managers was made in terms of personality, sporting manner and strategy. The evaluation was grounded on the indigenous traditions and locality, the Eastern Confucian values and the virtues of being modest and ‘tolerance’ and ‘politeness’ as part of the national character (Crolley and Hand, 2006, p. 190). The attitude of the R.O.K.’s manager holding his hat in his left hand when shaking hands with Japan’s manager with a smile after the semi-final match, was acclaimed as ‘modest’ and/or ‘good’ sporting manners and etiquette as well as a reflection of East Asian and South Korean sporting cultures (Chosun Ilbo, 23 Aug. 2008: 4; 27 Aug. 2008: 31; Hankyoreh, 23 Aug. 2008: 6). The South Korean manager’s ‘outstanding’ strategy, which represented the Team Korea’s victory as being based on the strong trust and faith in players, was praised by the national media.

In contrast, the Japanese manager was severally or ironically criticised with the use of negative terms such as ‘arrogant’, ‘indiscreet’ and ‘hasty’ in terms of his
personality, sporting manner and strategic decision-making when changing players. The reporting tendency was overtly evident in progressive and/or sport-specific newspapers. In addition to this, the visual images of the R.O.K. team and manager symbolised them as more committed, communicative and passionate than those of Japanese team and manager (*Hankyoreh*, 22 Aug. 2008: 21). The mainstream newspapers criticised the action of the Japanese manager, who was still wearing a hat when shaking hands with the South Korean manager, as lacking sporting manners or etiquette (*Chosun Ilbo*, 23 August 2008: 3, 4; *Hankyoreh*, 23 Aug. 2008: 4). The reports expressed anti-Japanese sentiments with the use of the ‘blame-gossip’ technique (Elias, 1994, p. xvi), which stigmatised the Japanese manager as being an outsider or an inferior to the South Korean manager according to the Eastern Confucian sporting virtues which follow the local indigenous traditions of modesty, politeness and tolerance, and which are claimed to be part of the South Korean national character. The symbolic description of the R.O.K. team’s performance as ‘South Korean-style doenjang baseball’ was also a reflection of the indigenous traditions and locality, the Eastern Confucian cultural virtues of being modest, and the national character in the R.O.K. and simultaneously expressed national pride based on national identity and sovereignty. The cultural elements were distinctive from Western sporting virtues and traditions such as Olympism. The reports set out to highlight the difference and uniqueness of Eastern Asian, South Korean sporting cultures in the context of globalisation.

The notion of nationalism and national pride was explicitly evident as the hegemonic content in the media portrayals of the athletic achievements of the R.O.K. manager and team members. For example, the R.O.K.’s victory over Japan was
described as the ‘miracle of team Korea’ in a collective form of team play, which was achieved by players, fans and ‘citizens’. The media depicted the R.O.K. team members as ‘twenty-four young lions’ and their manager as ‘the hero of heroes, who lead twenty-four young lions’ (Ilgan Sports, 25 Aug. 2008: 3). In this sense, national identity played a significant role in increasing the intensity of group solidarity and fulfilling claims to rights (During, 2005). More importantly, the media portrayals of R.O.K. team’s victory as an event, which moved ‘the central axis of world baseball’ (Chosun Ilbo, 25 Aug. 2008: 4), and that ‘the world gave credit to’ the R.O.K. baseball (Sports Seoul, 25 Aug. 2008: 4), implied that the balance of power shifted toward South Korea as the former colonised group from Japan as its former ruler in the context of globalisation. Accordingly, the relation between the former established and outsider groups was subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament. Therefore, the match symbolised the hegemonic transformation between the R.O.K. and Japan. Therefore, South Korean nationalism and national pride vis-à-vis Japan, which stemmed from surpassing Japan as the leading country in Northeast Asia, was overtly reflected in the conservative newspapers and KBS (Cho, 2009), while anti-Japanese sentiment was less visible in this case.

The media representations of national pride and nationalism vis-à-vis Japan tended to overlap with the new ideological content of a pan-Asian identity in the context of the R.O.K. at a specific sporting moment. For example, the conservative print coverage reported the need for cooperation between the South Korean and Japanese teams to start and develop a Northeast Asian baseball league. The reports were a reflection of ‘the launching of the New Asia Initiative’ of President Myung-bak Lee’s administration, aiming at ‘shaping [a] new regional governance in East Asia,
and expanding Korea’s Asian diplomacy’ (Kang, 2010, p. 3). Thus, the interplay between ideological elements - such as nationalistic sentiments, anti-Japanese sentiments and pan-Asian identity - tended to be observed along with the type of sport or game and sporting issues. An individual’s identities never carry equal weight at a particular moment, because the nature of these identities continually shifts across time and place (During, 2005), so that the form of the interplay between ideological elements varies over time, place and situation. The media representations of male team sports, such as the baseball tournament, overtly expressed such nationalistic sentiments as the hegemonic content, and which overlapped or was intertwined with subordinate ideological elements such as anti-Japanese sentiments and pan-Asian identity. Examining the media portrayals of male individual sports like swimming, however, the nationalistic sentiments were not only an over-arching hegemonic content. Instead, the media coverage of the Olympic swimming races paid drew relatively equal attention to not only nationalistic sentiments but also the character of being Asian, the regional identity of being Northeast Asian, and racial/ethnic stereotypes of White and Asian masculinity within the South Korean context. The details follow in the next section.

2-3. The Media Portrayals of Olympic Swimming Medallists

The analysis of media representations of national medallists, Western medallists from the U.S. and Northeast Asian medallists from Japan and China in the Olympic swimming competitions expressed the interplay between hegemonic and ideological elements within the South Korean context. The interplay between those elements varies in the scope of its nationalistic sentiments, pride, and character of being Asian,
having a pan-Asian identity and the racial/ethnic stereotypes of White and Asian masculinity. Most of the media portraits of national medallists and American, Japanese and Chinese medallists tended to be portrayed in a positive and/or neutral manner. Nine photographs out of twenty-eight focused on the rivalry between national and American medallists with an emphasis upon racial differences between them in terms of the size of their physical frame, athletic abilities and historical records. Meanwhile, unlike the reporting tendency regarding the Japanese baseball team reviewed in Chapter Five, a mood of rivalry between national medallists and other Northeast Asian medallists from Japan and China was rarely visible in the photographs. Instead, a mood of friendship and pan-Asian sentiments was often generated in the coverage of male sport, especially individual sports such as Olympic swimming competitions. However, in placing American, Japanese and/or Chinese medallists on the periphery of a photograph and a national medallist in the centre, the photograph was intended to express the notion of a pan-Asian identity and the national character of being Asian, which was overlapped with South Korean nationalistic sentiments.

