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BULGARIAN SPORTS POLICY IN THE 20th CENTURY:
A STRATEGIC RELATIONS PERSPECTIVE

by

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Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of the Loughborough University

5 May 2000

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Abstract

Key words: Strategic Relations, sports policy, state, state and sports projects, sport organisations, local and transnational forces

This thesis investigates Bulgarian sports policy in the 20th century, from 1878 until 1999. More specifically, it seeks to examine the making of sports policy as a field of state activity and as a process involving various projects, agents and transformations, by uncovering the underlying structures and relations in the national sports policy context. The research is informed by the premises of the Strategic Relations Approach as developed by Jessop (1990), while critical theory provides the link between the theoretical foundations and the interpretation of data.

This task demands an analysis which can account for the political, social and economic environments in which sports policy is made, and also for the structures and actors involved. In doing so, the thesis challenges both the traditional Marxist approach to the state, and some of the Jessop’s claims about interests, strategies and global influences on policy making. The history of the modern Bulgarian state is marked by three major transformations, and the advancement of three distinct projects - Capitalism, Communism and Europeanisation - each aiming to establish a new stateness. Subsequently, it is argued that sports policy is a strategic relation, the formation of which needs to be viewed within state-society relations at particular historical conjuncture. Furthermore, this relation constitutes a process of past and present struggles, the outcomes of which are uncertain.

The study draws several conclusions regarding strategic relations in sport policy making by highlighting:
- the relations between state projects and sports projects;
- the forms of state intervention in sport in various socio-political environments;
- the constitution of power in sports policy and state-society interactions; and
- the role of transnational and local forces in shaping sports policy (e.g. international sports federations and the IOC).

The conceptualising and operationalising of Strategic Relations allows for three overriding tendencies pertinent to Bulgaria’s sport policy to be outlined - of continuity, statisation and incongruity. One aspect of this study of theoretical interest in that, so far as can be ascertained, it is the first time that the Strategic Relations approach has been applied to a Communist state.
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Acknowledgements

In the course of completing this project I have incurred many intellectual and personal debts for which I would like to pay due credit now. First of all, I am greatly indebted to Mike Collins, my supervisor for his encyclopedical knowledge, drive, patience and friendship which he generously shared for many years stretching beyond the time span of this project. Also my sincere thanks go to Ian Henry who took me on a tour of the premises of the Department of Physical Education, Sports Sciences and Recreation Management in early 1990 and had been a source of support and intellectual stimulus ever since. This project would not have been completed without the trust and help of the Luton Business School and the Department of Tourism and Leisure to which I belong. I owe enormous gratitude to my Bulgarian friends and colleagues Peter Bankov and Ivan Sandanski and sports officials Ivan Slavkov, Jordanka Blagoeva and Radka Valkova for their insights and unique materials. I would like also to record my appreciation for the assistance of many colleagues with whom I have worked over the years in a number of national and international sports governing and professional bodies.

Finally, I thank my wife Rossy and daughter Katerina for their understanding and support which helped to remove any sign of tension created by extended research endeavours like this.
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List of Abbreviations

AU - Aerobic Union Bulgaria
BCP - Bulgarian Communist Party
BFU - Bulgarian Football Union
BOC - Bulgarian Olympic Committee
BSFS - Bulgarian Sports Union
CE - Council of Europe
CM - Council of Ministers
CYPES - Committee for Youth, Physical Education and Sport
DFS - Sports Societies
EU - European Union
IFs - International Sports Federations
IOC - International Olympic Committee
ME - Ministry of Education
MD - Ministry of Defence
NFC - National Fitness Complex
NSFs - National Sports Federations
SC - Sports Clubs
SCPES - Supreme Council for Physical Education and Sport
SR - Strategic Relations
SSF - School Sports Federation
UDF - Union of Democratic Forces
Chapter 1

The Bulgarian State in the 20th Century - Projects and Transformations: An Introduction
This thesis sets out to investigate Bulgarian sports policy in the 20th century, from 1878 until 2000. The investigation, however, extends to the last two decades of the 19th century (1878 - 1900) because of their formative influence on the state and sport. More specifically, it seeks to examine the making of sports policy as a field of state activity and as a process involving various projects, agents and transformations. Taken from a strategic relations perspective, this task demands an analysis which can account for the political, social and economic environments in which sports policy is made, and also for the structures and actors involved. Given the scope of the study and the lack of similar investigations in domestic and foreign literature, this has proved to be a challenging undertaking. The topic was provoked particularly by current major changes in Bulgarian society, marking the transition from a totalitarian to a democratic settlement. Thus, what has been termed totalitarianism was taken as a point of departure for labelling the three periods under investigation as: capitalism (1878-1944), communism (1944-1989) and democracy (1989-1999). The project reflects the author’s personal involvement in events since 1979, and many years of studying the topic.

1.1. State projects and transformations: towards a Strategic Relations perspective

The Bulgarian state has more than 1300 years of history, full of dramatic events. Over the last 121 years Bulgaria has undergone three massive transformations of the state, each causing enormous shake ups in public and individual lives. As a result, its history has been rewritten three times, every 40 to 60 years, and different interpretations were given to events, to actors’ roles (both individual and corporate), and to outcomes, posing extra difficulties for researchers.

The Bulgarian state was created in 681 and, after centuries of development and prosperity, in 1369 it lost its independence to the Ottoman Empire, to re-emerge only in 1878 as an independent state, though substantially different as a territory, population and constitution. The project set by the new state envisaged establishing a modern capitalist society based on democratic principles, but they (the constitution and administrative structure) were written in Russia, the least democratic country in
Europe. Despite its strong appeal, the project presented Bulgaria’s society with a whole host of paradoxes. There was no political party representative of capital to take a lead, nor was there a capitalist class *per se*, nor markets for the industrial products which had been lost with the eclipse of the Ottoman Empire. Contrary to what was intended, the capitalist period ended in 1944 with an overt monarcho-fascist dictatorship and a collapse of the national ideals.

For the second time, the fate of Bulgaria’s society was changed drastically in 1944, after World War 2, when it set out on the road to Communism and was subjugated totally to Soviet influence. This project presented a new host of paradoxes as the Communist Party, which was supposed to provide leadership of the project, was very weak and ill-organised. With over 70% of the population living in poverty in villages, there was no organised working class to assume a hegemonic role, nor was there a strong economy capable of delivering the promised general welfare. In a fashion similar to the previous period, the Communist project for equality and well-being produced a totalitarian society, with very limited individual freedoms, heavy foreign debts and mass disillusionment, which fell together with others in Eastern Europe in 1989.

The autumn of 1989 heralded the third state reshaping - the launching of the new democratic project. With it came the same paradoxes - there were no political parties to take the lead. Both the Communist Party and the new non-Communist formations had strong commitments to and sentiments about the past: the former to the Communist period when it reigned unchallenged, and the latter to the pre-totalitarian period and the privileges they had then enjoyed. Neither was there a distinct middle class capable of promoting and guaranteeing the key values of the project, nor was there a market economy in place capable of producing democratic institutions for the state. At present, the state’s financial and social policy is being substantially dictated by other external agents, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. This period is far from over, but so far all indications suggest a discrepancy from rather than compliance with what was proclaimed.
Despite different ideological labels, the three state projects - *Capitalism, Communism* and *Europeanisation* - displayed a great deal of similarity in terms of:

- total negation of previous values, practices and achievements
- subjugation to foreign visions and interests
- dominant political practices
- the nature of state - civil society relations
- forms of state intervention
- forms of participation (or lack of it) of those in whose name the project was introduced in the policy process
- project outcomes - failure to deliver what was promised.

The approach undertaken to the analysis in this thesis is shaped to a degree by the very nature of this project. It appears that studies aiming to explain transformations should be in a position to provide a clear picture of what particular phenomena used to be, and what they are now as result of the transformations. Here the analysis confronts the issue of understanding. Our ability to understand the transformation is predetermined by the ability to understand what a capitalist or communist state had actually been. J. Baudrillard (1995:81) in *The Gulf war did not take place*, successfully captured this dilemma by using Brecht's eloquent model of explanation: "This beer isn't a beer, but that is compensated for by the fact that this cigar isn't a cigar either. If this beer wasn't a beer, and this cigar really was a cigar, then there would be a problem." Somewhat analogous is the problem with understanding the transforming of sports policy and the form of state interventions in it. In other words, if we are justifiably critical about recent changes in national sport policy after the events of 1989, that is, if these were not real transformations, the adequacy of our understanding can be restored if we accept that what used to be labelled “socialist” sport has not been “socialist” sport, at least in the proper ideological sense of this definition. Conversely, if we agree that socialist sport was genuinely socialist, then it becomes difficult to understand why there were no changes during the transformation which would have persuasively characterised it as a process of dismantling socialist sport. The same model of logic is applied with regard to the capitalist and totalitarian periods of Bulgarian sport.
Having formed our understanding, we are still facing the issue: what went wrong in all three undertakings? Was it the project or its implementation? There could be very little disagreement with the timing and the aims of the three projects. They all were launched in a moment of crisis, when society was disillusioned, frustrated and humiliated, and clearly offered new perspectives for everyone.

This thesis, however, will argue that what went wrong stemmed from the specific conjunctures created by transformations in each of the three periods. First, the very idea of building a new stateness (this is a common concept in Bulgarian political discourse) is controversial in itself. Inevitably, it involves the notion of discontinuity rather than continuity. As each of the three projected new states had to be built on a new rather than a current terrain, priority number one of each incoming state machine became dismantling the remnants of the past. By doing so, they cut traditional cultural, personal and economic links and created vacuums in relations and institutions, and made projects’ and actors’ places in any domain highly uncertain.

Second, no project inherited a well-established political system and practices, nor a sound economy, nor an undivided society. Each sought to establish a new legitimisation, a new state and social unity. Third, various environments, outside forces and the nature of the projects turned the state into the supreme regulator of society and economy, and presupposed the kind of strategic relations to be established, ensuring its and its managers’ leading roles, yet another paradox. Despite the compelling evidence for the supreme role of the state demonstrated by its history, Bulgarians remained highly sceptical about the state, traditionally detested it, and never had confidence in it, while from a perspective of individuals a state post has always been a highly attractive option and a source of privileges.

Sports projects in the capitalist, communist and democratic periods clearly reflected the visions of various state projects, and sports policy making has always been considered as a state matter, rather than a private or a civil society issue. So, what then constitutes the relation between state and sport projects? Who are the sports policy makers? what motivates their choice? who determines what is to be placed on
Chapter 1. Bulgarian State in the 20th Century: An Introduction

society’s agenda? or what is at stake? This thesis ventures to answer these and other relevant questions adopting the approach outlined in the next section.

1.2. Synopsis

The analysis of Bulgarian sports policy in the 20th century is developed in nine chapters. Chapter 1 - Introduction - sets the scene by offering an account of the controversy and paradoxes involved in building a new stateness and points out that, this is a process which involves struggles, and outcomes which are contingent upon them.

Chapter 2 - the state, transformations and sport (a literature review) - sets the theoretical premises of the project by suggesting an analysis of the state as a strategic relation based on the Strategic Relations approach developed by Jessop (1990). It challenges both the traditional Marxist approach to the state and some of the Jessopian claims about interests, strategies and global influences on policy making. One aspect of this study of theoretical interest is that, so far as can be ascertained, it is the first time that the Strategic Relations approach has been applied to a Communist state.

Chapter 3 - Methodology - establishes the link between theoretical foundations of the project and the interpretation of data and events in the three periods. This is achieved by employing a Critical theory. The chapter provides the understanding that the sport policy process as a strategic relation in the pursuit of various projects can only be established and comprehended in examining the unfolding of that process.

Chapter 4 analyses the constitution of the state in the capitalist period (1878-1944), and examines the role of various forces acting within and outside it, and their impact on shaping the sports policy domain and policies. It provides evidence for the role of public and voluntary agencies in the domain, and unveils their strategic relations.

Chapter 5 follows the format of the previous chapter and investigates the constitution of the communist/totalitarian state (1944-1989) and its effects on forming sports
projects, the policy process and structures. It evidences the role of different agencies, and managers of state-voluntary associations, and identifies their strategic relations.

Chapter 6 investigates the emergence of the democratic state (1989-1999), the forming of its institutions and relations with civil society, and their role in forging the sports policy domain and practices.

Chapter 7 provides a more in-depth analysis on the workings of the sports policy process in the form of two case studies - of the Bulgarian Aerobic Union and the School Sports Federation. It scrutinises the forming of strategic relations and the role of agencies and managers in these two particular settings in 1999.

Chapter 8 deals with the global forces influencing the behaviour of the nation-state and its responses to global circumstances. Examined are the transnational linkages between the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Council of Europe (CE) and the European Union (EU) and the Trim and Fitness International Sport for All Association (TAFISA) in shaping Bulgarian sports policy, and these organisations' relations with state and voluntary agencies.

Chapter 9 - Conclusions - evaluates the theoretical discussion in the light of the empirical evidence. It substantiates and illustrates a number of Jessop's assumptions about the state as a social relation, though providing some valuable lessons from a non-capitalist setting. It concludes by offering a conceptualisation and operationalisation of state-social relations in the making of Bulgarian sports policy, outlining some opportunities for further research.
Chapter 2.

The State, Strategic Relations, Transformations and Sport
2.1. Introduction

Very little seems to have changed since Richard Gruneau’s observation made eighteen years ago, that despite the growing interest in studying sport and politics, “very little of the recent work... has attempted to situate sport in the context of any coherent theory of the state and there has been virtually no sensitivity among students of sport to the significant debates in social and political theory about the nature of the state and its role in social and cultural life” (1982:2). Certainly, Gruneau was not the first to address the need for further studies in this area, but so far the ever increasing number of scholars who have ventured to investigate it is still far from producing a coherent account. Why is this? Is it because of their lack of sensitivity, or due to the complexity of such a task?

In “state-ing the obvious”, C. Hay (1996:3) opens his analysis of the state with a quote by Schmitter (1985:33) which favours the latter of the above propositions: “the modern state is... an amorphous complex of agencies with ill defined boundaries performing a great variety of not very distinctive functions.” Besides the clarity this definition brings to the debate, together with other definitions of the state offered by various theorists (see Carnoy, 1984 and Clarke, 1991), it informs us that any attempt to fix the notion of the state would face several important limitations which would lead subsequently to flaws in state-sport analyses. Based on the above propositions, and given the focus of this thesis, it appears that what is needed is not necessarily a coherent theory of the state in which to place the debate about sport. Instead, it will be more instructive to seek an approach which, while acknowledging these limitations, suggests adequate avenues to distinguish between the elusiveness and tangibility of the state as an object, and to highlight what is distinctive about the state which will allow us to better understand the transforming politics of sport in East European countries generally, and in Bulgaria in particular.

Two further considerations are worth noting:
Chapter 2. The State, Strategic Relations, Transformations and Sport


(b) as R. MacIver rightly noted as early as 1926, "it is easier to agree on the nature of a particular state than on the nature of the state" (quoted in Hay, 1996:5).

It is the aim of this chapter therefore, first to identify and evaluate the interpretations of the state as a dynamic set of power relations given in the literature, and second, to examine the implications of those explanations for evaluating national sport policies. Although these tasks are straightforward enough, it is imperative for this introductory section to define the approach that will be used to accomplish them. As the preceding overview of Bulgaria's modern history suggests, a distinguishing feature of all three major transformations (revolutions) was that they involved creating a new 'stateness' and political order. Inevitably, the aspirations of the newly arrived political, moral and intellectual leaderships were driven by the idea of building this projected state. Clearly, state-building ("tracklayering" in Weberian terms) can be seen as a process of past and current struggles, the outcomes of which largely depend on specific conjunctures, timing, constraints and actors. Thus, the diffusion and organisation of sport throughout different periods would have to reflect similar patterns because changes in state order affect all basic areas of social and cultural life.

The accomplishment of the tasks set in this chapter involves both a challenge to the established qualifications for a model of state intervention in sport, as well as a new reading of the past and recent state involvement in sport. Following the assumptions outlined above, the approach to the literature review will be informed by the premises of the Strategic Relations approach (SRA) developed by Bob Jessop (1990), to be discussed in the next section.
2.2. The Strategic Relations Approach

A broad analysis of the literature on the state suggests that when reviewing the relationships between state and society (and sport in particular), it is as important to define as to demystify the state. This can be successfully achieved if the classical Marxist approach of seeing the state as something towards which one should have a strategy, that is, to maximise the advantages its form and practices provide, and to diminish its disadvantages, is substituted by an interpretation which, according to Jessop (1990:270) is described as:

"a strategic terrain, as the crystallisation of political strategies, as a specific political form which offers structural privileges to some but not all kind of political strategies."

Jessop’s (1990) Strategic Relations Approach makes two major claims. First, that the state is a social (strategic) relation, and second, that an adequate analysis of it must proceed on three levels. The first claim that the state is a social (strategic) relation was substantiated by an analysis which saw it as the site, the generator and the product of strategies. According to him, the state system is the site of strategy because its structure and *modus operandi* are more open to some types of political strategy than others. This strategic selectivity implies that a given type of state or regime will be more accessible to some forces than others according to the strategies they adopt to gain state power (Jessop, 1990:260).

The state is seen as a generator of strategies, in the sense that it is where the state’s formal unity (as a sovereign state) and substantive unity (as a social support) can be established. Thus, the state becomes the site of class struggles and the site of struggles and contests among its different branches. Finally, the structure and *modus operandi* of the state system can be understood in terms of their production in and through past political strategies and struggles. These strategies and struggles could have been developed within that system and/or at a distance from that system; and they could have been concerned to maintain it and/or to transform it (Jessop, 1990:261).
Jessop’s (1990:343) second claim is, that regardless of how we have defined the state, an adequate analysis of it must proceed on three levels:

*the forms of its basic institutional separation from the rest of the society whose general interests it is supposed to represent; the nature of its internal organisation, modes of political calculation and operating procedures; and the political practices and discourses in and through which the common interests are articulated and promoted.*

Based on these premises, he suggested that the next step to make the analysis more specific is to consider the organisational form and socio-political bases of the state by identifying six dimensions. The first three dimensions are formal and institutional in nature: *forms of representation, the internal organisation and the forms of intervention.*

As relevant *forms of representation* he instanced territorial and functional representation, pluralism, clientelism, *raison d'etat*, and populism, but political parties, social movements and state managers are also relevant. Jessop did not clarify, however, whether a state may be successfully represented in more than one form, and what effects that would have on its organisation, mode of intervention, and substantive dimensions. For example, being well concealed or straightforwardly manifested, political clientelism can be found in states of virtually all compositions alongside pluralism, populism, or *raison d'etat*. In the Bulgarian case it would be even more informative to consider the state's international political clientelism, as it is relevant to the three periods. This we do in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 8.

The state’s *internal organisation* refers to the distribution of power among different parts of the state system. This process involves power relations between the administrative apparatus, levels of government and supra-national state forms such as culture, education and sport. Despite different socio-political environments in the three periods considered, sport remained largely a state controlled area subordinated to the government. The state’s *forms of intervention* concern specific policies and practical measures applied through specific institutional mechanisms to society or
economy. They play a major role in shaping the changing boundaries between civil society and the state, and clearly exhibit a decisive role in forming national sports policy.

The other three dimensions of the state reflect its behaviour and strategic orientation. The first is defined by Jessop (1990:346) as the social base of state power, i.e., "the nature of the power bloc, supporting classes or other social forces and alliances whose unstable equilibrium of compromise is crystallised in the state system." The argument here is that each state or regime can be related to a social base which provides its support and serves to identify its principal beneficiaries. But as the previous discussion revealed, this relation is not necessarily straightforward. If the main beneficiaries for whatever reasons do not exist, or resist the project, it is also possible for this support to be created retrospectively, that is, to rationalise past actions.

The next two dimensions derive from what Jessop called a “part-whole paradox” of the state. This paradox as he put it (1990:346) “is rooted in the fact that the state is but one institutional order among others in a given social formation; and yet it is peculiarly charged with responsibility for maintaining the integration and cohesion of the wider society”. The second dimension is the state’s practices and projects and corresponds to the ‘part’ moment of the ‘part-whole’ paradox. In other words, the state unity (or order) is not a pre-given condition, rather it has to be established in the process of materialisation of the state’s practices and projects, which define the boundaries of the system.

The third dimension - historic bloc and hegemonic project - refers to the ‘whole’ part of the paradox, which articulates the notion of common will and interests and serves to legitimise the above practices and form of the state. This dimension also provides political and moral guidelines for the conduct of state policy. For example, during the totalitarian period, the development of sport was measured mainly by quantitative
criteria, such as number of participants, events, medals and points. These had to assert the state policy which in line with the socialist project aimed to ensure mass participation of all segments of society.

What follows from Jessop’s interpretation of the state is spelled out in several basic implications of the Strategic-theoretical approach despite the fact that, as he himself stated (1990:267), these remain at “the level of assertions and guidelines.” The introductory account of the struggles, interests and transformations in Bulgaria’s modern development substantiates most of the implications of the Strategic theoretical approach. We have seen in that, what emerged as a Bulgarian state in 1878 in terms of territory and nation had very little to do with what had existed five centuries prior to the Ottoman domination. The relation between the state’s formal and substantive unity was epitomised in the pursuit of a national ideal - the unification of Bulgarian lands and people. For the purposes of sport policy analysis, however, it is important to examine more carefully four key implications (features) concerning the nature of the state (what is it), its constitution (the evolving of the state’s form and institutions), state-society relations (representations and interests), and power (form-related balance of power) which will be discussed in turn.

2.3. The Implications of the Strategic Relations Approach

In line with Bulgaria’s historical development, and to ensure consistency of analysis, the three implications of the Strategic Relations approach (SRA) just identified will be examined, both in a capitalist and a socialist (non-capitalist) setting.

2.3.1. On the nature of the state

The first implication of the SRA maintains that the state is a specific institutional ensemble with no institutional fixity and no pre-given formal or substantive unity. Thus, Jessop (1990:341) suggested a broad definition of the state by making specific reference to state discourse and institutions:

*The core of the state apparatus comprises a distinct ensemble of institutions and organisations whose socially accepted function is to*
define and enforce collectively binding decisions of the members of a society in the name of their common interest or general will.

As he further clarified, this definition identifies the state as a specific form of macro-political organisation with a specific type of political structure, establishes clear links between the state and the political sphere, and the wider society. What is also interesting to note, is that Jessop puts the contradictions and dilemmas involved in political discourse, and more specifically the claims about general will or common interest (as opposed to straightforward political domination or violent oppression) at the heart of the analysis of the state. Such an approach, as Jessop himself argued, "could serve as a basis for describing specific states and political regimes as well as for exploring the condition in which states emerge, evolve, enter into crisis and are transformed" (1990:341-2). It can be also particularly useful when examining a social phenomenon such as sport policy in specific historical contexts in a given country.

Another strength of the above definition and approach to the state is its interpretation of the state as a dynamic and moving (and not as a fixed) object, thus overcoming the inherent limitations of other accounts by bringing to the fore several qualifications:

(i) states are never fixed, rather contradictions and transformations are inherited in their nature, the state is a strategic terrain, and its constitution involves struggles;

(ii) states never achieve full closure or complete separation from society and their precise boundaries are usually in doubt (Jessop 1990:342), hence state and society are interdependent. The relation of various organisations and institutions found around the core of the state to the core is uncertain;

(iii) the nature of these institutions and organisations, and their links with the wider society will depend on the nature of social formation and its past history;

(iv) the common interest or general will in whose name the state claims to act is always illusory, asymmetrical and marginalizing of certain groups (cf. Hay 1996:8).
Despite the clarity they bring to the analysis of state-sport relationships, when applied to a particular setting, however, these qualifications need further discussion, which is carried out in the remaining sections.

2.3.2. The state's constitution

The second implication asserts that political systems can be constituted out of the available institutional elements, and in this sense state-building is not a once-for-all process but is constantly reiterated. As the introductory chapter on state projects demonstrated, in each of the three transformations the basic institutional elements were imported or imposed, and reflected Bulgaria's gravitation in the European geopolitical balance of powers. During the first transformation, after the liberation from Ottoman domination, the key elements of the new political structure - the state form (the Prince and the Constitution), the structure of the government (including a temporary Russian government for 9 months), and the constitution of the army (including its command cadres and training) were imposed by Russia. Russian military personnel were also responsible for introducing several modern sports to Bulgaria. The specific manifestations of this influence will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

A similar pattern can be observed during the second and the third transformation periods. For the former, the Communist model of development was imposed again from Russia (now the USSR). The form of the state was decided in a referendum in the presence of the Red Army and the newly adopted constitution of the country contained articles (3, 12 and 13) surrendering its national sovereignty. Furthermore, the ways of the Bulgarian state's economic and cultural integration in the world were predetermined by political, economic and social treaties imposed by the Soviet doctrine (key Soviet advisers to the party, the army, the security forces and the economy were also appointed). With regard to the latter period, the form of economic development (conceptually and structurally) was imposed by the European Union, IMF and the World Bank, to the point that, as the former Bulgarian Prime Minister Z. Videnov (1995-1997) stated, "the country was on the brink of losing its economic sovereignty" (1998:195). This process was, and still is accompanied by intense overt
and covert external political pressure aiming to set up a national balance of political forces which would guarantee the necessary legislative grounds for its success.

What followed for the political systems to be established was a high degree of dependency on external interests which did not take into account the true aspirations of the people. The main conflict produced by these developments was an incongruency between the demand for national prosperity and the capacity for its materialisation. This conflict can be captured by the notion of centrifugal and centripetal forces operating within a state territory, as suggested by Taylor (1985: 113-4). Centrifugal forces represented both the striving for unification of Bulgaria's territories and the intervention of the great powers in this process. Centripetal forces in turn reflected the binding drive of the state as an idea. The form of the state as well as its basic structural mechanisms were not constituted solely out of existing institutional elements, rather major elements were imposed by outside forces. With few notable exceptions, the projects put forward by a myriad of political, economic and intellectual groups and their leaders served to justify what had already been imposed, and in essence they represented a "catching-up" strategy. These politics demanded little improvisation on behalf of domestic leadership elites, and in essence reinforced the ideological function of the state. As political historiography evidences, seeking approval for any major decision in the Russian, German or recently, the American embassy has always been an essential attribute of the repertoire of Bulgaria's political leaders.

Bulgaria's specificity provides some substance to Jessop's notion of state constitution, but as he himself pointed out, is still in its infancy and needs to go beyond the stage of abstract propositions and to be applied to particular states and problems. Such an attempt has been made by one of Jessop's associates - Colin Hay, in his (1996) analysis of the state and socio-political change in Britain.

Following the process of constituting a state and defining and maintaining its various boundaries, Hay differentiated between three interrelated generic moments of
stateness (1996:9): the state as a nation (an imagined national community); the state as territory (a bounded sovereign terrain); and the state as institution (a set of apparatuses and practices). Borrowing from Schlesinger (1987), Hay viewed the state as a nation in terms of a communal sense of belonging to a national collectivity pursued through national identity, nationalism and loyalty to a sovereign territory. A similar stance clearly denotes an emphasis on the sociocultural conception of the nation (as opposed to the ethnic) defined by the early French Enlightenment philosophers as a community of citizens united by the idea of common stateness.

The second moment of stateness is the territorial. Although related closely to the state as nation, it appears to be a more clear-cut concept perceiving the state as a territory, or a geo-politically bounded sovereign terrain. This meaning of territory is tied up with the legal concept of sovereignty. In the words of Hinsley (1966:26, quoted in Johson et al, 1995:96) "sovereignty implies that there is one final and absolute authority in a political community", and that "it is the bringing together of territory and sovereignty which provides the basis of the modern inter-state system." As will be demonstrated, the negation of this absolute authority has had serious effects on the form and functions of the Bulgarian state in the past. Both Jessop and Hay, however, failed to recognise two important functions of state territoriality - as a source of meaning and as an opportunity. The former serves to evoke aspirations, attachments, and moral and physical exploits among the people. The latter sets limits to essential economic activities concerning raw material production and the state's role in world markets. As the following chapters show, this moment of stateness was of particular importance for the unification and assertion of Bulgaria in the late 19th century, and shaped to a great extent its national ideal. Also, the opportunity function of the territorial state entails the need to consider the global aspect of its strategic relations.

A last moment of stateness is that of the state as institution which incorporates its administrative and organisational dimensions. Hay (1996:11) categorised the state as an institution in terms of:
(a) *its distinctive* modes of intervention (emphasis in original) *within* such spheres;
(b) *the extent of state regulation*; and
(c) *the degree of administrative centralisation and decentralisation*.

He further developed the relationships between the three senses of ‘stateness’ with the practices and processes of a specific state form. Hay’s moments and levels of stateness will inform the analysis of sport policy in Bulgaria in the three periods because they offer a clear framework for seeing the state in its wholeness and examine its strategic relations.

### 2.3.3. State-society relationships

The third implication of the SRA, pertinent to state-society relationship, concern the notions of representation and interest. These are viewed in the light of Jessop’s assertion that it seems to make no difference whether *the state will achieve full closure or will be separate from society* as long as their boundaries remain uncertain, which is problematic. To aspire to a full closure or to separation presents distinct strategies, political agendas and practices with different implications for various institutions and agents within the state.

Jessop’s third implication referred to the problem of representation, state neutrality among different political forces, and its interests. He went on to reconsider the problem of representation by suggesting that (1990:268):

> interests can only be established in relation to specific strategies and the selectivity of the state systems must be established in terms of the differential opportunities they offer to different political forces to realise their interests in pursuing specific strategies.

This strategic-theoretical model however, poses the need for clarification of two essential aspects which Jessop did not address. First, *representation* has a dual nature. As Dean (1994:150) stated:
collective representations are both forms of description of social identities and relations and in this sense constitute them, and also prescriptions of the legitimate forms of existence possible. The state becomes a focus of such representation.

If different social identities can be defined in relation to their manifest interests as Jessop suggests, for the analysis of interests and strategies it is equally important to consider representation as a structural relation. This relation is seen in terms of recurrent patterns of relationships that link strategic actors to each other and to the larger social system. Secondly, the pursuit of specific strategies clearly implies that attention has to be given not only to the strategic relations between different actors but to the process of their utilisation for achieving short and long term interests, that is, the analysis has to proceed further and examine the policy process itself. The case of School Sports Federation (see Chapter 7) illustrates the workings of representation in a sport-specific context. Using school sport’s manifested interests (as promoted by sport officials) as a sole determinant of their identity would not produce an accurate picture unless we examine strategic relations in the domain, which revealed that ordinary pupils’ interests were largely ignored.

This notion of representation is informative for the analysis of sport policy as it helps to identify the key preconditions for the instigation of the policy process (the pursuit of specific strategies) - establishing the two domains - membership (social identities) and structure (social relations). The policy process as a form of policy analysis will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

So far there could be very little disagreement that the notion of common interest, general will, the national (policy for the nation) and the territory (affected by this policy) constitutes the core of an analysis of the state and sport policy. Jessop’s critical reference to common interests merely as illusory (in the sense that truly common interests never exist), or that they can only be established in relation to specific strategies fell short on three accounts as it does not tell a great deal about:
(i) the interest peculiar nature - why specific strategies identified in terms of actors’ real interests are not pursued (as opposed to those which are acted upon). The Bulgarian Sports Union’s (BSFS) strategy to promote sports services at grass roots level in the early 1980s (an actor’s real interests) was not follow up by practical actions, and further measures for centralised planning and provision were implemented instead,

(ii) the nature of those groups who share it (e.g. professional bureaucrats, practitioners and participants), and

(iii) how these two are articulated as the state’s form changes, that is, whether the real interests (as identified) were acted upon and by which group.

The notion of general will and common interest implies the existence of a community of people to whom these are pertinent and how interests relate to power. Defining society in this sense as the biggest of these social groups and as a key element of the state-society dichotomy is both informative and problematic. Ahrne (1990:24-5) argued that although a particular design of a society has some importance, the integrity demonstrated by its common characteristics is illusory. He preferred to use the metaphor of social landscape instead which, in his words is “a mingling of diverse social processes and phenomena that happened to coincide in a certain place at a certain time”. What is a common and a non-abstract component of a social landscape for Ahrne is the nation-state which can be made material as an organisation, including a sporting one. The central assumption made here, borrowing from Foucault, is that the material form is of great importance for understanding social processes. The way voluntary sport sector in the three periods was organised and structured was indicative of its ability to influence policy making. Ahrne (1990:26) also placed significant importance on the concepts of terrain, territoriality and people as essential elements of a social landscape, predetermining the nature of social interactions. Voluntary sport sector as a community of members representing different sports do not share the same interests (Olympic - non-Olympic sports) but all are equally concerned with international success (which implies a sense of territory and a nation) as a
precondition for gaining privileges. The notion of a natural coincidence in the above definition seems, however, to rule out the existence of consciously developed strategies, guiding actors’ actions, and leading to predictable outcomes.

Interests also are thought of as pertinent to outcomes because they are supposed to be essential (actual or potential) for mobilising agents in struggles. Hindess (1989:36) referred to the actual-potential basis of interests in the case of the actual as to a

'capacity-outcome' conception of power, and in this case reference to interests provides an explanation for why agents act as they do. In the second case, interests are regarded as potential means of mobilization of agents whose ineffectiveness in a given situation has to be explained away

Hindess’ (1989) analysis is informative as it provided a clear account about several key concepts central for a Jessopian approach to the state as well as challenging their uncritical acceptance for explaining power. Building on Weber (1978) and Giddens (1976), he defined the conception of ‘capacity-outcomes’ in terms of the “capacity of an agent to secure something” and:

Outcomes are produced in the course of the agent’s practices which are always subject to definite conditions and obstacles and which often include the practices of other agents. We are concerned with conceptualising the sites of practices (their conditions and obstacles), particularly those in which the obstacles include the opposition of other agents. These are arenas of struggles (Hindess, 1989:28).

In his later works, Giddens developed further the idea of capacity-power-outcome by adding an important qualification concerning the contingent relation between power and conflict. He claimed that: “It is the concept of 'interest', rather than that of power as such, which relates directly to conflict and solidarity” (1993:118). This classification complies with Jessop’s notion of the state as the outcome of past struggles between social groups, which forms the context of, and resources for contemporary struggles. Both the notion of capacity-outcome and interests-conflict-solidarity require attention to be given to the policy process, and with regards to the transformations they inform analysis that an explanation is to be sought in terms of policy’s (strategies’) stated purposes and what this policy is actually achieving. This
relation is exerted by the behaviour of the totalitarian sport-policy elite during recent transformations. After a few years of struggle and tension with state agencies eventually, the leadership of many sports federations accepted the autocratic style of the state (thus, choosing short-term benefits) and abandoned the idea of independence (thus, sacrificing long-term interests).

Further reference to the concept of general will, interests and society suggests that the analysis has to proceed beyond their definition and to link them to how they are articulated by the state. Here interpretations vary as the basic concept of interest for pluralists is individual interest, and for neo-Marxism is class consciousness. While both groups recognise the importance of groups and organisations, their approaches to collective action remain limited by their central assumptions. Offe’s treatment of organisations as collective agents is viewed as a contribution to neo-corporatism. He argued that there are three perspectives from which interest groups can be analysed: that of the individual, that of the organisation and that of the social system (quoted in Cawson, 1985:3). The issue of common interest in a totalitarian society presents a particular case as it negates the distinction between the three forms of interests, and deserves more detailed examination here. As this project argues, it is a central issue which holds the key for understanding the nature of post-Communist transformations in sport.

2.3.4. The state’s power

The fourth implication of the Strategic Relations approach suggests that the state’s power is a form-related condensation of the prevailing balance of power; hence the state as such has no power, and it can only be assessed relationally. The idea of the sources of organised power in society is intertwined, and corresponds closely with the idea of human interactions and interests in different settings, and how it is articulated by the state in enhancing its capacity. As Giddens (1993:117) put it simply “in most general sense, ‘power’ refers to the transformative capacity of human action”. It would be beyond the scope of this chapter, however, to offer an exhaustive discussion on power. Hall’s (1985) analysis emphasised three types of power - political,
ideological and economic - where military power is regarded as part of the political. He (quoted in Rush, 1992:46) saw political power as:

the capacity of some individuals in society to organise and dominate their fellows, economic power as the capacity to organise and develop resources, and ideological power as the capacity to rationalise the organisation of society through belief or value systems.

Thus, political power draws largely on economic and ideological resources which are used primarily, but not exclusively, for political purposes. This view allowed Hall to place power in a broad societal context. The important point argued by Hall concerns the potential for achieving synergy between three powers capable of changing society. As he asserted: "where ideological, political and economic power move in the same direction, it is extremely likely that great social energy will be created..." resulting in societal change, or what he calls "enabling power" (1985:47). Failure to secure synergy results in what Hall called 'blocking power', in which different types of power - political, economic and ideological, conflict with each other and mitigate against a major societal change. Jessop (1990) termed the process of channelling the three powers in one direction as "a state hegemonic project". The effect of 'blocking power' is elaborated in the making of post-totalitarian sports policy (Chapter 6), despite attempts by various state administrations to promote the Europeanisation (hegemonic) project.

Another illuminating account of society from the point of view of power relations is offered by Mann in his comprehensive analysis of The Sources of Social Power. He argues (1986:1) that "societies are constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospacial networks of power." His point is that societies are not unitary and they are not totalities, or social systems. Rather, they can be regarded as an asymmetrical alliance or a loose confederation of stratified allies. What follows from this argument is that any analysis of strategic relations developed as result of social interaction ought to take into account particular sociospacial conjunctures and historical specificity as well as their material form. This is what distinguishes elitist or Marxist unitary views of society from a goal attainment-oriented human society.
We use again Mann's (1986) influential analysis of social power where, in a similar way to Hall, four types of power were identified - ideological, economic, political and military. In discussing the sources from which each of these types of power draws, Mann (1986:22-8) argued that ideological power derives from three interrelated arguments - meaning, norms and aesthetic/ritual practices. Economic power derives from the satisfaction of subsistence needs through the social organisation of the extraction, transformation, distribution and consumption of objects of nature. Political power derives from the usefulness of centralised, institutionalised, territorialized regulation of various aspects of social relations. And military power derives from the necessity of organised physical defence and its usefulness for aggression. Related to the four powers are their ideological, economic, political and military organisations. From Hall's and Mann's accounts it can be concluded that regardless of the type of society and historical specificity, the process of ruling society's affairs involves conscious decisions taken at different levels of formal human organisations, which are grounded on diverse individual and group interests. Those power sources based on the four greatest networks - ideological, economic, political and military - give collective organisation and unity to the infinite variety of social existence because they are capable of generating collective action. Because of its potential to carrying symbolic meaning, and contribution to political (a means for mobilising social support), economic (generating business activity and increasing work productivity) and military (enhancing fitness) aspects, sport lends itself perfectly to the realm of power and becomes a domain of public concern and relations.