In the reflection of a unique form of race relations within the South Korean context, a mood of rivalry between the West and the East and racial stereotypes of White and Asian masculinity were articulated in the media portrayals of the American and Asian medallists. For example, the media coverage tended to trivialise the athletic abilities of Phelps and Vanderkaay with an emphasis on their natural athleticism and the size of their physical frame. Meanwhile, the athletic abilities and performance of Park were described in terms of personality, psychological concentration and athletic skills. Park’s victory was overrepresented as one achieved by ‘Eastern power’ through
an ‘Eastern Revolution’ in challenging his physical limitations when competing against his Western counterparts in the men’s 200m freestyle (Sports Seoul, 13 Aug. 2008: 2-3). His athletic achievement was acclaimed as one gained not only by a South Korean athlete but also by an Asian athlete based on national identity, regional identity of being Asian and the racial/ethnic stereotypes of Western and Asian masculinity. By describing the men’s 200m freestyle as ‘the competition of the century between the East and the West’ (Hankyoreh, 12 Aug. 2008: 19), a mood of rivalry between the West and the East was generated within the South Korean context.

In this regard, the media coverage, especially in progressive newspapers and the television coverage, portrayed athletes from the U.S., Australia and Europe as an enduring, dominant, group of winners, the so-called traditional ‘established group’ while Park was portrayed as a new Asian winner. Park’s victory was reinterpreted as both an action of rewriting ‘the history of Asian swimming’ (SBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Olympic Games Men’s 200m freestyle; KBS, 12 Aug. 2008; Olympic Games Men’s 200m freestyle) and the entry of an Asian male athlete into the core of world swimming, hitherto dominated by Western male athletes.

However, the pro-American sentiments were implicitly evident in the media production and representations of Phelps’s victory over Park at the Olympic swimming competition. In the reports, Phelps was ‘personalized’ as the ‘heroic Olympic father’, whilst Park was personalised as the ‘heroic Olympic son’ and ‘the R.O.K.’s best blue-chip swimmer’ with emphasis upon the potential for his future athletic development (KBS, 12 Aug. 2008: Men’s 200m freestyle). The reporting style was reiterated in the media coverage of the Olympic baseball tournaments. The South Korean team was seen as being on ‘the sub-periphery of baseball’, ‘playing a unique
South Korean-style kickball’, whilst the American baseball team was ‘the head of the baseball family’. The reports represented Western, American male athletes and/or teams in a positive manner, as superior or the established group. Therefore, the interplay between national pride, newly-generated pan-Asian sentiments, Asianism vis-à-vis the West, racial/ethnic stereotypes of White and Asian masculinity and a mood of American superiority was significant in this case.

Unlike the reporting tendency of Phelps’s victory over Park in the men’s 200m freestyle, Phelps’s successive victories were no longer trivialised with an emphasis upon his natural athleticism. Instead, Phelps was personalised as ‘the most legendary Olympian, who keeps breaking the Olympic records’ (Chosun Ilbo, 18 Aug. 2008: 2) and ‘the most remarkable hero among all Olympians’ (Hankyoreh, 25 Aug. 2008: 22). His relatively superior athletic performances and achievements were celebrated as heroic and epic achievements, which challenged human limitations and broke world records (Cho, 2009, p. 353). Meanwhile, as a way of emphasising the precision of his performance, the reporting style of objectification was observed by likening Phelps to a ‘phantom’, a ‘monster’ and a newly-created nickname of ‘Phelfish’ (Chosun Ilbo, 14 Aug. 2008: 24; Ilgan Sports, 18 Aug. 2008: 5; Sports Seoul, 21 Aug. 2008: 8). Thus, the way in which a successful foreign athlete and his achievements were portrayed was by using the reporting style of personalisation, celebration and objectification (Whannel, 1992).

The athletes from Northeast Asian nations such as South Korea, Japan and China, and their athletic achievements were portrayed in a positive manner, based not only on national identity but also on a pan-Asian identity. For example, Park and a Japanese gold medallist, Kitajima Kosuke, were often described as ‘two rising stars in Asia that
surprised the world’ (*Chosun Ilbo*, 12 Aug. 2008: 22). Kosuke’s victory was even
dramatized as one achieved by overcoming a deep slump and injury with a talent and
‘indomitable willpower’ (*Ilgan Sports*, 12 Aug. 2008: 8). The reporting style, which
conveyed the pan-Asian sentiments, was distinctive from that reviewed in Chapter
Five, concerning the male Olympic team sports like the baseball tournament. The pan-
Asian sentiments increased in intensity so that the potential of Asianism *vis-à-vis* the
West became explicit in the media coverage, especially in progressive newspapers.
For example, the notion of Asianism became significant in the media portrayals such
as ‘the yellow hurricane … is surprising the world’ and ‘threatens the Western nations’
(*Hankyoreh*, 15 Aug. 2008: 22), and ‘Asian otters wounded the pride of Western

The racial/ethnic characteristics of the Western and Eastern athletes fuelled such
Asian sentiments and reinforced the mediated rivalry between them. The reports
expressed ‘a part of an active construction of fantasy group charisma’ of being Asian
that was established in both the ‘invention of traditions’ and habitus codes that support
the national character of Asian identity (Maguire, 1999, p. 183). In this regard, the
mediated symbols and ‘sleeping memories’, which refer to ‘the emotional bonds of
individuals with the nations they form with each other’ – like which ‘national sports
teams’ can have -, usually go unnoticed but, powerfully reinforced the notion of the
‘I/we’ relationship along with an Asian identity (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). A claimed
hegemonic transformation embedded in the media suggested the movement of Asian
athletes ‘from the sub-periphery, since the late twentieth century, to the core of world
In contrast, Park’s victory in the 400m freestyle competition tended to be portrayed as more important than Japanese and Chinese athletes’ victories, based on national identity. Thus, the notion of I/we relations, which saw the individual as ‘being Asian’, was often challenged by the degree of identification with many people recognising him as a South Korean. Even though athletes from Japan and China share this regional identity and the racial characteristics of being Asian with a national athlete, the mediated politics of the process still show the differences within an Asian identity, in applying Hall’s theory of ‘unities-in-difference’ (1987, p. 45; 1992). In other words, the significance of the degree of difference amongst Northeast Asian medallists who share the same Asian identity or racial characteristics could be observed based on national identity. Therefore, the ways in which the achievements of medallists from Northeast Asian nations, including the R.O.K., Japan and China, were represented could be varied, despite sharing an identical regional identity and race.

3. Theoretical Discussions

This thesis examines three dimensions which constitute, construct and reproduce the context of a society. The first dimension involved the examination of identity politics. A particular focus was given to examining the way in which social meanings, and the effect of multiple identities that national athletes and athletes from the U.S. and Northeast Asian nations such as North Korea, Japan and China have, share or lack, are represented in the South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games and its opening ceremony. The main consideration of this process was the significance of Hall’s ‘unities-in-difference’ as applied to what is shared or what is thwarted by any sort of monolithic culture as well as to what is different between members of one
identity (1987, p. 45: 1992). With reference to the concept of ‘hybridity’ - in which an identity is viewed as a practice whose meaning and effect are constantly mutating as its context changes (During, 2005, p. 151) - the implications of the change of social meaning and the effect of individuals’ multiple identities in the media representations could be examined.

The second dimension, based on the identity politics mentioned above, is designed to draw the identification of hegemonic and ideological elements in the context of South Korea. Particular attention was paid to clarifying the extent to, and the ways in which the hegemonic and ideological elements are intertwined with each other, and the contemporary conditions and changes in power relations between them are generated and re-marked as the context changes over time, place and situation – its ‘hegemonic transformation’. The dimension was examined with reference to the contemporary conditions and shifts in the historical, political, socio-cultural and ideological perspectives in South Korea. The main consideration of this approach was to examine the international relations and foreign policies between South Korea and its neighbour nations, such as the U.S. and North Korea, Japan and China.

In this regard, the twin processes of increasing varieties (e.g. in the ways in which the ideological contents are intertwined and/or merged to generate a particular power relation between hegemonic and ideological elements at a specific moment and place) and diminishing contrasts (e.g. in the way in which the emergence and/or reinforcement of newly-generated ideological elements such as a unitary Korean nationalism and a pan-Asian identity play a role in easing the conflicts and tension between two or three ideological contents such as national pride and nationalistic sentiments against North Korea and/or Japan) could be observed. The investigation of
the way in which these twin processes are embedded and underlined in the media production and representations of the Olympic Games and its opening ceremony could contribute to understanding a unique and distinctive trend in South Korea. That is, the preservation of indigenous traditions and culture, like Confucianism in Northeast Asian nations, and the impact of Americanization and Westernization, in the context of globalisation.

The media reports of the improved athletic achievements of Northeast Asian athletes at global sport events in the latest phase of the sportization process are worth considering. Even if it is hard to say that the sporting victory on the playing field has a significant impact on relations between nations (Houlihan, 1994; Maguire, 1999), the ‘profound differences’ that ‘will still divide states’ could influence an interdependency chain of figurations, constitutive of the relations between the core, semi-peripheral and the peripheral parts of the sporting world. Therefore, with an emphasis on the increase in national and Northeast Asian athletes’ sporting successes, a claimed hegemonic transformation of the movement of Northeast Asian sport from the semi-peripheral to the core region of world sport was evident in aspects of the national media coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games. The mediated suggestion of a hegemonic transformation deserves to be examined to understand a unique form of the globalization process within the context of South Korea – that is, a Northeast Asian, postcolonial, divided nation - with the impact of Americanization and Westernization. By applying the concept of established and outsider relations, it is possible to observe reports that highlighted the balance of power shifts toward the R.O.K. or Northeast Asian nations, which were previously viewed as outsider groups in the context of globalisation. The Western-oriented, traditional relations between established and
outsider groups can, by such media coverage, be subverted at a specific moment (Lee, 2007). Therefore, it can be proposed that the social relations can be controlled by more powerful groups in the short term but not in the long term. Rather, the balance of power is always in flux.

The interplay and/or blend between newly-generated ideological elements were observable in the media representations of the 50m pistol Games. The media portrayals of the sporting successes of Northeast Asian athletes from South Korea, North Korea and China not only expressed a unitary Korean nationalism but also pan-Asian sentiments in the R.O.K. based on the regional identity of being Asian and ethnicity. In other words, three athletes were referred to as ‘Asians’ based on the regional identity of being Asian in the South Korean cultural context. The notion of a unitary Korean nationalism was even more evident in the report that China’s bronze medallist, Jong-liang Tan, was represented as significant one of those, defeated by the ‘Korean brothers’, the R.O.K.’s gold medallist, Jong-oh Jin, and the D.P.R.K.’s silver medallist, Jong-su Kim. This report was not dissimilar to the media coverage of 2002 FIFA World Cup Finals held in South Korea and co-hosted with Japan. When South Korea faced Italy, South Korean football fans expressed the desire for a national team’s victory in disseminating the message of ‘Again 1966’, which recalled North Korea’s victory over Italy in 1966 (Lim, 2002; Lee and Maguire, 2009). The reports repeatedly signified the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism within the South Korean context. When the South Korean team reached the semi-finals of the 2002 FIFA World Cup, the media described its national team as ‘the Pride of Asia’ in an expression of a pan-Asian identity (Kim, 2002). The attempt was aimed to express a
unitary Korean nationalism, with emphasis on the group solidarity of being ‘Korean’ (Kim, 2002), and generating the national character of being Asian.