To conclude so far: it has been argued that the state can be better understood if several important implications are acknowledged:

- Firstly, state-building always occurs at specific historical conjunctures and involves individual and group actors;
- Secondly, the accepted definition of the state implies that its emergence, development and separation from society should be viewed as a process of past and present struggles, that is, the state seen in motion;
Thirdly, the approach to the state is based on Jessop’s assertion that states never achieve full separation/closure from society and their boundaries are usually in doubt; it will nevertheless challenge this assumption by outlining the difference between closure (totalitarianism) and separation, with several important implications for strategic relations;

Fourthly, the state becomes a focus of representation which involves establishing social identities (domain membership), and social relations (domain structures), as two essential preconditions for initiating the policy process;

Fifthly, human interests (the common will in societal terms) and sources of power are interrelated, and the outcomes produced in the course of agent interactions are predetermined historically by specific conjunctures;

Sixthly, conceived as a resource, power becomes a means to an end. The important question - To what ends or purposes is power put? - can be answered if, as suggested by the Strategic Relations Approach, we examine how projects emerge to promote the general interest which represent a balance of forces within and beyond the state.

The principal benefits of the Strategic Relations approach for the analysis of Bulgarian sport policy include:

- providing a framework for examining different aspects of the state in the three stages of its historical development, and helping to explain strategic selectivity of each towards a particular sports policy model;
- facilitating the identification of the state and its unity in relation to a particular political system and wider social formation and the key sports beneficiaries;
- helping to explore different parameters of the state’s crisis with regard to its representation, institutions, rationality, hegemony and legitimacy, and their impact on shaping relations in sport.

2.4. What did the Strategic Relations Approach fail to attend to?

Despite its comprehensiveness, the Strategic Relations approach did not adequately attend to several important aspects of the state. In his critique of Jessop’s Strategical-
Relational view of the state, Kelly (1999) identified four problematic issues concerning its methodological (questioning the extent to which it is possible to theorise contingency), theoretical (in that a limited view of capitalism as a strictly economic system is given), political (lack of concern about possibility of political or systemic transformation) and social (failure to recognise the role of agency 'free will') premises. His criticism, however, also remained at an abstract level, and did not offer a greater concreteness. In taking into accounting the aims of this project, the rest of the section seeks to overcome this flow of the analysis by addressing the application of the SRA in a non-capitalist (socialist/totalitarian) setting, and in periods of transformation.

2.4.1. Interpreting Strategic Relations in a totalitarian setting

Three main explanations for the origin of totalitarianism have been put forward by commentators studying this phenomenon. The first, whose main advocate is Hannah Arendt (1973), traced the origins of totalitarianism in socio-historical conjunctures in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. She identified four key factors for the development of totalitarianism: the breakdown of traditional community, the enfranchisement of the masses, the creation of a mass movement as a form of identification, and establishing the image of the common enemy.

The second explanation of totalitarianism is ideological and goes back to eighteenth-century messianic beliefs, Rousseau’s concept of the general will, and Jacobin ideas in revolutionary France, all of which were based on the belief that there is 'a sole exclusive truth in politics' (cf. in Rush, 1992:73). It was believed that the creation of an altogether new society, of a new man was possible and necessary to be built on a tabula rasa. A third explanation sought the origin of totalitarianism in psychological tendencies, such as aggression, intolerance and defence of authority exhibited by certain individuals. Notwithstanding that the socio-historical and ideological explanations enjoy greater popularity in the literature, when combined together, these three sources of explanation have an essential bearing on the analysis of the totalitarian state.
At the level of definition, two types have been advanced - the phenomenological (Zhelev, Bulgaria's president 1990-1997, 1990, Friedrich, 1969 cited in Rush, 1992) and the essentialist (Lefort, 1986). Both types of definition emphasise the supremacy of the political dimension in the society-politics relationship. Accounting for the two approaches, Rush (1992:72) suggested a short definition of totalitarianism which helps to grasp its nature: "a social system involving the political control of and intervention in all aspects of public and private life". However, as he argued (1992:77-78),

the term 'totalitarian' clearly implies an absolute rather than a relative state of affairs, but for analytical purposes this is a disadvantage, since not only can it be argued that no society has ever been totalitarian in the absolute sense, but it means that a given society must be classified as totalitarian or not"...."applied therefore as a tendency rather than an absolute, totalitarianism is more useful analytical tool.

The analysis of the historical development of the Bulgarian state complies with this conclusion, despite totalitarianism's almost unchallenged success between the 1960s and the 1980s. To understand fully the issue of Strategic Relations in a totalitarian setting an analysis needs to elaborate on the nature of the three key interrelated implications - state-society relationships, forms of representation and interests, and power, which are constitutive of totalitarianism and the Strategic Relations Approach. They will be discussed in turn below.

2.4.2. State-society relationships under totalitarianism

A distinguishing feature of the constitution of totalitarianism is the achievement of a full closure between the state and civil society which is based on the denial of the very principle which distinguishes between them. As Lefort (1986:280) put it "it is the very principle of a distinction between what belongs to the order of power, to the order of law and to the order of knowledge which is negated." Furthermore, the denial of the signs of division between state and society is linked intrinsically to the abolition of the signs of internal social division. What is rejected is the social heterogeneity of society, the existence of a variety of modes of life, behaviour and opinion, in so far as they contradict the image of a society in harmony with itself.
These two moments of the totalitarian project, according to Lefort (1986:286), "imply a de-differentiation of the agencies that govern the constitution of a political society". The outcome of their imposition is the creation of a society with increased homogeneity and concern with the problems of its organisation. In such a society, to quote Lefort (1986:280) again,

_the state alone appears to all and represents itself to itself as the sole instituting principle, as the great actor that possesses the means of social transformation and the knowledge of all things. It is the emergence of this 'point of view of the state' - of a state potentially at the centre of power and knowledge - that makes possible the formidable expansion of bureaucracies, whose members may cultivate their own interests and derive as much power and advantage as possible from it, on the alleged basis of their sovereign distance from those who are administrated._

This image of the totalitarian type of society appears to be in contrast with the society described by Ahrne and Mann (pages 24-7) in its totality and harmony, but clearly complies with the notion advanced by these authors, that the material form is of great importance for understanding social processes.

In a monumental work on _The Origins of Totalitarianism_, Arendt (1973:311) argued that:

_Masses are not held together by a consciousness of common interest and they lack the specific class articulateness which is expressed in determined, limited and obtainable goals._

The argument here is that these people cannot be integrated into any organisation based on common interest, such as political parties, professional bodies or trade unions. Conversely to the typical political party approach based on the promise of exchange - 'vote us in power and we will serve you' - the totalitarian movement offered in a unique way to bring these people onto the political scene. Unlike democracy, or any other state form, a totalitarian regime creates a whole class of rulers. Offe's useful distinction (in Ost 1993:459) between "class organisations" and "policy-takers" helps to better understand this process. The former include those organised groups that play a key role in shaping an economy through their role in the
market, and that seek to influence the state to help the market positions of their members. “Policy-takers” on the other hand, are those collectives shaped not by the market, but by the state, and are responsible for implementation within the framework given by the state. Thus, the totalitarian state assumes a decisive role in shaping interests. Although in a different political context, Jessop (1990:269) also referred to this category in terms of collective consumers or a political community representing interests constructed around the policies pursued by the state.

In the Soviet Union, Gorbachev himself said that this bureaucratic class numbered 18 million (quoted in Bukovsky, 1990:14). In Bulgaria, by 1989 this group in the field of sport was proportionally very substantial as well, having reached in excess of 4,000 professional sport policy-takers (these were managers paid by the state, not allowing for technical and pedagogical staff). As this ruling class did not have a choice, its historical mission was to be in and to maintain power. When it seized power in 1944, the membership of the Bulgarian Communist Party amounted to only 15,000, but reached one million members (every fourth working person; plus a compulsory membership for all 9 to 19 year olds in the Youth Communist League) forty years later, recruited mostly from the industrial and agricultural masses.

2.4.3 Representations and interests in totalitarianism

To explain away the difference between a capitalist and a totalitarian state we have to examine the third implication of the SRA - that of representation and interests. We do that by identifying the key representations which make up the ideological matrix of the totalitarian state system. Lefort (1986:286-9) discerned four such key forms of representation: the People-as-One image, the organisation, the social-historical creation, and that of society’s transparency to itself.

The People-as-One image is an ideological construct based on the belief that in a socialist society there can be no internal division, no other division than that between inside and outside. Consequently, combined with the image of the Power-as-One it
advances the image of the proletariat as identical to the people and the Party, and of
the Party with leadership, of the leadership with an ultimate figure. There are two
important strategic implications behind this notion, that -

a) the power is concentrated in an individual who embodies the unity and
the will of the people, and can be represented by a great Other - the
ultimate figure of that power (the Egocrat in Solzhenitsyn's term); and

b) the image can be affirmed if what is different from it is defined as alien
or enemy. The totalitarian project can successfully accomplish the
process of asserting people's identity only, if at the same time it points
out the enemy.

This process of double identification (with the people and the enemy) is best captured
by the metaphor of the body. As the integrity of the body depends on the elimination
of its parasites, so the pursuit of the enemy (in the form of regular ideological,
organisational or ethnic purges) is seen as a form of necessary social prevention of
'infection'. The People-as-One image is informative in that it reveals the social basis
of support for a totalitarian (or other) project. It can be viewed as similar to Jessop's
One Nation hegemonic project (1990:211-2) where the support of the entire
population is mobilised through material concessions and symbolic rewards. The two
images differ, however, in the use of moral and physical coercion on the part of the
totalitarian state. The strategic outcome of the first ideological representation is a
justification for the introduction of the Body Politics - the establishment by a supreme
body (the Party) of a uniform conception for every sphere of public life including
sport, and performance criteria corresponding to it.

This leads analysis to the second form of ideological representation - the organisation.
The novelty of the totalitarian project is in its attitude to the entire society as a vast
organisation comprising a network of micro-organisations. This new society is
simultaneously organised and organizable. It is organised in the sense that every
individual or collective member’s position and function is well predetermined, and
imprinted in this organisation. It is organizable - because it is perceived as an amorphous matter which lends itself to the intervention of the constantly working organiser, the builder of Communism. Effective organisation also becomes the supreme criterion for gauging the action and knowledge of the leader.

The next form of representation which complements the above image of the organisation is a social-historical creation. It derives from the myth of a social raw material offered to the power of the organiser, the creator of an already known future. The last representation - society's transparency to itself - rests on an irrational viewpoint of power possessing total knowledge of reality which aspires to be society's knowledge of itself. It developed as result of the merger between state and society, and bears clear implications for the practices of the organiser. Since he possesses the knowledge and the skills to organise society's affairs, and his performance is assessed by the results of the organisation, the most adequate framework for exhibiting this power appears to be the omnipresent state Plan. The plan represented the capacity of society to exhibit itself to itself, and following Marx's prophecy for the inevitable victory of Communism world-wide, involved an ever-increasing spiral of organisational outcomes aiming to demonstrate society's progression. The effectiveness of socialist organisation in sport is evidenced by the reports of sports organisations, which had always claimed an ever-increasing trend of more participants, medals and events.

2.4.4. The Totalitarian power

What follows for the policy and sport policy process from this analysis of the totalitarian state and its forms of representation is a new and unprecedented approach to power, based as Arendt (1973:417) argued, on

\textit{supreme disregard for immediate consequences rather than ruthlessness; rootlessness and neglect of national interests rather than nationalism; contempt for utilitarian motives rather than unconsidered pursuit of self-interest; "idealism," i.e., their unwavering faith in a ideological fictitious world, rather than lust for power...}
Subsequently, this led into the introduction of *Body Politics* comprising a uniform state strategy (based on the general interest as defined by the state, and the image of the strong male body) for the whole sports movement, practical approaches for its implementation (the means and degrees of freedom of the actors involved) and the ultimate criterion for its assessment (plan quotas). The manifestation of the above aspects in Bulgarian sports policy has been detailed elsewhere (Girginov, 1999, 2000). Clearly, this configuration of interests, actors and strategies does not fit into Jessop’s Strategic Relations Approach as it contradicts its very premises, which assume a free movement of various actors on the political scene trying to put forward different strategies to satisfy their interests.

A totalitarian state does not fit into interpretations of the SRA’s fourth implication regarding power and asserts a different vision of it. Arendt’s (1973:418) analysis described it as: “*power, as conceived by totalitarianism, lies exclusively in the force produced through organisation*”. Most of all, it was social power representing society itself *qua* conscious. As the dividing line between state and society disappeared, so did the dividing line between political power and administrative power, resulting in the state apparatus losing its independence from the Communist party and its leadership. Another important implication of this process is that it blurs the boundaries of different state bureaucracies by not fixing their prerogatives. The multiplication and duplication of administrative with Party offices destroys all sense of responsibilities and competence. Thus, the basis of bureaucratic power is not found in private property, it is not of a material kind. Instead, it is generated collectively and derived from the state-Party power which possessed all the means of production.

This is what makes totalitarianism politically possible - destroying any guarantee of competence in every sphere of the bureaucracy, including sport. All strategic decisions in the totalitarian (and the capitalist and democratic) period concerning the conceptual and practical policy orientations of sport were formulated by the State (i.e. the Bulgarian Communist party) and given to sport organisations nation-wide for
implementation. Political intervention pervaded even the technical sphere of sport - at the level of event organisation and coaching.

In totalitarianism the merging of the state and society, the identification of power and society, party and the state, and power and the position of the leader stemmed from the same necessity. By contrast with a democratic capitalist society where power appears as an empty contented place, is not fixed by law or linked to a body, and is impossible to wholly appropriate even by those who exercise public authority, in a socialist Totalitarian state this logic is reversed, and power is materialised in an organ - a body capable of concentrating in itself all the forces of society. The strength that such state power emanates, however, is ostensible despite its conformity with the notion established above (Hall, 1985) of the ‘enabling’ power based on the synergy between ideological, political and economic forces in harmony.

Although Jessop (1990:269-70) argued that the state as such has no power, and brought into the analysis the importance of all actors, including state managers and forces resistant to state intervention, he did not account for some dimensions of state power. Weiss and Hobson’s (1995:6-8) study on States and Economic Development helps us to understand the significance of this concept, particularly with regard to states undergoing drastic transformations. This study advanced the notion of despotic and infrastructural power of the state based on the difference between its penetrative and extracting capacity. They identified three key dimensions of state power - ‘penetrative’ which entails the ability of a state to reach into and directly interact with the population; ‘extractive’, referring to the ability of the state to extract resources from society; and ‘negotiated’, which in today’s societies is manifested in the capacity for co-ordinating the economy, and involves strategic institutionalised forms of collaboration between political and industrial actors.

According to this classification, totalitarian regimes fall into the category of despotic (weak) states as they can only generate low to moderate penetrative and extractive
power. Perhaps to explain this seeming contradiction of the omnipotent totalitarian state it is worth recalling a popular folklore from totalitarian times - "they (the state) lie to us for they are paying, and we lie to them for we are working". Weiss and Hobson concluded that:

*state strength increases with the effective embedding of autonomy, whereas state weakness ensues from despotic abrasion against society. This is the irony of state strength: the more autonomous a state is, the more isolated it is from social groups, with a low amount of economic and social energy created. Conversely, the more embedded a state's autonomy through supportive social linkages, the more economic and social energy can be generated* (1995:7-8).

In short, similarly to Jessop's Strategic Relations approach, the argument here is that modern states are more likely to pursue their projects by engaging in a complex network of competition and collaboration. As the last transformation of Bulgarian society has proved, the enhancement of state capacity for negotiation internally and externally is crucial for successfully achieving its strategic goals. The merit of Weiss and Hobson's neo-statist account for the analysis of strategic relations, however, seems to lie in the integration of the international variables for explaining the state's autonomy, strategy and capacity, an aspect which remains largely ignored by Jessop.

### 2.4.5. Strategic relations in a socialist (non-capitalist) setting

Having suggested the incongruency between capitalist and socialist reality, though, we have to consider the validity of some of the SRA's claims for socialist societies. As the analysis demonstrated, the totalitarian notion of general interests and the ultimate power of a socialist organiser makes the position of individuals and agencies in the state system highly uncertain. Although in a very controlled manner, this reinforces the struggle between agents to secure their place in or near the core of the state apparatus. Different states also tend to use similar approaches for mobilising support. These observations justify the position towards totalitarianism not as an absolute, but rather as a tendency and urge analysts to examine the reasons behind totalitarian forms of representation and intervention. This will be partly achieved by
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bringing in a global dimension which Jessop’s Strategic Relations approach did not acknowledge.

Lefort’s arguments and the preceding discussion are very instructive as they identified the totalitarian state as the possessor of ultimate knowledge about everything, the last instance of the truth, and the only agent capable of carrying out radical social transformations. These three essential characteristics of the omnipotent totalitarian state - as (a) identified with, and (b) whose power stems from society, and (c) which is represented by the metaphor of the body - entail reconsideration of the key premises of the Strategic Relations approach. As stated above, Jessop’s account is pluralistic in the sense, that it sees the state as a strategic terrain, an ‘empty space’ where different interests are competing. In this scenario, society’s agenda formulation can be viewed as a ‘bottom-to-top approach’ resulting from the struggle of various actors to maximise the benefits of their strategic position in particular historic conjunctures. The totalitarian project reverses this process and makes it ‘top-to-bottom’. The affirmation of totality requires the denial of difference between the norms which define different modes of activities and institutions, and the materialisation of power into one organ - the body. Individuals and collective agents appear subordinated to the aims of the omnipotent socialist organisation and are subject to political authority.

One crucial difference in establishing strategic relations in a capitalist and a totalitarian society with great implications for sport seems to be the relationship between actors’ positions in the state system and their ability to advocate transformation. Totalitarianism is a reality that in principle is already mastered - no innovation that might transgress the boundaries of an already known future is tolerated. In comparison in a typical capitalist society individuals and institutions try to promote strategies in order to change their position in the system, the same actors in totalitarianism find themselves confined by the principle of general organisation, with their only option to assert the fantasised general interest.
2.4.6. Strategic Relations and the Politics of Transformations

As outlined before, the Strategic Relations approach informed analysis about the significance of specific historical settings within which state-society relations evolved, identifying four basic implications of such an approach. Thus, the question of how a particular state and society (Bulgaria) is defined in the above terms becomes of equal importance for understanding the process of transformations subject to analysis. We refer again to Brecht’s model of explanation that implied our ability to understand a transformation is determined by our ability to understand the nature of the capitalist or the communist state. In the Bulgarian case, social and historical facts about recent and past transformations so far have conformed very little to the *a priori* notions of equal opportunities and social justice, and market economy and democracy proclaimed respectively by socialism and the modern democratic society. Is this a unique feature of Bulgaria’s development, or is it a typical scenario for any revolutionary or evolutionary process?

In her analysis of the state and major social catalysts (situations in which societal crises have culminated in the emergence of new socio-political arrangements) using the French, Russian and Chinese revolutions as examples of transformation, Skocpol (1979:171) argued that “epicycles were always added to the basic model whenever necessary to justify detours on the road to national power”. The point made here in examining the role of revolutionary leaderships, ideologies and practices, is that the outcomes produced by the three revolutions corresponded very little with their aspirations and proclaimed mechanisms. This conclusion complies with the observations made in the opening chapter concerning the projects and transformations in Bulgarian history. These observations, along with the premises of SRA, therefore, pose two interrelated issues which need clarification:

(i) about the logic of transformation as a perceptual and three-way socio-economic-political process, and

(ii) the level of transformation in terms of nationhood, constitutional order and ‘normal politics’ (state intervention in the process of distributing resources and rights).
The term ‘transformation’ (to change the condition, character or function) is closely associated with the term ‘crisis’ which derives from the Greek ‘krizis’ (literally ‘to decide’) and implies a moment of transformation. Although this analysis does not use the two terms interchangeably, it will consider the crisis as an essential precondition for transformation, and so the two can be viewed as inseparable. Habermas’ (1975, quoted in Hay, 1996: 87) definition of crisis that it “cannot be separated from the viewpoint of the one who is undergoing it” and the etymology of the term, imply that crucial to understanding transformation is the fusion between subjective perceptions and objective conditions. In his critical theory of crisis, borrowing from Habermas (1975), Hay (1996: 87) argues that:

*crisis is a lived (and hence subjective) experience and a moment of action and intervention in the shaping of institutions and the reshaping of the state. For a crisis to provide the opportunity for decisive intervention it must be perceived as so doing - it must be seen as a moment in which a decisive intervention can (and perhaps must) be made.*

This intervention and the moment of transition from one condition (of the state or sport) to another is what constitutes the transformation.

Clearly, the emphasis of an analysis of transformations will be placed on the actual process, and not, as the transition between different conditions implies, on the destination. A consideration for not defining the transformation in terms of a particular outcome (destination), rests in the fact that the criteria for what constitutes a transformation and what does not, in the three periods concerned particularly with reference to the post-communist experience, were not clear, either for the key actors or for ordinary participants (see Ellen, 1990). Stark’s (1992:22, quoted in Bryant and Mokrzycki, 1994:4) explanation of the process of transformation as one “in which the introduction of new elements take place most typically in combination with adaptations, rearrangements, permutations, and reconfigurations of already existing institutional forms” illustrates the point. This understanding also suggests conformity with the two previously established premises -
a) Jessop’s notion of the contingency and uncertainty of the outcomes of struggles (seen here as equivalent of destination), and

b) with Williams’ (1977) thesis about the residual and emergent, in that the legacy of the previous form of the state and society cannot be discounted, which in turn confirms Jessop’s idea that previous contests form the conditions for recent/current struggles.

Three points deserve attention. First, the definition of crisis and transformation means considering their temporal characteristics. Hay stated that in so doing we distinguish two aspects of crisis: synchronic and diachronic. “A synchronic analysis focuses upon the contradictions and crisis tendencies existing within a particular system at a particular moment” (1996:87). It is a snapshot of the state-society structural relations (including sport) at a specific point in time. “A diachronic analysis... focuses upon the historical development of a system with time”... and ... “looks at the actual way in which a crisis develops and unfolds historically within a system or set of structures.” Thus, in this sense, the process of crisis development can be seen as the actual process of transformations, and more specifically, as a simultaneous conceptual and structural transformation of the sport system.

Secondly, from a Strategic Relations perspective the very process of transformation inevitably invites analysis to account for actors (individual and group) and events in which actors get involved. As the interaction unfolds, it evokes as defined by Habermas’s (1975) two different crises (transformations) - that of the system and of the identity. The former refers to the breakdown of the integrity of the system, which in our case involves state-society relations (including sport), and also the relations between the state apparatus and various actors. The latter refers to the erosion of social integration resulting in the loss of identity. To illustrate this claim with a specific example, during Bulgaria’s last transformation, for three years (1989-1992), from being a clearly defined area of state policy, sport became a “no-man’s land”. Simultaneously, institutions and individuals lost their identification with projects previously promoted by the state which guaranteed their position in the system.
As the above discussion based on Habermas' and Hay's propositions suggested, system transformation (crisis) is associated with the objective conditions and unresolved problems, while system identification is tied to subjective perceptions of the transformation. From a Strategic Relations standpoint, it is informative to link actors and events to these two aspects of transformation. The notion of living experience constitutes the objective conditions of the transformation and has particular bearing on the establishing strategic relations between actors at various levels of the system as they engage in events. Actors' interpretations of these events and the informal communication network in which they are part refer to the subjective perception of transformations and form the ground for their assessment and the nature of future strategic alliances.

Thirdly, the consideration given to the two facets of reality - objective conditions and subjective perceptions which, correspond to actors'-events' relationship - brings to the fore another important aspect of the process of forming strategic relations and their political consequences. The point here is that we are confronted with a situation where the real problem (the crisis of the capitalist or totalitarian economic system) is substituted by an ideological interpretation (the advance of socialism or democracy). It is ideological because, as we have seen, it reflects only a partial view of the problem, distorts reality into a false and limited picture, and does not tackle the problem over the long term. Habermas' (1975, 1979) contribution of 'logic of crisis displacement' captured in an original way the intervention of the state in the economy. He described it as a process in which the fundamental crisis originating in the economy became the responsibility of the political system (the state) as supreme regulator of the economy. Thus, the crisis is displaced from the economy to the political system, where it becomes manifested as a rationality crisis.

Offe's insightful account of the complex process of transformation of totalitarian regimes supports the point. He (1996:41) argued that:
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The introduction of a market economy in the post-socialist societies is a 'political' project, which has prospects of success only if it rests on a strong and explicit democratic legitimation.

Such a situation, according to Offe, presents a number of crucial paradoxes (the Pandora’s box of paradoxes in his words), in the face of which “every ‘theory’ - or, for that matter, rational strategy of transition must fail.” Offe, in a way similar to Habermas, asserted that only a developed market economy produces the social structural conditions necessary for stable democracy and makes it possible to form compromises within the framework of what is perceived as a positive-sum game. These conclusions are being confirmed by empirical studies (see Walder, 1995 and Dostal, 1998 in particular), and take Habermas’ argument for understanding transformations further, by bringing in two useful dimensions - about the logical order or simultaneity of transformations, and the degree of what Jessop (1990:267) called institutional fixity.

In fact, the latter dimension presupposes the former. At this point, a plausible conclusion would be - the more contingent ‘givings’ a transforming society carries over, the less the correlation between its economic and political reform. Offe also stressed attention on the three levels of transformation including nationhood, constitutional order and normal political practices. Although Hay (1996) made specific reference to the notions of territoriality and the nation, neither he nor Jessop developed the idea of transforming the state territory and the nation, or examined its effect on actors’ strategies, rather they seemed to have taken the spirit of the constitution and political culture of the capitalist society for granted. It must be stressed here that most state boundaries were drawn between 1870 and 1925. In the Bulgarian case, several previous (1878-1941), and the 1945 fixings of national boundaries (politically reconfirmed in 1990) represented rather an arbitrary process controlled by Britain, France, Germany and Russia. Each was accompanied by a massive movement of people and debates over their national identity. The blueprint of the territorial-nationhood issue could be seen in the state projects of all regimes dominating the national political stage since 1878.
A similar logic can be applied to the sport system or sport policy making and the state's intervention in it. The crisis of socialism which, indeed originated in the failure of the command economy, and its model of sport (which simply meant the state's financial withdrawal) is being replaced by an interpretation offered by the state for a more democratic system of sport (meaning in practice less overt compliance by sport to a particular ideology). This becomes possible because sport does not have the internal capacity to resolve the crisis, and naturally looks for a political solution suggested by the state as its supreme regulator, in order to allow the process of accumulation (the provision of better resources and greater national-international achievements) to be sustained. But at the same time the new policy is clearly ideological, because it represents only a partial and short term solution of the financial problems of sport and does not address the world trend of an ever-increasing economic and political significance of sport, and the state's involvement in its financial and conceptual facilitation, but not its appropriation.

This logic of crisis displacement in the economy or in sport at national level is reinforced by the way they depend on global economic and sport systems. Developments in both systems nationally are influenced by changes in supply and demand for particular products and by more competitive and commercialised sport respectively. Taylor's (1985) approach to power and politics in the world economy makes a useful distinction between the scale of experience and the scale of reality and helps to trace the origins of political processes of transformations. Thinking of transformations in terms of a policy and more specifically about the role of the state, we need to examine the articulation of what was termed 'lived experience' and the 'scale of reality'. For Taylor, the scale of experience is, for example, the closure of a dominant industry and the repercussions for the local community. A sport example would be the closure of a specialist sport boarding school and its consequences for local, regional and national strategies for talent identification, and developing and nurturing the national sport system. The nationalisation of this industry, or leaving the future of the sporting school to the discretion of local authorities would represent a partial and short term solution to the problem. This is because, as Taylor (1985:31) argued for the economy, these problems derive from the scale of reality - both supply
and demand for our hypothetical industry, but also because the genuine striving for sporting excellence and international success are global in scope. This dispatches them to a level “where nobody can reach it” despite individual or group actors’ concerns. Thus, it is at the scale of ideology that the policy emerges in offering partial and short term solutions.

The unfolding of the state policy of transformation as process follows the format - the needs of accumulation are experienced locally (the closure of a sport boarding school), and justified nationally (to improve the efficiency of the national sport system) for benefits organised globally (to help the world expansion of competitive-elite sport, the multi-national companies and the mass media associated with this process, and the international sport governing bodies). Within this framework, various actors pursue different strategies and form alliances. It could be argued, then, that it is the ideology that separates experience from reality. This conclusion adds another dimension to the discourse of the state suggested by Jessop (1990: 260), and his notion of the state as the site, the generator and the product of strategies. What emerges from the above discussion, is that the state can also be viewed as a mediator of global strategies, engaging national actors and shaping the projects they put forward and their outcomes. Globalization of the economic, political and cultural sphere poses a much debated recently issue for the role of the state, and the consequences for the policies pursued nationally. The next section will take further the discussion about globalization and its consequences for the state-society relations and sport policy.

2.5. Globalization, the Nation-State and changing Strategic Relations: implications for sport policy

Finally, the Strategic Relations approach did not attend to the external influences responsible for shaping state-society relations and the making of sports policy. Following the primary focus of this study, this section has three interrelated aims to:

(i) outline the nature of contemporary globalization in sport and adopt a framework for its interpretation;
(ii) examine the effects of globalization on the nation-state, and to

(iii) consider various responses of the state to the process of globalization with regard to the strategies pursued in the sport domain.

Since McLuhan launched his influential idea of the 'global village' (in Explorations in Communications, 1960), most of the last forty years have seen a proliferation of literature on globalization. The very idea, as most theorists would agree, is not new, but the novelty of the current debates was brought by the post-World War II settlements, and particularly by the demise of Communism in Europe and elsewhere at the end of 1980s. Recently Robertson (1992:58-9), using a temporal-historical approach, offered a useful outline for comprehending the global circumstance. He identified five successive phases: Germinal (from the early fifteenth until the mid-eighteenth century), Incipient (from the mid-eighteenth century until the 1870s), Take-off (from the 1870s until the mid 1920s), Struggle-for-Hegemony (from the mid-1920s until the late 1960s), and Uncertainty (from the late 1960s and displaying crisis tendencies in the early 1990s). In the light of these five phases, it appears that contemporary globalization is to be perceived broadly as a process of changing patterns of hegemony and establishing a new world order.

As stated above, the aims of this section can be accomplished by employing different perspectives. Robertson and Khondker (1998:33) identified four overlapping types of globalization discourse:

- **regional** (civilization) - such as in Western or Eastern Europe,
- **disciplinary** - in business, political or cultural studies,
- **ideological** - Left or Right, and
- **female-male**.

These ideas are taken up in chapter eight. The approach to this analysis will be multidisciplinary and multidimensional, and informed by political, economic and sociological premises. Political studies provide the concept of statehood and its
dimensions; economic studies the idea of the ‘economy of ideas’, based on increasing intangible returns rather than “things”; sociology as the understanding of society with its multiple interests and relations. Hence, globalization will be seen both synchronically, in terms of its one-shot specific manifestation, and diachronically, that is, to account for the changes in the relations between the nation-state and the global system over the past century.

The analysis also assumes that, contrary to the age of Empires at present, globalization unfolds in a world of nation-states established in the nineteenth century, whose European part was lastly reshuffled by the breakdown of the Soviet Union into fifteen independent countries, the reunification of Germany, and the fragmentation of Yugoslavia. This world order, or as has been called, the Westphalian world order, evolved over the period of three centuries, and according to McGrew (1997:5), is based on four key principles:

1. Territoriality - states have fixed territorial boundaries which define the limits to their legal jurisdiction and the scope of their political authority.
2. Sovereignty - within these fixed territorial spaces the state, or government, claims effective supremacy; it claims the undisputed and exclusive right to rule and to represents the ultimate source of legal and political authority over the people within a delimited territory;
3. Autonomy - states are entitled to conduct their own internal and external affairs in a manner which only they are competent to decide and free from external intervention and control;
4. Legality - relations between sovereign states may be subject to international law but only in so far as each state consents to being so bound.

These four principles clearly underpin Jessop’s Strategic Relations approach and Hay’s moments and levels of stateness, as the latter assume and define the state within the former. But as it is discussed further in this section, it is the globalization project which challenges this notion of the immutable sovereign statehood, and entails re-examining its key aspects, such as common interests, representation and political authority. It does not undermine, however, the premises of Strategic Relations, rather
it brings to the fore new dimensions which have bearing on the policy making process, and the sport policy making process in particular.

2.5.1. Globalization-definitions and interpretations

Globalization is defined in many different ways. A broad overview of the debate suggests that there are three overlapping perspectives - cultural, political and economic. For Robertson, who put stress on the cultural dimension (1998:29-30), in its most basic sense

*globalization involves the compression of the entire world, on the one hand, and a rapid increase in consciousness of the world, on the other. Contemporary globalization has produced a global circumstance in which civilization, regions, nation-states, nations within or cutting across states, and indigenous people, are increasingly constrained to construct their own histories and identities.*

Amongst the prominent advocates of political dimensions, Giddens (1990) maintained that globalization is a consequence of modernity, which he saw as a Western product. The reductionist thesis of globalization sees it as at root economic, and "**contends that we now live in a world economy dominated by transnational corporations (TNCs), that invest wherever they like in a footloose manner**" (Kiely, 1998:96).

A different view of globalization accounting for cultural and political dimensions was advanced by Beyer (1998:80) as "**the emergence of a global society whose central dynamic can be understood in terms of mutual conditioning of systemic structures and cultural resources**". Although McGrew can be classified as a representative of the world polity perspective, his basic interpretation of globalization "**simply as growing global interconnectedness**" (1997:7) was not politically bound and helps us to grasp the idea of transcendency of traditional state-society boundaries, and the mutual dependency of structures and agencies at global as well as local and national level. This interconnectedness, according to McGrew, has four attributes, implying:

a) expanded social, political and economic activities across national frontiers in such a way that events and decisions in one part of the
world have immediate effect for individuals and communities in distant parts of the globe;

b) intensification in the flows of patterns of interaction which make states part of a global trade or world sport order;

c) blurring the distinction between local and global as result of growing extensity of global interactions, so a “*domestic* decision by the German Bundesbank to raise interest rates in Germany can lead to houseowners in the UK paying more for their mortgages” (1997:7); and

d) growing interconnectedness generating a host of transnational problems, for instance, the spread of drug taking in sport, or the need for uniform regulations and practices in administering the International Olympic Committee global TOP marketing programme. These problems cannot be resolved by the efforts of individual governments or national sport governing bodies alone, and demand multilateral co-operation.

From the discussion so far, it is evident that globalization implies a constant polarity between global and local, which consequently brings into play the consideration of two different realities - the global and the local, which often seem to be at odds with each other. In fact the global cannot be defined without the local, an argument captured in the coining of a new term- ‘glocalization’. But as Johnson et al (1995:378) warned “*in conceptualizing our world we must not fall into the trap of thinking that geographical scales exist separately from the social practices that create and continue to modify them.*” The image of the ‘local’ nation-state was shaped as outlined above, by the Westphalian institution of sovereign statehood. Globalization, as we have seen, is associated with the transformation of Westphalian order, and has significant implications for state-society relationships and state shared sovereignty and control over national territory by international agencies. Such an account, of course, is not unproblematic, as the problem of contingency arising from state sovereignty and the setting of rules for relations with other sovereign units (global) is
not the same as the issue of building national statehood (local). Bearing this in mind, analysis will proceed further by examining how globalization affects stateness.

2.5.2. Globalization and the nation-state: effects and responses

Generally, it is argued that globalization has challenged four aspects of the state: its competence, its form, its authority; and its legitimacy (McGrew, 1997). Drawing from twenty contributions examining geoeconomic, geopolitical, geosocial, geocultural and geoenvironmental changes, Johnson, Taylor and Watts (1995:381-3) have identified six fundamental remappings for a basic understanding of the current trajectory of our world. They will be used as a framework for examining the effect on the stateness, and discussed in turn.

First, it is the trend to economic globalization which, involves a new division of labour, an enhanced role of finance, increased capital mobility, and a flow of more intangible products - ideas (from software to media images) than things. The latter is of particular significance for sport and is perfectly illustrated by Olympic sport, and will be elaborated in more detail. This type of economic growth become possible because the cost of reproducing an idea is essentially zero and returns increase indefinitely with the scope of the market. As Evans (1997:77) argued:

> the magnitude of returns of an idea does not flow from a logic of marginal production cost in a meaningful sense of the term, but it does depend on authoritative decisions, like the determination of the duration of the copyright and patent protection and the intellectual property regime more generally.

It is not accidental that struggles over the issue of appropriation, and specifically the question of intellectual property rights, is a top priority of the United States' international economic policy. American senior officials and experts had to put a lot of effort including various incentives and threats to align Bulgaria’s legislation and enforcement policy with international standards, to ensure that the intellectual rights will be observed because allegedly the country was placed amongst the leaders on the US list for software piracy of musical CDs in particular (estimated for 1997 to amount
S$125 millions in lost profit for US companies). The case of the global information economy, and especially of intangible assets, provides an example of how powerful transnational economic actors, while wanting to limit the state’s ability to constrain their own activities, also have an interest in stronger states to guarantee the increased scope of the market, and ultimately their profit.

By stepping into a new area of legislation and economic policy as a response to global pressures, the state takes away from public and private institutions a lucrative source of revenue, but at the same time, gives to an independent sports actor a significant source of income. Until 1995, for forty years the Bulgarian National Bank amongst others was a main exploiter of the five Olympic rings (a registered intellectual property of the IOC) in using the symbol for commemorative coins and not paying any royalties. Eventually after five years of struggle, the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (the only authorised guardian of the symbol in the national territory) had to threaten to take the case to the international court in the Hague, and thus to use another supra-national institution’s authority to make the BNB comply in future. This incident may not be of crucial significance for global sport, but if the BNB has to pay for what has been unlawfully appropriated, the amount due would have taken the whole budget of Bulgarian sport for at least five years.

The second remapping involves the promotion of markets as resource allocators in an increasingly deregulated world. As Johnson et al (1995:382) pointed out “all social activity is premised on the existence of rules: deregulation presupposes an alternative regulation.” This observation is valid, particularly for the transforming economies of Eastern European countries as the striving to ‘join the West’ on many occasions led states to confuse market principles with market practices. After the demise of socialist economic integration within the framework of CMEA, a new institutional economics emerged stressing the importance of institutional regimes to any kind of economic transaction. This served, as Evans (1997:78) said, to “further generalize the argument that efficient markets can exist only in the context of effective and robust nonmarket institutions.” So far, in most of the post-Communist countries, the state has failed
generally to ensure a tax discipline and policy adequate to the liberalisation of the market, and this has resulted in cutbacks of social programmes, including the health service, education and sport. The lack of clear vision by Bulgaria's post-Communist governments about privatisation has also led to the loss of many sporting properties-facilities, services and assets - which were transferred to private actors and served different purposes, with no compensations to the sports community.

The third remapping represents a challenge to state sovereignty. There is no doubt that global flows have changed the functions of the state, and led to arguments that the power of nation states as administrative and policy-making agencies and their role as economic managers have declined. However, this does not mean the eclipse of the state. States generally remain the supreme authority in their national territories and appear to be a key source of legitimacy to markets and social activities, and deregulator of authority to powers above and below the national level, which makes them essential agents for adjusting to the changing environment.

In responding to the previous challenge a fourth remapping - the construction of new civil societies in which people can engage in social change through their states - is required. The central part of the argument here suggests that following the global changes discussed above, for state strategies to sustain themselves, adequate policies are needed to set a framework for state-civil society relationships. In the case of post-totalitarian societies, this may prove extremely difficult, because for several decades traditional community ties were abandoned and distorted. In the aftermath of the Eastern European revolutions from the end of the 1980s, accompanied by massive reforms (see the second re-mapping in particular), many social institutions have been eliminated on ideological or ill-interpreted 'market' grounds. As yet, they have not been replaced by new democratic institutions, and this gap is acutely felt in, amongst other places, Bulgarian sport. Clearly ideologically driven, state intervention in sport since 1992 has managed, in a systematic manner, to weaken and eventually to dismantle completely the principal voluntary umbrella sport governing body - the Bulgarian Sports Union, so that the State Committee for Physical Education and
Sport’s authority over national sport is now absolutely uncontested. Putman’s perspective (1993, quoted in Evans, 1997: 80) - ‘strong society, strong state’- is informative here as it suggested that:

*just as modern markets depend on economic decision being nested in a predictable institutional framework, likewise civic engagement flourishes more easily among private citizens and organised groups when they have a competent public sector as an interlocutor.*

With regard to sport, it is easy to agree on the interlocutor’s role of the state, but certainly not on its self-proclaimed supreme supervisor’s role.

The fifth remapping, as Johnson et al (1995: 383) pointed out, “genuinely transcends the state in the form of environmental change”. It may transcend but in no way bypasses the state. The concern for global environment becomes dominant in the international and domestic political agenda. It was manifested in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment in Rio de Janeiro. The outcome of this summit - the Rio Declaration promoted the concept of ‘sustainable development’ to which over one hundred countries subscribed. One of its key principles - No.8 - proposed “*reduction and elimination of non-sustainable production and consumption patterns*”. Sport was assumed to be one of those patterns “on account of its increasing expansion in ways that are often neither healthful to society nor in harmony with nature” (Da Costa, 1997:15).

Subsequently, sport alongside several other areas underwent ecology-related assessments and under the leading role of the International Olympic Committee, general principles for international and national sport governing bodies were drawn up. This global development entails the introduction of a new concept of sustainable management which, presents a challenge to all sport organisations with regards to conformity to standards of ‘production and consumption’. Future polices and practices should account for ecological demands on sports activities, which concern not only the typical outdoor sports practised on water, snow, beaches or forest, but include also the impact of mega sporting events like the Olympic Games, or by setting large-scale
facilities. Clearly, for sports authorities to comply with ecological standards would be impossible without the mediating role of the state as proponent, legislator and enforcer of environmental strategies incorporating sporting practices as well.

The sixth remapping calls for re-evaluating the central claim of modernity that there is an inexorable social progress. Different flows of globalization do not benefit all local and transnational actors equally. What they imply is that the modern world and its constitutive elements, nation-states, are undergoing a profound social change. This change, because of historic or current circumstances surrounding a particular state may take two basic forms, as continuity (more of the same), or discontinuity (a turning point to a new path of development). Bulgaria’s history contains examples of both forms but despite the two great turning points - in 1944 and 1989 - a close examination reveals the domination of continuity of processes, structures, strategies and actors.

In addition to the six remappings, another emerging implication from globalization, which seems to have been played down by the Strategic Relations approach, points to the significance of ‘world images’ created by global interconnectedness. These world images as an aspect of contemporary consciousness play a critical role in framing the directions in which different state and non-state actors’ interests (both ideal and material) have to be pursued within a given world order. In an original attempt to address this issue, Robertson (1992:78-79) identified four types of such images of world order based on societies, individuals, the system of societies and mankind. As yet, these images remain on the level of fairly abstract constructs, but nonetheless, they point to an interesting notion of global ideologies or doctrines promoting one or a mixture of world orders. This explicitly ‘globe-oriented’ perspective is defined as “one which espouses as a central aspect of its message or policy a concern with the patterning of the entire world” (Robertson, 1992:79). With necessary allowances, it could be assumed that, modern Olympism with its concern for universal understanding, peace, equality, education and participation, represents such an ideology. There could be also very little disagreement on the appeal of this ideology.
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to nation-states as sport is justifiably seen as a significant contributor to the national health, cohesion, self-assertion, and economy. Subscription to this ideology on the part of a state (albeit not necessarily in the form of formal agreement, rather through a non-governmental agency - the National Olympic Committee) brings distinct advantages and obligations. It is in the interests of the state, therefore, through its public, voluntary and private bodies to put forward strategies to maximise the benefits promoted by the global Olympic ideology.

2.5.3. Towards a global sport order?

Two issues need prior clarification here. First, it is important to answer the question of whether modern international, and Olympic sport in particular, is truly global. Second, what constitutes its authority, and how this can be imposed on the nation-states? In answering these questions, one has to employ certain criteria against which to assess the globalization of modern Olympic sport. In a study of the limits of globalization, Weiss (1997:6-7) offered such three criteria:

i) novelty - is it unusual or without parallel, thus suggesting secular growth rather than oscillation?

ii) magnitude - how substantial is it in size? and

iii) distribution - to what extent is it world-wide in scope?.

Her findings, though, provided no compelling evidence indicating that the changes produced by the cross-border flow of people, products, capital and money had resulted in a clearly global tendency. This analysis does not intend to evidence and counter-evidence in detail the globalization of sport. Instead, it tries to satisfy the above criteria, and in line with their logic will provide a single key argument.

Institutionalised modern Olympic sport emerged only some hundred years ago but can be said to satisfy the above criteria. Its novelty lies in the principal difference between the national-religious character of the ancient festivals, celebrating the superiority of the Greeks, and the global-secular format of the modern Games promoting human excellence. In terms of magnitude - the International Olympic Movement (IOM),
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encompasses some thirty six International Sport Federations (administering the sports on the Olympic programme, but virtually all other International Sport Governing bodies being affiliated by the IOC) and all National Olympic Committees representing several hundred million athletes from all over the world. An third criteria - the distribution of the Olympic Movement - it seems to be the only governmental and non-governmental movement supported by its all potential members - the existing 200 National Olympic Committees and national sport governing bodies (with more member-countries than the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund).

Having ascertained the global character of the modern Olympic sport, let us now turn to the question of its authority. One way of understanding this issue is by placing it within the concept of international regimes which, Young (1980, quoted in Ruggie, 1982:380) defined “as social institutions around which actor expectations converge in a given area of international relations.” Inevitably, however, international regimes limit the discretion of their constituent units (social institutions) to decide and act on issues that fall within the regime’s domain, because the former are thought as comprising principles, norms, rules and procedures which the latter subscribe to (see also Puchala and Raymond, 1982). Ruggie (1982:380) further argued that:

insofar as international regimes embody principles about fact, causation, and rectitude, as well as political rights and obligations that are regarded as legitimate, they fall closer to the consumatory end of the spectrum, into the realm of political authority. Thus, the formation and transformation of international regimes may be said to represent a concrete manifestation of the internationalization of political authority.

Essential for the evolving institutionalisation of sport order and its authority, as Gruneau (1988) suggested, are three central subprocesses: codification, organisation and legitimation. With the establishment of the first international sport federations at the end of 1880s and the IOC in 1894, the new international sport order which will be termed “Olympic” was given an institutional framework, and thus, it sought to establish formal authority. The authority relations within this order are constructed in an open, but clearly West European way, giving much scope to competitive-market forces, and allowing very little or no deviation, so that, even the Communist bloc
countries had to abandon their proclaimed holistic approach to physical education and sport in order to join the Olympic order after World War II.

Specific regimes that serve such an order in the areas of codification and organisation are the written rules and regulations (in the case of Olympic Movement, the Olympic Charter), and recently the Olympic marketing contract within the TOP programme (TOP III-IV-1992-1996-2000). This is the first ever global sponsorship programme providing substantial cash and services in return for promotion of selected transnational companies’ (called “Olympic partners”), mostly providing intangible goods or services. All National Olympic Committees around the world were sent a clear message by the IOC to join the regime if they wanted to be part of the Olympic order. This marketing regime which epitomises the ‘economy of ideas’ discussed above

in the case of the newly emerged National Olympic Committees of Europe (as result of the breakdown of USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia)...was used by the IOC as a condition for recognition, a position very similar to the IOC’s attitude towards Eastern European countries after the 2nd World War (Girginov, 1998:142).

The workings of the marketing regime as constituent of authority, along with the structure of the Olympic sport order, are instructive for constructing the argument in the last part of the analysis in this section.

Finally, what is important from a Strategic Relations perspective, is how the state copes with all those remappings, world images and international regimes, and what strategic responses, if any it offers. Environmentalist’ slogan -‘think global, act local’, is of little help here as, it tends to by-pass the state and fails to acknowledge its potential roles. As the preceding analysis demonstrated, globalization clearly constrains traditional state authority and sovereignty but in no way implies its eclipse. In a world of increasing interconnectedness, the thesis that globalization is confined to the political and economic obsolescence of the state is, at the least misleading. Similar thinking about globalization and the crisis of nation-states, as Wade (1996, quoted in
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Arrighi, 1998:66) noted, “simply recycles arguments that were fashionable a hundred years ago.” Instead, it is important that states are seen as subsystems of the global political system, and, as Thomas et al. (1987, quoted in Beyer, 1998:88) argued, “the modern state is a globalized institution that implies a model to which all states are under pressure to conform, more or less.” Such a view of the state associates globalization with the emergence of new political forces and social energies, and an increased capacity for stimulating new kinds of political organisations and solidarities. The massive growth of international non-governmental organisations and transnational social movements; the environmental, women’s, or the Olympic movements illustrate the point.

Borrowing from Weiss (1997) and Evans (1997), and relating to the fourth implication of Jessop’s (1990:270) the Strategic Relations Approach asserts that

i) state power can only be assessed relationally;

ii) the state as such has no power;

iii) it has only a set of institutional capacities and liabilities which mediate that power; and

iv) the power of the state is the power of the forces acting in and through the state.

The argument for the mobilization of forces and stimulation of new capacities and alliances assumes four responses by the state to globalization:

i) adaptation rather than decline of functions;

ii) acting as facilitators not victims of globalization;

iii) emerging ‘catalytic’ states which consolidate domestic and international linkages; and

iv) mutual empowerment of state and civil society.
2.5.4. Globalization and state strategies

It must be emphasised however, that as a state’s capacities differ, so does its ability to exploit opportunities of global political, cultural and economic exchange. Thus, the concept of state capacity does not apply in any uniform way to Eastern European countries, rather, it is to be seen within the particular circumstances of each state. Four state strategies are briefly outlined below, while Chapter 8 deals in greater detail with their adaptation in Bulgaria, and how they are specifically manifested in sport.

The issue of state adaptiveness involves various aspects of state behaviour - economic, political, social and technological - and concerns three main factors of the adaptation - institutional arrangements, the use of political tools, and key decision-making actors. Self’s (1985) comprehensive study on environmental change and government response noted the tendency for expansion of state activities and the relationship between social structure, public opinion and the policy process. He suggested the assumption that

environmental changes have had a potent effect upon the growth and work of government. At the same time, the self-exciting tendencies within the political system, and their feedback effects upon public demands, must not be forgotten (1985:28).

This tendency was clearly reinforced during the totalitarian period as the Bulgarian state took more responsibilities than it could handle (virtually full responsibility for everything). The tension, which the preoccupation with virtually all aspects of state and society functioning produces, diminishes the state’s capacity to tackle strategic issues, and hence its adaptability to the changing environment. Furthermore, in the case of transformation from a totalitarian to a democratic state, in economic, political and social terms Bulgaria together with other Eastern European countries, falls into the category of a ‘late developer’, as she has to ‘catch up’ and comply with certain standards for democratisation laid down by the West. Economically, these countries face the prospect of unequal competition with established producers, both domestically and globally, whereas, ironically, the reverse process is in operation in sport. From their appearance on the Olympic scene in 1952, the Communist countries
dominated Olympic sport by setting the standards for excellence and leading medal tables. Thus, the process of adaptability demands from the state adjustment of its political, economic and social tools and institutions, whether to catch up or to sustain a particular model.

This leads to the second response of the state as to why it is assuming the role of facilitator rather than victim of globalization. Building on the arguments from the previous section, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the growth of transnational flows of capital, products, images and people demands strong states, capable of ensuring an adequate economic, political and legislative climate to accommodate these flows. But these transactions do not have a unilateral direction, that is, they also include the promotion of the local (local resistance) as a global phenomenon. The ideas concerning the local and the indigenous are reproduced in a variety of international and transnational organisations and movements. Particular examples in sport constitute the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), The Committee of Sports Ministers of the Council of Europe countries, European Non-Governmental Sport Organisations (ENGSO), or the World Festivals of Traditional Sports and Games run by TAFISA.

Furthermore, the facilitating role of the state is encouraged by the key global actors advocating for abandoning the constraints on the transnational economy and communications. Deacon’s (1995) and Deacon and Hules’ (1997) studies on the making of post-Communist social policy and of international agencies provided a clear insight into the role, among others, of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, OECD countries, and the European Union in setting social policy to meet the market changes. Deacon and Hules (1997:60) even advanced the conclusion that: “the policy making in Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union is being used as a testing ground for ideas about the future of social policy elsewhere.” These developments clearly imply a double facilitating role of the state - both 'upwards' and 'downwards', as encouraging local business or sport
Thirdly, states can also respond to globalization by changing their powers through reconstructing the power around the consolidation of domestic and international networks. This process, closely associated with the facilitating role of the state, involves building power alliances - via inter-state coalitions ('upwards'), and via state-business alliances ('downwards'). Catalytic states, according to Weiss (1997:24),

seek to achieve their goals less by relying on their own resources than by assuming a dominant role in coalition of states, transnational institutions, and private-sector groups, and that

it is a way of highlighting the tendency of states to seek adaptation to new challenges by forging or strengthening partnerships with other states (state and non-state) power actors, rather than going it alone.

Accounting for the 'late developers' position of the East European countries in the global economy and democratisation, Weiss' argument apparently does not fit fully their circumstances, although, some regional developments, such as the reawakening of the Balkan political, economic and sport co-operation, or the bi/multilateral commercial links between Bulgaria and former Soviet Republics provide substance to it. But as Weiss (1997:25) asserted: "regionalism (inter-state coalitions) without domestic capacity (public-private coalitions) is only half the story, akin to conducting a war of movement without having established a war of position." Putting it slightly differently, the most important of these coalitions will be a partnership of government and business in new power sharing arrangements, with the state remaining as an active centre for mediating and managing domestic and international linkages.

One essential emerging link accounting for the fourth response of the state is the mutual empowerment of state and society. As we have seen, the state's adaptation and enhanced capability entails new functions, mediating roles and shared power arrangements. These can be successfully achieved by establishing productive state-civil society relations. This response is at odds with the globalising assumption that
revitalising civil society implies accelerating the reduction, if not the demise of the state. The point here is not that the civil society could provide a substitute for the organised public institutions of the state, but rather that state agencies and local community groups can work together to produce a needed service or collective good. Evans (1997) referred to this prospect as 'state-society synergy' achieved at the macro level through effective development projects, and illustrated it with Taiwan's Irrigation Association. In this light, the hostile attitude of Bulgaria's State Committee for Youth, Physical Education and Sport towards the voluntary sports sector appears in sharp contrast, and reinforces the country's inherited tendency for centralised and unchallenged state governance.

In conclusion, several important implications of globalization on state strategic relations have been identified:

- globalization is not a truly universal concept entailing the eclipse of the state; it does however, suggest a re-evaluation of the Westphalian order by challenging its basic premises, requiring states to share their sovereignty and authority with other levels of government or transnational actors (see also Henry, 2000);

- in addition, globalization challenges a state's economic, social, environmental and developmental policies as it promotes a world order increasingly dominated by the 'economy of ideas'. Corresponding to this world order is a global Olympic order which has been identified, based on the uniform regimes of rules, regulation and marketing contracts;

- globalization prompts at least four key state responses- i) adaptability instead of diminishing functions; ii) facilitating 'upwards' (global) and 'downwards' (local) roles involving transnational flows of products, services, people and images; iii) consolidating domestic and international linkages via intra-state (downwards) and inter-state (upwards) mediating arrangements; iv) emerging state-civil society relations, presupposing mutual empowerment.
From a Strategic Relations perspective, what emerges from the effects of globalization and the responses of the state, is the creation of a whole new strategic environment, where state projects, and the political system devised to promote them, are often shaped by actors and arrangements distant from national territories. In the same way, state and non-state agencies get involved in struggles for resources and their distribution, located beyond national reach. It could be argued then that, virtually all relations established by the state in this global environment carry the sign of 'strategic', whereas, far fewer intra-state links may have such an essential bearing on the constitution of the state and society. The likely implications for the sport system on the national level include a greater dependence of the National Olympic Committee on the new strategic environment (the Olympic order), hence increasing its authority over the national sports federations on Olympic matters from a strengthened financial position. The growing links between the state Committee for Physical Education and Sport with the Council of Europe, because of the leading role of the former, will impose certain models in the sports policy-making process promoted by the latter. As far as the local level of the sports system (clubs, societies and individual athletes) is concerned, the striving for international success, emphasising marketability of the sport product, may result in failure to comply with the norms set by national sports governing bodies, thus causing conflicts in the system, and prompting new strategic relations.
3.1. Preliminary remarks

The starting point of this study was the recent transformations in society and in sport in Eastern European countries. More specifically, of particular interest was to observe the way Bulgaria's sport system, and its principal aspects - value orientation, ideology, policies, structures and actors - would be transformed in a changing environment. This seemed a challenging project, since there is no such analysis so far in the domestic or foreign lay or professional literature. The author's early studies (Girginov 1989, 1991, & Slavkov, 1994, 1995), as well as studies from other authors (Tzonev & Bankov, 1988, Stoichev & Tzonev, 1995, CYPES, 1996) provided interesting data concerning these aspects of the sports system. These data provoked and helped to formulate the research problem and theoretical framework for the study. However, there are two critical methodological considerations, concerning the congruency between (i) how capitalist, communist and democratic reality was viewed at the time, and (ii) how this reality is being studied at present, which need to be addressed beforehand. This poses the issue of constructing and testing the research questions. Academic studies elaborating on the role of the state in sport in the capitalist period are few, and most of the literature is descriptive and "administrative" in nature, being mainly supportive of the contemporary practices. The methods used include observations and ethnography. In addition, the literature on sport under Fascist rule, published subsequently during the Communist years, is clearly marked by its current ideological commitment. The totalitarian period has been and is being studied through a variety of methods - observations, interviews, ethnography, questionnaires, and hermeneutics, but the majority of the reports inevitably bear the sign of ideological rather than academic interpretation. Despite the historical specificity of the two epochs, it can be argued that empirical studies have been theoretically informed by a positivist perspective, seeking to discover a pre-existing pattern in order to predict and control events in sport.

Accounting for different socio-economic conjunctures in the three periods and methodological concerns, the preliminary findings could only be considered as a set of regularities and empirical generalisations, and not as universal laws. The analysis of
empirical observations suggested that they were not only theoretically informed but can also be theoretically informative, in the sense that they can yield new theoretical claims and concepts. For these findings to become theoretically significant, they had to be related to a set of propositions. Studying the three periods from a contemporary perspective requires the application of a theoretical perspective and research strategy different from those used in each period. It was decided that a critical social science perspective would provide the framework of analysis needed to question the social situation during the three periods. As a theory on the topic, the strategic relations approach as developed by Jessop (1990) was chosen. The principal benefits of this approach for the analysis of Bulgarian sport policy as identified in chapter 2 included:

- providing a framework for examining different aspects of the state in the three stages of its historical development, and helping to explain strategic selectivity of each towards a particular sports policy model;
- facilitating the identification of the state and its unity in relation to particular political systems and wider social formations and the key sports beneficiaries and/or losers;
- helping to explore different parameters of the state’s crisis with regard to its representation, institutions, rationality, hegemony and legitimacy, and their impact on shaping relations in sport.

More specifically, the introduction (Chapter 1) and the literature review (Chapter 2) suggested that the 121 years of Bulgaria’s modern history can be viewed as a continuum, including three major reshapings (periods) of the state. Each period was marked by a distinct project seeking to build a new stateness, and which involved past and present struggles and produced outcomes which corresponded very little with what was intended. The theoretical propositions and the empirical observations brought to the fore some implications, and informed the research methodology about several important aspects as summarised in Table 3.1.
Table 3.1. Key theoretical propositions and their methodological implications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical propositions</th>
<th>Methodological implications</th>
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<tr>
<td>The state is a social relation which has no pre-given power or structure. Rather, it represents a strategic terrain where these have to be established in struggles the outcomes of which are always uncertain, and allowed the state to be seen simultaneously as site, generator, product and mediator of strategies;</td>
<td>Attend to situations of crisis and transformations in which struggles occur and outcomes are produced. These to be seen in historical perspective as a process (diachronically).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The nature of these struggles is the pursuit of the state’s formal unity (as an institution) and substantive unity (as a social base), whereby different projects (including for sport) are put forward by individual or group actors trying to assert their interests and knowledge while competing for core positions in the domain and greater privileges;</td>
<td>Look at changes in actors’ positions in the sports domain as result of enhancing their knowledge and access to resources; in-depth evaluation of sports policy process (synchronically and as a series of snap-shots) in order to explain how and why particular sports policies arise at certain times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past and present struggles and their outcomes create various socio-political environments which presuppose the forms of state intervention in sport;</td>
<td>Reassesses knowledge about events and the role of various actors; look at whose interests have been promoted by the state’s activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The small correlation between the state’s projects and their outcomes urges an analysis to account for two important aspects: (i) it is a result of the contest over implementation of particular strategies pursued by various agents, and (ii) that there is a difference between the scale of reality (which involves global interests beyond the reach of anybody) and the lived experience (individual actors’ perceptions), which are separated by ideologically obscured formulations;</td>
<td>Account for individuals’ beliefs and perceptions, and the role of structures and specific settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The global interconnectedness - the relations between transnational and local forces in shaping state and sports projects;</td>
<td>Examine the effects on actors’ knowledge and abilities to promote local interests and strategies.</td>
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It was suggested also that sports policy is a strategic relation the formation of which needs to be viewed in a broader context of state-society relations at particular historical conjunctures. Furthermore, similar to the state project, this relation constitutes a process of past and present struggles the outcomes of which were uncertain. The testing of theoretical propositions involved in the Strategic Relations approach entailed examining the process of sports policy making, accounting for the role and interests of the state and non-state actors (local and global), and the projects pursued by them. These were studied both diachronically, that is, as a historical
process throughout the three periods, and synchronically, as a snap-shot (case studies), in a particular moment in time.

This chapter aims to address the key elements of the research methodology by:

a) formulating the research questions;

b) considering the project's ontological and epistemological suppositions;

c) examining the basic conditions for critical research; and

d) setting the methodological building blocks.

3.2. The study of sport policy through the lenses of the critical theory and the Strategic Relations approach

As was argued in the previous chapter, the concept of the state as a set of strategic relations provided an adequate framework for addressing its role in the area of sport. In the preliminary comments of this chapter, it was noted that some data and research findings suggested a great deal of similarity at different times in sport's principal aspects such as its conceptualisation, state intervention, patterns of people's participation, and key actors. Therefore, this study was initiated with a well-defined vision, addressing a number of interrelated research questions formulated with the objective of elaborating on each significant aspect of the state-sport relationship. Allowing that virtually no work has been undertaken on the analysis of sports policy in Bulgaria, the investigation that forms the focus of this thesis can be defined as explanatory in nature, aiming to uncover the underlying structures and relations in Bulgaria's sport policy context.

The research questions that will be pursued are:

1. What constitutes the relationship between the Bulgarian state project and state project in sport in the three different periods?

2. How does state intervention and the articulation of sport change as the political and economic environment is transformed?

3. How is the social base of state power in sport constructed with reference to various state-civil society relationships?
4. What is the role of transnational and national organisations and actors for formulating national sport policy and values?

Table 3.2 illustrates the relation between the main research questions, theoretical premises, data required, the sources sought and the techniques used for its acquisition pertinent throughout the project.

The justification for emphasising the totalitarian form of the state is both historical and conceptual. From a historic perspective, as already pointed out, the political and socio-economic development of the Bulgarian state has been dominated by totalitarian forces, agencies and relations. Conceptually, totalitarianism can be seen as opposition to liberal-democratic ideas, but its representations in Communist and democratic societies is somewhat paradoxical. The example of totalitarian Communist states, or the failure of Communism to develop a critique of totalitarianism illustrates the point. The contribution of a strategic relations approach to the analysis is its capacity to offer a middle way between state-centred and society-centred approaches, thus recognising the significance of structures and individual agents for creating and implementing the state's sport policy. The former mode of inquiry focuses upon the actual behaviour of the state as an institution. As Clarke and Dear (1984:10) argued:

> Questions of bureaucratic organisation, relationships between contending centres of power, and the maintenance of the state's legitimacy through its own actions indicate the scope and definition of this type of analysis.

The society-centred mode of inquiry is the principal alternative to the state-centred. Clarke and Dear (1984:10) added:

> Here the analytical method focuses upon the social obligations between society's members, and hence derives the necessity of the state, and its apparatus, from social relationships.

Moreover, the "state neutral" nature of the strategic relations approach, makes its application to the three different socio-political settings unproblematic. As Jessop himself (1990:353) asserted:

> Nothing in my proposed definition of the state implied that it necessarily has a particular class (or gender, ethnic, national or order) content. Nor has my account of the state as idea and the role of the state projects in shaping the state led to the conclusion that the state must be capitalist.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question/Theoretical Premises</th>
<th>Data Needed</th>
<th>Sources Sought</th>
<th>Technique Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What constitutes the relationship between the state project and the state hegemonic project in sport in the three different historical conjunctures?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Relations (Totalitarianism)</td>
<td>Accumulation strategies, State forms, Economic, Social, Political Objectives, Actors, Agencies, National programs, Classes</td>
<td>Archives, Government Reports, Documentation, Literature, Official statistics, Sport organisations documentation and practices</td>
<td>Literature search, Analysis, Ethnography, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How does state intervention and the articulation of sport change as the political and economic environment is transformed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Relations</td>
<td>Political &amp; economic development, Forms of intervention, Occurrence Impact, State language</td>
<td>Government Reports, Literature, Documentation, Official statistics, Sports organisation Reports, Firsthand experience, Archives</td>
<td>Literature search, Analysis, Ethnography, Observations, Surveys, Case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How is the social base of state power in sport constructed in relation to various state society relationships?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Relations (Totalitarianism)</td>
<td>State formation, Political actors, Structures and supra structures, Objectives, Economic, Political, Social, Personal, Cultural Relationships, Diffusion of sport</td>
<td>Literature, Documents, Archives, Sport organisations Documentation, First hand experience</td>
<td>Literature search, Analysis, Ethnography, Observation, Case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What is the role of transnational and national organisations and actors for formulating national sport policy and values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Relations (Globalisation)</td>
<td>International &amp; national sport organisations-Policies, Agents &amp; Relationships,</td>
<td>IOC &amp; EC, CYPES &amp; BSFS documentation, Literature First hand experience, Archives</td>
<td>Literature search, Analysis, Interview, Observation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In a similar study, Nassis (1994) used the strategic relations approach, based on Jessop’s (1990) assumption that various agents, whether political parties, local interests, or transnational organisations attempt to put forward specific projects by adopting certain strategies for realising their aspirations, and then explored different level of relationships. On the contrary, accounting for specific circumstances, this thesis took as a point of departure the existence of a Bulgarian state project and its related non-economic (hegemonic) project in sport as predetermining factors of sport development strategies. Nassis (1994: 214) for example, argued that “developments in Greek sports policy since 1980 are reflections of the strategic relations within and around the specific context, and present the materialisation of specific strategies put forward by certain agents and favoured by the form of the Greek state and sport over that period.” Clearly, in the Greek case we have a certain number of actors, operating in a changing political and economic environment, and trying to maintain or change their status quo by pursuing their aspirations. By contrast, in the Bulgarian case, in the three periods concerned, despite different state projects, there was more or less an environment shaped by the state hegemonic project, and imposed on all actors in the sporting scene with little resistance. What the two empirical researches have brought to light, however, is the contextual substance needed to conceptualise the strategic relations’ principles in a particular setting. Jessop (1990: 267) acknowledged the lack of empirical research:

...we can now deal with some basic implications of a strategic theoretical approach. For the moment these must remain at the level of assertions and guidelines but they nonetheless challenge many received wisdoms within Marxist state theorising.

and:

In advocating a strategic-relations approach I have only been able to provide some abstract and formal indications about new directions for research and enquiry (p. 270).

It is the aim of this study to identify and conceptualise the strategic relations in empirical terms at three different historical conjunctures, that have led to the process of statisation of Bulgarian sport.

As demonstrated by the historical overview of Bulgaria’s sport policy development in chapter 1, the study of recent transformations could not be based on the face value of
empirical observations alone. The theoretical lessons brought by empirical analysis suggested that data are important in order to ground the enquiry, but data are meaningful only and must be treated as dependent in terms of their theoretical and socio-historic context. Empirical analysis together with theoretical conjecture is essential for a dialectical analysis of inner connections. These underlying assumptions inform our understanding about the significance of two crucial components concerning the practices under investigation - the knowledge (in the form of hegemonic projects and related sport policies) and its articulation by dominant social structures. As Harvey (1990:2) claimed:

*at the heart of critical social research is the idea that knowledge is structured by existing sets of social relations. The aim of a critical methodology is to provide knowledge which engages the prevailing social structures. These social structures are seen by critical researches, in one way or another, as oppressive structures.*

and (1990:6):

*in its engagements with oppressive structures it (the critical process) questions the nature of prevailing knowledge and directs attention to the processes and institutions which legitimate knowledge.*

The notion of oppression occurs in sociological literature in different forms - class, race, gender or religion - but there is a limited body of work addressing the existence of oppressive practices imposed by state-society strategic relations. It is the aim of this project, therefore, to examine the national sport policy in relation to state-society strategic relations. In order to accomplish this critical social research, an epistemological perspective was employed in which knowledge and critique are intertwined, assuming that a critical process informs knowledge. In the words of Harvey (1990:4):

*critical social research aims at an analysis of social processes, delving beneath ostensive and dominant conceptual frames, in order to reveal the underlying practices, their historical specificity and structural manifestations.*

Critical theory, as first developed by the Frankfurt School, rests on the idea that reason is the highest potentiality of human beings and that, through its use, it is possible to criticise and challenge the nature of existing societies. One of the leading proponents of the critical perspective, Habermas (1972:301-17), classified the process
of scientific enquiry into three categories according to their underlying interests ("knowledge-constructive interests"), their anthropologically rooted strategies for interpreting life experiences, and their means of social organisation. Each of these categories produces its own form of knowledge - empirical-analytic (technically exploitable knowledge for prediction and control); human-hermeneutic (practical interests in communicative understanding between individuals or social groups); and critical (based on the emancipatory interest in achieving rational autonomy of action freed from domination).

Blaikie (1993:54), in his analysis of Habermas borrowed from Giddens (1977), and represented this classification as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of science</th>
<th>Underlying interests</th>
<th>Aspect of social existence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical-analytic</td>
<td>Prediction and control</td>
<td>Work (instrumental action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical-hermeneutic</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Interaction (language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical theory</td>
<td>Emancipation</td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, the underlying interest of critical knowledge is about emancipation and power. It is concerned with ways in which social, political, economic and cultural conditions produce a certain selectivity in the process of devising and implementing sport policy. It involves also a continual scepticism toward the commonplaces and socially accepted conventions of sport policy, acknowledging that social practices contain contradictions in which there are continually issues of power domination (see Morgan, 1983). This notion provides an important precondition for relating the basic assumptions of critical theory and Strategic Relations.

Habermas argued that critical theory involves all three forms of knowledge. By using the methods of historical-hermeneutic science it studies the interpretative understanding of systems of belief and modes of communication and critically evaluates them, whereas it investigates their causes through the methods of empirical-
analytical science. More recently, other authors such as Antonio (1983), Sayer (1984), Fay (1987, 1993), Harvey (1990), Popkewitz (1990), Agger (1991), Hoy and McCarthy (1994) and Bailey (1994), drawing from the same epistemological and ontological assumptions, have also argued that critical theory can use a combination of methods. In turn, this assumption had a particular bearing on the chosen research strategy and methods as it allowed for more adequate investigation of the three historical periods.

3.3. Research Methodology: Elements and Strategy

The sociological literature provides ample examples for varied critical research, but also asserts that a critical methodology is based on several building blocks. Antonio (1983:344-5) and recently Harvey (1990:19-32) argued that these blocks represent elements which are drawn together in various ways in the process of deconstruction and reconstruction and include abstraction, totality, essence, praxis, ideology, history and structure. The rest of this section discusses the setting of these blocks in relation to the project's objectives.

As stated above, the starting point of this project was the abstract generalisation concerning the similarities in Bulgaria’s sport policy at different historical conjunctures. This study sets out to investigate these generalisations by admitting that facts do not exist independently and so are not self-evident, and so concepts cannot be abstracted from them, an approach similar to what Sayer (1984:42) referred to as concept-dependent and socially-produced objects of study. More specifically, it goes on to investigate their taken-for-granted underpinnings in the form of state projects, related practices and material structures. The analysis of sport policy as an abstract concept is made concrete in terms of its specific objectives, value orientation and underlying state-society strategic relations. Such a view replaces the superficial understanding of sport policy as a guideline document (a state affair) for public agencies and sport organisations with a dynamic conception of sport policy as a strategic relation and provides the basis for a total critique of the social process behind its creation.
Accounting for the totality of the critical approach, this study attempts to relate empirical data gathered for sport policy-making bodies to the structural and historical environment of each period. This involved an appreciation of the historical specificity of social relations, an understanding of structural relations, and a recognition of the mutual dependency of specific structures and specific forms of policy. That is, the state project entailed establishing specific sport policies and supportive structures, which in turn served to legitimise it. Throughout modern Bulgarian history all supreme sport governing bodies have been state creations.

Essence in critical social research is seen as a key to unlocking the deconstructive process. The key used in this analysis of national sport policy is strategic relations. Sport policy is essentially a strategic relationship. It is a mode of social practice developed by different agents, over a contested terrain of scarce resources on behalf of those involved in them, and which often conflict with what those concerned actually need. This is not denying, however, that individuals and groups have no choice in what practice to take up. Most national sport conceptions, for example the National Fitness Complex (NFC), were introduced in the name of a wider population, but as seen by a governing group of political and sport administrators (the experts in the Bulgarian Sports Union and their supervisors from the CC of the BCP), and were never based on a public dialogue with those concerned. Habermas' comments (noted in Holub, 1991:5) make a bridge to the next block of the methodology - praxis: "the public opinion of the private people assembled to form a public no longer retained a basis of unity and truth; it degenerated to the level of a subjective opinion of the many," and Holub (1991:5) added "there is no necessary relationship between what the multitude thinks and what is true." The process of deconstruction and reconstruction is spelled out in the next section.

Praxis in critical research terms means practical reflective activity (Harvey, 1990:22), or what Habermas termed rational reconstruction (relating to human competency) and self-reflection (seen as a mode of reflection). The former provides a basis for historically relevant critique of social life and exploration of actual developmental possibilities, while the latter "brings to consciousness those determinants of a self-
formative process (Building) which ideologically determine a contemporary praxis and conception of the world” (quoted in Held, 1980:327). This concept challenges Marxist view which reduces praxis to techne, by connecting social structures with human agency, and is seen as the intersection between them. Giddens (1993:81) argued that the concept of Praxis is analytical to the concept of agency:

(1) that a person 'could have acted otherwise' and (2) that the world as constituted by a stream of events-in-process independent of the agent does not hold out a predetermined future.

As reflection is predominantly an individual activity, what counts for critical research are two things - that individual actions are indicative of social groups operating within an oppressive situation; and that changes in social formations are the result of praxis. For this study, the forming of sport policy and structures are seen as result of practices (situated doings of a subject) at local, national and international levels in each period. It is further argued that practices need to be understood in terms of power, and that sports policy is a transformative project. Policy research is ultimately concerned with knowledge for action which, eventually will change the world.

Another fundamental element of practices which is constituting for actors' interaction and leads to the next block of methodology is that of language and discourse. Giddens (1993:158) viewed the language as a practical activity, because it serves as a medium of the description of acts (justifying practical policies), and as a medium of communication between actors (describing intentions for action). In similar vein Held (1980:319) argued that systematic distortion of interaction or language represents (institutionalised) domination and that “systematically distorted communication is seen as the condition of the emancipatory interest.”

The concept of ideology constitutes an essential element of the project's critical methodology as it logically relates to other key concepts like group actions, and the hegemonic project. Geuss (1989:4-26) suggested that critical theory can interpret ideology in three research programmes - descriptive, pejorative and positive. This project sees ideology as an overt attempt of various governments (state agencies) to put certain moral and political values on the agenda by acknowledging that
interpretations of ideology varied in different periods, and reflected by no means class interests. Ideology's relevance to sport policy rests in its ability to shape beliefs that incite people into action. For example, communitarianism (people's participation in sport in the totalitarian period predominantly as part of a collective) was used in justification of not investing in individualistic pursuits (including the production of sports equipment), of policies promoting mass participation (individual satisfaction was never recognised as a value), and of greater control over the voluntary sports sector. This in turn is indicative for a dialectic between ideas, social needs and ideology.

Jessop (1991:171) claimed that:

hegemony involves the interpellation and organisation of different 'class-relevant' (but not necessarily class-conscious) forces under the 'political, intellectual and moral leadership' of ... its political, intellectual and moral spokesmen. The key to the exercise of such leadership is the development of a specific 'hegemonic project'.

Here, interpellation is described as the ideological mechanism through which subjects are endowed with specific identities, social positions and interests. This mechanism is grounded in the accumulation of cognitive and organisational learning capacities (developed through agents' interaction), and which are released during crises in the old social order. As will be demonstrated in this project, the ideological agenda of the three hegemonic projects, Capitalism (capitalist period), Communism (totalitarian period), and Europeanisation (democratic period) promoted as central the need to increase sports' dependency on the state, and to instil a culture of administrative supremacy in sports policy making, as opposed to public debate and consultation. Similar approach to Thatcherism as a hegemonic project in relation to leisure policy is argued by Henry (1993:175-83). Butsch's (1990:8) treatment of hegemony in a sense that it "directs our attention to practices rather than ideas - leisure rather than culture - as a medium of hegemony" sums up the link between ideology and praxis. A sport policy's ideology is expressed both through the promotion of certain values, and through gaps and omissions it makes in relation to various groups and interests.
Chapter 3. Research Methodology

The notion of *structure* is usually interpreted in two different ways: firstly, as something that can be reduced to its elements and examine them. The underlying assumption of this approach implies that individual elements are meaningful in their own right. Critical research is concerned with the second way of interpreting structure. It is viewed as "a complex set of interrelated elements which are interdependent and which can only be adequately conceived of in terms of the complete structure" (Harvey, 1990:25). This interpretation involves the idea of wholeness, transformation and self-regulation. The case of National Sports Federations which make up the structure of sport on national level, conform with the legislative, normative and administrative regulations set up by the state and the international governing bodies (wholeness), transform itself according to changes in the environment (transformation) by using the mandate given by their members (self-regulation) illustrates the point.