The media production and representation of the Beijing Olympics reflected the contemporary politics, international relations and foreign policy with geopolitical allies such as the U.S. and other Asian nations, also reflected a desire to develop the R.O.K-U.S. strategic alliance and build a new form of governance in East Asia. Therefore, the boundary in dividing nations into ‘themselves’ and/or ‘us’ and ‘significant others’ and/or ‘them’ was not only dependent upon national identity but also the regional identity of being (Northeast) Asian and the political ramifications at a specific moment, place and situation. The review of contemporary international relations, politics and foreign policy between nations provides a crucial content with which to understand the interdependence between the media sporting culture and the context of a nation or amongst nations from a sociological perspective.

Cultural studies explain identity politics with reference to two different sets of identities: the allied one with subordinated or marginal identities and another collaborated with parts of hegemonic identities as the form of rigidity and constraint (During, 2005). Sports act as ‘vehicles of identity, providing people with a sense of difference and a way of classifying themselves and others’, both latitudinally and hierarchically (MacClancy, 1996, p. 2). Eichberg (1984) argues that in defining Olympism as a form of colonialism, sport can be viewed as a site for resistance through the success or evolution of subcultural and other cultural developments. The ‘swifter, higher, stronger’ motto of the Olympic Games has been seen as marginalizing the assorted values and achievements esteemed in differing cultures. In addition, the reports on the R.O.K.-Japan competitions could be understood within the
The postcolonial, socio-cultural context of South Korea – especially with regard to the fact that Japan was represented as a major rival to South Korea since the 1968 Olympic Games (Cho, 2009). Victory over their former colonial rulers, like the R.O.K.’s victory over Japan, could be reinterpreted as a form of rite of passage. Based on this, the postcolonial context of the R.O.K. still reinforced not only national pride and nationalistic sentiments but also a mood of rivalry with Japan and anti-Japanese sentiments in the global sport competitions. Therefore, the Olympics become not only international but also a critical national event, politically and ideologically (Cho, 2009).

The third dimension is designed to explore the ways in which the boundaries of the personal pronouns of I, We and They images and the relations between established and the outsider groups vary over time, place and situation. The Olympic Games tend to reinforce a specific identity, like a national identity, which increases the intensity of group solidarity and fulfils claims to rights (During, 2005). By using nationalistic symbolism such as the national flag ‘Tae-guk-ki’ and the national anthem ‘Ae-guk-ka’ (Maguire et al., 2002; Cho, 2009, p. 352), the R.O.K.’s gold medallist, Jong-oh Jin’s victory in the Olympic 50m pistol event was generalised into a national one. Meanwhile, the media representations of team sports such as baseball represented national players as ‘twenty-four young lions’ and their manager as ‘the hero of heroes, who lead twenty-four young lions’ (Ilgan Sports, 25 Aug. 2008: 3). The victory of the R.O.K.’s baseball team over Japan was represented as the ‘miracle of team Korea’, in a collective form of team play, which was achieved by players, fans and ‘citizens’. In this sense, a person’s ‘we-image and we-ideal’ of themselves as a member of the ‘twenty-four young lions’, ‘heroes’ and/or ‘Team Korea’, which seized a chance of
victory, shaped ‘a person’s self-image and self-ideal as the image and ideal of him- or herself as the unique person to which he or she refers as I’ (Elias, 1994, xliii).

The self-image of a player, fan or a citizen was regarded as one ‘whose action[s] made and remade the national habitus anew’ and of being of assistance in constructing the image of a nation (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). Here, the link between the individual and the nation was ascribed to the sleeping memories being organised by the emotional bonds between the manager, players and fans of sports teams and the nation (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). The sleeping memories and common symbols such as ‘team Korea’, which consisted of the manager, players, fans and citizens, reinforce the notion of I/we-relations and formulate ‘the focal point of a common belief system’ (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). Therefore, examining these habitus codes reveals why South Korean integration at a national level runs ‘ahead of the degree of identification’ that the majority of readers and viewers feel toward the notion of being South Korean (Maguire, 1999, p. 184). Meanwhile, the notion of I/we relations, which viewed the individual as ‘being South Korean’, can be challenged to explicate the degree of identification that many people have with ‘being [Northeast] Asian’.

In the consideration of a unique form of race relations in the R.O.K., the racial/ethnic stereotypes of White and Asian athletes became crucial criteria in dividing into ‘We’ and ‘They’ groups. Western athletes were signified as significant others with a ‘They’ image with an emphasis upon natural athleticism and physical advantages whilst, the Asian athletes were depicted as having a ‘We’ image with fewer natural advantages but having psychological concentration and technical impetus. In this regard, the sporting successes of Asian athletes were represented as great human achievements, which challenged physical limitations and/or
disadvantages by psychological concentration and technical impetus based not only on national identity but also on the national character of Asian identity. In this light, a Western, American athlete, Michael Phelps, was signified as a member of the established group and so superior to Northeast Asian athletes, viewed as outsiders. However, the established and outsider relations are not ‘simplistic’, ‘unidirectional’, mono-causal relations derived from Western domination, Americanisation or global capitalism (Featherstone, 1990) but multidirectional relations, which are constitutive of interconnection and interdependency between/amongst nations in the context of globalisation (Lee, 2007). For example, the symbolic descriptions of both American baseball as the ‘head of the baseball family’ and South Korean baseball as playing a ‘unique South Korean-style kickball’ revealed that the American team was signified as the established group in the context of South Korea. Meanwhile, the mediated victory of the R.O.K. team over the American team suggested a claimed hegemonic transformation concerning the balance of power shifting towards the R.O.K. in the context of globalisation. The reporting tendency was also evident in the mediated victory over Japan’s team. The Japanese image shifted from a former colonial ruler as the established group to the strongest rival as one of outsiders in the postcolonial context of South Korea. A mood of rivalry between two nations was reinforced so that the mediated victory over Japan’s team implied that the power ratio between established and outsider groups had narrowed. In this sense, sport can be considered as a site for resistance through the evolution or success of subcultural and cultural developments in the context of globalisation (Eichberg, 1984).