Giddens' (1993:128-9) central theorem of Structuration theory - the duality of structures - is in some ways analogous to this understanding of the structure:

*By the duality of structure I mean that social structure is both constituted by human agency, and yet is at the same time the very medium of this constitution;*

Giddens' definition is informative for this research in two ways:

(i) it complies with the basic assumptions of the Strategic Relations approach by asserting that individuals, interest groups and institutions are pursuing their aspirations by developing specific strategies (thus reproducing social structures) and strategic relations (thus creating a medium for constitution);

(ii) the duality of structure suggests that if the analysis breaks the sports policy down into a system of individual actions (tasks), it would ignore the interrelationships and consequently would deny the structural relationship between conventions, resources and moral rules.

The implication for the analysis of sports policy is that its nature as a strategic relation can only be seen when different policies are related to the broader context of the state and its hegemonic project.
As this project clearly involves examining the history of national sports policy, it is imperative to distinguish between traditional and critical historicism, and to outline how such an approach will inform the analysis. Critical research accepts that the reconstruction of history is an active interpretative process (historicist approach), rather than gathering of facts. More specifically, critical social research adopts the formulations of radical historicism which offers a critical analysis of the prevailing frameworks in which the historical facts are located.

The point of view of the critical historicism adopted in this study concerns the generalisation about repeating patterns of state intervention in sport policy’s formulation and implementation. Of practical interest are two interrelated issues:

(i) to examine the genesis of the oppressive social relations and structures in relation to the prevailing social practices and to look at how far these structures are sustained through them;

(ii) in each period to discover the residual patterns of relationships (practices that tie the present to the past) and emerging practices (patterns that tie the present to the future).

For example, practices of state-controlled centralised planning of sport in pre-, totalitarian and post-totalitarian periods illustrate the residual, while the introduction of the first world-wide Olympic marketing programme in 1984 signalled an emerging pattern, setting the National Olympic Committee on the road to financial independence from the government.

In this respect Harvey (1990:28-9) argued that:

the critical approach to history locates events in their social and political context, addresses the economic constraints and engages taken-for-granted ideological factors,
and that
within critical social research the reconstruction of history takes place alongside the structural analysis; it both informs and is informed by it.
Based on these building blocks, the next step of critical methodology is to offer an understanding of sport policy as a subsystem of public policy and to consider the processes of its deconstruction and reconstruction at different conjunctures.

3.3.1. Defining sport policy

Sports policy will be interpreted as a framework of principles, objectives and planned (unplanned) actions (inactions) developed by a credible local, national or international agency aiming to achieve common ends concerning specific communities within given range of resources, time and space. This definition implies four classifications which, together with Laumann and Knoke’s (1987) approach to public policy, will inform the analysis and set its framework:

(i) whether local or global, sports policy is a social construct designed to serve people’s particular interests and involves making conscious decisions on the part of authorised institutions (appointed by the state or by members) about the distribution of always limited resources, and promoting relevant practices over given territories. It must be considered not only as a set of rationally pre-planned actions, but as ad hoc reactions and inactions as well. Allison’s (1993:4) introductory comment on the politics of sport is helpful here, as he described it as a typical phenomena both for Marxists and their ideological opponents by using Harold Lasswell’s well-known observation that politics was about “Who gets What, When, How”, while the real politics was about class, about “left” and “right”;

(ii) Hogwood and Gunn (1984:24) suggested that “for a policy to be regarded as a ‘public policy’ it must to some degree have been generated or at least processed within the framework of governmental procedures, influences and organisations.” As highlighted by the discussion so far, clearly sport policy represents a particular domain of public policy. It will be interpreted as a set of actors with major concerns about the sport area, whose visions and actions on policy scenarios and events must be taken into account by the other participants in the domain. Operationally, this study defines national sport policies as concerned with the planning, provision and distribution of sport services, facilities and equipment. Particular policies within sport’s domain include the provision of physical activity programmes for different age groups, setting standards for training and performance, providing sporting
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infrastructure and resource allocations, establishing codes of practice for athletes and officials, staff training and certification, and the regulation of sports structures. Given the scale of the sports domain and the range of policies, not all of the actors can be viewed as core, and so they will exercise differential influences over policy matters. It has to be stressed however, that the criterion for who is a core or a non-core actor may change and have an impact on the distribution of roles. An example from the early 1980s was the shift in the focus of sport policy from participation-oriented to health and fitness. This evoked the emergence of a new set of actors - health consultancy centres - a partnership between health and sport authorities.

(iii) Membership in the sport policy domain is also a collective social construct representing the outcomes of continuous struggles and negotiations between core and peripheral corporate actors such as unions, federations, associations, committees and clubs who try to promote their strategies and have greater say in the policy-making process. A perfect example of defining the sport membership domain from the early 1960s was the classification of all sports into three categories - major (group A) and minor (group B) Olympic and others (group C), for the purpose of granting aid according to their contribution to country’s Olympic success.

(iv) Structural relations in the sport policy domain concern the robust, recurrent patterns of interactions linking the core and non-core actors to each other and to the larger public policy domain. According to Laumann and Knoke (1987:12-3) three generic relationships are especially significant in identifying political systems’ social structures: information transmission, resource transactions, and boundary penetration. Information transmission refers to the ability of a sport actor to access information affecting his/her interests. Resource transaction is the potential of a sport organisation to participate in the exchange of resources in order to maximise its power and position. A gold medal from the Nagano 1998 Olympics won by a sport boarding school graduate caused the Ministry of Education and the State Sport Committee to reconsider their decision to close her local school, and to re-establish it as a major centre for winter sports. Boundary penetration is an actor-to-actor type of linkage and involves primarily the shared use of personnel. The appointment of a commission by the National Olympic Committee to advise on policy matters is an example of
partnership between a voluntary and an interest group. Other typical examples include common membership in boards or commissions, or research or staff training projects.

The interpretation of sports policy given above, and particularly the notions of it as a social construct, membership and structural relation, relate clearly to the premises of a useful tool - the policy network model. According to Marsh (1995:18), this model fits with Jessop’s theoretical approach because:

Policy networks are an important feature of the precise form the state takes and, in particular, of the way it relates to civil society. From Jessop’s perspective we would expect policy networks to be common and to be tight with a limited number of interests dominating a variety of networks; as such, certain interests would have much greater access to policy making and their strategies would be privileged.

By utilising the policy network model, Marsh (1995) advances five hypotheses. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to test any of them, but it is believed that empirical evidence asserting some of the assumptions they make would bring extra substance to the research objectives. An approval or disapproval of Marsh’ third and fifth hypotheses (1995:20) that

Networks will be based on structural rather than interpersonal relationships, but the strategic calculations of groups and individuals have a crucial influence on both the membership and the outcomes of networks. So the emphasis is upon strategic rather than structural selectivity and the relationship between structure and agency is viewed as dialectical, and that,

Policy networks are a restriction of democracy because the tighter networks reflect a consistent pattern of structured political inequality and are characterised by the exclusion of most interests,

will be sought in unravelling the making of sports policy in the post-totalitarian period.

Building on the theoretical premises established in the previous chapter and methodological approach several important clarifications need to be made. As highlighted by the above interpretation, sport policy can be analysed in a variety of different ways. Hogwood and Gunn (1984: 13-41) suggest a useful categorisation of
the usages of the terms ‘policy’ and ‘policy analysis’. According to this categorisation, sport policy will be seen as: first, a label for a field of activity for governmental and non-governmental actors; second, a specific proposal in terms of statements indicating an envisaged course of action to be undertaken by political or sport organisations. For example, the Socialist Party’s Manifesto in 1992 stated that the party will promote the sponsorship of sport, so corresponding legislative and administrative activities can be expected; and third, an output, or what government or sport organisation delivers as opposed to what it has promised or has authorised through legislation. A typical form of output in the sport area is to describe such items as more facilities, more funds, or better regulations, but these should only be considered as important contributory factors to a desired output, as often in practice outputs do not conform to stated intentions; fourth, an outcome, that is, in terms of what is actually achieved. It is essential here to distinguish between outputs (the activities of institutions at the point of delivery) and outcomes (the impact of these activities). An example from the early 1980s was when the Bulgarian government committed resources to provide the necessary conditions for young people to learn to swim (output), but this still did not suffice to achieve its pledge - ‘every boy and girl - a swimmer’ (outcome). In this sense, considering sport policy as outcomes allows the researcher to assess whether the stated purpose of a policy appears to be what the policy is actually achieving. The effect of what was labelled as a national policy for improving young people’s health and fitness through the acquisition of life-time skills was limited to certain favourably located regions of the country with natural water areas and traditions. Thus helping improve these places infrastructure further at the expense of those which were lacking the resources was an example of unintended policy consequences. One may feel entitled then to argue that, this was a regional development policy as much as a national fitness policy.

The term ‘sport policy analysis’ presupposes different approaches to sport as a public domain, each highlighting a particular meaning. This study will use four specific approaches to sport policy analysis-as policy content, policy process, policy advocacy, and policy evaluation; The study of policy content focuses on the origins, intentions and operation of sport policies during the three periods, and is descriptive in nature;
studying the sport policy process involves the actions taken by the state (primarily the
government) and non-public actors at each stage (see below); policy advocacy uses the
analysis in making an argument in favour of a particular policy. It is important here to
distinguish between the role of political actors and analysts (experts or interested
groups) in policy advocacy. This is necessary as their interests and standards for
performance differ significantly. Over the past eighty years the involvement of
academics in key management positions in politics and sport (that is, as policy
advocates) has been a common practice. Accounting for the conflicting demands of
political (predominantly pragmatic) and academic (rigour of analysis) environments,
the objectivity of their motivation and opinions would always be prone to challenge.
As this will be an evaluative study, it will seek to assess how far sport policy's
objectives have corresponded to their outcomes. This approach is also descriptive as it
informs the project about the factors which shape national sport policy over time.

Analysing sport policy in terms of process involves several stages but it is far from a
uniformity or fixity (Ham and Hill, 1993). Hogwood and Gunn (1984) suggested a
detailed model for public policy making including nine successive stages. For the
purposes of this analysis however, Laumann and Knoke's (1987:14-8) notion of the
policy cycle has been adopted. It rests on the idea for time-dependent nature of the
actors' searches for problems and solutions by acknowledging that policy processes
do not occur in a vacuum, but involve a multitude of interests and other actors.

The policy cycle begins with problem recognition. This usually occurs when an actor
or group of actors identify some condition as an issue and invite other actors to take
stance. The advance of the technological revolution in the late 1970s and 1980s has
been pointed out by the Communist Party as a problem imposing a sedentary way of
life on and threatening the physical development of young people. Subsequently,
sports organisations have been urged to introduce policies to tackle the downside
effects of technological progress. Of course, issue recognition is not always a
straightforward process; rather it is often highly uncertain, and most importantly it can
only become a domain issue if it is recognised by all key actors in the domain.
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The second stage of the cycle is option generation.

A policy option is the empirical unit act in the policy process. It consists of a statement made by a policy domain actor that advocates that a specific action be taken, either by an actor or by some other authoritative actor, with regard to a specially perceived issue (Laumann and Knoke, 1987:15-6).

The important strategic implication here concerns the cases when the agencies which first identified and voiced an issue are not those who subsequently propose policy options aiming at solving it in their best interest. Once a problem has been recognised and policy options generated, the next step is to be placed on the agenda (agenda placement). A government or sport governing body agenda specifies the formal order, time limits, resources and actors needed for materialising particular policy option subject to decision. Typically, the number of issues calling for solution far exceeds those that can be placed on the agenda. Subsequently, organisations and actors take actions including committing resources and creating alliances with other actors to ensure that their issue reaches the agenda. The case of the 1996 Sport Law illustrates the point. It underwent more than fifteen editions and four years of rounds of extensive discussions at different levels, before the bill reached the agenda of the parliament where, without debate it eventually became law.

The above example leads to the next stage of policy making process - events and scenarios. In fact the Sport Law can be seen as a wider scenario called “setting up post-socialist sport” as it envisaged a series of discrete events aiming to legitimise the sports scene, to prescribe obligations to public actors, or to urge the government to provide for minimum standards for physical education and sport. Finally, the process ends with authoritative decisions. The focus of the study is not on the procedures by which laws and regulations are authorised, but rather, on the socio-political construction of sport policy in terms of determining structures, relationships and outcomes.
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As stated earlier, the four approaches to sport policy-making, and the policy cycle model adopted here can serve analytical purposes well but by no means exhaust the richness of real life and its variety of scenarios. This is to suggest that different policy issues may require adjusting policy-making approaches to account for the circumstances and the issue in question.

3.3.2. Sports policy deconstruction and reconstruction

As the preceding discussion suggested, the key assumption of critical theory entails that human beings can appreciate one another's existence and shape the course of their affairs as a result of acting in a social manner, or what writers such as Habermas (1987) term 'communicative competence'; or Fay (1987) label 'human activity'. Thus the analysis of human interactions logically requires attention not only to individual agent accounts, but also to the structural settings of power, structures and domination within which interactions take place and make sense to these actors.

Critical theory can therefore be seen as a structural phenomenology. As Forester (1983: 235) put it:

\[
\text{it is a phenomenology because it attends to the skilled and contingent social construction and negotiation of intersubjective meanings. It is structural because it attends to the historical stage on which social actors meet, speak, conflict, listen, or engage with one another.}
\]

Various actors (including institutions) make sense of sport by getting involved in social interactions (communications), but the sense of sport (a sport policy or form of participation) depends on the objective historic setting. People take part in sport as result of a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic influences, but the actual form of participation is predetermined to a large extent by the policy of sport provision prescribed by some credible agency - a sport governing body, an expert, or an entrepreneur.

As the above discussion suggests, the project research strategy required an approach that would account both for the phenomenology and the structure. In analysing relationships between the state project and state hegemonic project in sport and state intervention in developing Bulgarian sport policy, the research considered old and
new decision-makers' accounts, archive files, meeting records, social and political strategies, organisations and structures. This process involves a constant questioning of the perspective and analysis that the project is building up, and a constant deconstruction and reconstruction of concepts. Accounting for individual agents' interpretations, the research will build up a picture of how the state power in sport is constructed in terms of the significance of personal relations within the structure as well as analysing individual actions. The core concept of this project is sport policy as strategic relations.

The deconstruction used in this project sees sport policy in terms of its strategic relation to the state project and state hegemonic project. This allows for the nature of sport policy to be reconstructed. The character of sport policy is revealed through the analysis of strategic relations between the state, society and individual agents. The process of deconstruction and reconstruction is continuous and gradually undermines the embedded ideology in prevailing conceptualisations. This is achieved by relating the core abstraction to the historical and structural totality in order to find out how it works, and by using empirical data to elaborate the relationships and suggest further deconstructive stages. In conclusion, the dialectic of deconstruction-reconstruction of this project is seen as a process focusing on the structural totality (as found in a particular historical conjuncture) and critically reflecting on its essential (strategic relational) nature.

3.3.3. Data Collection

The nature of the research topic required the use of both, qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods, according to Patton (1990) consist of three principal kinds of data collection: (a) in-depth open-ended interviews, (b) direct observation, and (c) written documentation. For the purposes of this study, focused interviews, direct observation in the form of case studies and ethnography, and document analysis were all employed.

The focused interview was the most used form of semistructured interview, and goes a step beyond open-ended questions, as it provides more flexibility in terms of the
questions asked. Merton, Fiske and Kendall (1956:3-4), in a comprehensive discussion of this method, suggested that the focused interview uses topics and hypotheses selected in advance, while the actual questions are not specified in advance. The essence of the focused interview is the structure provided by the interviewer, which includes four elements. Firstly, the people interviewed must have been involved in particular events, that is, sport-policy making on a central or local level during all, or any of the periods under investigation. Secondly, the events subject to study must have been previously analysed by the researcher through content or situational analysis. This was accomplished for situational analysis of events during the totalitarian and the post-totalitarian period of Bulgarian sport, which allowed a set of hypotheses to be formulated concerning certain aspects of the belief and behaviour of those people to be investigated. Thirdly, based on the analysis in the previous step, an interview guide needed to be developed, setting for each major area of inquiry and hypotheses which provide criteria of relevance for the data to be obtained in the interview. Fourthly, the interview should focus on the subjective experiences of persons exposed to the pre-analysed situation in order to ascertain their definitions of the situation. The responses to the situation obtained in this way helped to test hypotheses, and as it is possible for unanticipated responses to be included, this might inform the researcher in undertaking more systematic investigation.

Based on these assumptions several key actors, active during the communist and post-communist period were selected to be interviewed (see Table 3.3). They include Mr. Christo Meranzov, a former vice-chairman of the Bulgarian Sports Union, deputy director of the BCP Central Committee Organisational department and current consultant to the Bulgarian Sports Union; Prof. Peter Slanchev, former National Students Sports Union 'Academic' chairman and National Sports Academy chancellor; Mr. Ivan Slavkov, an IOC and Bulgarian Olympic Committee member and Bulgarian Football Union president; Mr Plamen Krastev, recently deputy chairman of the Committee for Youth, Physical Education and Sport (CYPES); Mr. Svilend Ranev, Head of CYPES International Relations; Miss Radka Valkova, Secretary General of School Sports Federation; Mrs Jordanka Blavoeva, Bulgarian Aerobic Federation Executive Director and owner of a private fitness centre 'Jova
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Sport'; and Mr. Dimitar Haralampiev, former head of BSFS' International Relations, BOC Secretary General and currently project co-ordinator of Foundation Bulgarian Sport. No key figure from the pre-totalitarian period was alive and available for interview.

Table 3.3. Sport policy-makers in Bulgaria interviewed regarding communist (c) and post-communist (pc) period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Christo Meranzov</td>
<td>V-Chairman, D-Director (c)</td>
<td>BSU, OD, BCP CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Peter Slanchev</td>
<td>Chairman, Chancellor (c)</td>
<td>NSSU ‘Academic’, NSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Ivan Slavkov</td>
<td>President (c, pc)</td>
<td>BOC, BFU, IOC member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Plamen Krastev</td>
<td>Deputy Chairman (pc)</td>
<td>CYPES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Svilen Ranev</td>
<td>Head (pc)</td>
<td>Intern Relations, CYPES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Radka Valkova</td>
<td>S. General (pc) official (c)</td>
<td>School Sports Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Jordanka Blagoeva</td>
<td>Exec. Director, Owner (pc)</td>
<td>BAF, 'Jova Sport' centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Dimitar Haralampiev</td>
<td>Coordinator (pc) official (c)</td>
<td>Foundation Bulgarian Sport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critical ethnography attempts to link the detailed analysis of ethnography to wider social structures and systems of power relations (Schwandt, 1990, Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993). In this project, it explored and situated the group of sports leaders (the BSFS, the BOC, National Federations) during the totalitarian and post-totalitarian periods, in social and political milieu. This was achieved by using detailed accounts collected by means of in-depth interviews and participant observation to examine structural relationships in terms of actual practices. Studied were the behaviour and practices of the BOC (Sofia 1992 and '94 Winter Olympic bids, 1985-88), the BSFS Executive Board (1989), leaders of the BSFS (Chairman and Executive Director, 1993-94), Police Sports Association (Executive Director, 1993-94), Bulgarian Aerobic Union (Secretary General, 1998), and School Sports Federation (Secretary General, 1998).

For the purposes of this discussion a wide range of documents (written materials) have been studied. These can be classified into two major categories - primary and
secondary. Primary documents included policy papers, such as conceptions, plans, statements, analyses, speeches written, or eye-witnessed by the author. The secondary documents consisted of official reports, personal accounts, analyses, statistics, archives, and lay, academic and professional literature. According to their content all documents were further classified in five chief categories: policy (conceptions, reports, strategic plans, speeches), analyses (research papers, consultancy documents and surveys), accounts (personal, auto-and biographical books, polls), archives (state (e.g. Ministries of Finance & Education), public (e.g. BSFS) and private (e.g. Prof. N. Petrova) and statistics (official state, professional and public bodies). This was necessary in order to ensure a more comprehensive grasp of the subject under investigation, and to prevent analysis of overlying on certain categories of materials.

3.3.4. The Case Study Method
The case study method refers to non-experimental research in which the variables are neither controlled nor manipulated, where the phenomenon under study is analysed in its natural “ecological” setting, hence facilitating the study of context. While acknowledging the use in many case studies of quantitative research methods, the application of the case study method in this research should be considered as qualitative. Denny (1978:2) defined the case study as “an intensive or complete examination of a facet, an issue, or perhaps the events of a geographical setting over time.” One of the most quoted case study methodologists, Yin (1989:23) described the case study strategy as an empirical inquiry:

- that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which
- multiple sources of evidence are used.

Clearly, the function of case studies in research is to identify and examine phenomena and meanings, in order to establish relationships and configurations. The argument of this methodology is that understanding strategic relations in Bulgaria's sport policy requires analysis of their development over time, and in the current environment. To meet the aspirations of the study, the analysis of post-totalitarian state intervention alone was not enough, as it would have provided information for only one level of
relations. The use of a case study allowed an embedded design to be employed that is, multiple levels of analysis within a single study (Yin, 1989), which included voluntary and private, provider-state, and client relationships, as well as the style of management. Moreover, the principal methodology of this study as offered by the critical science approach, aims to enlighten certain phenomena and relationships conforming with what Yin (1989:25) saw as the most important application of case study method "to explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies."

The main criticism faced by the case study method concerns the issue of generalizability, that is one-off cases are seen as opportunistic and unique, rather then representative for the phenomena under question. This application of the case study approach was testing the theoretical propositions established in Chapter One. Such a promising idea is argued by Pinfield (1986), whose assumptions were influenced by the writings of classical ethnographers. They asserted that a one-off case study can test a theory by a process of pattern matching, whereby several pieces of information from the case can be related to theoretical propositions. This can also be seen as one of a number of ways to link data to propositions. Thus, if multiple case observations cannot substantiate the pattern demanded by the theory, then the study has to conclude that the prior assumptions and theory are wrong.

Another problematic issue with the application of the case-study method refers to the nature of sport policy-making and the focus of this project - transformations. As discussed above, sport policy is seen as a process of continuous struggles and negotiations between various actors, and transformations are examined in diachronic aspect, while the case study provides a snap-shot picture of the issue under study. Accounting for this potential flaw of the case-study method, the design of the particular cases used the four approaches of studying sport policy - its content, process, advocacy and evaluation, with emphasis on the unfolding of policy process (issue recognition, options generation, agenda placement, events-scenarios and authoritative decision) and the key actors and events involved in it. Thus, the chosen research strategy allowed analysis to locate the discussion in the context of the large
framework of the transforming post-totalitarian environment and to follow through the unfolding of particular sport policies, that is, seeing it not as a snap-shot but as a process.

Eisenhardt (1989: 534) suggested that "case studies typically combine data collection methods such as archives, interviews, questionnaires and observations. The evidence may be qualitative (e.g., words), quantitative (e.g., numbers), or both." Yin (1989: 95-102) gave more detailed argumentation on the validity of evidence in developing three main principles of data collection:

- Using of multiple sources of evidence
- Creating a case study data base
- Maintaining a chain of evidence.

Following these principles, the methods adopted in this study used data from all principal sources of evidence - documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, and participant-observation. At the same time, the use of the case study approach in the manner outlined above, worked in a form of triangulation (matching data from secondary sources and interviews) concerning reliability in relation to factual accuracy. The research design fits clearly the distinction made by Miles and Huberman (1994) between triangulation by data (the use of a variety of data sources), by method (the use of multiple methods of study), by researcher (the involvement of more than one investigator), and triangulation by theory (the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data, see Jones, 1993).

The two cases selected for the study were Aerobic Union Bulgaria/Jova Sport Fitness Centre a voluntary - private partnership establishment and the Bulgarian School Sport Federation (SSF) - a voluntary governing body in Sofia. The former represents the most popular private fitness centre (which subsequently merged with a voluntary body) in the country, a novelty on the sport scene. The latter represents a typical voluntary organisation responsible for devising sports policy for the most dynamic group in society - the pupils - an area of public domain, which was firmly under the state control in the previous two periods.
3.3.5. Validation of Research Concepts

As indicated in earlier remarks, the emergence of several trends in sport development, over three distinct periods, unveiled the presence of virtually unchanged phenomena (e.g. state intervention or sport organisations' behaviour). This suggested that certain structures, values and configurations in Bulgarian society must have been more durable than the ideological constructions derived from the current form of the state.

Based on these assumptions, the construction of the main concepts of this study is grounded on the logic of the research strategy and strategic relations approach. Subsequently, the definition of this project's main concepts (or fixed phenomena) was followed by identifying the key variables (those parameters which vary in quantity, intensity, amount or degree) for each, followed by defining their attributes (variables' values). More specifically, this implies a match between the relationships within the research strategy (abstraction, phenomena, deconstruction and reconstruction), with different levels of the state project and hegemonic project relationships (accumulative strategies, agencies, intervention, transformations, policy, project, consequences). The research model and strategic relations approach complement each other in such a way that theoretical formulations derived from strategic relations guided the collection of data pertaining to the main concepts. In turn, this process was channelled by the research model denoting clear relationships between the phenomena under consideration, causal conditions, particular context, implemented action/interaction strategies and logical consequences.

National sport policy in Bulgaria was chosen as a core concept of this study on the grounds that it is an umbrella term (although not necessarily explicitly and consistently holistic) concerning different groups of people and addressing wider social and economic relations. Bramham et al (1993:1) argued in a similar, though broader context in relation to the existence of leisure policy:

one should recognise both that leisure is invariably subject to intervention, and that intervention not only restricts leisure opportunities, but also creates new opportunities.
Chapter 3. Research Methodology

Clearly, formulating a national sport policy involves a set of agencies, actors, power relationships, resources, decision-making, regulations and deregulations, particular interests, and outcomes. All key concepts proved to be representative for the specific historical contexts and causal conditions, as they reflected primarily the durable elements in strategic relations. Their selection allowed the analysis to follow a clear path of development of its arguments.

3.3.6. Data Analysis

The analysis of data presented in this study is based on the assumptions laid out at the beginning of this chapter, concerning two starting positions: the existence of early researches and a defined point of view, in relation to the concepts under investigation. More specifically, research findings and observations suggesting a great deal of similarity in sport's principal aspects such as its strategies, forms of state intervention and key actors in three different phases, and deriving from that, a point of view in the form of four interrelated issues further spelled out in the research questions. Subsequently, the analysis of data was designed to search for patterns of state involvement and sport organisations' behaviour. Data collected were then interpreted in terms of the strategic relations theory which allowed the author to move beyond the historical-comparative analysis of a particular setting to a more generalised meaning of the events.

In order to ensure the congruency of the research methodology and the development of the new body of knowledge, the analysis of data builds on the research paradigm in a distinct aspect. It was imperative to adopt methods of data analysis in line with both the research model and the critical perspective as this thesis' research paradigm. For the purposes of the study and based on the above assumptions, three interrelated methods of data analysis were selected: successive approximation, negative evidence and the use of diagrams and charts.

According to Lawrence (1994:412) in successive approximation the researcher begins with:
Chapter 3. Research Methodology

research questions and a framework of assumptions and concepts. He then probes into data, asking questions of the evidence to see how well the concepts fit the evidence and reveal features of the data. He also creates new concepts by abstracting from the evidence and adjust concepts to fit the evidence better. He then collects additional evidence to address unsolved issues that appeared in the first stage, and repeat the process. At each stage the evidence and the theory shape each other.

As already pointed out, this study covers a great time span of Bulgaria’s history, from the end of the 1870s to the present day. It is clear that the historical reality is not linear, and so to facilitate analysis and data collection there was a need to divide the history into periods. As a main criterion for theoretical definition of each period a crucial event was chosen. Subsequently, this resulted in distinguishing three periods termed capitalism, communism and democracy. The capitalist period is confined between the two World Wars, the communist from the end of World War 2 and the Eastern European revolutions from 1989, and the democratic begins after 1990, to the present day.

The method of negative evidence emphasises the non-appearance of a feature or incident. Lewis and Lewis (1980) suggested seven kinds of negative evidence to consider. This study will apply two of them - events do not occur, and people are unaware of events. A prime example for the ‘events do not occur’ evidence is the fact that no conception of the country’s sport policy was ever based on an in-depth analysis of contemporary society. A possible explanation may be that agents and agencies implicitly recognised the power of the state over them. The state (in its three periods) exercised its power in a way that ruled out the idea of questioning the premises of a proposed sport policy. An extension of the first negative evidence is the ‘population unaware of events’: for many years sport development at all levels was subject to centralised planning. Until experts (and wider society) became aware of the incongruency of this method of policy making and the potential of the real nature of sport in a setting uncontrolled by the state grew, few saw this practice as limiting the opportunities of local and central agencies, and the population at large.
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Presenting qualitative data analysis in the form of diagrams, charts and matrixes was employed as powerful means for organising ideas, and investigating of relations within the data. For example, a summary box of major events for each of the periods concerned was develop to provide the guidelines for their sequencing and analysis. In addition all significant trends in national sport policy are presented in graph or chart form, to allow visual comparisons. Several computer software packages, such as MediaGraphics were used.

Finally, another influential idea in the form of so-called ‘outcroppings’ was applied. This method of data analysis overlaps with the interpretative perspective of studying social reality but, used in conjunction with the strategic relations approach, provides valuable insights into the concepts under investigation. It is based on the idea that there are many things we cannot directly observe in the social world. As Lawrence (1994:423) put it:

\[
a \text{researcher's data from the observable, surface reality are only samples of what happens on the visible, surface level. The researcher uses the data to generate and evaluate theories and generalisations. At the same time, he assumes that beneath the outer surface of reality lie deeper social structures or relationships.}
\]

When applied to the formation of sport policy, strategic relations theory looks for a range of relationships, including the role of individual agents whose behaviour is not always rational, and who exercise significant influence in shaping certain outcomes of this policy. The data collected from personal involvement, observations and interviews is organised in a way to point out the outcroppings of the make up of Bulgaria’s sport policy. The next three chapters discuss in greater detail the patterns of strategic relations in the national sport movement in its pre-, totalitarian, and post-totalitarian periods.

To conclude, from the discussions in the first two chapters, several important theoretical and methodological points emerged which have a bearing on the analysis to follow. The study of transformations in Bulgaria’s sport policy through the capitalist, communist and democratic period was informed by the premises of the Strategic Relations approach developed by Jessop (1990). Its main claim asserted that
the state is a strategic terrain which offers structural privileges to some but not all kinds of political strategies. Therefore, the state will be viewed as a social relation and analysed as the site, the generator, the product and the mediator of strategies between local, national and global levels.

More specifically, the subsequent chapters will examine the role of the Bulgarian state in shaping sport policy by using as guidelines its formal (forms of representation, internal organisation and forms of intervention) and substantive (the social base, state practices and projects, and historic bloc and hegemonic project) dimensions. The state will be interpreted as nation, territory and institution, and corresponding to it, category, form, regime and structure (see Hay, 1996). As this project sets out to investigate the transformations in sport policy in three different socio-economic environments, the analysis of the transformation will place the focus primarily on the actual process of transition from one setting (capitalism to communism) to another (communism to democracy) and to a lesser degree on its destination.

Following the assumptions suggested by the literature review, the project employed the critical theory as a methodological tool in order to achieve its aims and objectives. Critical theory's epistemological and ontological premises inform the research in that knowledge is structured by existing social relations and that social reality is produced and reproduced by social actors. Subsequently, sport is seen as an institution whose policy and patterns of conduct are continually related to larger issue of social production and reproduction. In this context, practical policies are forms of social regulation in which particular social knowledge is selected and cast for people to guide their choice and participation. The project aims, therefore, to analyse social processes and reveal the underlying conceptions and practices. For a more concrete analysis, an attempt is made to examine their practical manifestation by further spelling out social processes, concepts and practices into several interrelated blocks, including - abstraction, totality, essence, praxis, ideology, history and structure. Accounting for both, the framework and its elements of analysis, the key concept of this project - sport policy is seen as strategic relations, that is, as a label of activity for governmental and non-governmental actors, as specific proposal put forward by them,
as an output and an outcome of their activities. Finally, the approaches to studying Bulgarian sport policy to be used include its analysis as - policy content, policy process, policy advocacy, and policy evaluation.

In the three historical chapters (4, 5 and 6) which follow the reader is introduced to the content by a series of key events. These were selected as result of analysis which unveiled their critical impact on structuring and shaping sports domain and policies. Based on theoretical propositions, each of the three chapters follows certain logic (format) including: (i) the setting up of the new state as nation, territory and institution and its effects on state strategies; (ii) state projects and their impact on the conceptualisation of sport and its structuring, and (iii) key state strategies and strategic relations in sport policy making. The conclusions take the form of conceptualisation of strategic relations in sport policy which is spelled out in terms of content, process, advocacy and outcome.
Chapter 4.

State projects, strategic relations and sport policy making:
the Capitalist period (1878-1944)
Key state interventions in the capitalist sport policy (1878-1944)

1897 Ministry of Education directive encouraging the setting up of gymnastics clubs
1925 First state body set up - the Directorate for Physical Education within the Ministry of Education, with a separate budget
1931 First Sports Act and state budget for sport
1936 First state co-ordinated promotion of the Olympic Games in Berlin
1938 Law on state control over public and voluntary organisations
1938 First national military-fitness programme “Bulgarian Sport Badge” introduced
1941 Setting up of state youth umbrella organisation - Branik (Defender)

This chapter sets out to analyse the emergence and development of the third Bulgarian state (1878 to present), its key projects, and their implications for shaping an environment in which various interests, concepts, structures and relations in sport evolved. In order to achieve that the following objectives will be pursued:

i) analysing the setting up of the new state as nation, territory and institution and its effects on state strategies;

ii) discussing the state’s projects and their impact on the conceptualisation of sport and its structuring;

iii) establishing key state strategies and strategic relations in sport policy making.

4.1. The making of a state

As previously discussed, one of Jessop’s central claims in Strategic Relations theory was that political systems can be constituted out of the available institutional elements. This provided only a limited viewpoint for understanding the emergence of the third Bulgarian state, which also marked the dismissal of Eastern feudal despotism. After a long delay, the Bulgarian nation appeared on the road to modern development, with the mission to build a new secular state out of the ruins of the theocratic Ottoman empire. This project presupposed no continuity, as Bulgaria aspired to regain its place as a European state. The backwardness of the Ottoman
Chapter 4.  

Strategic relations in sport policy: the Capitalist period (1878-1944)

Empire provided no political, economic or social foundations to build on, and virtually all constitutional elements of the new state had to be developed anew, or imported. This task was assumed by Russia, but was largely facilitated by the uprising of April 1876 - the most powerful manifestation of national striving for independence which received wide political support in Europe (see Todorov, 1975, Dimitrov, 1981, Crampton, 1997). As diplomatic efforts for a peaceful solution to Bulgaria's problem failed, in 1877 Russia eventually declared a war on Turkey as a last attempt to reshuffle the political balance in the Balkans, in accordance with its own strategic interests.

The project for the constitutional settlement of the Bulgarian kingdom was prepared by the Russian military administration nine months before the end of the war. Bulgaria was declared by the Saint Stephan Peace Treaty of March 1878 an independent state incorporating 80% of its ethnic territory (including about 5 million Bulgarians) in the Balkans. The Treaty, though, was not sanctioned by Great Britain which saw it as a threat to its interests in the region, and after a secret deal with Russia the Berlin Treaty was imposed instead, in July of the same year (see in particular Penkov, 1969, Velev et al, 1997). Despite pledges of the local population, the country was divided into five parts ruled by Bulgaria, Serbia, Turkey and Rumania, a move which had a crucial impact on future developments. Besides the international dimensions, equally important for the territorial settlement of the new state was the issue of partitioning the land and its ownership, which shaped interests and strategies. Clearly, the geo-political orientation of the country and its constitutional order were decided by the Great Powers, and besides its basic mission the new state was assigned an additional role to play - that of a mediator of foreign interests and strategies.

Russia laid down the foundations of the Kingdom’s constitution, parliament, state administration, laws, judicial system, army and police, banking system, transport and communication network, and its cultural and sport institutions. It is interesting to note that ironically this modernisation was intended and accomplished in a far more advanced fashion than it was in Russia itself. As the then Russian War Minister, Milutin, acknowledged, "we could not have not admitted that our whole state
organisation demands a fundamental reconstruction from top to bottom. As for agricultural self-governance, local, regional and state administration - everything has outlived its time and would have to gain new forms” (quoted in Manolova, 1994:11). So apart from its strategic interests in the Balkans, Russia’s critical intervention in building a new modern state in Bulgaria could be seen as a testing ground for similar reforms to be implemented later on its own soil.

Bulgaria’s political system was designed outside its boundaries, and no national representatives were allowed to take part in the preparation. Most commentators (Todorov, 1975, Dimitrov, 1981, Peshev, 1993, Velev et al, 1997) agree that the Turnovo constitution of 1879 settling the state-political construction was one of the most democratic constitutions in Europe. However, as a creature of the Russian Tsarist government, it naturally envisaged a leading role for the future monarch, and limited economic and civil freedoms. Following recommendation by the Russian Tsar Nikolai II, a 22 year-old officer in the Prussian army, a member of the Battenberg dynasty, and a nephew of the Russian Queen, was proclaimed the first Bulgarian Prince. He was entrusted with a great deal of power and the country declared a constitutional monarchy though it was ruled for nine months by a temporary Russian government. At the outset, the design of the political system was susceptible to an authoritarian style of ruling.

As this first episode of Bulgaria’s modern history illustrates, from the very beginning the building of a new ‘stateness’ evoked various interests and struggles. The Great Powers’ plans for the geo-politics of Bulgaria under the Berlin Treaty (1878) shaped to a great extent the nature of national ideals and sport visions in particular. The Treaty reshaped the territorial and ethnic base as well as the organisational and spiritual culture of Bulgarian society. The Bulgarian people refused to accept it, and openly resisted. As Velev et al (1997:75) asserted:

restoring the wholeness of the ‘Bulgaria of Saint Stephan’ as part of the great Bulgarian national ideal - ‘for a unified and inseparable Bulgaria’ has turned into a national incantation.
Chapter 4. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Capitalist period (1878-1944)

In 1885 as the result of a mass uprising, Bulgaria gained territorial unification, endorsed by the Prince, and thus confronted the Great Powers with a *fait accompli*. Russia disliked this demonstration of independence, and withdrew its military personnel, leaving the Bulgarian army without commanders. According to many analysts (Penkov, 1969, Mitev, 1980, Velev et al, 1997), the realisation of unification was the single major independent act in Bulgaria's modern history which was not dictated or instigated by outside powers. Eventually, after 30 years of struggle, in 1908 Bulgaria gained its full independence from the Ottoman empire, and appeared as an equal member of the international community.

The country's further historical development was marked by continuous military conflicts and disasters. Most notably, there were three consecutive wars - two Balkan wars (1912-1913 and 1914), and World War I - and two coups, where the army appeared as a critical factor on the political scene. Bulgaria was defeated and suffered huge material and moral loses, as Gentchev (1968: 89) commented:

> the army - this reactionary institution - inevitably haunts over political life, plays a fatal role, and prepares a reactionary phalanx of political figures and military personnel, who look with disdain on the traditions of bourgeois democracy.