The identification of the two ways in which various ideological contents are intertwined and overlapped and the extent to which a hegemonic or ideological
content supersedes other ideological contents at a particular time, place and situation, requires a sophisticated investigation. For example, the recognition of notions of a pan-Asian identity, and national character of being Northeast Asian, tends to be weakened by being intertwined and blended with nationalistic and anti-Japanese sentiments within the South Korean context. The emergence of a pan-Asian identity could be an example of ‘increasing varieties’ whilst its tendency to blend with nationalistic and anti-Japanese sentiments became an example of ‘diminishing contrasts’. This sociological logic challenges the concept of a homogenizing tendency whereby nationalism supersedes other ideological elements at global sport events. Maguire (1999) states that the interplay between the twin processes of increasing varieties and diminishing contrasts, between heterogenizing and homogenizing social tendencies varies in scope and intensity over time and place. For example, the national pride and nationalistic sentiments vis-à-vis Japan remain as hegemonic within the postcolonial context of South Korea and became apparent in the media production and representations of popular international male sports, especially team sports like the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament.

On the other hand, the intensity of nationalistic sentiments seemed to be weakened and blended with the newly-generated notion of pan-Asian sentiments with the impact of a political goal of building a new form of governance in East Asia. The tendency of a claimed hegemonic transformation between hegemonic and ideological contents was evident in the media coverage of international, male, individual sports like the Olympic swimming competition. That is, the previous hegemonic content of nationalisms became weakened and a new hegemonic content such as pan-Asian sentiments upswing due to its relational, relative and dynamic character (Gruneau,
In doing so, the power ratio between hegemonic nationalism and other ideological elements narrowed along with the type of male sport, especially team or individual sports, in the international sport competition. This case created a more equalized and balanced power ratio between hegemonic and ideological contents in the national media coverage. The intensity of a hegemonic and/or ideological element is always in a constant mutation with reference to political, socio-cultural ramifications so that the social meanings and effects of individuals’ identities change along with those characteristics of variability in scope and intensity. In this light, it could be seen that the ‘We’ image individuals and/or nations are not fixed but subtle and replaceable by the ‘They’ image and vice versa.

Regarding homogenising and differentiating tendencies, the interpretation of indigenous traditions and locality, the Eastern Confucian values and the virtues of modesty, ‘tolerance’ and ‘politeness’ as part of the national character (Crolley and Hand, 2006, p. 190) contributes to increasing varieties in a nation and, furthermore, in the globe and generating a homogenising trend with differentiation in globalisation. For example, the symbolic description of the R.O.K. team’s performance as ‘South Korean-style doenjang baseball’ reflected the indigenous traditions and locality, the Eastern Confucian cultural virtues of being modest and humble, and the national character of the R.O.K. The photograph, showing the R.O.K.’s manager, Kyung-moon Kim, holding his hat in his left hand when shaking hands with Japan’s manager, Hosino Senichi, with a smile after the semi-final match was portrayed as ‘good’ sporting manners and etiquette and as a reflection of the East Asian and South Korean sporting values of being modest and polite. Meanwhile, the action of Senichi, who was still wearing a hat when shaking hands with Kim, was criticised as lacking

In this case, the Eastern, Confucian, sporting virtues of being modest, the indigenous traditions and locality and politeness and tolerance as part of the national character appeared to be the main criteria to divide ‘themselves’ from ‘significant others’ in the context of South Korea. In addition, the trust-oriented teamwork between the manager and team members and psychological impetus and the indomitable and determined spirit to win were also emphasised in the context of South Korean sporting culture. The theme of an indomitable and determined spirit to win was not only significant in the media portrayals of athletes but also those of ‘citizens’ and fans in a collective form based on national identity. For example, the reinforced form of South Korean national identity was observable in the mediated patriotic behaviour of the Red-Devils, the official fan club of the South Korean football team (Choi, 2004; Lim, 2002). The reporting style and pattern contrasted the concept of ‘the naivety and innocence of the nation (both in football terms and in terms of their global outlook); politeness and tolerance [tolerant patience] as part of the national character and the gregarious nature of the Koreans according to the sport pages of *The Times* (Crolley and Hand, 2006, p. 190). Thus, the South Korean sporting cultures were not simplistic and unidirectional but complex and multidirectional and always in flux.

Throughout the recognition of contemporary ideological conflicts and tension embedded in the media coverage, the empirical research could draw a generalizable inference on how a social world is constructed, sustained and reproduced at a particular time and place. Thus, this thesis helps to draw a generalizable inference on
how the sporting context of South Korea, a non-Western, Northeast Asian, postcolonial nation experiencing the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation, is constructed, sustained and reproduced in the globalization process. The reflection of contemporary politics, international relations and the foreign policy of a nation or amongst nations in the media production and representations of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games could be, simultaneously, concerned with an examination of distinctive and/or discriminative reporting styles and tendencies and the degree of its seriousness.

4. Evaluation of the Research

4-1. Evaluation of the Research Processes

This empirical research processes followed the inductive approach of Charmaz (1997), whereby theoretical ideas stemmed from data based on observations. The selection and conceptualisation of an overarching theoretical framework linking identity politics, contemporary cultural studies and the figurational concepts of personal pronouns involved in the ‘I/We’, ‘us/them’ images and ‘established and outsider relations’ were undertaken. Secondly, their application to the sporting field, the media sport complex and the Olympic Games was reviewed. Thirdly, the historical review of South Korean sporting cultures was made with reference to contemporary political, socio-cultural and ideological dimensions. Based on the literature review, the data collected from the print and television coverage during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, its opening ceremony and a week before and after the Games were analysed in both quantitative and qualitative terms. The data analysis,
with the use of both interpretivism, especially hermeneutics, as the epistemological position and constructionism as the ontological position, concluded by drawing on a theory based on ‘generalizable inferences out of observations’ (Bryman, 2001, p. 9).

The entire research process was undertaken accompanied by my attempt and attitude as a researcher, trying to keep a balance between the insider’s account of being involved in the research field and the outsider’s account of being detached from it. When the degree of involvement increased, the emotional resonance and minutiae of what was being researched could inadvertently seep into the study. Meanwhile, when a researcher acts as an outsider, a more detached view from the research field can be applied but the lack of detailed knowledge may prove problematic. A claimed suggestion for a researcher’s attitude, therefore, would be trying to keep an ideal balance between the insider and outsider accounts. By doing so, I examined the research themes in ‘a long-term, developmental perspective rather than as short-term, today-centred thoughts’ (Maguire, 1988, p. 190).

4-2. Research Accomplishments

The contribution of this thesis is made from three perspectives. Firstly, it contributes to the review of South Korean sporting cultures and the update of contemporary South Korean politics, international relations and foreign policy toward its neighbour nations such as North Korea, Japan and the U.S. Their implications for productions by the national media and the representations of global sporting events like the Olympic Games are revealed and subjected to multidimensional analysis. Secondly, the application and development of a unique theoretical framework linking identity politics, contemporary cultural studies and figurational sociology is
accomplished. The use of an overarching theoretical framework is undertaken within the Northeast Asian and South Korean contexts. In doing so, the multidimensional analysis of the contemporary sporting cultures within the context of a divided, postcolonial, non-Western and Northeast Asian nation subject to the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation could be drawn. Thirdly, a contribution could be made to redefining the South Korean sporting context as an entity constantly mutating in response to changes in the globalisation process. Here, the globalisation process is considered as a homogenising trend with differentiation, experiencing the twin processes of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties over time, place and situation. Therefore, the generalizable inference concerning the similarities and differences in the reporting style and patterns of the Eastern media sport complex, which stemmed from a blend of South Korean indigenous traditions and locality with the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation, can be seen.

4-3. Limitations of the Research

The limitations of the research exist in the range of the research field, its themes and methods and the language in use. Firstly, the review of contemporary South Korean politics, international relations and foreign policy toward nations such as North Korea, Japan and the U.S. was limited to the domestic level. Both the impact of other nations’ foreign policies toward South Korea and that of South Korean foreign policy towards its neighbour nations were not considered in this thesis. To understand the way in which the media production and representations of global sport events reflect the contemporary political conditions and changes between South Korea and other nations, a review of the nations’ foreign policies toward each other should be
undertaken with a focus upon their mutual interactions and contextual conditions and changes in the context of globalisation.

Secondly, the reflection of South Korean foreign policy in the media production and representations of women’s sports was rarely observed in this thesis, even though the media paid considerable attention to the women’s weight-lifting competitions, especially the contest involving a national athlete, Mi-ran Jang, and her Chinese rival, Mushuangshuang. The withdrawal of Mushuangshuang from the competition resulted in the chance to examine the media representations of national and Chinese muscular female athletes and their achievements and the political ramifications reflected in the media coverage of women’s sports being missed. The media’s attention was also given to the female team sports, like the Olympic archery competition. However, the spectator culture in the Olympic stadium was more popularly discussed than the medal achievement in the coverage. Therefore, a theme of the political implications on women’s sports and gender relations in the South Korean media coverage of the global sporting events may form the topic for future research.

Thirdly, the data were derived from empirical research involving observations of the television and print media coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games and its opening ceremony and the associated sporting issues as represented through the media coverage. Therefore, the risk of missing meaningful but marginalised issues that were under-reported in the media coverage would remain in this case.

Fourthly, the subjectivity of journalists and the political, socio-cultural, ideological characteristics of print and/or televised, conservative and/or progressive, commercial and/or public media coverage could permeate the process of media production and representations. Therefore, drawing generalizable inferences from
sporting cultures based on observation of the media contents, viewed as a tool, could not avoid the risk of errors. As an attempt to diminish such a risk, this thesis employed a sophisticated, multidimensional textual analysis of the research themes and social phenomena. However, the textual analysis could and perhaps should be supported by a thorough examination of the functionaries of the media sport production process such as owners, editors and journalists through the use of semi-structured interviews. Therefore, a blend of the textual analysis and the semi-structured interviews may form the method for future research.

Fifthly, my attempt and attitude as a researcher, trying to keep a balance between the insider’s account of being involved in the research field and the outsider’s account of being detached from it, resulted in remaining neutral in relation to my data findings. Therefore, the exclusion of the researcher’s subjective comments on the data findings was one of the limitations of this research.

Sixthly, in terms of the language in use, the researcher had to translate the South Korean media content from Korean into the English language. The process of translation was not only time-consuming but also accompanied by the difficult task of searching and selecting appropriate terms and expressions, which convey closely meanings that are near or identical to the original phases written in Korean. Similarly, the complex language used by some of the writers referenced in this research presents a challenge to readers for whom English is not their native tongue. The level of accuracy of the translation of phases, terms and expressions from Korean into English is one of the limitations of this research.
5. Suggestions for Further Research

This empirical research can be expanded to several further research topics, in order to draw generalizable inferences on how the mediated sporting context of South Korea, Northeast Asian nations, and furthermore, the globe, is produced, reiterated and reproduced in a constant mutation given the changes in interdependency chains over time, place and situation. To do so, the scales of time, place and scope could be considered.

Firstly, a longitudinal research design can be applied according to a ‘time’ scale. Two methods for future research can be suggested. First, a longitudinal research design can be applied to compare and contrast the reporting trends and patterns of both the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the 2012 London Olympic Games. Attention can be given to examining the extent and way in which the European-centric or Western-oriented ideological elements such as the regional identity of being European and pan-European sentiments are embedded in the media coverage of the 2012 London Olympic Games. This may thus be in contrast to the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games which showed the emergence and/or reinforcement of newly-generated ideological elements such as the regional identity of being (Northeast) Asian, pan-Asian sentiments and Asianism vis-à-vis the West within the South Korean context. Second, a longitudinal research design, examining the changes in the national media production and representations of athletes and their achievements at the 2004, 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games, can be applied with reference to the contextual changes in South Korea. Future research can focus on updating the reflection of recent political affairs such as the sinking of the R.O.K.’s
Cheonan ship, the first artillery attack on a South Korean civilian area of Yeonpyeong Island by the Northern forces on 26 March 2010 (Yoon, 2011) and the negotiations for ‘American troop withdrawal from South Korea, adjustments of trade relations as well as the difference in the assessment of and approach toward North Korea’ (Kang, 2010, p. 4) in the media portrayals of the global sport events like the Olympic Games. In doing so, this thesis can be extended to explore the influence of current political climate upon global mega sporting events, national sporting cultures and the media. Based on this, the changes in the power relations between hegemonic and ideological elements impacted on the media coverage can be investigated in the context of South Korea.