As will be further demonstrated, this role of the army also had a serious bearing on sport. The core of the sport system comprised sports developed and practised in the army, and top military personnel were amongst the favourite appointments for key leadership positions in all sport governing bodies.

Bulgaria's social and political reality after World War I (as a German ally and one of the defeated countries) was predetermined to a great extent by the 'slavery' clauses of the 1919 Neville Treaty. The most fertile land of south Dobrudja, western Thrace, and the western outlying districts, was cut from the national territory, and huge reparations, equal to 20% of the national wealth, were imposed, on top of the existing foreign debts (Natan et al, 1969:476). Bulgaria was deprived of having a regular army, and a particular reference was made in the Treaty (see Petrova, 1978, 1983, Bardareva, 1991) to the character of voluntary sport organisations, and even the way
gymnastics should be delivered in schools, in order to prevent the introduction of any military element in it.

All these years of uncertainty, frustration, national humiliation, human and material suffering, coupled with the failure of bourgeois democracy to provide for these basic necessities, created anxiety, anger and a great demand for order, stability, and social and economic efficiency, which particularly appealed to the young and working people, and to military personnel. The call for a new social order capitalised on nationalistic fervour, and came in the form of the first military-fascist coup on 9 June 1923, with the subsequent establishment of authoritarian-totalitarian regimes (for a detailed account on the authoritarian model in Bulgarian politics between the two World Wars see Tzvetkov, 1991 and Poppetrov, 1997).

Gradually, the country’s political and economic development began to follow an orientation towards nazi Germany, which by the terms of Versailles Treaty had been obliged to surrender its colonies, and subsequently was doomed to suffer from a chronic shortage of raw materials. Still driven by the powerful national ideal for a unified Bulgaria, in 1941 the state again joined Germany and entered World War II, which led for a short period of time to the country’s re-unification. After a strategic U-turn in 1944, a day before the Red Army’s invasion, Bulgaria declared war on Germany. Despite its army’s critical contribution and 32,000 casualties against the Nazis, during the Paris post-war conference Bulgaria was not recognised (by the Allies including the USSR) as fighting on the side of the anti-German coalition, and as a result was deprived of its territories in Pomoravia, Macedonia and White Sea Trace. This was yet another catastrophe, and crushing for the national ideal (see Velev, et al, 1997).

In summary, the constitutional settlement of the third Bulgarian state emerged as a result of a national struggle for independence, and the Great Powers’ (Russia, Great Britain, and Germany) strategic interests in the Balkans. The state became a site, generator, product and mediator of competing conservative and liberal projects, which predetermined its relations with the rest of society. The clash of foreign and national
interests over the constitution of the Bulgarian state, and related struggles highlighted the importance of the relationships between the state as a nation, territory and institution. Furthermore, these arrangements had a serious impact on the role of the state and influenced the nature of state and sport projects.

4.2. State projects and society

As stated above, the Turnovo constitution of 1879 defined Bulgaria as a bourgeois state led by a monarch and put the building of a capitalist society at the top of its political-economic agenda. This project, however, had to be pursued by the only party - the Liberals, representing the poor and the petit bourgeoisie. The Conservative Party, which was supposed to represent the interests of the wealthiest group (a very small number of people), was linked closely with German and Austrian financial and economic capital elites, but did not constitute itself for four years after the liberation.

Then, for some ten years, it demonstrated total disregard for the aspirations of the majority of the population, supported the Prince in suspending the constitution after a state coup in 1881, which for seven years brought about a regime of full powers (meaning that he assumed total responsibility for all domestic and international affairs, subjugating the parliament and the government). It eventually disintegrated and ceased to exist after 1885 (see Nikolova and Sazdov, 1992).

The rest of the parties on the political stage emerged as ‘spin-offs’ of the Liberal Party, triggered by either ideological or leadership differences. It is correct to talk about social and ideological streams rather than political parties per se. The lack of political tradition and the need to appeal to the majority of population urged various interest groups to generate support by identifying themselves with “the whole people” as opposed to a particular class or group. Despite attempts by social democrats and agriculturists to distance themselves from this common image, nonetheless the first 30-40 years of developing the political environment nurtured a specific political culture dominated by several common conceptual, economic and social trends.

Conceptually, all political formations were preoccupied with a concern to defend and implement the Constitution, and with unifying Bulgaria’s lands and people. This was
Chapter 4. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Capitalist period (1878-1944)

a hegemonic project aiming to establish a modern capitalist society which called for mass support from all classes and groups. Subsequently, their programmes looked very similar, revolving around these key projects, but in which sport was not given formal recognition (Table 4.1). They had centralised structures and party discipline dominated by an omnipotent leader (see Hadjiski, 1943, Nikolova and Sazdov, 1992).

Table 4.1 Bulgaria’s ruling political parties, their ideologies and sport visions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political party</th>
<th>Core ideology</th>
<th>Sport visions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1879-1919 Various liberal, conservative formations and coalitions</td>
<td>Statism supported by all parties across the board</td>
<td>Corporal education, military training and state governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1923 Bulgarian People’s Agrarian Union</td>
<td>Inconsistent bourgeois, professional criterion</td>
<td>No special policy, corporal (physical) education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-1931 Popular Entente-Sgovor</td>
<td>Radical right wing, Dictatorship</td>
<td>Setting control over PE and sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-1934 Popular block</td>
<td>Bourgeois-parliamentary democracy</td>
<td>Military training and a state budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935 Zveno</td>
<td>Monarcho-fascist dictatorship (I)</td>
<td>Military training and state control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-1944 Tsar Boris III</td>
<td>Monarcho-fascist dictatorship (II)</td>
<td>Militarism, totalitarian government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This was particularly true for the parties ruling the country as they were known by their leader’s name, and not by their ideological platforms. For example the Radoslavists (after Dr Radoslavov for conservatives), the Tzankovists (after Dr Tzankov for liberals), or the Stambolovists (after A. Stamboliiski for agriculturalists) (see Radeva, 1993).

In an attempt to compensate for the lack of comprehensive visions for the development of the country and having represented the blurred interests of large fluid groups, most parties adopted a convenient approach to practical policies, which Nikolova and Sizdov (1992:12) characterised in the slogan ‘our programme is our acts’. This approach, coupled with a lack of adequate collective control over political
centres and regular changes of party memberships in favour of those in power, also set the practice of justifying *post factum* actions to serve particular interests. Given the lack of political culture and democratic traditions, it comes as no surprise that Bulgaria had four cabinets in three years including interim Russian Prime and War Ministers (1882), with the first cabinet being the shortest lived, surviving only for four months.

During its first five decades Bulgaria could be characterised (according to present terminology) as 'a developing economy', dominated by small to middle-sized craft production and agricultural small holdings. Until 1884, there were only 23 factories with more than 10 employees, increasing to 30 in 1904, and to 1,245 by 1930 (Hadjiski, 1943:194-5). In comparison, the Cadbury's chocolate factory near Birmingham had 3,000 employees in 1900. Despite this growth and the state's heavily economically protectionist policies in the form of special laws for encouraging domestic industry (in 1883, 1895, 1897, 1905 and 1928), the economy remained underdeveloped and poorly structured, with industrial production contributing, equally with craft production, only 6% of GDP in 1926, and still only 10% in 1930. The nation's trade balance until 1930 was negative, as imports exceeded exports, thus placing an extra burden on small firms. Bulgaria's foreign debt in 1939 (12.6 billion Lev) equalled twice the value of its annual exports (6.07 billion Lev) (Tzvetkov, 1994:47).

After 1930, the economy took a course to closer integration with Germany's military economy. Up to 1935 Germany's capital investment represented a modest 5.5% of the total foreign investments in the country, but rose to 16% in 1939, and reached 29.1% in 1944, the highest of all investing countries. A similar trend dominated foreign trade. In 1933 Bulgaria's exports to Germany represented 38.2% and its imports 36% of its total trade. By 1939 these figures were 67.8% and 65.6% respectively. During the war Germany established a virtual monopoly comprising 95-100% of the exports of Bulgarian meat, fruit and vegetables, 85% of its wine and 65% of its tobacco, and maintained a negative trade balance, exceeding two billion DM (even if calculated at the very favourable and artificially maintained exchange rate of 32.5 Leva to the
German mark). This maintained level of exchange was in fact a way of crediting the Nazi military economy (Natan et al, 1969:544, 563, 590, and Stojanov-Finance Minister in 1944 (quoted in Toshkova, 1994:79).

From the preceding discussion it is clear that as a result of an imposed model of economic development, territorial limitations and the lack of colonial profits, Bulgaria’s capital accumulation had to be materialised at the expense of the domestic market, and more specifically from the state, in the form of state supplies, protectionist import duties, industrial privileges and other measures. Furthermore, wealth redistribution had to be achieved mainly within the country, which further reinforced the significance of state power as the most valuable strategic resource. In contrast to advanced capitalist countries where the bourgeoisie profited through the state, Bulgaria’s capitalists generated their profits from the state. This was a critical consideration, highlighting the specific role of the state as site, generator, product and mediator of strategies which underpinned various actions promoted by different public and voluntary actors.

Bulgarian society’s social structure mirrored its economic reality, dominated in its income by a middle agricultural class, but in its social behaviour by a servant-intelligentsia class (consisting of well-educated in Western Europe people occupying influential public or private offices). Table 4.2 shows the changing structure of society from the liberation to the next great transformation in 1944. This structure presents Bulgaria’s towns as the centres for modernising tendencies, as opposed to highly conservative villages. The towns’ diverse social structure comprised a small wealthy capitalists class (of bankers and entrepreneurs), a mixed middle class, and a very powerful group of intelligentsia, who often became politically involved. Naturally, these groups were the bearers of modernisation manifested through industrialisation. In contrast, a traditionalist block was represented in the agricultural masses suffering the so-called “farming overpopulation” (an underdeveloped agricultural sector unable to employ large numbers, Totev, 1943, quoted in Minev, 1997). This was referred to by some commentators as the fundamental problem of the Bulgaria economy. This problem seemed to have no solution as there was no industrial sector capable of
absorbing the labour force generated by the villages. A prime example of the clash between industrialisation and conservative strategies was the period 1920-1923 when the agricultural party (BZNS) was in office. It tried to promote an authoritarian strategy, aiming to channel capital accumulation and distribution in favour of farming, a strategy which was uncompromisingly opposed by the other bourgeois parties. This conflict provoked two military coups, asserting further authoritarian and totalitarian tendencies. There was no typical leisure class per se interested in developing culture and sport in their own right. This particular composition of society allowed interests and strategic alliances to be formed in pursuing various state and sport projects, which are discussed below.

Table 4.2 Aspects of Bulgarian social structure, 1885-1944

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>1895</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1905</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1925</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1935</th>
<th>1944</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong>&lt;br&gt;(000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>towns</td>
<td>3 310</td>
<td>3 744</td>
<td>4 035</td>
<td>4 337</td>
<td>4 860</td>
<td>5 483</td>
<td>6 000</td>
<td>6 090</td>
<td>6 978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>villages</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamlets*</td>
<td>3 838</td>
<td>3 839</td>
<td>4 216</td>
<td>4 276</td>
<td>4 269</td>
<td>4 261</td>
<td>5 251</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% urban</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% literacy</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong>&lt;br&gt;(%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crafts, services</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trade, com’ns</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kushev, 1986 and other state statistics (* hamlets-scattered groups of houses)

To conclude, these political, economic and social developments nurtured a typical political and economic ‘partisan’ culture, discredited political parties as populated by office seekers, created an attitude of distaste towards politics, and fostered a public perception about the state as a source of privilege. Political parties quickly developed
their own systems of clientelism, and were somehow reluctant to stop these practices even when in opposition, as they anticipated their turn to benefit from the system of privileges offered by the state. Party strategies were marked by the country’s foreign orientation, the degree of closeness to the Palace, and inevitably by the question of nationalism. This explains the unprecedented state ban in 1934 on all political parties and associations, and confiscation of their properties under the authoritative regime imposed by Tsar Boris III (see Dimitroff, 1986). It is also indicative of the strategic behaviour of all state administrations, which always looked for critical support in outside factors - the Tsar, foreign states, the army, or entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, a dominant statist ideology emerged, underpinned by the notion of the state as the most adequate representative of public interests and as the supreme arbiter of group interests. Institutionally, the state’s penetration of the affairs of civil society grew from a modest first cabinet with six ministries in 1879, to incorporate more and more spheres of state and civil activities (including sport), and exercised control with varying success over relationships and resource distribution. Dragan Tzankov, Bulgaria’s Prime Minister (in 1880 and 1883-84), and one of its most influential early political figures, eloquently summarised the point: “the state in itself is of extreme importance, gained with many sacrifices and, therefore, the state interest has a natural priority over the civic” (quoted in Gavrilova and Elenkov, 1998: 75).

4.3. Constructing the sports policy domain: state projects and interventions

The above discussion instructs our understanding about the social, economic and political setting of Bulgaria’s state and society. It is instructive also for comprehending how sport was constructed as a policy domain. There were four key contributing factors - ‘state generic’, ‘utilitarian and sport-specific’ policies, and ‘a public sport movement’ that shaped sport as a specific domain, and a recognised area of state intervention (Figure 4.1). These will be examined in turn in the rest of this section.
Chapter 4. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Capitalist period (1878-1944)

Figure 4.1 Shaping the sports policy domain - state projects and public movements

State Projects
National and Territorial Unity

State Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution, civil and economic laws</td>
<td>Education of youth in obedience to the Tsar and the motherland; military training; national cohesion</td>
<td>Ministry of Education sports budget; voluntary organisations subsidies; staff training; sport laws and measures; Directive</td>
<td>Shaping various group sports interests; issues recognition and promotion; national-international sport presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Sportive Manhood' Project
Membership, Structures, Policies, Relations
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The first were state generic policies carrying implications for sport. For decades, article 83 of the Turnovo Constitution (1879) remained the only judicial document regulating the establishment of civil organisations. It reflected the struggle between the two dominant political concepts - the conservative and the liberal. The former, promoted by Russian and Bulgarian conservatives, aimed to confine the freedom of association, while the latter sought more civil freedoms. A compromise was achieved, allowing for association as a civil right, providing it did not jeopardise state and public interests, religious and moral standards as defined by the state.

Another informative example with clear implications for state-society-sport relationships concerned state legislation in the field of local authority self-governance. The 1886 Town and Village Municipalities Act, the 1909 Public Referendum on Community Issues Act, the 1922 Town and Village Municipalities Act, and the 1927 Local Authorities Businesses Act gave a greater say to the people in all crucial public matters, including the election of local assemblies and mayors. Conversely, when Fascist-military tendencies advanced in public life, these rights were abandoned and substituted with greater state control through a series of pieces of legislation violating the spirit and letter of the Constitution, such as the 1924 State Defence Act, or the 1934 Town and Village Municipalities Decree Act (see Manolova, 1994:189-197).

Secondly, the state’s utilitarian policies reflected the use of sport for achieving other political goals. These were evident in: the Minister of Education’s Order (1897) urging gymnastics societies to be established to provide essential military training, made necessary by the conditions imposed in the Berlin (1878) and Neville (1919) Treaties; in pursuing the ultimate end of Bulgarian education defined as

\[
\text{love towards labour and creativity; passion and discipline; moral will;}
\text{clearly defined national awareness; profound religious consciousness;}
\text{heroism; self-optimism, and optimism in the people’s future (Petrova et al,}
\text{1985:162).}
\]

It was also evident in striving for closer political and economic integration with Germany in the case of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games which were much promoted by Bulgaria’s government.
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Thirdly, there were the sport-specific policies which saw sport as a legitimate sphere of government intervention. They were particularly aimed at regulating state-sport relationships and at setting guidelines for resource strategies and allocations. Other notable examples were the first establishment in 1926 of a Physical Education Directorate within the Ministry of Education with a separate budget for developing the government’s ideas in physical education; the first Physical Education and Sport Law (1931), its amendment in 1937; the introduction of a Soviet military-fitness programme “Prepared for Labour and Defence” in 1938 under the name “Bulgarian Sport Badge” (despite its ideological background but in line with its totalitarian nature), and the setting up of Branik (Defender), a state youth organisation compulsory for 10-21 year olds. All these had the ultimate purpose of imposing central control over national sport movements. They were accompanied by respective financial mechanisms as Table 4.3 illustrates. The Ministry of Education’s budget, from which sports were financed, had a constant share from the total state budget, with a noticeable exception in 1944 due to the set up of Branik. No accurate records for sports allocations were found, but given that sport did not enjoy a special status, it would have been justifiable to assume that the share of its subsidies followed a similar pattern.

Table 4.3 Ministry of Education budget as percentage of the total state budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1925</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1935</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1944</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Central state archive, fund 157

Fourthly, it is important to recognise the role of public sport movements in shaping the sports policy domain. As demonstrated by the previous discussion, modern sport in Bulgaria did not emerge as a typical leisure pursuit of an affluent class. Nor were its governing structures grounded in a wide network of clubs and local provision. Following the political and economic priorities set by the government project for building the new state, sports organisations clearly had similar missions. Thus, sport entered the policy domain as a military necessity and not as a social issue. The public discourse from that time is also instructive, as the most used names for clubs and
associations were those of Christo Botev and Levski (the brightest revolutionary figures who led the movement for liberation from Ottoman domination), Boretz (Fighter) or Unak (Hero) (see Tzonkov, 1963).

From its very first days sport reflected the state project, and was bound to the military training of the population, an area where the state was otherwise banned from intervening by the Berlin Treaty. In 1878 the theme of military education was directly borrowed from the father of Germany’s Turnverein (gymnastics movement) -Friedrich Jahn (1811) - by the founders of the first revolutionary Bulgarian ‘Edinstvo’ (Unity) committees, and introduced in the form of shooting groups, in an attempt to save the country after its partition. However, when these groups no longer reflected the state unification project, efforts were made to reshape them into civil societies aiming “through organisation, discipline, physical exercise and education to defeat the honour and rights of the people, silence and public order in the country” (Petrova, 1978:42). These efforts, however, proved unsuccessful.

The first gymnastics club established in 1883 was a German “Turnverein”, followed by a Bulgarian club “Unak” (Hero) in 1895 with 18 members, assisted critically by Swiss physical education teachers. Three years later, it was transformed into a national union “Unak” which declared itself as a universal organisation promoting a holistic approach to the individual, and not bound conceptually to any particular doctrine of physical education. However, its ultimate goal was:

*to provide Bulgaria with physically and morally sound citizens, capable of protecting the country from internal and external threats - masculine patriot sons...who won’t stop at anything when the fatherland calls them to defend its supreme interests.*

(quoted in Vasev, 1950:89). Subsequently, Unak took part in the first Balkan War (1912-3) raising several legions, including a regiment of 220 minors.

This position of the Union helped to justify the importance of gymnastics both as in-school, and out-of-school activity for the physical and moral education of the youth. It was supported by the Ministry of Education, and although very limited in scope, sport
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and gymnastics in particular (as the Union's only means for exercise) was given public recognition and defined as a policy domain.

Further proliferation of voluntary sports organisations resulted on the one hand in the constitution of a wide network, and on the other, in the public recognition of sport as an issue, which was a precondition for its inclusion in the state system. Despite sports organisations' increased popularity, they never managed to become a real voice of the people, and so they did not develop a clear members' or customers' orientation. Most sport organisations' primary target group was the youth and schoolchildren in particular. However, membership in Unak never exceeded 15% of all pupils, and in other sport clubs 5%, and exhibited a steady decline. In 1932-33 Unak had 30,000 members in 160 gymnastics clubs (averaging 187 members per club), while the Bulgarian National Sport Federation had 10,127 in 155 clubs (averaging 65 members per club) (Petrova, 1983:133-35). These organisations did not differ conceptually; rather they competed over the distribution of limited resources as each tried to claim greater responsibilities in order to qualify for a greater state subsidy. This was particularly evident in Unak's obstructionist strategy aiming at preventing the setting up of a Bulgarian Olympic Committee in 1923, as it was projected to assume wider co-ordinating responsibilities in national and international sports affairs.

By the end of 1939, after sixty years of existence, sports organisations total membership did not exceed 90,000 people (0.6% of the population), and the sports domain included some 600 clubs and 24 national federations (most of which composed of 2-3 clubs or were part of a bigger union). On average, it took seventeen years for individual sports to build up their national structures. A similar period was needed before Bulgarian national governing bodies joined international sports associations. This is indicative of most voluntary sport bodies' striving to secure a place in the policy domain and to qualify for state support. The pace of the process of forming a national sport policy domain in Bulgaria was much quicker than in two of the most advanced industrial societies, Britain and Canada. It took both of those countries between sixty and eighty years (between the beginning and the late 1800s) to legitimise their national sporting scene and to set up powerful voluntary bodies.
The above discussion poses two important issues - that of representation, and related to it, of the nature of sport projects and strategic relations for their implementation. As sport organisations were not grounded on solid membership support and a well-established national structure, it was difficult to substantiate the claim that they represented the real interests of their supporters. The records of local clubs and national associations’ annual meetings offer ample evidence of endless squabbles over the distribution of various privileges, rather than strategic discussions (see Ministry of Education secret survey, 1934). Subsequently, driven by the ambition to help achieve the national ideal, and their leaders’ personal aspirations, sport establishments gradually started to call for more state involvement. They surrendered totally to dominant state visions and became liable to political interventions of all sorts. This predetermined to a great extent their strategies and relations.

4.4. Strategic Relations in sport policy making

Instigated by the lessons of World War I, and in unison with Fascist tendencies in society from the 1920s, the notion of holism, that is, the balanced development of human physical and intellectual education was gradually replaced by a vulgarised doctrine of Apollonism (after the ancient Greek god of male beauty Apollo). This was Bulgaria’s equivalent of athleticism, embodied in the strong male body and its utilitarian purposes. Furthermore, the emergence of ‘superman’ as the epitome of the political athlete and its related body politic reflected the core Fascist pledges for effort, discipline and virility and the construction of new society, a task which would have been quite impossible for merely healthy people alone. It is imperative for an analysis to account for these visions which clearly underpinned the state and the related sportive manhood project, and which could explain strategic relations in sport in the next quarter of a century.

As mentioned, the Bulgarian sport movement was not a complete stranger to the Nazi sport doctrine based largely on the three fundamental themes of Friedrich Jahn’s corporal education - a feeling of racial superiority, the health of the Volk, and military education (see Hoherman, 1984). The idea of extending the notion of the ‘Political Athlete’ to the body politic (in the pursuit of ‘superman’) was grounded in the
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transformation of the strong, healthy body into a public matter, or the introduction of body politic which represents an essential element of the fascist-totalitarian doctrine for subordinating society. Everything in society - political parties, organisations, religious groups, and individuals - would have to be subjugated to the communitarian will, and the individual and the community would become one. As Macridis (1989:207) noted:

Communitarism called for constant participation; it aimed to inculcate a spirit of individual attachment to the whole and a readiness not only to obey but also to sacrifice everything for the general interest as defined by the Nazi.

The slogan launched by the Zveno Fascist group after the coup in 1934 was “Through sport for the mother country” and the proliferation of supportive literature (Sheitanov, 1928, Zaimov, 1937, Mintchev, 1938, Grigorov, 1941) illustrates the point, and is symptomatic of public discourse promoting the notion of ‘sportive manhood’.

The advance of the body politic was largely facilitated by the pursuit of a strategy which could be seen both as international and national. The struggle for control over workers’ sport in the early 1920s witnessed the founding of two rival international sport organisations- Lucerne Sport International (LSI) and Red Sport International (RSI). The latter was led by the Soviet Union, recruited its members from countries such as Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Germany and Sweden, and its popularity was greater than the Olympic Games. As Peppard and Riordan (1992:28) commented on this early form of Soviet sports diplomacy:

for its part, the RSI was openly revolutionary in its goals and wanted to use sporting contacts with workers-athletes to enlighten them politically and prepare them for the class struggle with the bourgeoisie.

The Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP - a spin-off of a Social-Democratic party founded in 1891) which proclaimed as its ultimate goal the establishment of a Soviet society in Bulgaria, was very susceptible to the Red Sport International project and tried to promote it. In a BCP resolution of 1921 sport for young people was seen as a means for “developing a healthy body and unlimited energy needed for the forthcoming fights against capitalist slavery” (quoted in Petrova, 1978:71). Both the Bulgarian Communist Party and the fascist governments perceived sport
predominantly as a political battleground, and the issue of who would control the sports establishments was one that mattered. For the triumphant (Fascist) athlete, and for the suffering (Communist) hero, the ultimate goal was elimination of the political opponent, and sport was given an essential role to play in this process. The interesting point, however, is that from different ideological standpoints, the two contesting camps tried to employ the same strategic project grounded on the notion of body politic and backed up by outside interests.

As both this and the previous section have suggested, international relations played an essential role in shaping Bulgarian national sport policy. It is worth noting that, after about forty years of political and technical assistance, and provision of material and human resources in a number of sports, including rowing, yachting, chess, and tennis, the Russian school stepped aside to open the way to the influence of the German sporting system. It was not until the end of World War II, when Bulgaria was finally politically and economically subordinated to the USSR, that Soviet visions of physical culture became dominant.

State policies for subordinating society manifested in sport through body politics were based on gradual introduction of a system of laws and norms which led to full centralisation and hierarchisation of civil organisations. The strategy for implementation of this policy is well captured by Gavriloova and Elenkov (1998:44) who suggested that:

*an organisation is being set up for every activity under the control of the respective ministry (for sport it was the Ministry of Education, explanation added). It represents a union of organisations, and even unions on professional basis; these organisations have their branches in different establishments or territories. There is only one such organisation in each place as the rest are being dismantled; on the executive boards of these organisations by right sit state representatives.*

The rest of this section will illustrate the workings of the body politic by means of four examples, each providing evidence for the state’s strategic selectivity and relations. Initially, critical strategic relations were established between the Ministry of Education as the most influential state agency with regards to sport and the voluntary
body Unak. The state commissioned Unak to provide training for all gymnastics teachers in exchange for regular structural and material support. In addition the Union acting as a professional organisation, tried to promote strategies concerning teachers’ pay, conditions of work and further qualifications. Financial privileges were offered also to other voluntary agencies, but until 1923 Unak remained the key voluntary actor on the sports policy scene.

The most effective way to create structural privileges and relations tended to be for different governments to try to set up their own umbrella sports governing body, thus ensuring greater state control over the sports movement. Notable in this respect was the intervention of the Sgovorist government between 1924 and 1926 to establish a new national umbrella organisation under the authority of the Ministry of Education - the Confederation for Physical Education (CPE), incorporating all national sport governing bodies. It took over all important aspects of sport policy and services previously delivered by voluntary organisations. Two particular outcomes are worth mentioning. First, Unak was deprived of the privilege of running staff training courses, a task previously assigned by the state, and which it had pioneered and successfully promoted for thirty years. Second, the struggle for supremacy in the voluntary sector between Unak and the newly established Bulgarian Olympic Committee (BOC in 1923) went beyond national boundaries, and provoked the organisers of the Olympic Games in Paris 1924 to inquire about which body was representing the country. At the same time the government did not deliver the support it had promised, and introduced a law banning the import of less than essential goods, including sports equipment (see Tzonkov, 1981). This produced a massive outcry, but because of their subordinate position, voluntary sport organisations were unable to intervene decisively.

Another illuminating example was the introduction of the first Sport Act in 1931, for which the rationale put forward by the state was (1931:1):

- the poor physical condition of the youth;
- the insufficient role of voluntary sport organisations;
- the need of strengthening state governance and control.
These perfectly justified the concept of 'sportive manhood', and physical education was made compulsory for all boys and girls under 21. The legitimation sought by the state was best illustrated by D. Ivanov, the chairman of the umbrella body, the National Sports Federation, in a rather harsh speech during the parliamentary debates. He argued (as quoted in Petrova, 1978:81) that the aim of corporal education was:

_to develop youth morally and physically, to teach them how to fight, not to be like a granny, and to argue for eternal peace - there is such a peace only in the grave, but they should know that life is a fight, a fight for existence, that in some ways life is sport, just as in sport, there is either victory or a defeat._

The Sport Act envisaged the following key measures in the sports domain:

- developing and enhancing the physical and moral powers of youth;
- increasing the number of Physical Education classes for all ages;
- compulsory Physical Education for non-school youth;
- committing all educational and working establishments to provide facilities and to pay annual membership fees for their personnel in sports organisations; and
- delegating supreme control over the sports domain to the Ministry of Education and setting up a new Supreme Council for Physical Education.

There were three important implications for sports membership, structures and practices. First, following the overall strategy described above, the idea of the corporate state was manifested in the attempt to set up workers' sport in the factories. Second, never before had the Bulgarian state committed a special budget to sport, and in the context of strategic control over sport, the law provided clear structural advantages. Third, the allocation of material resources was based on an approach to standards. Existing and newly established sport organisations were supposed to meet certain quantitative indicators, such as the numbers of affiliated members, activities and participants, in order to qualify for government subsidy. From an organisational point of view, this process marked the beginning of totalitarian government of sport, and paved the way for a specific management ethic, vulnerable to administrative ambitions or the political commitment of a small elite leadership of sport organisations. The Supreme Council for Physical Education which supposedly
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represented the notion of governance (public-voluntary sector partnership), eventually had its first meeting in 1936.

This environment explains the state’s selectivity with regard to the project of the Balkan Games promoted by the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (BOC). A 1931 decree of the government fully backed the project for the staging of a multisport event involving the Balkan countries, because it promised two distinct advantages—demonstration of supremacy over the rest of the region, and asserting national identity. It committed the whole state administration, and offered diplomatic, material, logistic, security and promotional support. Eventually it paid off - Bulgarian athletes were triumphant (Tzonkov, 1981, Bardareva, 1995).

A third notable example of body politics was the state’s intervention in the preparation for and participation by Bulgaria in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, also known as the Nazi Olympiad. In 1929 the International Olympic Committee member for Bulgaria D. Stantchov resigned, and was succeeded by Stefan Tchap rashikov, a wealthy tobacco tycoon, ex-ambassador to Germany and chairman of the Bulgarian-German Chamber of Commerce. His ambitions to enter Bulgaria in the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1932 proved unrealistic, despite lavish promises. However, the arrival of an overtly Fascist regime in Bulgaria in 1934 saw the 1936 Olympics as an excellent opportunity for generating nationwide support and promoting relationships with Germany.

Following a request from the BOC chairman, general Lazarov, the then Minister of Education (ME) A. Bojadgiev submitted an amendment (along with others) to the 1931 Sport Act allowing for an extra Lev to be added to all tickets for sport competitions in order to generate cash for the ‘Olympic preparation’ fund. The Ministry of Education also approved the BOC’s charter and offered further structural and material privileges including free usage of all sporting facilities in the country (Tzonkov, 1981:82-4).
The Olympic ideal had a strong appeal to the body politic, as the Olympic Games provided an opportunity to manifest fascist superiority. The state enthusiastically supported the idea for the Olympic torch relay to run through Bulgaria as proposed by the Third Reich’s main sport ideologist and IOC member, Dr Carl Diem. In similar fashion to the Balkan Games project, the government ordered all participating urban administrations, heads of schools, police and army to become involved in this mass display. The Bulgarian government, otherwise reluctant to support the country’s participation in the 1932 Games, was quick to attach a great deal of ideological meaning, and declared its support for the 1936 Nazi Olympics. Germany’s gesture was in the spirit of true partnership. Hitler became personally involved and presented a grant of 200,000 Reich marks to the sport representative of the Bulgarian region of Varna to build a new stadium. An impressive national delegation of 94 members (the largest ever sent to the Olympic Games) and officials took part in this highly effective Nazi display, boycotted by various progressive movements and governments around the world. Bulgarian athletes participated in six of eighteen sports in the Olympic programme - athletics, cycling, gymnastics, equestrianism, fencing and shooting. This participation indicates the character and structure of Physical Education and sport, set in favour of military training of the youth, and with disregard for other sports (see Petrova, 1983). Table 4.4 shows Bulgaria’s participation in the Olympic Games in the capitalist period. It illustrates the strategic importance of military oriented sports (shooting, fencing, equestrianism, cycling-at the time part of military training and not a popular leisure pursuit, and gymnastics to a certain extent) dominated by athletes who were also military personnel and who represented the core of the sport policy domain. This participation also showed how far Bulgarian sport was from international standards. As the BOC report on Berlin 1936 acknowledged “...it is clear that our sport is only in embryo and a long period of hard work is needed in all aspects of sport” (quoted in Vasev, 1950: 95). Olympic sport challenged more than athletes’ military skills.

The fourth example illustrates what could be called the pinnacle of the Fascist body politic - the law for an “Organisation of Bulgarian Youth” passed in 1941. It was preceded by a major escalation of state intervention in the sports policy domain. In
line with promotion of the state project for subordinating society, the 1931 Sport Act was amended again in 1937 (Petrova et al, 1985). This alteration gave the Minister of Education greater powers, enabling him to intervene directly in and demand full accountability from all sport governing bodies. What is more, the Minister enjoyed an unrestricted right to appoint a delegate to sport organisations’ executive boards, and to dismiss these boards, and to appoint new leadership at the discretion of his representative.

Table 4.4. Bulgarian participation in the Olympic Games in the capitalist period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Olympic Games</th>
<th>1896</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1904</th>
<th>1908</th>
<th>1912</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1924</th>
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To implement the state project, the Bulgarian government relied on German support, and invited again Dr. Carl Diem with a mission to develop a uniform state programme for Physical Education. His report suggested that the chief aim of Physical Education should be the pre-army training of the youth, and recommended that the Ministry of Education should be delegated dictatorial powers (State Archive, 1937). The end result of this strategic process was another structural reshuffling of the sport policy in the form of a new state organisation, Branik (Defender) with compulsory membership - individual or collective - of all youngsters aged 10 to 21. The aims of the organisation represented a summary of the Fascist doctrine for the state - “Believe, Obey, Work, Fight”.

The prime purpose of the organisation was to “educate and train Bulgarian youth for a faithful service to the Tsar, country, state and people’s aspirations”. Further more, it was called to “strengthen youth’s consciousness about their supreme duty to the state”, to create “unanimity and a Bulgarian view of life”, to teach the youth “to lead
a modest and harsh life”, and “to be brave in defending its supreme duty” (Filov, 1941), and to provide pre-military training for army service. Branik was given the supreme authority to control structures, membership and practices - from legitimacy of sport establishments to decision-making, activities, international relations, including appointing sport organisations’ leaders (Branik, 1941). Sports organisations were put under full dependence, and that included the total subordination of Physical Education and sport, in a truly totalitarian manner.

The strategic response of voluntary sport governing bodies could be seen largely as conformity, as they did not question the state project, and tried to demonstrate obedience and support instead. Always loyal to governments, Unak ordered that all Communists should be expelled from the organisation, while the Cyclists Union readily assisted the government in printing posters against the Resistance movement.

However, this loyalty to the state, dictated by the need to gain privileges, was not unequivocal. As the BNSF 1936 Annual Report suggested (quoted in Vasev, 1950: 94), not only the progress but the backwardness of sport was attributed to the state:

it must be emphasised that decay has set in all sport organisations, provoked by the tactless actions of state representatives and their unnecessary intervention into the lives of organisations... there was no uniform system and planned actions during this period in any of the associations. Public attention towards sport was degraded, and athletes' drive was reduced to the lowest level.

In similar vein, the BOC’s Berlin 1936 report identified as a key reason for the constant struggle between sport organisations the lack of systematic state support. It made the conclusion that

once and for all, the state power should realise that our sport movement has to be materially supported, because the poverty of sport associations is often the chief reason for in-fightings, criticism, squabbles and organisational decay (quoted in Vasev, 1950:95).

It could be claimed that this comment represented sports organisations’ consciousness that sport was being exploited by the state to serve particular projects, and the interests of the athletes were being largely disregarded. But it could be argued also that, by
voicing concern about the state’s insufficient role, sports organisations aimed to be assigned greater responsibilities which usually accompany greater state subsidies. This consideration partly explains why the voluntary sports sector never developed a strategy to combat this situation.

Finally, essential for strategic relations was the role of both the state and voluntary organisations’ managers. The state body politic’s attempts to subordinate Physical Education and sport inevitably demanded the development of a cohort of loyal and obedient leaders in all national sport governing bodies. Communitarian values manifested themselves in the totalitarian principle of leadership and the institution that best combined authority and control with representation. All key appointments were considered a matter of high political priority, a policy developed further in the Communist period. The chairmen of national umbrella governing bodies (being party officials), were members of the parliament, top military officials, or in the case of the Bulgarian Olympic Committee - Mr. Tchaprashikov, Chairman of the Bulgarian-German Chamber of Commerce. The close relationships between the three fundamental elements - the state project for sportive manhood, the state’s totalitarian sport policy, and loyal political leadership formed the core of the body politicum, initiated and promoted by the authoritarian-totalitarian sport projects in Bulgaria.

4.5. Conclusions

The struggle over the constitution of the new state highlighted the significance of the relationship of its territory, nation and institutions. Russia, Great Britain, and Germany tried to promote their interests by imposing a model of constitutional settlement running against the unity of these three aspects. The clash of national and foreign interests, the forming of strategic geo-political alliances, the introduction of various structural elements and policies shaped Bulgaria’s national ideal for unification and predetermined the nature of state projects. These developments also prepared the ground for the emergence of an authoritarian-totalitarian state holding a vice-like grip over political, economic and social life.
Chapter 4. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Capitalist period (1878-1944)

As an organised activity on a wide scale, sport emerged in response to the threat of military invasion, inspired and supported by Russia and Germany. Later, it was clearly ideologically bound and fragmented on political grounds, and the project for 'sportive manhood' was promoted in line with the state's overall political and economic orientation. The sports policy domain consisted of ill-organised national bodies and a network of some 600 clubs (of which only 6 were in villages where 70% of the population lived) totally subjugated to the Ministry of Education. Sports organisations were not specifically committed to represent their members' interests, and subsequently were not entrusted with the power to be a real voice in policy making. During the entire capitalist period, the state managed to sustain full control over eight key strategies of: i) defining sports projects, ii) setting policies, iii) determining membership in policy domain, iv) issue recognition, v) setting up structures, vi) resource allocation, vii) forming loyal leadership, and viii) setting standards for performance and effectiveness.

In the pursuit of these strategies, the state asserted its role as supreme regulator of sport policy making by establishing crucial strategic relations. These can be put into two broad categories - intra-state and transnational relations. The intra-state category involved political/class and organisational relations. Political/class relations were manifested in the separation of sport on workers (Communist) and bourgeois (Fascist) (nurtured by a Red Sport International's decision in 1924 imposed by Moscow), where participation was determined not by the service provided, but by one's political affiliation. However, class separation which was closely intertwined with the political, did not have great impact, lasted for a short period of time, and after 1935 was re-evaluated both by the Comintern and the Bulgarian Communist Party (see Doncev, Tzonkov and Petrova, 1969, Petrova, 1970). As a result of this, a new political line was introduced which encouraged workers to join in bourgeois sports clubs and to use them to promote communist ideas. Political relations had a bearing on resource allocations, though communist-controlled clubs were essentially deprived of governmental (always anti-Communist cabinets) support. Organisational relations were established between state agencies (Ministry of Education, Branik) and the voluntary sector (Unak, BOC). Initially, they were between the Ministry of Education as a powerful governmental agency, aided later by Branik, another state organisation,
and voluntary sport organisations and their leadership, with the critical partnership of the army. These relations were imperative by nature, and had a crucial effect on determining membership in the sports policy domain, its structuring, devising policies and appointing leaders, and ensured only a limited autonomy to sports organisations.

Transnational relations played also a significant role in devising sports policy. Foreign political and economic interconnectedness were influential factors for the success of various sports projects. Although the Czech and Swiss sporting systems enjoyed equal popularity with the German and the Russian schools, they did not make inroads because they lacked political backing, and so the Bulgarian state was disinterested in backing and promoting them (see Petrova, 1982). The shaping of sport projects was not seriously influenced by the international sport system, because by 1944 Bulgarian sports organisations were members of only five international sport federations, and had undertaken a modest participation in four (including the Olympic Winter Games in 1936) out of ten Olympic Games, which were still predominantly a European affair.

Therefore, the content of the sports policy was predetermined by the disposition of the domain, and policies were defined with well-defined utilitarian purposes - to provide military training, to develop obedience to the Tsar, or to combat an ideological treat. The forming of sports policies as a process followed a pattern of state sanctioned actions. All major sports projects were instigated by governmental agencies (ME, MD or Branik), and in the case of voluntary organisations driven initiatives - such as the BOC’s idea for a Balkan Games - the project was appropriated by the state to serve its aims. With regard to policy advocacy, both political actors and academic proponents tended to promote the notion of a healthy and fit body capable of any bodily achievements as a key rationale for introducing a body politic. The outcome of these policies was a structurally disintegrated and ill-organised sports movement, a high degree of state control and poor performances nationally and internationally.
Chapter 5.

The State, strategic relations and sport policy making:

The Communist period (1944-1989)
Chapter 5. Strategic Relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-89)

Key state interventions in Communist sport policy (1944-1989)

1949 The first Socialist Sport Act
1949 Communist Party sets up Supreme Committee for Physical Culture and Sport
1957 Communist Party sets up Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sport
1964 BSFS is given mandate by the Party to improve sporting excellence
1969 Politburo decision on improving sporting excellence: focus on athletics, swimming, gymnastics
1971 Politburo decision: State Committee for Youth and Sport (CYS) set up
1974 Council of Ministers’ decree (5 of 26/1/74) for improving Bulgarian athletes’ mastery
1976 National programme for Healthy Way of Life; CYS dissolved
1985 Politburo decision to dismantle army (CSKA) and police (Levski) representative teams
1988 Communist Party’s perestroika attempt to reconstruct the sports movement

This chapter discusses the Communist (totalitarian) period of the Bulgarian state. It reveals the transformations from the capitalist period to the new stateness, the evolution of state projects, concepts, structures and relations, and their effects on sport policy. More specifically it pursues the following objectives:

i) examining the socialist state’s constitution and the nature of its project and strategies;

ii) analysing the socialist project and its impact on the conceptualisation of sport and its structuring;

iii) establishing the state’s key strategies and strategic relations in sport policy making

5.1. Building the socialist state and its projections for sport

As result of the geo-political reshaping of Europe after 1945, Bulgaria undertook the task of building a new socialist stateness. On 8 September 1944 the Red Army
occupied the country, and facilitated a military coup led by the political group Zveno, which put in power a government of the Fatherland Front, dominated by the Communist Party. It was hardly a coincidence that to assert the one-party system, Moscow used the same key actors who masterminded the previous model coup in 1934 - Kimon Georgiev and Damjan Veltchev. The former, now as then, became the new Prime Minister.

As for the previous period, Jessop’s notion about constituting the state proved useful but limited for an analysis where global geo-political interests prevailed over other considerations. Bulgaria’s strategic orientation for the next 45 years was decided in the arrogant “percentage deal” struck by Stalin and Churchill in October 1944 and sealed later by the Yalta Conference. This deal determined the participation of the USSR, Great Britain and the USA in controlling the Balkans. For Bulgaria the initial 90%:10% influence in favour of the Soviet control was finally negotiated to 80%:20% and the country was placed in the Soviet zone of influence (see Toshkova, 1994). Furthermore, despite the army’s contribution in freeing the regions of Pomoravia, the whole of Vardar and Aegean Macedonia from German occupation, the country’s territory was reshaped again, and Pomoravia, Macedonia and White Sea Thrace were cut off by the post-war agreements.

These developments were facilitated by the lack of a firm stance by the government in defending the country’s national interests. The head of the delegation P. Stajnov, who was authorised to sign the armistice in Moscow, pledged the country’s readiness: “to wipe out the guilt [for the war, explanation added] with streams of blood in the fight against the Nazis, and to obey the verdict of the alliance” (quoted in Toshkova, 1994:50). To further testify to its attachment to the anti-Nazi coalition, the government dismantled all Fascist political, military and public organisations, released political prisoners, and abrogated all Fascist laws and decrees. This strategy did not work, however, and the national ideal for unification of Bulgaria’s nation and territory suffered another major catastrophe.
Chapter 5. **Strategic Relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-89)**

Internally, the country’s constitutional settlement was decided in a referendum held in an environment dominated by political repression, and in the presence of Red Army regiments. It was declared a republic - a decision supported by the major political parties. The government’s programme from 17 September 1944 (*Rabotnicesko Delo*, 17/9/44) proclaimed the re-establishment of the Turnovo (1879) constitution, but it also promoted social and economic demands which could not be regulated by law. The contest over the constitutional arrangements became a critical issue. The Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP - then Bulgarian Workers Party - Communist) tried to promote some key principles for a state regulated economy, the nationalisation of heavy industries, and direct intervention in solving social problems as a basis for achieving its ultimate goal of establishing a Soviet type of society. For that it needed a new constitution, a project opposed by the other bourgeois parties. The original project of the new constitution which enjoyed a certain political consensus in the first round of Parliamentary discussions was replaced in 1947 by a socialist version, prepared with the participation of Soviet referents (full time appointed representatives of the Soviet government, Metodiev and Stoyanov, 1990). After its territorial settlement, the institutional settlement was decided in line with socialist visions of what a state should be. The success of the Communist Party’s strategy was guaranteed chiefly by USSR pressure as, with a modest 15,000 membership and a weak working class of 300,000, the Party lacked the political and social resources needed to win such a strategic battle.

Regarding state-society relations there were three crucial implications. First, a mass and deep transformation in the forms of ownership occurred, which in turn changed economic relations and subsequently the social structure of society. Through expropriation, coercive collectivisation of the land, and further legislative measures, the backbone of the country’s economics - the owners of small and medium size businesses - was abandoned. The new socialist state was entrusted with a monopoly over all strategic sectors of the economy and a leading role in planning and controlling, and labour was declared the major factor in regulating socio-economic life. Second, the introduction of the leading Soviet principle of inseparability of the legislative, executive and juridical powers opened the way for extra-constitutional
forms of governance, and later for the Party’s uncontrolled intervention. Third, both the 1947 constitution and the new overtly Communist version endorsed in 1971 finally declared the renouncing of the national ideal and its substitution by an ideological construct - the building of socialism. As Velev et al (1997:96) put it:

*Bulgaria was forced by the ruling BCP to deny its national ideal, which is being declared ‘pan-Bulgarian and chauvinistic’. The national cause was subordinated to the class struggle and sacrificed in the name of ‘socialist revolution’.*

Subsequently the BCP and its governments demonstrated an unprecedented national nihilism: firstly in 1946 by forcing some of its own people to give up their nationality to comply with Stalin’s and Tito’s decision about Macedonia Vardar (based on an early 1934 Comintern decision to create a ‘Macedonian nation’); and secondly, by approving in 1963 and 1964 a secret plan to unify Bulgaria with the Soviet Union by voluntary action (see Peikov, 1996, Velev et al, 1997, Zhelev, 1998).

BCP’s leading role was constitutionally endorsed (articles 2 and 3) along with an inadmissible abandoning of national sovereignty (articles 3, 12 and 13). Bulgaria was declared part of the world socialist system (articles 13 and 15), and part of the global Socialist economic community (articles 13 and 32); the state received a full monopoly of governing the public, individual and economic life entirely, as only personal, not private ownership was allowed (Metodiev and Stojanov, 1990:15-8, 37-81). This precluded the formal process of total subordination of society by depriving people of their basic human rights - the inviolability of the person, the freedoms of speech, of information, and of travel around the world. It also confirmed Arendt’s (1973) conclusions about the totalitarian state’s rootlessness, neglect of national interests and contempt for utilitarian motives.

The Soviet intervention was not only decisive in Bulgaria, but it also marked a geopolitical restructuring of the world’s political and economic balance, and signalled the beginning of the Cold War. A new phenomenon appeared - the world Communist system comprising the USSR, eight states in Europe, Cuba and some Asian countries - which had great impact on state strategies and policies for sport. Long term political
Chapter 5. *Strategic Relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-89)*

(the Political Consultative Council of the Communist Parties), military (the Warsaw Pact) and economic (CMEA) treaties were introduced, and bound these countries to well planned and controlled patterns of development. As will be demonstrated, sport made no exemption.

To sum up, the creation of a socialist state with its territorial, national and institutional dimensions was a project externally imposed by Soviet doctrine for a world socialist revolution, and was critically assisted by Great Britain and America. For a short period of time the socio-economic and political foundations of society were reshaped, long standing national aspirations abandoned and subordinated to foreign visions, and an atmosphere asserted of total negation of a public heritage. This led to the emergence of an omnipotent totalitarian state possessing full control over society, the economy and individuals, and brought to light new actors and relations. From a political perspective, though, as the previous chapter suggested, this tendency was not a novelty, rather it demonstrated a substantial continuity in terms of a political model for state construction and compliance with foreign visions, thus leaving less contingent givings for the new state builders.

5.2. State projects and society

The abandonment of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism, and other ideological principles ensured that building a Socialist society under the lead of the Communist Party would dominate the political and economic agenda. In a way similar to the pre-totalitarian period, this state project appeared to be a controversial issue because the Communist Party was not well structured, and did not have wide social support. In achieving its aims, the state project presupposed pursuing three interrelated processes - of capital accumulation (industrialisation), of generating social (political) support, and destratifying of society (which could be seen equally as a purpose and as a result) - where sport was assigned an essential role. However, the state was capable of endorsing its agenda mainly by coercive power backed politically and economically by the USSR.
Chapter 5. Strategic Relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-89)

The advance of the one-party system was accompanied by parallel measures in shaping state institutions and economics. The parliament was declared the supreme governing body, while, following the Soviet formula, the Council of Ministers was set up as the executive and distributive organ. Later in 1971, a new powerful institution - the State Council - was introduced and entrusted with enormous power to govern by decrees between sessions of the parliament. In reality, it undertook most legislative functions, turning parliament into a symbolic body whose role was to approve its decisions. The Council of Ministers was subordinate to the parliament but also to the State Council. For the first time, the number of ministries was not fixed, thus leaving space for institutional manoeuvring. This structure of institutional power placed the State Council and its head (de facto also the chairman of the Communist Party) at the top of the state hierarchy, and opened the way to an uncontrolled command method of state-party governance.

Moreover, this institutionalisation combined with the ideological enthroning of the Communist Party perfectly exemplified the disappearance of any dividing line between political and administrative powers. From a strategic relations perspective, there were two important implications of this process. Firstly, it resulted in the state apparatus losing its independence from the Communist party, and secondly, in blurring the boundaries of prerogatives of the different state and public bureaucracies. The duplication of administrative, public and party offices destroyed actors' and agencies' sense of responsibility and competence. Sport's organisational and decision making structure illustrates the point. Party representatives sat on all sport governing body committees and boards at national, district and local levels. Strategic decisions as well as staff key appointments had to be approved by the respective Party committees which supervised sport organisations. Subsequently, sport organisations' performances were judged not by those whose interests they were supposed to represent - members and general public - but by the Party.

The nationalisation of capitalist industries and banks in 1947 accomplished a transitional stage before the introduction of socialist industrialisation. This ambitious project could be summarised in the much-quoted words of Bulgaria's Prime Minister
(1947-49) G. Dimitrov, that “Bulgaria has to achieve for 20 years what other peoples have achieved for centuries.” The political, economic and organisational mechanism for achieving this task was the omnipresent state Plan, as an epitome of the supreme knowledge possessed by the party-state and the socialist organiser. Everything in the economy and society was subject to planning and approval from the top. The logic of the plan presupposed the setting of an ever-increasing spiral of measurable outputs and their over-achievement (mere achievement was not good enough), which in sport was judged in terms of the numbers of participants, events and medals.

Bulgaria’s economic growth was rather a statistical fiction, as it did not affect the standard of living. In 1980 the country was ranked 3rd in Europe and 5th in the world by the annual growth of industrial production, first in production of motocars (forklifts) and cigarettes (Tzvetkov, 1994:54). These otherwise impressive statistics had very little if any bearing on the standard of living, as in 1976 the per capita annual expenditure on sport equipment and apparatus were 3.12 Leva, and 4.03 Leva in 1981 (the cost of a pair of plimsolls) (BSFS Statistical yearbook, 1982:226). In addition to this argument is another datum showing that the socialist economy ended its industrialisation in 1989 with foreign debt of $10.5 billion equal to 65% ($16.3 billion) of annual exports (Tzvetkov, 1994:47-8), or $1,000 per head - an average annual salary.

However, these efforts gradually started to produce their intended results as by 1953 the state’s share of the total industrial output reached 87.9%, compared to 10.7% by the co-operative and 1.4% by the private sectors. In terms of GDP the contribution of the three sectors was 57.6%, 21.8% and 1-2% respectively. The integration with Soviet and other socialist economies moved closer. In 1981 exports to the CMEA countries represented 68.3% and imports 73.9%, reaching in 1989 84% and 83% respectively (Statistical Year Book, 1990). The long-term agreement (1977-1990) for co-operation between the Soviet State Committee for Physical Culture and Sport and the BSFS clearly reflected the same economic pattern, envisaging that the USSR would export 20 different sport products to Bulgaria and would import 5 products (see Andonov, 1982).
Chapter 5. Strategic Relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-89)

The state project for mass industrialisation in fact represented a structural-creative process which inevitably evoked the transformation of the basic principles for structuring society. The core of the socialist status order as Minev (1997:74) argued was a "system of social rights, widely deployed but on a low level. A central axis of this system is the proverbial 'right of labour', but (and this is remarkable) transformed into a 'duty of all socialist citizens.'" Civil rights were very limited which prevented an independent third sector from developing, including in sport.

Arable land in 1939 was owned by 1 million households (only 13% of poor villagers did not own land) and nearly equalled to that in 1989 (respectively 47.9 and 46.5 million decars (or 11.5 billion acres), 87% of which was owned by the state (Tzvetkov, 1994). This change of form of ownership from private to state and co-operative, and the need of industry for human labour resulted in a massive migration from the countryside, producing extra 135 towns (from 102 in 1935 to 237 in 1989) and almost reversing the village-town population ratio from 77:23 to 68:32 in the same period. This social engineering also suggested that for most people the salary granted by the state appeared to be their main source of income, thus making them easy to control and subordinate to the general interest. The Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) even declared in its 10th congress that the differences between village and town had been eradicated, and proclaimed a classless society (BCP, 1976).

The above process represented an essential step towards eliminating the demarcation between state and society and their merger into a 'People-as-One'. More essentially, it also had an important bearing on defining group interests as a precondition for forming strategies. As Dimitrov et al (1997:45-52) suggested, in order to prevent the forming of groups with consistent homogeneous status which could have provided them with clear consciousness about their place in social hierarchy, the Communist party used different ideological and economic mechanisms: labelling the working class the 'vanguard' of society with the mission to establish a proletarian dictatorship, giving various sectors of the economy priorities and privileges, or remunerating poorly the highly prestigious labour of the intelligentsia. For example professors'
salaries were never anywhere near those of bus drivers (see *The Working Youth*, 1983). In this respect Dimitrov et al.’s (1997:47) argument summarised the point that:

the dichotomy 'social diversification-group identification' (or at least consciousness of private interest) is extremely important from the point of view of forming civil society... Sociologists have sufficient evidence suggesting that while the first process was taking place, the second was at its starting point and was actively impeded by the ruling party.

It also helps us to comprehend the transformation of the social base of sport and its structure and participation.

5.3. Constructing the sports policy domain - state projects and interventions

From a political perspective sport was seen both as a subject and as an essential contributory factor for asserting the state project. In line with Marxism’s socialist visions of sport which were based on a profound disdain of body culture and the perception that it could only be viewed as a constructive leisure, sport had to be transformed to become a ‘people’s movement’. Subsequently, all sport organisations were labelled Fascist and their activity and their sporting achievements were disregarded and banned, while athletes had to join the Fatherland Front’s committees and participate in building the new people’s state (*Naroden Sport*, 25/9/44).

The shaping of the sport policy domain as a process of establishing strategic relations was influenced by four key contributing factors - the state’s *generic, utilitarian* and *specific* sports policies, and the *public sports movement*. These policies were implemented through a complex ideological, legislative, executive and clientelistic mechanism incorporating Communist party theses and decisions, parliamentary acts, ministerial decrees and measures, and the sports organisations’ struggle to secure greater privileges. As a rule, the last instance of the truth and direction setting was not the legislative or the academic, but the party tribunal.

The state’s *generic policies* carried some important implications for the construction of the policy domain. In 1945 the new regime abandoned the 1934 legislation banning
political parties and public organisations. In addition the 1947 constitution guaranteed several universal civil rights such as free education and health services, paid holidays, equal opportunities, state pensions, and freedom of association. The right to create associations and societies had to comply with a public order defined by the state and was further developed by the Persons and Family Act (1968). However, with the advance of socialism nationally and internationally, this liberal approach was changed, and a new law was endorsed in 1951 abandoning all pre-1944 legislation. This act dismantled the normative basis of the third sector and laid the foundations for new centralised and simplified structures through unifying and merging the associations. It also signalled the end of their autonomy and voluntary identity in return for state subsidies. This was about to change according the BCP’s July (1987) Conception for socialism, which was the party-state response to Gorbachov’s Perestroika in the Soviet Union. Despite its more open character, this document did not transform the heavy ideological dependency of society from the Party. The BSFS’s response to the BCP’s attempt at reconstruction - a policy document Conception for a Profound Reconstruction of the BSFS (BSFS, 1988) - never received approval by the BCP’s Secretariat and was not even published for discussions.

State utilitarian policies with implications for the sports domain could be broadly divided into three categories. First, were those concerning the building of a socialist society’s material base (laws and measures for urban and industrial development) - for example the Urban Planning Act (1962), the Industrial Establishments decree (1970), both envisaging compulsory construction of public sport facilities in living areas - or the Council of Ministers’ decree (79 of 1961) for reducing state administration. Second, were policies referring to the people’s general well-being and the defence of the country, such as the Labour Acts (1963), the Health Care Act (1976), the Military Service Act (1958), or various Communist Party Congress decisions. These regulated universal civil rights, and in the case of labour legislations committed all municipalities, industrial and service estates to establish social and cultural activity funds to provide for pupils’ and workers’ leisure. Third were policies dealing with the moral and physical development of the individual encompassed by the Public
Education Acts (1948, 1983), BCP Politburo theses for youth (1967), or a parliamentary decree for setting up a Youth and Sport Commission (760 of 1968).

Between 1945 and 1989 the party-state sport specific policies comprised more than 35 critical interventions addressing a wide range of issues. These included two Acts of Parliament (1945 and 1948), politburo decisions and ministerial decrees concerning single sport development (e.g. a Council of Ministers (CM) decree 48 of 1969 for wrestling), to the setting up of state structures (Committee for Youth and Sport - Politburo decision - December 1971). They varied in degree of concreteness as some CM decrees (36 of 1972) envisaged the exact amount for sport allocated by the government to each member of society aged 6 to 60, while others set standards of provision for the elite sport (5 of 1974) (see BSFS 1986, 1986a). The party-state intervention became gradually more overt and influential, a process which is illustrated by the transformation of students sports movement. Professor P. Slantchev, the first chairman of the Voluntary Student Association ‘Academic’ (1947, and currently a president of the Bulgarian Association for Sports Science) elaborated that:

at the beginning Academic was a truly voluntary and independent organisation full of sport lovers. However, by 1952-53, it all changed due to political considerations as more paid staff were appointed, and the organisation’s leadership became fully accountable to the local Party committee. Today’s sport is not made by students (interview, 5 August, 1998).

In many instances, political decisions promoted by the Party had a more powerful bearing on sport’s conceptualisation than formal legislative acts. For example, a 1949 Politburo decision reflected the subordinate position of sports scholarship in regard to practice. One fragment of the Party’s decision stated that “the curricula of the Higher Institute of Physical Culture and Sport, and the Ministry of Education have to be approved by the VKFS (The Supreme Committee for Physical Culture and Sport)” (BCP, 1949:53), and indicated the uncritical environment of the sports domain established at the very beginning of this period. Virtually no academic analysis or survey was published challenging sport policies and practices - this was strictly territory reserved for party judgements only.
State *generic, utilitarian* and *specific policies* had significant implications for the sports movement’s conceptualisation and structural relations, as well as for domain membership and agenda setting. The shaping of the socialist sports movement followed the general principles for organising society according to which sport was assigned by the party-state to become a people’s movement, thus involving masses of people in physical activities. This strategic project was accomplished by conceptual, principal and structural transformations which set the boundaries of the policy domain and determined its policy community.

Borrowing largely from the Soviet example, the first major step for the unified and centralised governance of sport was the establishment in 1948 of the VKFS as a state-public body. Its mission was three-fold: to involve the working population in sport; to increase labour productivity; and to enhance people’s ability for self-defence (Vasev, 1950:62). In addition, a few voluntary sports organisations which were centred around the main trades unions (those of the miners, builders, light industry), together with four departmental sports organisations (for the army, militia police, students, and army construction forces) were also formulated. Gradually, two structural tendencies started to emerge - a growing number of local sports establishments (from 600 with 170,000 members in 1944 to 2,260 societies with 362,000 in 1946) and a reduction of national governing bodies - from 24 unions and associations in 1944 to a single state agency in 1948.

The process of structural centralisation of sport was inevitably accompanied by another essential step towards classifying sports organisations which shaped the core and the periphery of the domain in a truly extensive manner. It has to be pointed out that all four major sports categorisations in 1949, 1958, 1969 and 1988 were instigated by BCP Politburo decisions. These can be seen as deliberate political and social engineering aimed at promoting sports with high utilitarian potential. The initial justification given for emphasising sports with well established traditions does not stand up because, as will be demonstrated, priorities changed according to more rational criteria. Between 1949 and 1959 these were based on team sports’ capacity to organise large contingents and generate support for the Party’s committees (BSFS,
1958). Bulgaria achieved its major international success in basketball and volleyball in this particular period. The third classification in 1969 was provoked by two key factors: sports' capacity to provide young people with basic training and military skills for defence and to win international prestige (BSFS, 1986). Team sports were harder to administer and sustain and less cost-effective for the system. For example, a team of twelve volleyball players could only bring in one medal, while six gymnasts were in a position to win potentially nineteen medals. The fourth reshuffling of the sports domain followed similar criteria, and included only single sports or sports for individuals rather the team, though their numbers increased along the way (BSFS, 1988a). This restructuring of the sports movement had great impact on the distribution of resources and privileges as well as for pursuing strategies. Table 5.1 shows the changes in priorities for sports’ development.

Table 5.1 Sports classification in policy domains imposed by the Communist Party

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<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>Wrestling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boxing</td>
<td>Table tennis</td>
<td>Boxing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Chess</td>
<td>Weightlifting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythmic gymnastics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shooting</td>
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<td>Rowing</td>
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<td>Wrestling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equestrian</td>
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<td>Tourism</td>
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Three more interrelated crucial factors - the principle of setting the sports movement - that is, how to become a member, the nature of sports delivery and participation, and the international sports system, deserve attention in order to comprehend fully the nature of the sport policy domain. First, following the BCP’s Central Committee’s
decision of 1948 the principle for organising the sports movement was fundamentally transformed. The ‘territorial’ principle, that is, individuals’ ability to take part in sport by joining any local club or activity was substituted by a ‘professional and departmental’ one, suggesting that sports participation should take place predominantly where people studied and worked. Hence, a network of sport clubs in schools, factories and institutions began to be set up. Gradually, a network of sport clubs in residential neighbourhoods also emerged. A clarification is needed here. The interpretation of the term ‘sports club’ will be rather conditional, as until 1989 three terms describing grass-root level bodies were used interchangeably - councils, societies and clubs. Moreover, for 45 years no clear analysis appeared in the domestic sociological and organisational literature concerning the nature of these establishments (none of them had legal status), and administrative statistics have never been a reliable source to numbers or active membership.

The key ‘productive units’ of the national sports domain however, were not the clubs but the sports societies (DFS) established locally. As Table 5.2. illustrates, changes in the number of DFSs was a well-regulated process, exhibiting the same tendencies of reduction and centralisation. In addition, after 1970 all DFSs were categorised into five groups according to a number of factors, including their contribution to Olympic sport.

Table 5.2. Sports domain members on a local level

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sport Clubs</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>2,697</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFS</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>276</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>420,000</td>
<td>608,663</td>
<td>758,194</td>
<td>938,270</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BSFS I-VII Congress reports

Those in group 1 and some in group 2 were assigned to produce elite athletes, whereas the rest (groups 2 to 5) were given the role of nurseries - to identify and select talent and provide initial training. By 1981 there were 19 DFSs in category 1 based in 12 of 237 towns nation-wide, but more than half of the districts (16 out of 28) did not have
top teams or athletes (BSFS, 1982 statistical yearbook). However, despite their significance for the sports movement, no DFS's representative ever sat on the BSFS Executive Board. The number of other than central bureaucracy representatives on BSFS’s working commissions was also strictly controlled as after 1981 there were only one chairman of a District Sports Council (of 28 districts in total), four representatives from National Sports Federations (of more than 45 federations), and one active athlete (of more than 1,000 on the BSFS’s payroll alone) (BSFS, 1990:38).

Formal membership in sport organisations was supposed to be individual and collective. As clubs were not grounded on people’s interests, individual membership quickly turned into a fiction. This issue for the first and only time was acknowledged in the BSFS’s founding Congress report (1958:77) stating that from the planned contribution of 800,000 Leva individual and 950,000 Leva collective membership fees, only 70,000 Leva (5.6%) and 617,000 Leva (65%) were collected respectively. The concept of collective membership fees needs a little elaboration. This was, in fact, a transfer from municipalities and the social-cultural activity funds of factories/institutions which had been provided by the state, to the central sport governing body budget. However, this practice also gradually disappeared.

Because of the principle of collective membership in sport, the main patterns of participation were also collective, and their meaning as a vehicle to promote and regulate sport consumption was diminished. The tendency identified above for a steadily decreasing number of sports establishments coupled with an ever-growing number of members supports the point. As a rule participation was free of charge, except for some symbolic charges for a few activities such as for swimming, tennis or skiing. However, as a representative survey by Tzonev and Bankov (1989:309-10) demonstrated, between 3% and 13% of the people were taking part on a pay-as-you-play basis. This number was substantially higher amongst working people as 30% were prepared to pay in return for a wider and well-informed choice. At the same time, sociological surveys (Bankov, 1984, Tzonev, 1985, Stoychev, 1986), and BSFS congress reports (I-VI, 1958-1982) claimed relatively stable rates of participation, which for school-aged youth ranged between 25% and 50%, compared to 10% to 20%
for workers and 3% to 8% for peasants. These trends perfectly illuminate the workings of the socialist project based on centralised governance and the efforts of organisation and participation as primary criteria for its effectiveness. The form of sport production - consumption did not offer much added value to social well-being because it did not stimulate job creation, diversification of services or general satisfaction.

Third, as the Party assigned sport to win prestige for the socialist system, international contacts and competitions became important. Between 1964 and 1983, the BSFS signed over 140 agreements and protocols (including with governmental agencies) with 42 countries, and 100 Bulgarian representatives sat on various committees in 37 international sports governing bodies (Haralampiev and Bankov, 1983). The cooperation between Soviet block countries was seen as essential and was organised in a comprehensive manner. It included five areas of mass and elite sport, sport science, resources, and ideology, where working groups were established with the objective of advising national sports governing bodies, and co-ordinating a socialist position internationally. It has to be pointed out though that Bulgarian representatives' position hardly ever promoted specific national interests, and never differed from the collective stance adopted by the socialist block.

5.4. Strategies and strategic relations in sport policy making

As discussed in previous sections, structurally and conceptually the sport policy domain was shaped largely by the socialist project and state interventions. These developments had great effect on the pursuit of particular interests ensuring strategic relations in sport policy. This section examines the workings of the two key strategic projects in socialist sport - mass participation and elite sport - and illustrates the process of promotional strategies and alliances by three examples each representing different approaches used by various actors seeking to secure a place in the core of the domain and to gain more privileges - state support for wrestling, the role of the CSKA and Levski (army and police) sports clubs, and the bid for the winter Olympics.
Before analysis unfolds, it is essential to comprehend the specific role of the Communist Party in channelling the strategic orientation of sport. In line with its leading role in Bulgarian society, the Party controlled and regulated sport in seven main directions, as Sotirov (BSFS’s Vice-Chairman, 1986:22-3) argued, ranging from defining strategies to disseminating the Party’s experience with voluntary organisations.

Following a decision of the Central Committee of the BCP (June, 1957), the national sport scene was eventually shaped by the setting up of an umbrella governing body - the Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sport (BSFS). Despite its full doctrinal and financial dependency on the Party-state, the Union (as with other voluntary organisations) was an attempt to join public, voluntary and economic potentials of society to achieve greater social and political results. BSFS’s charter perfectly mirrored the founding principles of socialist constitution. Article 1 (BSFS, 1982a:3) asserted that it was to be a “mass voluntary organisation of the people...voices the interests of its members, and creates conditions for expressing their aspirations and abilities in sport.” It went on to claim that the “BSFS is learning from the rich experience of the Soviet and other socialist countries’ sports movements. BSFS is an inseparable part of the progressive sport movement, works whole-heartedly for enhancing the friendship between Bulgarian and the athletes of socialist countries...” Naturally, sportpeoples’ interests were viewed as identical to society’s interests as defined and promoted by the Party, as evidenced in the closing words of the article that “the BSFS realises its multi-sided activity under the guidance of the Bulgarian Communist Party.”

Sport’s general strategies, therefore, followed society’s strategic projects as promoted by the Party. Table 5.3 shows the Communist Party’s various strategic orientations and its related sports strategies. The political mechanism for ensuring congruency between party visions and voluntary sports organisations’ responses followed a route from the Party congress to the BSFS congress. Usually, the BSFS received an address from the BCP Central Committee containing an evaluation of its work and guidelines for the future. In return the Party-state provided various structural, material and moral
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>State Project</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sport Projects</strong></th>
<th><strong>Strategic sport mechanisms</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946 Establishing people’s power</td>
<td>Assisting Fatherland Front to achieve power</td>
<td>Dismantling old structures and relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 Setting foundations of a Socialist society</td>
<td>Ready for labour and defence complex</td>
<td>Specialisation, centralisation, bureaucracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957 Building state socialism - the April’s line (A project set by the Party in April 1956)</td>
<td>People’s mass involvement - sports classifications</td>
<td>Command competition, Spartakiades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962 Developing socialism’s industrial base</td>
<td>Sport into people’s manner of life - political image</td>
<td>Centralised planning - further specialisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966 Expanding socialism-improving living</td>
<td>Healthy generations - builders of Communism</td>
<td>Mass sport competitions-NSF focus on elitism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 Transition to a developed socialist society</td>
<td>Increasing the nation’s vitality - sports mastery</td>
<td>DFS’s mandate for elitism, sport complex Rodina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977 Developed socialism-more effectiveness</td>
<td>‘Mass sport, elitism, bright Communist virtues’</td>
<td>Priority sports - Uniform system for participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982 Total intensification-socialist democracy</td>
<td>‘Mass sport, elitism, bright Communist virtues’</td>
<td>State plan for participation - Olympic standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987 Reconstruction of socialism</td>
<td>Greater voluntarism and democracy in sport</td>
<td>State professionalism, more sport services</td>
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</table>
privileges. Between 1971 and 1976 alone, 333 sport administrators and athletes were decorated with State Council medals and orders including the highest honour, the ‘Hero of Socialist Labour’ (BSFS, 1977a). It has to be stressed, though, that the discourse employed by the Party to promote state projects was very difficult to comprehend, and did not make much sense to most people. For example, Socialism was presented as consisting of several states, which were labelled with various adjectives - ‘developing’, ‘developed’, ‘intensified’ or ‘expanded’, and society’s energy was channelled to achieve one of these stages.

It is evident that, as in most countries, mass participation and elite sport were the two key themes of the BCP’s and the BSFS’s strategies. The former was supposed to generate much needed social participation and support, while the latter sought to gain political recognition for the system in the outside world. However, from the very early stages of forming the socialist sports movement, it became increasingly clear that the BSFS was not in a position to pursue these two projects equally with the resources available to it and its structure. As the pressure from the Party for better results and effectiveness increased, BSFS’ strategic response was further centralisation, tougher control, and further structural disintegration of mass and elite sport. This outcome was predicated by the territorial and departmental principle because BSFS did not have direct control over grassroots sports establishments. More than 95% of sports clubs were set in schools, factories and institutions which financed them, and they managed 80% of sports facilities.

Furthermore, after 1970 BSFS’ main structural elements - DFSs at the local, and sport Federations at the national level - were given a mandate to focus on elite sport production (BSFS, 1971, BSFS, 1998). Two examples illustrate the process of distorted development. Between 1972 and 1980 (the time of the Munich and Moscow Olympic Games) there was an increase from 6% to 10% in the number of sports participants, in contrast to a 100% (from 21 to 42) increase in the number of Olympic medals won by Bulgarian athletes (BSFS, 1982 statistical yearbook). The lack of a strong correlation between socialist mass and elite sport is well demonstrated by gymnastics and weightlifting. From 1968 to 1988 with fewer than 20,000 gymnasts,
Bulgaria won 30 medals in the Olympic Games, World and European championships. But from a national perspective, gymnastics may well be considered a mass sport, as during the same period some 4,000 weightlifters brought in more than 400 medals. As Gartner (1989) and Riordan (1991) pointed out, the public-good aspect of international sporting success bore more forcefully on centrally planned allocation decisions than the results produced by the market. After all, as the former head of the state and Secretary General of the BCP, T. Zhivkov, admitted in 1980 “we might not have the right resources to provide for sport for all, but we can always find some 40-50 millions levs for our top athletes” (Girginov, 1998:125-6).

This indicates how the struggle for limited resources and privileges was shaped. As the BSFS had no clear commitment to cater for its members’ needs and demands, most strategies promoted in mass sport aimed to gain government recognition for political promises made by the Party, thus committing the state the more to its project. In this regard, the Council of Ministry decrees 36 of 1972 ensuring standard annual state aid for sport for every member of any school or working establishment, 63 of 1980 for improving the economic management of sports organisations, 3 of 1983 establishing the national fitness complex Rodina, and the inclusion of mass sport indicators in the state plan were considered huge successes. In reality, these measures delegated rights and responsibilities to other state and voluntary agencies operating in the domain, thus further blurring collective responsibility, and easing the burden on the BSFS. The very nature of these strategies offered virtually no personal privileges, rather they made all actors in the domain vulnerable to subjective judgements by state officials.

The BSFS was fully aware that to ensure mass participation was beyond its capacity. All congress reports (see BSFS, 1966, 1972, 1977, 1982b congress reports) provided clear signals about that, but the only strategic response the Union was capable of producing within its structural and ideological mechanisms was to further centralise its activities and exert tougher control. For example BSFS’s Vth congress voiced concern about disregarding the norms of the Council of Ministers decree 36 of 1972
stipulating an annual state sport subsidy of 6 Leva for every working person. It was reported that on average the allocated amount did not exceed 2 Leva (BSFS, 1977:30). Subsequently the BSFS sought to encourage individual participation in residential areas but the mechanism approved by the Congress was to introduce a uniform state plan and system for participation (BSFS, 1977:30, 155-9). In similar fashion, the BSFS VIth Congress was alarmed about the poor fitness of the population and the need for more individual sport services as opposed to centrally organised mass activities. In this regard, some incremental measures were undertaken. For example, the set up of health-consultancy centres (see Bankov, 1988) - a health and sports authorities partnership - a new entry in the domain, which proved short lived. The strategic response, however, was the introduction of a uniform system for participation and a central co-ordinating planning unit. Plan indicators (for mass and elite sport) for all DFSs were developed and in the spirit of Socialist democracy, they were given the freedom to ‘uncover their reserves’ by increasing centrally given quotas for medals and participants (BSFS, 1982:90).

Elite sport was more attractive for all actors - from party functionaries to instructors, because it offered many tangible and intangible privileges. Although party officials' personal sporting endeavours were not publicised at all, their partialities towards sports and teams were well known. One of the Communist Party’s top long serving officials, a member of the Politburo, Mr. P. Kubadinski, was chairman of the Bulgarian Wrestling Federation and a keen supporter of equestrianism. Another highly influential figure in Bulgarian sport, Mr. H. Meranzov (BSFS vice-chairman 1963-1980) was for 1980-1989 deputy head of BCP’ CC organisational department responsible for overseeing sport. Each area of society’s life being overseen by a Party department). Meranzov recollected how in 1969 he managed to gain a Council of Ministers’ decree ensuring more resources for the sport of wrestling. The significance of this achievement could be judged by the fact that, in the whole history of the Bulgarian governments’ interventions in sport, there were only two special decrees regulating particular sports - one for wrestling (48 of 1969) and one for equestrianism (266 of 1975). It also exemplified the significance of strategic relations between the
Chapter 5. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-1989)

Party executive powers and voluntary organisations for asserting their place in the sports policy domain.

Despite wrestling's undisputed contribution to the country's Olympic glories, the Politburo's crucial decision of 1969 identifying priority sports only foresaw these as athletics, gymnastics and swimming. The leadership of wrestling and of the BSFS were acutely aware that this could mean fewer resources and prospects of future medals. Until the 1968 Mexico Olympics, wrestling was responsible for 70% of all Bulgarian Olympic medals, and still contributed 42% in the Munich Games. Generally wrestling and weightlifting were the two prominent sports which together brought in 69 of the 116 Olympic medals won by Bulgaria until the 1988 Seoul Games (60% - 49 from wrestling and 20 from weightlifting), but they still had to compete for resources.

After being categorically told by the Prime Minister that such a proposal for a decree for wrestling would not stand, and after failing to promote it through official channels, Mr. Meranzov went to see the chairman of the Federation. Mr. Kubadinski promised to persuade the head of the Politburo, T. Zhivkov, to sign the proposal first, which would then proceed without any obstructions in the Council of Ministers. And so he did - the decree was approved on the next day (interview, H. Meranzov, 1 September 1998, see appendix 1).