Secondly, a comparative research design can be applied to consider the ‘place’ scale. The research themes of this thesis can be examined in the context of other Northeast Asian nations, in understanding their relations with South Korea in a transnational manner. For example, the ways in which South Korean athletes and their achievements are signified in Japan’s media coverage of global sport events can be examined with reference to the political, socio-cultural and ideological ramifications within the context of Japan. By doing so, the symbolic descriptions of athletes from South Korea and Japan and their victories can be compared and contrasted. The review of contemporary international relations, politics and foreign policies between the two could provide crucial clues to understanding the similarities and differences in the ways in which the media sporting culture of global sport events is created, reiterated and reformed from a multi-dimensional perspective. In addition to this, by widening the research field to review Japan’s contemporary foreign policy toward South Korea and North Korea, the extent to, and the way in, which the notion of a
unitary Korean nationalism within the context of Japan, as both a former colonial ruler as well as a current geo-political ally in East Asia, is interplayed with pan-Asian sentiments and embedded in the Japanese media coverage of global sport events can be examined. Attention can also be given to analyse the way and extent to which the notion of a unitary Korean nationalism becomes subordinate to the notion of pan-Asian sentiments.

The comparison of the media production and representations of South Korea and Japan in the global sporting competitions could thus be undertaken. The extent to which the mediated ideological elements based on the regional identity of being (Northeast) Asian, such as pan-Asian sentiments and Asianism, vary in intensity could be investigated. Through the comparison of media production and representations of Northeast Asian nations, the similarities and differences in the power relations and changes between hegemonic and ideological elements could be analysed. Furthermore, the future research could be expanded to reveal the similarities and differences in the reporting tendency and patterns between the Eastern and Western media coverage of global sport events. For instance, in terms of the media production and representations of athletes and their achievements which are varied in intensity and scope along the lines of their multiple identities, the extent to and the way in which the reporting style and pattern in Eastern nations are similar to and/or different from those in Western nations such as the U.S. and European nations can be examined. To do this, the blended method of both the textual analysis on the media sport contents and the semi-structured interviews with the functionaries of the media sport production process such as owners, editors and journalists can be applied for future research.
Thirdly, a comparative research design can be suggested when considering a ‘scope’ scale in the field of sport. The suggestions for future research mentioned above can be applied in examining the media production and representations of various global sporting events such as the Olympic Games and intercontinental sport competitions such as the East Asian or the world leagues of baseball. Future research can be undertaken to examine the way in which the globalisation process, which is constitutive of the twin processes of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties, and the tendencies of simultaneously homogenising and differentiating, emerges and develops in other Northeast Asian and/or Western, sporting contexts over time, place and situation. To do so, the way in which this thesis examined the South Korean sporting context and its media production and representations of the global sport events can be applied. The similarities and differences in media production and representations of global sporting events between nations or states could be compared and contrasted and, simultaneously, the changes in the identity politics and the globalisation process within a nation or between/amongst nations could be examined, interpreted and discussed in future research. In addition to this, the political implications on women’s sports and gender relations in the South Korean media coverage of the global sporting events can be examined and compared with those in other Northeast Asian and/or Western media coverage.

6. Conclusion

This thesis examined the sociological exploration of South Korean media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The originality of this thesis was laid on the examination of the relationship between the venue for a sports mega event and
its treatment by the media. With reference that Beijing in People’s Republic of China was the place in which the 2008 Games were held as the third host nation from amongst Northeast Asian nations, this thesis focused upon defining and redefining not only national identity but also Northeast Asian identity. The discourse of media sport content, therefore, was generated from an attempt to understand the national characteristics of South Korea as a Northeast Asian, postcolonial, divided nation with the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation in the context of globalisation. The implications of politics, international relations and foreign policies with its geopolitical neighbours such as the U.S., the D.P.R.K. and Japan on the media were taken into consideration. This thesis also documented how the political and ideological conditions and changes between the R.O.K. and the D.P.R.K. between 2004 and 2008 influenced the media coverage of the 2008 Games. The strength of this thesis was laid on its overall synthesis of theory and evidence rather than one particular part.

To begin with, the data findings revealed that the media production and reproductions of the opening ceremony and the men’s 50m pistol event expressed the interplay between the reinforcement of nationalistic sentiments and inter-Korean ideological conflicts and a notion of a unitary Korean nationalism. According to the degree to which each print and television media expresses conservative or progressive public or commercial characteristics, it could be shown that the reporting style, context and tendencies vary when reporting a politically controversial issue. The media trends and patterns of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games were distinctive from those of the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games as the contemporary context of inter-Korean political relations had changed. That is, the previous media trends of the 2000
and 2004 Olympic Games, in which the South Korean nationalism vis-à-vis North Korea were weakened and replaced by an alternative unitary Korean nationalism, changed to one that reinforced South Korean nationalism. Thus, the change in the political climate generated the changes in the power relations between the hegemonic and ideological elements between 2004 and 2008 and impacted on media coverage of the 2008 Games. In this light, this thesis interprets the influence of political climate upon global mega sporting events, national sporting cultures and the media.

This thesis explored the significance of transformation in power relations between the previous hegemonic content and a newly-generated hegemonic content embedded in the media coverage. To illustrate, the media portrayals of the R.O.K. victory over the U.S. and Japan in male team sports, like the Olympic baseball tournament, conveyed a hegemonic content of South Korean nationalism. The reports simultaneously expressed its interplay with ideological elements such as pro-/anti-American sentiments, anti-Japanese sentiments, and pan-Asian sentiments. Meanwhile, in male individual sports, like the swimming competition, the new hegemonic content emphasised pan-Asian sentiments (Gruneau, 1983; Mouffe, 1981; Williams, 1979; Dunning, 1999). In doing so, the power ratio between the previous hegemonic content and the newly generated hegemonic content narrowed. Therefore, this thesis suggests that the changes in power relations between hegemonic and ideological elements embedded in the media coverage were evident along the line of time, sporting issue and the type of male sport.