One of the key implications of the principle for the departmental structuring of sport was the emergence of two giant sport societies - CSKA, based in the army and Levski, funded and run by the police. Heavy state support for the Defence and Internal Affairs Ministries was largely justified by the socialist project and for waging the Cold War, and they managed to set up real sporting empires, with well developed structures and mechanisms. As military service was compulsory for all men, prospective sporting talents were easily available to CSKA. In addition both of these societies could afford to offer privileges to staff and athletes, such as the highest salaries, free meals and housing, full medical and technical support, or military rank, as no one else was able to do. Subsequently, CSKA's and Levski's athletes contributed 35% of all medals...
won by Bulgaria between the 1952 Helsinki and the 1980 Moscow Olympics (BSFS, 1982 statistical yearbook).

The role of state managers proved critical for establishing strategic relations in this case as well. D. Djurov, Minister of Defence and a member of the Politburo, guaranteed the political stability of CSKA, while his son-in-law, a colonel himself without single day’s service in the regiment, was the DFS’s chairman. However, regular concerns were voiced about the monopoly position both DFSs were put in, and the lack of fair competition. The opportunity for changing the situation presented itself in 1985 in the form of a large scale incident amongst players during the final of the national football cup between the teams of CSKA and Levski. The five item decision of the BCP’s Central Committee Secretariat (June, 1985) was formulated the same night by those members of the Politburo who wanted to abandon the military and police’s monopoly in sport. Despite BSFS’ attempts to prevent its enforcement, the decision was published, and its first item proclaimed the dissolution of all representative teams of the two DFSs. No sports body nor leader was consulted, and this act had long-term detrimental effects causing an in-principle restructuring of sports, the loss of identities and supporters’ loyalties, and other privileges, which can still be observed today. More specifically, the two football clubs were separated from their societies and transformed, under new names (Sredetz for CSKA and Spartak for Levski) into independent clubs; the leadership of most sports developed by those societies was opened to civilians and not only to army and police personnel; the number of athletes on the payroll and those who were considered conscripts was significantly reduced. Both CSKA and Levski did not lose their leading positions overnight, but their monopoly was seriously shaken.

A third illustration of strategy and relations involved the most prestigious project Bulgarian sport ever undertook - Sofia’s consecutive bids to host the 1992 and 1994 Winter Olympic Games (WOG), launched in 1983. The background of the case involved several interrelated events. In terms of sport, it was Bulgaria’s contribution for restoring in 1973 in Varna the tradition of Olympic movement’ congresses after 40 years break; the work of its representatives in the Olympic movement; and socialist
Chapter 5. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-1989)

Sport general enhancement boosting the confidence of sport minded officials and leaders for staging an event of highest calibre. In addition, between 1977 and 1983 the country’s two principal winter resorts - Borovetz and Pamporovo - hosted a series of nine successful European and World Cup Alpine and Nordic ski events, including the World Students Winter Games in 1983. These developments were backed by a special Council of Ministers’ decree (N36/1978) regarding winter sports.

Politically the end of the 1970s was also an interesting period, as Bulgaria made a serious attempt to rebuild, at least morally, its national identity, in sharp contrast to Brezhnev’s doctrine for limited national sovereignty. The late Mrs. L. Zhivkova, daughter of T. Zhivkov (for 32 years the constant head of state and Communist Party Secretary General), was promoted to the post of chairperson of the state Committee for Culture, and later installed as a member of the Politburo. With her father’s support, she launched a massive national and international campaign to celebrate the 1300th anniversary of the Bulgarian state (681-1981). The ultimate goal of this project was to open Bulgaria to the cultural heritage of the world, and to promote the national culture abroad, thus raising national consciousness and transcending the boundaries of socialist reality.

Moscow overtly detested the project, as the USSR had never staged any major event in its cultural programme; Zhivkova was never seen by any senior Kremlin official; the Russians even claimed authorship over the Slav alphabet, invented by the Bulgarians Ciril and Methodius. This perhaps explains the highly hypocritical speech of Zhivkov during a solemn meeting to launch the 1300 years programme, aiming to demonstrate its compliance with the Communist project. Instead of praising national achievements, he stated: “Our love towards the country and the party of Lenin is already an irrevocable trait of our national character, of our socialist stateness. ...Our ideals and aims are common, our way is one” (quoted in Andonov, 1982:194). However, this background helps to appreciate the political and cultural as well as sport-specific environment which nurtured the idea of staging the Olympic Games and the interests behind it.
The personal interests of state and voluntary organisation managers and their ambitions also came into play. Brief elaboration on the timing and characters involved is needed here. A person rapidly progressing in the Party and administrative ranks - A. Lukanov - was in charge of foreign economic relations, was Bulgaria's representative in CMEA, and was very close to Moscow; a Soviet subject himself, he stood clearly behind the success of the tourist resort of Borovetz. His personal attachment with tourism was well known, as he became chairman of the Bulgarian Tourist Union, and after the events of 1989 the first Prime Minister. Politically, together with the then Minister of Culture, Mr. G. Jordanov, they were also the only candidate-members of Politburo (a political rank, the last step before the top of the Party hierarchy).

However, the ambitions of winter sports and their leaders were not sufficient for such a strategic undertaking. The supreme sanction from the Party was needed and it came partly by accident, in the form of another key appointment. In 1982 L. Zhivkova's husband, Mr. I. Slavkov, was moved from the post of Director of Bulgarian Television and appointed as chairman of the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (with just one member of staff). According to the Party's current standards for punishment, this was a major one. Slavkov, however, became a pivotal figure in the realisation of Sofia's WOG project, and for three years, was even the successor as the IOC member for Bulgaria to General Stoychev.

The BCP Secretariat's decision (844 of 1983) to promote Sofia's bid for the WOG as well as the Bulgaria 1300 project turned the hitherto low profile Cultural Minister G. Jordanov into a very popular figure, and he was also appointed by the BCP as chairman of the Initiative Committee (BCP CC, 37 of 1984 decision, BOC, 1989). Despite the Party's decisions, the bid did not take off because it had to overcome three serious contesting interests. The first was an economic concern voiced by A. Lukanov and the group behind him, whose arguments were very strong (not at least because of the Moscow 1980 Olympics which incurred massive financial losses). These people managed to make the disagreement over the bid in Bulgaria's state apparatus known to people in IOC circles, in a conscious attempt to prevent its success. After all, a
state's guarantees of political and economic stability were crucial factors influencing the IOC's decision about a host city.

The second critical concern was expressed by the Environmental Ministry and citizens of the city of Sofia living at the foot of the Vitosha mountain national reserve. Because of the advantages a capital city could offer, the Games were projected to be hosted in Sofia, neglecting the interests of Borovetz. These opinions were promoted by the member of the Initiative Committee V. Josiffov, who was also chairman of the Union of Bulgarian Journalists, who wrote several critical articles about the negative environmental impact of the Sofia project.

The third resistance came from the Communist party's ranks. Key national and local level officials (so called 'local party barons') rightfully feared that an Olympic Games in Sofia would have cut severely budgets for local economic and social programmes, and in addition, inevitably would have attracted massive material and human resources from all districts to the capital. The Party functionaries' reluctance was reinforced by the clientelism and nepotism of national politics. Once in power, most officials felt obligated and felt it necessary for their prestige to do something for their home place and relatives, thus securing greater local eminence, support and privileges. Often they abused their power by influencing decisions or by redistributing resources for various projects. Sport developments such as the erection of a 15,000 seated stadium in a settlement of 4,700 people, or building an Olympic standard swimming pool to serve a small village provided ample evidence of the effect of political cliaentelism (see the Party guidelines to BSFS's 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Congresses).

Contesting political, economic and ecological considerations were dealt with by different strategies. These were elaborated by Slavkov himself (interview with I. Slavkov, 7 September 1998). As noted, despite the Party decisions to support the bid (between 1983 and 1989 there were nine altogether, some very detailed), the government's various branches did not show great enthusiasm, and hindered progress. Slavkov went to see his father-in-law in his residence on the Black Sea and shared his concern about the bid's slow development. Zhivkov referred to Sofia's bid as 'a
political project with great significance’ and as ‘fools’ those who underestimated its meaning. He quickly ordered the preparation of a Council of Ministers’s decision (113 of 1984) and the bid really took off. The government was left the task of devising detailed BCP decisions through its Central Committee, and of providing finances and other support.

Environmentalists were disarmed publicly by selectively disclosing the hypocrisy of their claims. Slavkov published an open letter to Josiffov questioning his real concern about Vitosha, as the latter had his country house built in a preserved area on the same mountain. Subsequently, Josiffov was sacked. With regard to opinion polls, another key member of the bidding committee - D. Haralampiev, currently BOC Secretary General - admitted that public views were never an issue and the polling results on the support for Sofia’s project were simply made up (interview, 5 August, 1998). However, the contesting political, economic and ecological interests indicated insufficient of unity, did the damage, and Sofia’s bids for the ‘92 and ‘94 winter Olympics failed.

5.4 Conclusions

The totalitarian period of sport reinforced further the critical role of the state as site, generator, product and mediator of strategies, and blurred its boundaries with civil society. As demonstrated, despite specific circumstances, state projects were formulated by the Communist Party, inspired and controlled by Soviet doctrine. All significant sport projects were in line with the Party programme, and reflected the interests of a small leading elite. The people never became a factor in sport policy making, as it was believed that these elite groups’ interests coincided with, and best represented the general interest.

The success of the socialist sport project was facilitated by the general principle for organising society. The omnipotent Party-state intervened, from its first critical decision in 1949 until the late 1980s, and promoted the concept of “command competition”. All political committees, public, trade and voluntary organisations were obliged to take part in a nation-wide competition for “the best sports work”. It may be
argued that there is nothing wrong with competition, since it is a prominent feature of sport. However, the competition was not about sport, rather it was about the work done by different sports administrations. No national or local sport programme ever made reference to the 'people's needs', or used them as a policy rationale. This was true even for the only national conference in the whole period devoted to sports services. Nowhere in its materials, the concept of 'needs' is mentioned (BSFS, 1981).

The public discourse adopted as early as the 1950s represented exactly the belief that, like the production field, sport should also be put in a measurable framework, its progress directed by administrative decisions. The claim that BSFS was a mass voluntary organisation, as Staykov (1989:182) demonstrated, was difficult to substantiate. In a representative survey of youth and adult population, he found that individuals volunteered to devote 14% of their time to attending Youth Communist or Communist Party meetings, as opposed to 0.7% of the time being engaged in other voluntary activities including sport. This policy resulted in the creation of a working ethos aimed at satisfying the omnipresent economic Plan quotas, and urged sport organisations to include sport as indicator of state's general planning. Sport's conceptual and structural construction of its domain presupposed an extensive style of development, gradually breaking the sports movement into two well defined sub-domains - mass and elite - each competing for some privileges and core position. Despite rhetorics for the importance of people's health and fitness, the outcome of the mass-elite sport struggle was presupposed by the real powers delegated to the BSFS, and the constitution of elite sport as a highly centralised and specialised system which had no clear links with mass sport. The Union was assigned a full responsibility for mass sport but lacked the structural and financial leverage for implementing the various major demands set by the Party. Its budget for mass participation never exceeded 3% to 5% of the total.

Membership and structures in the sport policy domain were ideologically constructed and politically regulated. As all key appointments in state and voluntary sport organisations were strictly politically controlled, this established a more or less one-way trilateral movement of strategic relations - the Party to executive to voluntary
Chapter 5. Strategic relations in sport policy: the Communist period (1944-1989)

sport. In 1982 72.3% of BSFS’s Central Council staff and 100% of its leadership and Executive Board were members of the BCP (BSFS, 1982b).

The state bought out the voluntary sport organisations’ independence by means of regular financial support, but although finance grew in absolute terms, its relative share of the state total budget remained relatively constant. (Table 5.4 shows the allocation of the state budget to sport).

Table 5.4 Budget of the central sport governing bodies the VKFS (1945-1949) and BSFS (1959-1988) as percentage of state budget

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<td>% Total</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.04</td>
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Source: Ministry of Finance, Central Archives, fund 163 and BSFS, fund 597

It has to be noted, though, that the table only covers the budget of the VKFS, and after 1958 that of BSFS, and does not take into account subsidies for sport provided via other channels - the youth organisations, the trades unions, the Ministry of Education, or governmental programmes for athletes’ Olympic preparation. As H. Meranzov put it: "the BSFS never knew what exactly its budget was. We have always spent more than planned" (interview, 1 September 1998). This comment reflects the importance of key agents’ placement in a policy domain. Persuading party or government officials on whatever grounds was not impossible at all, as they could have easily allocated extra resources using the popular resolution ‘by exception’.

As the discussion in this chapter evidenced, the process of constructing sports policy was influenced by certain strategic relations. These can be put into two broad categories - intra-state and transnational relations. Manifested the first category were political, organisational and personal relations. Political relations were established between various Party committees, and sports structures at central, regional and local levels, when proved critical for forming policies. Organisational relations involved dealings between state apparatuses - the Council of Ministers, Ministries of Education, Defence, and Internal Affairs - and central (BSFS, BOC), and local
(CSKA, Levski) sports organisations. They included also relations between voluntary sports and non-sports organisations - the BSFS and DFSs, Trades Unions, the Youth Communist League, at both levels. Personal relations proved also essential, particularly in making strategic decisions, and for actors’ placements in the domain. Of particular significance were nepotic relations (of Slavkov and Hristov), but non-kinship relations were also relevant (Meranzov).

Transnational relations bore the sign of collectivism, or rather of Soviet domination. Multilateral co-operation between the Soviet block countries within the framework of political, economic and military treaties, and its extension in the sporting area was critical for establishing state and sports projects. The shaping of elite sport was clearly influenced by the nature of the international sports system nurtured by the East-West rivalry but the participation of Bulgarian representatives in various international sports structures was used more as a means of promoting collective socialist visions than of specific national interests.

Therefore, in a similar fashion to the previous period, the content of sports policy was dictated by the Communist project, which used sport for utilitarian purposes. Initially, this was to gain support in asserting the influence of the Communist Party, and later to prepare people for effective labour and defence of the country, and to bring international recognition and success for the system. Seen as a process, the sports policy always stemmed from Communist Party’s decisions and aspired to achieve the goals it set. Policy advocacy in this period presented an interesting case because of socialism’s belief in science and its power to transform society. It is very difficult to draw a fine line between the political and the academic discourse due to the supportive role science played for political rationale and the desire of political leaders to sound scientific. The sports policy outcome was a highly centralised sports system, disintegrated on mass and elite sport, and bound by uniform planning. Mass participation was limited to several events for casual sport with little choice, while the elite system developed as a fine tuned, sophisticated and competitive engine for producing international success.
Chapter 6.

This chapter sets to investigate the transformations from the Communist to a post-Communist sport policy, discussing the emerging new democratic state, its projects, strategies and relations, and their impact on shaping strategic relations in sport policy.

The latter will be demonstrated in the form of two case studies in Chapter 7. Therefore, the scope of this chapter will be confined to:

i) studying the project of building a democratic state/society and related strategies;

ii) investigating the effect of the democratisation project on sport’s conceptualisation and structuring;

iii) analysing sports policy’s strategic orientation in the new environment.

6.1. Setting up a democratic state - arrangements and strategies

The formal event heralding Bulgaria’s transition from a totalitarian to a democratic settlement was the ‘palace coup’ of 10 November 1989. For 33 years T. Zhivkov had
been head of the Communist party and the State Council. He lost his positions both in the Party and state apparatuses, and this initiated a chain of political, social and economic transformations. The party meeting which announced the change was preceded, however, by several crucial international and domestic developments. The world socialist system was undergoing a deep crisis, although Gorbachov’s perestroika policy was trying desperately to preserve its unity. Bulgaria’s satellite position in relation to Moscow proved critical, however, when the latter withdrew its support, this almost determined the end of Zhivkov’s rule. Domestically, the regime was demonstrating increasing inefficiency and reactionism, by violating people’s fundamental interests in ways such as social security, growing ethnic conflicts and escalating foreign debt. To dispel any misunderstanding about the spontaneity and independence of the transformation, it has to be noted that the ‘palace coup’ was endorsed by Moscow, and its key actors were briefed there days before it took place.

Unlike the two previous periods, the 1989 transformation did not involve any issue of Bulgaria’s boundaries. Nevertheless its constitution and nationhood were at stake. This time, however, for reasons elaborated in the previous chapter there was only one key player on the political stage - the Bulgarian Communist party. Hindered by various coercive political and economic mechanisms already discussed, increased social differentiation did not result in a clear consciousness of group identification, as a basis for forming group interests and related strategies. The existing social and economic resistance therefore, was not against socialism per se but rather it was confined to socialism’s crisis. Thus, from the very beginning the construction of the new democratic stateness was deprived of its most effective political mechanism - democracy- as a regulator of contesting but structured, and economically motivated interest groups. Moreover, the middle class which was supposed to lead such a transformation, was small and very loosely defined, and its creation was purposefully impeded by delaying privatisation measures and by inadequate legislation.

The responsibility for constructing the new state and its public institutions was assumed by the Communist Party, and more specifically by its elite, critically assisted by Moscow, but challenged by Washington. The form chosen was of a Round Table
negotiation. Everything from the roster of participants to its agenda and timing was carefully controlled by the Party. Despite the multitude of participating groups ranging from dissidents to youth, environmental and religious formations, often poorly defined and with blurred interests, sport was not given public recognition, and subsequently no sport organisation was invited to take part. The ultimate purpose of the Round Table was to legitimise the power of the new party elite and the constitutional settlement of the state. An essential step in this process was the change of party name from Communist to Socialist (BSP) with a vision of trying to join the democratic left forces in Europe. From an international point of view, also it had to demonstrate to the West that the formula by which Bulgaria and the USSR 'shared the same lungs, the same circulatory system and the same heart' was changing, and the restoration of limited national sovereignty was a priority task.

In reality, the Round Table took away the legislative functions of parliament and the executive functions of the State Council and the Council of Ministers. It 'negotiated' and forged the laws for political parties and the parliament, as well as the law for changing the constitution, and abolished Articles 2 and 3 of the constitution affixing the leading role of the Communist party. These were then voted on without debate in the old Communist parliament, approved and enacted. Round Table debates were televised live, but all the critical decisions were reached by small 'contact groups' (nicknamed 'the chequered Politburo') behind closed doors. Society was never offered a clear understanding, nor a political contract of what had been negotiated, nor it was consulted in any way.

This explains why 'Bulgaria bucked the trend', to use M. Glenny's phrase, because the renamed Socialist Party, which ironically had employed a British advertising firm to run its campaign, returned to power in June 1990 with a comfortable 47% of the vote, against 36% polled by the UDF. These results were achieved despite Washington's overt diplomatic and financial intervention (a total of $1.3 million for the election alone), including the presence of America's vice-president Dan Quail at the UDF's final pre-election meeting on 7 June 1991 in Sofia (see Peikov, 1996). These relations with Washington and Moscow indicated the traditional state policy of
having a Great Power (America or Russia) patron. In line with this trend, the BSP and the Chinese Communist Party were the only ones which did not condemn the Moscow state coup in August 1991, and took an ambiguous position.

The state’s new constitutional settlement included a division between legislative, judicial and executive powers and their independence was a direct outcome of Round Table negotiations. The first free elections voted for a supreme parliament, of which the opening session took place in the medieval Bulgarian capital of Veliko Turnovo. This was a symbolic gesture, intended to mark the continuity between two sovereign Bulgarias. It was however, undermined by a BSP strategy implemented earlier, which in sharp contrast with the constitution allowed the registration of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF). This was a conscious attempt to prevent the UDF capitalising on the votes of the Turkish minority (representing 7% of population) which had been discriminated against by the Communist regime. The MRF was based on ethnic principles, and aimed to defend the rights of the Turkish minority. Anti-Turkish demonstrations prevented the leader of the MRF attending the opening of parliament. The net result, however, was that the MRF gained 16 seats in the new parliament, and assumed the position of a balancing factor between the BSP and the UDF.

This incident was indicative of a re-emerging national self-consciousness, and as Todorova (1995:98) pointed out:

‘the Turkish problem’..., presents a much more serious challenge... it involves many independent issues outside its scope - problems of regional security, global security, ethnic minority status, the right to protect ethnic minorities, and the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of a neighbouring nation, among others.

From a Strategic Relations perspective, this episode suggested that fundamental issues concerning the constitution of the state’s key components - its boundaries and nationhood - in contemporary times cannot be resolved only by forces acting within the state. It is necessary for the state to place them in a global context, and to consider other circumstances and interests. By the end of 1991 the integrative segments of the socialist political (Consultative Council), economic (CMEA) and military (Warsaw
treaty) structures were dismantled, thus lifting any formal constraints on further assertions of national sovereignty.

The state's institutional arrangements represented several paradoxes, and for ten years did not manage to establish stable institutions which enjoyed public support. The constitutional settlement which delegated greater powers to the parliament, and doomed the political system to failure had several important impacts on state-society relations. Essential for comprehending the peculiar nature of Bulgaria's transformations is the fact that the key actors did not emerged as those unfolded, but rather they were appointed by the old Party elite. For example, 46% of the BSP deputies in the Supreme Parliament were from the Party's old top nomenclature, while most of the UDF's leaders were secret service agents (see Dimitrov et al, 1996). As future events demonstrated however, they displayed interests and strategies different from those of their ideological master.

Another significant impact of the transformation with critical implications for state-society relations and sport policy, was the emergence of a deep ideological cleavage, revolving around the notion of 'restoration' (for a comprehensive analysis on political and social cleavages in post-Communist Bulgaria, see Karasimeonov, 1998). For those who had supported the building of socialism, restoration implied returning to what had been before 1944 - Fascism - whereas for the rest it meant going back to pre-1989 Communism. As many commentators argued (Dimitrov et al, 1996, Minev and Kabakchieva, 1996, Krastev, 1997, Minev, 1997), both the BSP and the UDF identified themselves not as social and economic communities, both rather as separate cultures (or subcultures) sharing memories from the past. Hence, the core of the BSP's supporters perceived democratic changes as a U-turn to restoring the pre-1944 political regime. Ironically, the two key political formations were interested in maintaining these cultures as an effective collective mobilising mechanism and a way of legitimation. For instance, aided by the secret services, the BSP set fire to its headquarters and blamed the opposition for seeking barbarian revenge, while the UDF's main pre-election poster represented a black map of the country with scattered skulls and cross-bones in white indicating Communist concentration camps. The fire
was later used by the BSP to claim that most of the Party archives, and particularly those of the Politburo and the Central Committee, had been irretrievably lost. Initially, these developments provoked a period of hyper-political activity, with some 95% of the population turning out at the first election in June 1990. As the gap between political promises and actual delivery widened, people’s trust in state institutions was undermined, and in 1994 the parliament and the government received only 7% and 12% approval respectively, while in some regions of the country, only about 33% of the electorate voted in local elections (PER, 1999).

A territorial issue, that of land and property restitution, has occupied the political and social agenda ever since. The coercive collectivisation, land appropriation and migration of 1947-1950 now presented enormous problems. Over 80% of citizens in district towns had a piece of rural arable land for which they claimed restitution. This process affected also sport, as many facilities, buildings and terrains were given back to their earlier owners, or simply lost because no sport organisation could afford to pay them the compensation. As in the past, the changing form of ownership was not merely an administrative procedure, but rather it presupposed a structural-creative process, reshaping society’s structures, interests and various actors’ positions.

In conclusion, Bulgaria’s transformation from totalitarianism to democracy can be seen as a result of several key factors. First, it was a consequence of Communism’s global crisis, marked symbolically by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The end of the Communist era eroded strategic relations and resources which had made possible a totalitarian regime in Bulgaria. Second, the post-Cold War remapping of the world, despite the power vacuum it produced, left the state in the Russian (ex-Soviet) orbit of interests. Third, the transformation was designed and implemented by the only significant political and economic actor - the Communist party elite - and its key aim, as Minev (1997:75) argued, was “the re-creation of the elite’s eroded power, and chiefly of reconcentrating its economic power, which had been lost in the process of industrial development” (for Minev, the term socialism is just a label for the process of industrialisation). The new stateness was politically and socially constructed in an atmosphere of secrecy, obscurity and uncertainty, where civil society was grossly
excluded, and which did not allow clear group interests and strategies to be expressed, apart from those of the key actor.

6.2. State projects: forging state’s formal and substantiative unity

Thus the building of this new stateness was a negotiated process in which the key actors initially were appointed to their roles by the Communist Party. It is important, therefore, from a Strategic Relations perspective, to analyse the state projects which set the framework necessary for its formal (institutional) and substantive (social) unity. This we do by examining the processes of the political, economic and social construction of the Bulgarian state.

Politically, the foundations of Bulgaria’s post-totalitarian party system were set by the BSP during the Round Table, as many analysts have argued (Kolarova 1994, Karasimeonov 1996, Minev and Kabakchieva 1996, Dimitrov et al 1997, Krastev 1997). For eight years (1990-1998) the attempts to shape the political system resulted in three general elections and a presidential one, and eight governments with different configurations in the parliament. Five blocs including 32 civil formations, together with 34 political parties registered for the first free elections in 1990 and competed for votes. These figures increased to 106 registered parties for the 1994 elections, each claiming to represent specific interests and to have unique programmes (Mitev, 1994). The variety of competing political actors poses the essential question, how far they were really representing structured group interests and were bearers of specific values and ideas.

At first reading, this hyper-activity suggests that the political scene was a highly contested terrain where different individual and collective actors tried to promote their strategies. However, the analysis of the pre-election programmes of the key political actors - BSP, UDF and MRF - challenges this notion and illustrates to a great extent these parties ideological positions and their visions for transformations. A comprehensive study conducted by the Centre for Studying Ideologies (Mitev, 1991, 1994) advanced several important conclusions.
First, the three political parties had identical dominant demands revolving around three issues - freedom, democracy and rights. Similarly, another three key categories - privatisation, control and responsibility (which inevitably accompany the first three) - were given either no or very little mention. Second, no messages of these political programmes were addressed to particular groups. Instead, parties preferred to employ vague and abstract categories such as 'joining civilised Europe'. Thus, the political vote was barely influenced by the programme, rather it depended on psychological and symbolic identifications. This conclusion was reinforced by a study of 34 members of parliament and leaders of the BSP, UDF and MRF (Minev and Kabakchieva, 1997:126). Only one person interviewed from BSP and UDF said they served their voters and national interests, and felt most dependent on them. The rest gave rather abstract answers such as 'all people' or the 'whole nation'.

Third, these attitudes nurtured a culture of non-accountability of political parties, and the use of state funds as a main source to finance their activities. Despite that the Law on Political Parties (1993) demanded an annual financial report, this practice only lasted for about two years, and then was abandoned. The main political parties, however - the BSP, the UDF and the MRF - clearly derived financial benefits while in power as Table 6.1 shows. Sports organisations, as will be demonstrated, developed a similar attitude to the state and their members. Fourth, the economic reform which was supposed to be at the heart of these transformations as a basis for changing the fundamental regulatory principles of the new democratic market society was not a subject of discussion. These facts seriously undermined all intentions for social justice and economic progress the different parties declared they would pursue. Moreover, they highlighted the importance of ideological and identification mechanisms such as 'Communism-anti-Communism', or 'past-present' as a means for constructing a national political and institutional settlement. Although the right of every individual to sport and the state's responsibility for provision was fixed in the new constitution, no political party recognised sport as an issue.
Economically, the underlying process shaping the national economy was a massive redistribution of national capital. Abandoning the system of central planning did not deprive the state of its position as owner of most of the national wealth, rather it lost the ability to defend its interests in the new role. The negotiated transition from a centralised to a market economy was accompanied by a process of national wealth distribution, in which as Avramov and Genov (1997:25) argued “at the start, individuals and groups who possessed the real economic power during the previous regime have an advantage.” Consequently, these actors were state economic managers and secret service personnel. As the latter were not legitimate, they needed the assistance of the former nomenclature as political patrons to operate in the new environment. None of them, however, displayed the knowledge or behaviour of real market subjects.

Bulgaria lost its traditional markets, accounting for 80% of foreign trade turnover, as a result of the disintegration of the socialist economic system. Hence, capital accumulation, as in previous periods, had to take place predominantly at the expense of the state. Until 1994 the state undertook no serious steps to change the structure of ownership, and no public firm was closed. In 1992 total national economic losses represented 15.3% of GDP and reached 17.6% in 1993, with industry being the major contributor, incurring 71.7% of them (Avramov & Genov, 1997:28-32). At the same time, the share of industry in the GDP decreased progressively, from 59% in 1989 to 42.3% in 1993 (Bartholdy, 1995:526). Foreign exports shrank from 16% in 1989 to 3.3% in 1992, and imports from 14.9% to 3.6% respectively, with inflation rates ranging from 26% to 334% (Horvath, 1995:41). This poor economic development was
complemented by a massive transfer of Bulgarian capital abroad in the form of properties and financial investments. According to Avramov and Genov (1997:37), in 1993 this transfer amounted to $828.6 million (8% of GDP), while the state’s gross external debt reached $12.6 billions. This process was facilitated largely by the proliferation of banks and state overseas companies set up in the 1980s which were transferred into private enterprises. Eventually, in 1997 the UDF government published a list of 2,000 credit millionaires (see Peikov, 1996), but they were not expected to repay their debts because earlier (in 1993), the Communist-dominated Parliament had passed a bill about uncollectable credits.

The degree of penetration of the private sector in the economy is still very limited; according to the National Institute of Statistics, it was about 20% in 1994. Political disagreements hindered the process of land restitution, and by 1995 only 22% had been returned to previous owners for use. Although the contribution of the private sector in GDP in 1995 reached about 35%, it remained the lowest amongst all East European countries (NSI, 1995). The lack of clarity over property and capital ownership freed all economic agents from the responsibility for any economic losses incurred. This opened the way for an unprecedented seizure of capital, in the form of the socialisation of company’s losses, irreparable credits and transfer of capital abroad.

Socially, this economic reshaping resulted in a changing structure of labour and people’s sources of income, as two factors which directly bear on attitudes towards and participation in sport. The economically active population decreased from 82.4% in 1990 to 59.1% in 1994, with an alarmingly high unemployment rate rising from 1.4% to over 20% in the same period. It was particularly high amongst youth, where every fourth person was unemployed. People’s incomes in 1995 dropped significantly to 50.7% of the 1990 level. The contribution of working salary to household income also diminished drastically from 55.9% in 1989 to 38% in 1995, at the expense of other sources such as home production of food and services, which changed from 0.6% to 27.6% for the same period. A direct consequence of this was a decrease in leisure time and people’s disposable income for leisure pursuits. For example, the
number of holiday takers using both seaside and mountain resorts between 1989 and 1994 dropped by 50%, and in the same time the average leisure expenditure per person fell from 4.2% to 2.8% of general expenditures (National Statistical Institute, 1995:81, 1996:37-41).

Two distinct demographic trends played a critical structural role. Bulgaria is a country with an ageing population, where every fourth person is aged 60 and above (24.4%), and mass emigration in excess of 550,000 people under 45 years of age happened between 1989 and 1994 now continuing as a steady annual outflow of 30-40,000 people. In addition there was internal migration, resulting in the deserting of entire, mostly economically underdeveloped regions. At present the population in over a third of all settlements is fewer than 200 people (NSI, 1995). State economic restructuring together with demographic trends eventually led to a deep stratification of society, which is one of the critical determinants for forming identities and interests and generating social support for state projects.

Finally, two key processes legitimising transformations with strategic implications for sport policy were the degree of decentralisation and the formation of a viable third sector. Here analysis and reality are confronted with a complex paradox. Decentralisation (or deregulation) inevitably invited more regulation. Dismantling totalitarian structures and mechanisms in a democratic way could be achieved only by their replacement with modern legislations making them accessible and accountable, and fixing the boundaries between the state and civil society. At present both processes of decentralisation (increased local autonomy for sports structures) and the formation of a voluntary sector are impeded by conflicting legislation, lack of understanding on part of the state’s agencies and their reluctance to assist. The unprecedented freedom granted to local governments (municipalities) by the Local Self-Government and Local Administration Act (1991), including the power to approve local social and economic agenda, own budgets and the right to borrow for capital investment projects ensured only limited decentralisation. This is because the financial relationship between the central government and the municipalities continued to be regulated by the 1961 Budget Law, which has been the cornerstone of
centralised control of municipalities. It stipulates that collected revenue must be sent to central government and then redistributed from Sofia to municipalities. At present, 53% of municipal finance is obtained from locally generated sources and 47% from state subsidies, controlled by the government. As Jepson et al (1995:107) argued: “in practice, the Ministry of Finance has a significant hand in determining municipal budgets, through legal regulation as well as through the provision of subsidies and the redistribution of local finance.”

In a comprehensive study of intergovernmental (central-local) fiscal relations in Bulgaria, Martinez-Vazquez (1996:218) revealed that:

...the centre has given little attention to implementing what legal reforms it has instituted... Bulgaria cannot even be said to be at a policy crossroad” and “because of economic and political instability brought on by the transition, the government will be tempted to further centralize, rather than decentralize.

As will be demonstrated, this conclusion is confirmed by an analysis of the same relationship in the sport sector.

The transformations also urged on the emergence of a plethora of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in all sectors of society. Their proliferation was particularly noticeable in 1990-1991 mainly for two reasons - the needs to shape long-suppressed social energy and interests, and to legitimise existing structures (sport clubs included) as a result of deregulation. As several studies on the third sector indicated (Nikolov, 1993, 1994, Gaskin and Smith, 1995, Jordanova, 1998), this process was hindered by two key factors - lack of proper legislation, and finance. Non-governmental organisations still had to be registered according to a 1949 Communist Law for Persons and Family (despite several amendments), which, in this particular respect, ironically reproduced the same 1932 Fascist Law texts. Furthermore, the lack of effective legal financial mechanisms to differentiate between profit and non-profit sectors stimulated corruption, and prevented clear regulation.

With regard to support for NGOs, Nikolov (1994:81) suggested a very limited role for the state, as only 53 (16.1%) of all 330 organisations studied had received state
resources, compared to 116 (35%) assisted by other NGOs. Another obstacle which NGOs needing to generate cash faced was the ban on currency accounts, which prevented improving financial stability and making international contacts. There was also a general attitude of scepticism concerning NGOs' role in society because of revelations for wide-spread abuse of not-for-profit organisations to make quick profits, mostly by smuggling alcohol, cigarettes or oil (as in the case of the Sapio Foundation, 1992).

Sport organisations as a form of shared interest groups, appeared to be the most popular non-for-profit organisations in the third sector. A snapshot survey of the sector in the region of Shoumen revealed that 44% of all registered organisations were sport associations (Jordanova, 1998: 10). Another study comparing eight European countries, by Gaskin and Smith (1995: 34) stated that the highest single proportion of active volunteers was in the field of sport and recreation - 28% on average. This figure, however, was notably lower for the two Eastern European countries in the sample - Bulgaria (4%) and Slovakia (12%) - and, as will be demonstrated, a growing number did not reflect structured group interests.

From a Strategic Relations perspective, however, the structuring of the third sector followed a specific path as Jordanova (1998: 7) argued:

*the institutionalisation of an NGO follows not a line of expansion and mobilization of civil initiatives, irrespective of their type, public interest and even power and public intensity about particular issues, but rather it follows the line of financial stabilization through joining a community of sponsored non-for-profit organisations.*

This trend, coupled with the state's reluctance to facilitate voluntary organisations, and generally low social rating of the third sector suggests two important conclusions. First, establishing strategic clientelistic relations with financially viable central organisations was a prerequisite for becoming a member of the domain (culture, sport, environment), and not the scale of social support a voluntary organisation enjoyed: two example are the students' association 'Open Society' sponsored generously by the powerful Foundation of the same name, and the Foundation Bulgarian Sport which enjoys the sponsorship for its major projects from the Foundation Civil Society (both
based in America). Second, state policies regarding the third sector, carried out through legislative and executive bodies, have been coercive and destructive. In this respect, it is significant to note that major studies on the third sector in Bulgaria have been conducted and paid for by foreign institutions, such as the American John Hopkins Institute and the Foundation for Development of Civil Society, the British Charitable Know-How Fund and Volunteer Centre, or the European Union.

To sum up so far, the forging of the institutional unity of the post-totalitarian state was shaped by prevailing central political forces and modest incremental democratic changes. This process was partly presupposed objectively by the pressing need to deregulate the totalitarian state, but subjectively by strategies promoted by the former Communist Party elite in attempts to stabilise their economic power. Linked to that was the process of building the state’s social unity. Whether seen as a political or a civil project, social unity was sought not through the support of particular social groups, but rather it was based on clientelistic relations between political parties, state or foreign agencies and the third sector, including sports associations (for a comparative analysis see Miller, 1992).

Massive and constant restructuring of the political, economic and social fabric of society prevented other interest groups, than the political and economic nomenclature being given a democratic chance to compete for various structural privileges. This was chiefly achieved by effectively substituting state projects with their ideological construction involving false images of Communism and painful comparisons with modern democratic methods. The key strategies used by all major actors in this process, as Kolarova (1994) described them, were of consciously eschewing contingent issues and tacit agreements about the constitutional settlement, the distribution of powers and key appointments, or the processes of economic restructuring.

6.3. Constructing the sport policy domain - interests and interventions

Constructing the sport policy domain became a struggle involving two major actors in the form of groups - the voluntary sport organisations under the leadership of the national umbrella body, the Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sport (BSFS), and the state in the form of a governmental Committee for Youth Physical Education and Sport (CYPES). We consider these as group and not individual actors because their structure or membership incorporates various agencies not directly concerned with the domain, such as parts of the jurisdiction, branches of government (CYPES), or other voluntary partners (BSFS). Thus, accounting for those key actors and their interests, the post-totalitarian period of sport policy can be divided into two. The first period which lasted between 1989-1992 is identified as ‘voluntary versus voluntary sector’, and the second, from 1992-1999 as ‘the state versus voluntary sector’.

The formal event that signalled the sport domain’s transformation was the resignation of the BSFS’s chairman in November 1989. The cleansing undertaken by the Communist party reformers in the aftermath of the palace coup (the 10/10/1989 Communist Party’s plenary session which voted Zhivkov out of office) aimed to take out of the party’s governing body - its Central Committee - the most loyal supporters of Zhivkov’s regime. The chairman of the BSFS was one of them. After 22 years of service his resignation was observed by all key members of the domain with unprecedented standing applause. This was very illuminating for members’ perceptions of forthcoming changes calling for a balanced development of both mass and elite sport. They had no serious reason to think about it as Bulgarian sport had just concluded the most successful year in its history - the 1988 Seoul Olympics with 35 medals, including 10 Olympic titles.