The media representations of both the Olympic baseball tournament and swimming competition conveyed not only a mood of American/Western superiority with the impact of Westernisation and Americanisation, but also indigenous, local,
traditions, politeness and tolerance as part of the national character and Confucian cultural values of being modest and humble. The mediated blend of Western and Eastern sporting values, such as Olympism and Confucianism, provided significant evidence to propose a homogenising trend with differentiation in the globalisation process. The newly-generated trend, like the increase of sporting successes of a non-Western, postcolonial nation, are worth considering in the latest phase of the sportisation process as an integral part of the civilising process (Maguire, 2004). With an emphasis on the increase in national and Northeast Asian athletes’ sporting successes, a claimed hegemonic transformation of the movement of Northeast Asian sport from the semi-peripheral to the core region of world sport was evident in aspects of the national media coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games.

Media portrayals of the R.O.K. victory over the U.S. implied a nationalistic meaning that the power ratio between the U.S. as the occupier and R.O.K. as the occupied narrowed and the relation between the two was subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball competition. The media coverage tended to frame the meaning of the match in terms of the hegemonic transformation between the R.O.K. as the occupied and the U.S. as the occupier. In addition to this, in a reflection of postcolonial sporting cultures in the context of South Korea, the media portrayals of R.O.K. team’s victory over Japanese team implied that the balance of power shifted toward South Korea, as the former colonised group, from Japan as its former ruler. Accordingly, the relation between the former established and outsider groups was subverted in the 2008 Olympic baseball tournament. Thus, the match was signified as an event, surpassing Japan as the leading country in Northeast Asia, and symbolising the hegemonic transformation between the R.O.K. and Japan.
Simultaneously, media portrayals of the R.O.K. team’s victory over the U.S. and/or Japan’s teams in the Olympic baseball matches expressed antagonistic sentiments towards the U.S. and Japan. This coverage was in spite of the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation, as well as that of favourable foreign policies with the U.S. as a strategic ally, and Japan as a nation with an Eastern, Asian identity. In particular, a mood of rivalry with and against Japan was more significant than that with or against the U.S. The media content emerged out of the representatives of distinctive traditions of civilization, which not only aim to express and advance their own indigenous cultural traditions but also resist Americanisation and Westernisation (Maguire, 1999). This provides evidence in interpreting that non-Western cultures like the South Korean that resist and reinterpret Western sports and preserve, sustain, foster and promote their own indigenous traditional pursuits on a global scale.

Therefore, the mediated suggestion of a hegemonic transformation that the relations between the former established and outsider groups can, by such media coverage, be subverted at a specific moment deserves to be examined to more fully understand a unique feature of the globalization process – a non-Western, postcolonial, divided nation - within the context of South Korea.

Media portrayals of Northeast Asian swimming medallists’ victories celebrated the entry of Asian male athletes into the core of world swimming, hitherto dominated by Western male athletes and symbolised the hegemonic transformation between the East on the sub-periphery and the West in the core of the global sport. The reports, especially progressive or sport-specific newspapers and television coverage of KBS, highlighted a ‘fantastic group charisma’ of ‘being Asian’ based on the national character of Asian identity. The reports emphasised the variability of boundaries,
defining ‘us’ with the ‘we’ images of the Northeast Asian nations from ‘others’ with the ‘they’ images of Western athletes at a specific sporting situation.

This case also displayed a unique form of ‘race relations’ that western or white athletes are superior to Asian athletes in terms of physical frame and natural athleticism (Elias, 1994, pp. xxix-xxx). The media portrayals of the rivalry between the R.O.K. athlete Tae-hwan Park and the U.S. athlete Michael Phelps expressed the racial/ethnic stereotype of western white male athletes. Although the nationalistic reporting tendency was evident in the report that Park’s victory was described as more difficult to achieve than Japanese gold medallist Kitajima Kosuke’s, their mediated victories were overrepresented as examples of great human achievements of Northeast Asian medallists, which overcame physical disadvantage, based on a superior athletic technique and perceived stronger commitment. However, the media portrayals of an American eight gold medallist Phelps’s athletic performance and achievements allowed an exception. The symbolic descriptions of Phelps rarely trivialised his athletic performance and achievements by emphasising his natural athleticism but objectified or represented him as a machine-like superhuman and the Olympic hero. Thus, this provides evidence in interpreting a distinctive form of race relation within the Northeast Asian context.

Overall, the balance of power is always in flux in the context of globalisation, this suggests that social relations can be controlled by more powerful groups in the short term but not in the longer term. Therefore, ‘while the speed, scale and volume of sports development is interwoven with the broader global flows of people, technology, finance, images and ideologies that are controlled by the West’, this thesis contributes to detecting and providing signs that this is also leading to ‘the descending of the West’
and the upswing of the Northeast Asia, especially South Korea, in a variety of contexts (Maguire, 1999, p. 93). Sport, especially global sporting culture, may be no exception.

The global-national patterns and transformations in power relations between hegemonic and ideological elements, which consist of a unique and distinctive form of South Korean sporting culture in a bigger frame of global sporting culture, resulted in generating the similarities and differences in the reporting trends between national and foreign, between the Northeast Asian and Western states/regions and amongst the northeast Asian nations. The mediated similarities were laid on a homogenising trend which a hegemonic content of nationalism weekend and interplayed with the impact of Americanisation and Westernisation and the creation of a new hegemony such as the national character of Northeast Asian nations, pan-Asian sentiments or pan-Korean sentiments. Meanwhile, the mediated differences stemmed from the issues of national identity and locality such as politeness and tolerance as a part of the national character, indigenous traditions and Confucian culture. The political implications on the mediated issues of identity such as national identity, race and ethnicity were also one of the factors, which generated the differences in the reporting trends between nations, states and regions. Therefore, it can be seen that the twin processes of increasing varieties and diminishing contrasts between them in the globalisation process - a homogenising trend with differentiation – were explicitly and/or implicitly evident in this thesis.

As my attempt to define and re-define the context of South Korean sporting culture in a more sophisticated manner, the political implications on women’s sport and gender relations in the national media coverage of global sport events, like the
Olympic Games, may form the topic for my future research. More evidence to identify the characteristics of Northeast Asian identity will be collected from my future empirical research and synthesised with the findings of this research. In doing this, the concept of globalisation could and may have to be constantly applied to form an in-depth exploration of the context of South Korean sporting culture, identity politics and the media in a constant mutation.


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