Eventually, in February 1990, the BSFS organised its long overdue 7th congress (the 6th had been held in 1982) with the aim of deciding its future strategic direction. It acknowledged its heavy ideological dependence on the past and blamed its failure to deliver mass sport on the Communist party for assigning a voluntary body such a great strategic task (BSFS, 1990). However, the new charter defined BSFS as “an

independent, democratic and self-governing voluntary organisation for individual, amateur and professional sport” (article 1 BSFS, 1990a), and its mission of democratising sport as a precondition for pluralist and diversified development. These claims were made concrete by some figures, envisaging increased allocations for free of charge services from 7.5% to 11.1% of the budget and a decrease in elite sport and in Union administrative subsidies from 20.4% to 17.8%, and from 10.6% to 7.4% respectively (BSFS, 1990: 44). These outcomes, as will be demonstrated, were never delivered. The Congress also called persistently for decisive state intervention to set a Ministry of Sport.

The three key parameters of the new sport policy as set in the BSFS’ eclectic structure incorporated recreational services, amateur and professional sport, and a gradual distancing from mass sport (see Chapter 5). Together with the post-Communist attempt to bring the state in, they presupposed to a great extent the constitution of a sport policy domain and different interests. First, the BSFS clearly could not rely on massive grass root support as during the totalitarian period it established itself mainly as a professional organisation because for the pursuit of excellence. At the same time it did not want to sacrifice the central position it occupied in the domain. This explains why it still claimed to represent the interests of such diverse and incongruent groups of participants, ranging from fitness doers to professional athletes. Second, by correctly labelling the party/state assignment to introduce mass sport as ideological and unrealistic, the BSFS was seeking to justify a new legitimation for its structure and policies. While politically and economically the state was in crisis, the elite sport - BSFS specialism was undeniably successful, and at most needed cosmetic adjustments to comply with the calls for democratisation. Third, the call for more state involvement was no more than asking the government and other state institutions to undertake the responsibility for providing mass sport, and to assign to the BSFS only the task of elite sport production. In the 1992 BSFS’ remaining structures dealing with mass sport were finally abandoned, and in 1993 an independent Sport for All Association was established (see Chapter 8).

The first two years of the democratic period clearly demonstrated the quasi-voluntary character of BSFS as the key actor in the sport policy domain. As it never represented its individual members’ real interests, the Union did not try to generate mass public support and to produce a powerful collective voice demanding privileges for a broad membership. This conclusion was supported by empirical data from a national representative survey amongst people aged 14 to 55 and 27 leading Sport for All experts, carried out in conjunction with the introduction from Australia of the health and fitness campaign *Life. Be In It.* It revealed that 62% of the experts believed that the most effective and safe way to present the campaign would be to give a governmental agency the leading role. This was in sharp contrast to the opinions of most of the sample, who did not have any confidence in the state - only 13% approved (Girginov et al, 1991).

BSFS’s reaction to the first and only attempt to address critical sport policy issues raised by a non-domain actor was very indicative of its real intentions. In 1989 a group of intellectuals, physical educators and members of the public organised a national Open Forum for Reconstruction of Physical Education and Sport (OFRPES, 1990). It exposed the failures of totalitarian planning and governance of sport in catering for people’s needs, documented regular malpractices in sport such as child abuse and exploitation, and devised policy guidelines for state and voluntary sport organisations. Amongst the 81 founding members of the Forum (and its subsequent meetings) was not a single representative of the BSFS’ Central Council. The latter perceived the gathering as an ideological and structural threat, and allowed only one representative of the Forum to take part in the 7th Congress of the Union several months later. The fate of similar attempts in other transforming Eastern European countries - Russia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic - was much the same (see Stolyarov, 1989, Foldesi, 1991, Krawczyk, 1992, Arvisto, 1995).

Despite declarations about democratisation, throughout the first two years of transformations, the BSFS preserved its close relations with its former ideological master - the renamed Socialist Party. For example, various branches of the BSFS were used by the socialists to give away much-needed sport equipment to influence the
votes of conscripts in Sofia. They were perceived by the BSP as volatile but critical for the outcome of the elections, particularly in some constituencies where their regiments were based. In return the BSFS enjoyed the support of the BSP-dominated parliamentary Commission for Youth and Sport and of the party leaders (personal communications with key officials, Gruev, Dimitrov, June 1990). Thus, the project for democratising and transforming the sport policy domain was substituted by the BSFS's actions, with its logical slogan 'don't throw the baby out with the bath water'. This conclusion is supported by the findings of national surveys suggesting that 72% of pupils, students and workers lacked physical activity and would participate in sport, including on a pay-as-you-play basis if they could (Girginov et al, 1991, Stoychev and Tzonev, 1995). In reality the three strategies promoted by the BSFS further weakened the ability of the underdeveloped civil sector in sport to create interests different from those of the bureaucratic apparatus capable of pursuing their own strategies. Instead a hostile environment was nurtured, which in the long run determined sport policy's strategic orientation, coupled with the ideological tension of Communist-anti-Communist ideal.

Eventually the state stepped in, and a UDF governmental decree (161 of 18/8/1992) set up a Committee for Youth, Physical Education and Sport (CYPES-in its 1996 version, after being renamed three times). It was assigned to implement state sports policy with key functions to develop programmes, co-ordinate activities, allocate and own properties and control the domain. Following the anti-Communist line of transformation promoted by the UDF, the CYPES' mission was preoccupied with ideological concerns. The BSFS and DFSs were declared to be totalitarian and illegitimate structures, and so had to be destroyed, and their leaders and practices were ruthlessly suppressed. More specifically, for six years, involving numerous applications and court hearings, the BSFS was refused official registration as a voluntary body, and so could not be considered a partner of the state. An attempt by national sport federations to form a confederation materialised only in part, as its registration is still being refused.

The reshaping of the sport policy domain began with no clearly formulated visions and strategies. The CYPES' first general policy document was published only in 1996, four years after its establishment. Policies followed a clear path of fragmenting the sport movement by dispersing national and local multi-sport organisations into single sport clubs. Three basic mechanisms - structural, financial and functional - were used in deconstructing the membership of the sports domain:

(i) a compulsory licencing of all associations in the domain granted by the CYPES, and its consequent monopoly over resources;

(ii) allocation of sport facilities (previously owned by the BSFS) and finance (both state subsidy and toto money), and

(iii) a direct administrative intervention in voluntary organisations' affairs. Their impact justifies the characterising the period between 1992 and 1999 as 'the state versus voluntary sport'. We shall examine each of these in turn.

(i) Licensing.

The regulation (CYPES, 1998) for licensing sports establishments made no reference to private clubs which encouraged either mass participation or excellence, thus depriving largely private actors from participating. The regulation for financing sport clubs and associations, however, was even more restrictive and exclusive. Since its creation in 1957 the national sport Totalizer (Toto) had been the major source of revenue for all sport organisations. According to the CYPES (1993, 1998) regulations, grass root sports clubs (those established in schools or residential areas) did not qualify for state subsidy, only local (at municipal level) and national (Sports Associations). Furthermore, the criteria for assessing sport organisations' performance in order to qualify included:

-measures taken for selecting and preparing young athletes;
-athletes' and teams' performances in international, national and regional championships; and
-the demonstration of self-generated revenues in supporting these respective activities (CYPES, 1996:2).

In addition, all sports were divided into two categories - Olympic and non-Olympic - and their championships were attributed a coefficient of importance. For example, in 1995 rhythmic gymnastics was given the highest coefficient of 2.26 for its national
championships, compared to 1.15 for women's wrestling (CYPES, 1996b). The point here is, that the actual mechanisms for inclusion/exclusion in/from the domain devised by the state contradicted its proclaimed mission for democratisation of sport and more free choice for all people.

(ii) Financial allocations

Unable to deliver crucial services to its productive units (the DFSs), the Union disintegrated, and as a national survey of 665 sport and tourism clubs in 1994 showed, only 31% were members of the BSFS, whereas 79% were members of a national federation where memberships ranged from 1 to 120 clubs. Until 1989 100% of DFSs had been members of the BSFS (Slavkov and Girginov, 1994). Table 6.2 shows the membership of the sport policy domain, and needs clarification. Sport clubs listed in 1989 were those set up at grass-roots level - in schools, universities and factories - which after 1992 were no longer considered as actors in the domain, and did not receive support neither from the BSFS nor from the CYPES. The 1994 and 1999 figures represent only those single-sport clubs licenced and subsidised by the CYPES which emerged as result of disbanding the DFSs.

Table 6.2 Sports domain membership (1989-1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sport Clubs</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>1,114</td>
<td>1,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Societies (DFSs)</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Sport Associations</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(for an explanation of the differences, see text)

The case of Shoumen county previously cited in Jordanova is instructive here for the role of the state in structurally determining sport policy. Only 15 (20%) of 72 registered sport clubs in the county received grants from the CYPES in 1997, and this distribution was limited to four sports - basketball, volleyball, handball and riding. According to the coefficient of their sporting potential, these clubs were ranked between the 49th and 331st places, which in turn determined the amount of subsidies allocated to them.
From being a core member of the domain, the BSFS gradually lost its structural privileges and relations, was effectively replaced by the CYPES, and eventually in 1998, after 40 years of operation, ceased to exist. The end of co-ordinated governance of the voluntary sector did not seem to cause either public or government concern; instead it was proudly noted by the CYPES's chairman, Bartchovski, in an interview for the biggest daily newspaper (24 Hours, 23/8/98). At present it seems that the only strategic issue binding together the various core actors and urging them to act as a collective force is preserving the Totalizer for sport. As a state agency the CYPES was politically sensitive about this issue, and did not assume a central role, leaving the lead in voicing the matter to the voluntary sector (sports federations). However, the lack of clearly co-ordinated strategic visions and interests predetermined the poor outcome of an unprecedented meeting of all key actors with the President of the country, a former athlete and sport-minded person P. Stoyanov, in February 1999. In effect, the meeting discredited the sports movement as disorganised and preoccupied with short term, narrow interests of individual organisations, and managed only partly to promote the issue of preserving the TOTO money for sport on the political agenda. Eventually, the 1999 Gambling Law exempted the totalizer from taxes, and preserved all its money for sport.

Another set of actors with great potential for reshaping the sport policy domain was the municipalities. Two centrally controlled processes, however, still prevented them from becoming key actors in sport in particular. First, is their restriction by law to set their own budgets and most municipal fees and charges. Second, is the municipal ownership of sport facilities (about 80% of the total) which was reinstated by a Council of Minister’s order (110 of 2/11/1992a), which is an obstacle to converting to a market economy. Around 65% of the sport facilities in the country are used free of charge, and only 15% demand usage fees from sport clubs (Slavkov and Girginov, 1994). Given that the sports clubs’ financing by the CYPES favours elitism, and that both they and the municipalities deliver very limited services to the public, municipal ownership becomes a burden because sports facilities consume resources for maintenance, and bring poor returns from usage.
(iii) Administrative intervention

The state’s administrative intervention was crucial for structuring the sport policy domain, and forming its strategic relations. The Council of Ministers’ 1993 (27/7/93) decree was a replica of the 1937 decision of its predecessor in delegating unrestricted rights to the CYPES (in 1937 it had been the Ministry of Education) to intervene and override all voluntary sport organisations’ collective decisions. It is worth noting that, apart from the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (BOC), no organisation took a stance on that matter. The 1997 licensing regulation also contained a clause (#11) empowering the CYPES to withhold a licence from a sport organisation in a case of breaching its charter, the procedures of its annual assembly, or flaws in its training and competition processes (CYPES, 1998:167-7). Clearly, voluntary sport organisations were put under legal, financial and administrative dependence and control, and as the next section reveals, virtually no co-operation and dialogue was established between the state and the voluntary sector. CYPES’s position in the domain, however, was not uncontested. In 1998 the CYPES and its budget were put under the control of the Ministry of Education, and after that the Committee had to compete for budget allocations on an equal footing with another 1,000 subsidiary branches of the Ministry.

The central role of the state in the sport policy domain was finally cemented by the CYPES’ Conception for the System of Physical Education and Sport (1996), and further perpetuated by the Sport Law (1996b) and Council of Ministers decrees (1997, 1997a) and CYPES regulations (1997, 1998). At the same time voluntary sport organisations were largely marginalised with regards to strategic policy decision making and put under centralised control. The above documents constitute a political and structural mechanisms for shaping the domain in line with the state’s vision of assuming the responsibility to represent the general interests of society. According to the CYPES conception the major aim of the sports system was “to improve the health, physical development, fitness and capability of the nation, providing the necessary conditions for regular participation of all members of the community” (1996:8). As we have seen, none of the criteria for assessing the players in the domain corresponded to this aim. The Law (article 8. (2) 1-5, 1996b:5) fixed the central role
of the governmental agency in the domain and delegated the key functions, policy formulation, supervision, licensing and finance allocation to it. The national Programme for Physical Education and Sport (Council of Ministers decree 1031 of 19/12/97) ensured the structural and financial backing of the CYPES and operationalised the functions of domain members. Voluntary sports organisations are given only a supportive role (1997: 96):

*the Council of Ministers reckons that...the voluntary sports organisations must take their responsibilities, rights and duties in synchrony with state agencies and municipalities in implementing the national programme.*

Despite its time span, for 1997-2000, the programme itself contained no specific tasks, targets, deadlines, specified individuals/agencies in charge and resources, thus dooming the implementation to administrative interpretations. Table 6.3 sums up the status and the key projects promoted by the voluntary and the governmental agencies.

### 6.4. Strategic orientations and relations

From previous discussions it is clear that despite declared policy intentions for Sport for All, both the BSFS and the CYPES sought legitimation through elite sport. The football team's 4th place in the 1994 World Cup in the USA was commonly perceived as a great success and was used by politicians to generate social unity and to assert Bulgaria's national identity. At the same time, though, as will be demonstrated in chapter 8, the elite orientation served global more than national interests. Moreover, elite sport was quantified and offered tangible privileges as opposed to mass participation with loosely defined social effects. For example, the state subsidy offered to a sport club for an Olympic gold medal ($3,000) exceeded the annual contribution made to any sport club in more than 120 municipalities (of 160 financed in total) in 1997 (CYPES, 1998, 1998a -document).

Sport policy's strategic orientation was never subjected to a structured public consultancy process. Various attempts for wider discussions on projects such as the draft Sport Law (initiated by the Chancellor of the National Sports Academy in 1991), the National Round Table for sport (organised by the BSFS in November 1993), or a Sport in Society conference (jointly organised by BSFS, Bulgarian Tourist Union and
Table 6.2 The status and strategic projects of BSFS and CYPES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Strategic project</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Strategic project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Independent, self-governed voluntary organisations for individual, amateur and professional sport</td>
<td>To promote mass and elite development; BSFS to play an important public role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport for All abandoned conceptually and structurally; Registration as legitimate voluntary association denied on ideological grounds</td>
<td>Calls for more state intervention and sport legislation fixing the role of the state and voluntary bodies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>A government committee for sport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appreciation of basic human values, implementing state policy in preserving improving nation’s health and developing the achievements of Bulgarian sport; Restructuring national sport domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confederation of independent sport governing bodies - BSFS changed to BSU; Lack of leverage on resources</td>
<td>Calls for state support; claims to preserve control over Toto money allocation and facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Full control over strategic resources Negotiation and supervision over 1200 sport clubs and 51 NSFs Dismantling totalitarian structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>A non-governmental organisation; Contractual partner to the state; Registration denied</td>
<td>Implementing state orders against the provision of resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clear orientation towards elite sport; Conception and Sport Law; total control over sport domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Ceased to exist (except on paper)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elite sport promotion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


BOC in May 1994) were either poorly organised and attended, or boycotted by key actors in the domain.

Subsequently, no sport policy conception was ever based on an analysis of Bulgarian society's complex transformations, and it could be argued therefore, policy was not anchored in real life processes, rather it was predominantly an outcome of key actors' interests. A typical example was the CYPES's 1996 conception which has determined and controlled the sport domain ever since. Essentially, the document was a 'single-person creation' developed by Tz. Zheljazkov - one of the country's leading professors (and a long-serving head of department at the National Sports Academy) in the methodology of sport training, a founder and proponent since 1964 of the elite sport system, and for many years until 1989 the BSFS vice-chairman responsible for national Olympic teams (personal communications, August, 1996). Now, from his position as vice-chairman of the CYPES, he promoted a classical complex, academic-style document (40 pages dense text only in its English version) advocating that the state take the leading role with elite sport, and having nothing to do with political rationales for making decisions.

The above developments nurtured an environment dominated by state agencies and managers oriented to elitism, and marginalised the voluntary sector by preventing it from forming viable organisations based on clearly identified group interests. As major restructurings of the sport domain occurred without prior strategic visions offered for open consultation, this resulted in the emergence of a clientelistic culture revolving around relations between key actors' placements. Besides the above example of policy advocacy, clientelistic relations were responsible for a unique distribution of power in national sport policy making. During 1994-96 (with some minor changes until 1999) sixteen key positions in the domain were shared between three people, two of whom were detested by the vice-chairman of the CYPES. Figure 6.1 illustrates the placement of those actors and their positions in the sport domain.

Of particular significance is the configuration of these positions between the three actors, who are supposed to represent conflicting interests. For example, Zhajakov

was appointed chairman of the CYPES (a state agency), but remained president of the BVF (a voluntary body), and of Orbitours (a private company).

Figure 6.1. Key actors roles and relations in the sports policy domain - 1994-1996

Key to figure: CNSF (Confederation of National Sport Federations), BOC (Bulgarian Olympic Committee), BASfA (Bulgarian Association Sport for All), BFU (Bulgarian Football Union), BFV (Bulgarian Volleyball Federation), NC PEST (Ministry of Education National Council for Physical Education, Sport and Tourism), Orbitours (the biggest chain for youth tourism and recreation), NSA (National Sports Academy).

I. Slavkov (BOC Chairman): "*If the state wants medals it has to pay for them*” (a personal statement on a poster hanging in his office reception area)

N. Hadjiev (BSFS Chairman): "*Fundamental is the role of the state body - the CPES, which determines the state order for everybody*” (1995:5)

V. Zajakov (CNSF Chairman): "*The state body should assume supreme responsibility in shaping national sport policy*” (personal communication, September, 1994).

Hadjiev served for more than two years as a full-time chairman of the BSFS (a umbrella voluntary organisation), but kept also the chairmanship of the BSfAA (a voluntary body). Slavkov is full-time chairman of the BOC (the voluntary body responsible for all Olympic sports), and also of the BFU (a single sport on the Olympic programme).

The pro-state stance of those three managers presiding over the most powerful voluntary sports governing bodies is indicative of their political thinking and vision. Illuminating of the elitist character of these organisations is the fact that no-one ever questioned the holding of several offices both in the public and voluntary sectors by the same person. Equally, they never formed an alliance to devise common course of actions and policy for the voluntary sector. These findings support the notion that the sports policy network (Marsh, 1998) was based more on structural than interpersonal relationship, and emphasised strategic calculations of key individuals.

In an attempt to secure a better place in the domain, I. Slavkov, in violation of the BOC charter, set up a political party ‘Forca Bulgaria’ (copying his Italian friend Berlusconi’s example), and participated in the 1994 elections. Most of the party’s candidate-deputies were former and present top sport managers and elite athletes, but none were elected. The relations of sports with political actors became prominent as boards memberships and presidencies of popular sports federations/clubs turned to be a highly attractive position for top politicians of all breeds. At present, the presidents of six national federations (equestrian, ski, jetski, pentathlon, volleyball, boxing) are acting ministers. Between 1992 and 1999 three ministers and five members of the parliament served as presidents of the Basketball Federation, two ministers presided over the Tennis and Swimming Federations, while the recent crisis in the Volleyball Federation was solved by the election of a new president, the Minister of Agriculture. Mingling politicians with sport was encouraged by the Prime Minister Kostov himself, as he did not see this as a political intervention, but rather as a “healthy process” which aims to “help sport, and keeps people with dodgy interests away from it” (Capital, December, 1999). (The actual word he used was ‘mutri’ (ugly faces) a slang for the Mafia).

The fragmentation of the sports movement was a structural-formative process with great implications for sport organisation’s financing and mode of operation which in turn, dictated further their strategic orientation, relations and place in the domain. In 1993 the BSFS did not generate any revenue from services while the expenditure for staff salaries represented 46% of the total. In 1994 the revenue from membership fees
and services was only 2% and 3% respectively, with salary expenditures reaching 61% of the total budget allocations (BSFS 1993, 1994). The structure of National Sports Federations and clubs budgets was very indicative of their autonomy and relations. A survey of 44 NSFs and 665 sport clubs (Girginov, 1995) revealed that they remained heavily state financed bodies with no affinity in spectator sports or in serving the public. Table 6.4 shows the structure of NSFs’ and sport clubs’ revenues and supports the thesis about their strategic orientation towards elitism and reliance on clientelistic relations instead of serving wider group interests or being market-oriented.

Table 6.4 National Sports Federations’ (NSFs) and sport clubs’ sources of revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of revenue (%)</th>
<th>NSFs (average)</th>
<th>Sport Clubs (range)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government grants (CYPES)</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport TOTO</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td></td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership fees</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, as Table 6.5 shows, between 1993 and 1998 the CYPES spent between 75.3% and 94.7% of state sport budget for 22-24 Olympic sports and some 200 athletes (CYPES, 1996b). In 1999 state selectivity favoured three sports - athletics, wrestling and volleyball - which together received 25% of total TOTO subsidy, 9.88%, 8.57% and 6.82% respectively (Capital, 29-4 February, 2000).

On average, a weightlifting club received nearly five times more subsidy than its counterpart in athletics. The criteria for allocations set by the government agency did not stimulate the setting of a wider network of structural elements, the clubs. As result, only 15 of 51 (this number was usually 40 but some sports received occasional grants) subsidised by the CYPES sports had affiliated clubs in all regions of the country, while others simply concentrated on a few clubs capable of bringing competitive success. This undermined the very basis of these clubs’ existence -
satisfying their members' needs and deprived large groups of people from having a say in policy formulation.

Table 6.5 Top ten state grant beneficiary NSFs and their club network (1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Sports Federation</th>
<th>Sport clubs network (No)</th>
<th>Total Subsidy (mill Lv)</th>
<th>Average per club (mill Lv)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weightlifting</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>365.4</td>
<td>10.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>288.2</td>
<td>8.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>274.6</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>272.6</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>216.3</td>
<td>16.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shooting</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>198.2</td>
<td>10.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythmic gymnastics</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>174.7</td>
<td>7.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>167.8</td>
<td>11.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxing</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>159.0</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biathlon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>140.7</td>
<td>14.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.5. Conclusions

Contrary to the sphere of politics, the transformation from Communism to Democracy in sport policy making was not negotiated, but rather an imposed process. Its very nature was legitimising a contradiction between policy declarations, outputs and outcomes long masked by the previous regime. All key actors in the sport policy domain identified and legitimised themselves by means of elite sport promotion. Sport for All was declared as a basic right of the people, and an 'anonymous state' was assigned to provide for it. It must be pointed out, that, although the CYPES did formally associate its name with Sport for All, in the case of the joint CYPES and BASfA BULPHAR 2000 (Bulgarian Physical Activity and Development, 1998) programme, none of its 19 sub-programmes commits the governmental agency financially or structurally.
The process of building the new stateness represented a structural-creative process with critical implications for the conceptualisation, structuring, production and consumption of sport. The point here is that for ten years no conception of sports policy ever considered any of the political, economic or social trends identified above. This allowed an analysis to argue, that as in the political sphere, the key actors' strategies - of the BSFS and CYPES, were grounded on ideology and not on principles of common interests. As such, they did not offer mechanisms for the majority of sport participants and athletes to promote their interests and rights, and served the interests of the elite from the old sport clientele.

Under the lead of the CYPES agency, the project for sport democratisation was substituted by an ideological interpretation fitted within and limited to the Communism-anti-Communism dichotomy. The previous 45 years of sport history were labelled totalitarian, and accordingly its concepts, structures and actors had to be dismantled. This strategy materialised in the disbanding of strong sports societies into thousand of single sport and other small clubs with no collective co-ordinating voluntary body other than the CYPES. The ideological trap it threw sport policy into is still felt very strongly as in 1998, ten years after the transformations began, a UDF member of parliament Berberjan (a former CSKA tennis coach and army officer) proposed a lustration amendment to the Sport Law (Article 17) banning former Communist party members from taking leadership positions. Clearly, very little in conceptions or policies pursued in the domain can be seen as synergetic, that is, as joint state-voluntary, or voluntary/private organisations strategies aiming at common ends.

Sports' formal and social unity was forged not around strategic visions but rather around an ideological construct. Voluntary sport associations were granted limited autonomy and non-negotiable contracts (see Chapter 7), ensuring both their place in the domain and giving a formal unity to the sport democratisation project. The CYPES retained full central control over major strategic resources - finance, facilities and legal leverage for intervention. It supported financially only 40 of more than 100 sports on offer, dispensed to the licenced clubs and sports federations 15% and 13%
respectively of the sport TOTO money, compared to 22% for its administrative expenses. The autonomy given by the CYPES to sport associations implied that this governamental agency currently negotiates and supervises directly 1,220 sport clubs and 51 NSFs. A similar approach can be seen as a precondition for furthering authoritarianism in and the bureaucratisation of sport policy making.

This type of formal unity was matched by nurturing a form of social unity based on clientelistic relations, and not on well-defined group interests. Inescapably, the jobs of key actors turned into major assets for gaining privileges and ensuring a core place. Ironically, this construction of the domain and its relations was in the best interests of all core agencies and managers: for BSFS and CYPES because of their inability to provide for mass participation, for NSFs because of their historical commitment to elite sport, for the leading DFSs because of their strategic interests in being basic elite sport production units.

Subsequently, in a similar way to the capitalist and communist periods, three types of intra-state strategic relations - political, organisational and personal - were evidenced. Political relations were established between state political apparatuses (the President, the Council of Ministers, Ministries of Education and Finance) and various voluntary sports organisations (National Sports Federations). Relevant for this category also were the relations between politicians and sport organisations. Organisational relations involved state agencies (the CYPES, Ministries of Education or Finance), and voluntary organisations (the BSFS, sports federations). Personal relations were established between key actors in the voluntary sector, and between key appointments in state sport administrations and powerful politicians (for example, the re-appointment of Barchovski as chairman of CYPES in 1993, 1995 and 1997). As noted in the beginning, these relations will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

For seven years (1989 to 1996), the sports policy content was not clearly defined and was marked by many improvisations. Although the CYPES's Conception for Sport in 1996 could be seen as an attempt to channel the sports movement in achieving particular aims, the dominant practices pointed to a destructive tendency, aiming to
dismantle totalitarian sports structures and to prevent former officials from getting back into office. The policy process was marked by harsh state interventions, ensuring its grip over strategic resources - conceptualisation, membership in the domain, financial allocations and evaluation. Oddly enough, the voluntary sector also called for more state intervention. Sports policy advocacy represented a classic example of ideological statements (from 1990 to 1995) and a mixture of political rationales and academic analyses. It was, however, dominated by pragmatic (political) visions. So far, as an outcome, sports policy produced another major paradox. In contrast to the democratisation project, voluntary sports establishments were not allowed to have say in forming sports policy, and their collective governing body, the BSFS, was dismantled. Greater choice and opportunities for sport were not created either. Guided by political considerations so as not to run counter to the Ministry of Finance’s position about the status of TOTO, the CYPES let the voluntary organisations take the lead in lobbying to preserve this major source of cash for sport in the Gambling Act (1999). Their efforts, and the personal intervention of Bulgarian president, made this strategy a success.
Chapter 7.

Disentangling Strategic Relations in Sport Policy Making: The Cases of Aerobic Union Bulgaria / Jova Sport Fitness Centre and the Bulgarian School Sports Federation
Chapter 7. Case Studies: Aerobic Union and School Sports Federation

7.1. Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 3 (Methodology), the approach undertaken to the case studies presupposed an analysis of Strategic Relations in sport policy to place the focus on the content, process, advocacy and evaluation of the policy process. This enabled the research to examine the conditions, the complexity and the coping strategies of the cases. Previous chapters revealed the key role of the state as generator, promoter and controller of national sport policy. The purpose of this chapter therefore, is to present the uniqueness of the two cases - Aerobic Union Bulgaria and the National School Sport Federation - by placing them in the particular context of the mid 1990s, thus highlighting how and why particular sports policies arise. This will be achieved by developing the structure of the chapter following the path identified by Stake (1995:127) as "description one by one of several major components of the case." First to follow is the case of the Bulgarian Aerobic Union.

7.2. Setting the scene

For the purposes of this analysis, it was essential to provide some background information regarding the diffusion of aerobics in Bulgaria to set the scene for further interpretations. Aerobics emerged and proliferated in Bulgaria after 1982, more that ten years after it became popular in North America and Western Europe. The reasons for this late introduction were not ideological, but rather structural. Elsewhere mass aerobics was largely commercially organised, that is, on a pay-as-you-play basis, and it was one of the fastest growing sectors of the sporting industry. Since there were no similar market preconditions in Bulgaria, the above principle was unacceptable as a foundation for promoting and controlling aerobics nationally. However, the decision to set up a national co-ordinating body was heavily influenced by the participation of Bulgarian experts at a Trim & Fitness conference on the Isle of Man in 1982, where examples of aerobics from around the world were demonstrated, and expertise shared.

In the next six years great efforts were made by the BSFS, the National Sports Academy and the Ministry of Health to develop a national co-ordinated programme, including staff training, research and publications, allocating resources,-setting
standards, organising championships, and promotion aimed at establishing aerobics as a major component of a healthy way of life of young and female Bulgarians.

Given the public character and the authority of the three institutions mentioned, the developments until 1989 helped to legitimise aerobics and the agency dealing with it as in the domain of public policy. Issues concerning different aspects of aerobics were placed regularly on the agendas of these decision-making bodies (BSFS, MH) and discussed at national conferences as hundred thousands of people became involved as participants, instructors, administrators and spectators. Despite the scope and the success of its activity, aerobics was never given the status of an autonomous institution. Instead, it was put in the framework of a National Aerobic Commission within the remit of Sport for All Department as structural element of the BSFS' Central Council.

Due to the political, economic and structural crisis of late 1989, in the next eighteen months the National Aerobic Commission gradually faded away. The BSFS's new strategy for coping with changes envisaged identifying the Union purely with the image and priorities of National Sport Federations, that is, with elite sport, and to separate from Sport for All, encouraging the setting up of new structures. From being a subject of co-ordinated efforts of several national agencies, all of a sudden Sport for All turned into a no man's land. The vacuum produced by the withdrawal of the state and its agencies from providing services to mass sport led in the next three years to a profound restructuring of the Sport for All sector. Notably, it was marked by the emergence of five national agencies - the Aerobic Union, the Sport for All Association, the Veteran Athletes Federation, the Sport for Disabled Federation and the School Sport Federation - which took the responsibility of catering for services previously provided by the BSFS, the Youth Communist League and the Trade Unions.
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7.3. Aerobic Union Bulgaria

The Aerobic Union Bulgaria (AU) was created on 19th April 1991 in Sofia as a non-profit association of amateurs. Nevertheless, it cannot be perceived as the successor to the National Aerobics Commission because there was no continuity - neither assets, charter, programme, structures nor staff were transferred. The new body came into existence as an extension of the private fitness centre Jova BG founded eighteen months earlier by a former world champion and Olympic high jump silver medalist, Mrs Jordanka Blagoeva. Its mission, as one of the first private establishments in the field, was to promote a healthy way of life. Until August 1994 Jova BG and the Aerobic Union ran in parallel, but in fact were difficult to distinguish since even the accountancy of the latter was managed (following a decision of its Management Board) by the former. After that, Jova BG ceased to exist, or rather merged with the AU, having changed the name of the centre to Jova Sport and adopting the slogan - 'Good health is good business'. The range of services offered included classic, step, slide and funk aerobics, body-work, as aerobic school for children, callanetics, stretching, martial arts, and supplementary services such as sun-beds, massage, sauna, hairdresser, shop and snack-bar. Membership of the AU is individual and open to everyone. The members of the Jova Sport fitness centre average some 250 people a month, which makes it very successful. The AU (Jova Sport) does not possess any facilities, but rents a whole wing of one of Sofia’s most prestigious sports halls, Universiade, located centrally and very close to the city’s largest park. Part of the foyers are converted into a permanent shopping centre. All this, together with regular sporting and entertainment events, gives an extra advantage to the promotional strategy of the centre.

The Universiade hall (as a national sport centre) is owned by the Committee for Youth Physical Education and Sport (CYPES) which charges the AU a rent of 550 000 Lv per month, a sum representing over 60% of the CYPES’s contribution to the AU. For nearly four years the AU has not had a fixed budget, that is, activities other than participation in major championships were planned provisionally and with great uncertainty. Firstly, this is due to the volatile economic situation in the country, and secondly, to the criteria set for financing sport - through the state and the commerce.
Sponsors, for example, get no tax relief and so are not stimulated to invest in sport. The peculiarity of this situation will be discussed in the next section.

The AU seeks to pursue four major aims and objectives (AU Charter, 1993:2):

1. to assist in developing and popularising aerobics;
2. to generate and provide information concerning the activity of its members;
3. the Aerobic Union represents and defends the interests of its members in front of the state bodies, local and foreign organisations in order to create equal conditions for realisation of its programmes together with similar organisations;
4. the Aerobic Union assists its members in activities aiming the popularisation and development of aerobics.

AU’s structure is shown in Figure 7.1. It comprises four levels of management, the supreme governing body being the General Assembly (GA). The GA is the decision-making body on matters of overall policy and strategies, as well as the Union’s performance and international links. It holds its meeting every two years. The Management Board is the executive organ composed of seven representatives, including the president and the general secretary. It sits at least once every three months. All posts are subject to election and approval by the General Assembly, but only that of the Secretary General and the technical secretary are paid.

Figure 7.1. Organisational structure of the Aerobic Union Bulgaria
7.4. The politics of aerobics as a social construct and public domain

Because of its broad appeal through fitness, entertainment, fashion values, and worldwide popularity, aerobics easily proved to be an activity contributing to a healthy way of life, and became part of the public domain policy. Aerobics was socially constructed around the idea of promoting physical fitness, and a better quality of life, while legitimately seeking strategies to establish itself both nationally and internationally. Its implications, though, far exceeded the pure health benefits gained by the individual and affected the sports industry and education.

It is necessary for an analysis here to differentiate between aerobics as a domain of public policy before 1989 and after. As discussed, aerobics entered Bulgaria’s sport scene on a mass scale in 1982 as an activity introduced through a decision of the central sports governing body - the BSFS. Subsequently, several other national agencies were involved through joint programmes. The institutionalisation was sanctioned by the state (for which read the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party) and aerobics took off as a popular leisure pursuit. There was no need for international co-operation and approval, or for a mass demand.

With the setting up of the state Committee for Youth Physical Education and Sport (CYPES) in 1992, the domain of sports policy was given a formal framework through the introduction of compulsory legal court registration and licensing granted by the state body. Every sports establishment which could satisfy these requirements was licenced, and entitled to state funding and participation in the national sport movement, subject to a specific contract. The licence and the contract however, do not turn automatically a sport association into a key actor on the sporting scene. These are simply prerequisites, or from the point of view of the state body - the CYPES - filters for reducing and controlling the number of entries in the field.

7.4.1. Becoming a key member in making aerobic policy

Currently, there are over 120 national sports governing bodies in Bulgaria, including 54 single sports federations (NSFs) and other activity/interest associations. Added to this number is the group of the strongest sports clubs/societies which do not operate
on a national level but deliver athletes and competitive results, and consequently have a strong say in policy matters. The forum which is supposed to represent the interests of the national bodies - the Confederation of Sports Federations (CSF) is also refused a licence by the CYPES and so, it cannot voice legitimately their needs and demands to be a partner to the state in the policy bargaining process. This urges individual federations to pursue independent strategies in order to ensure their place at the decision-making table.

In the case of the AU the most effective way to become a member in the making of sport policy, as the General Secretary J. Blagoeva put it, is 'personally'. As an ex-world champion and Olympic medalist she was and is a well-known personality and could have easy access to people and institutions without prior legitimation. However, two particular strategies deserve attention here. They are examined within the framework of actors' individual placement in structures and networks, and AU's structural relations in the sport policy domain.

As pointed out, the AU emerged as an extension of the private fitness centre Jova BG. In 1990 Jova BG competitors took part in the World Aerobics Championships in Tokyo. The success of this event further motivated leaders and sponsors to develop aerobics on a wider scale, and on return to Bulgaria they decided to organise the first national championships. At the time there were no structures or calendar, only an informal network of athletes/instructors and a few officials. Hiring a sports hall to stage the competition proved a burden, as private individuals did not have this right, only institutions. Consequently, the AU was registered and the formal obstacle eliminated.

This move, though, posed the need to pursue two interrelated and equally important strategies - *national* and *international* - both of which would have guaranteed a key place on the sporting scene to the AU. *Nationally*, the AU had to cope with the policies and criteria set by the CYPES. Basically, these aim to promote elitism, and state subsidy is made available against results - i.e., medals and rankings achieved at international competitions. The emphasis on athletes' participation and winning is
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supported by the breakdown of the AU’s 1998 budget, in which 35% of the income comes from the CYPES, 23% from outside sources (e.g. sponsors), and only 19% from services to the public. Subsequently, 75% of the expenditures go on the international sport calendar, the second big item being rent and maintenance costs amounting to 11%.

Internationally, the AU must play an active role within the International Aerobics Federation (IAF), if it wants to gain organisational, promotional and financial privileges. After all, it is on the international stage where the AU’s representatives, the officials and athletes, can to a great extent justify its existence nationally, to obtain state funding and other privileges. This applies particularly to the distribution of the annual Aerobics World Cup/Grand Prix tournaments by the IAF, which come with guaranteed international television coverage and sponsorship, meaning a significant boost and extra revenue for domestic aerobics.

At national level, four important factors - political, economic, organisational and structural - determine the AU’s strategies and success. First is the political environment, dominated by a strong and open anti-Communist stance (according to the CYPES chairman all sports societies and clubs established before 1989 are labelled as ‘incubators for Communist cadres’), and the commitment of the CYPES to the policy of the governing Union of Democratic Forces party (UDF). The following example illustrates this point: in 1996 the functioning of the Jova Sport fitness centre was blocked for two months by the CYPES on the grounds that the AU’s main sponsor -Molov Bank - was alleged to have been ‘a Communist establishment for laundering money’.

Second, the general hostile economic situation - big fluctuations in the currency exchange rate (until 1997, when the Bulgarian currency was tied to the German mark), unfavourable interests on loans, uncertainty of the banking system, high import taxes and rates of payment for electricity, water and heating. Maintenance for sport establishments (offices and facilities) is charged at the highest tariff, as for industry. In order to avoid the unbearable import tax on sports equipment, the AU’s athletes
participating at the 1998 world championships in the USA had to carry back in their personal baggage equipment and apparatus provided by the International Aerobic Federation. The peculiarity of the domestic economic reality even forced the AU to pay Bulgarian Television US$ 500 for 30 minutes highlights of the National Aerobics Championships in 1997, in order to make the sponsorship deal for the event possible.

Organisationally, by Charter the AU is set up as an association of individuals, but the representation in its General Assembly and Management Board is collective, that is, individual members can sit in either of these organs if delegated by a club. At present, there are 47 aerobic clubs across the country affiliated to the AU but fewer than half - 18 (38%) - are licensed, that is, entitled to state subsidy, participation in tournaments and legitimate representation of their members’ interests. In 1997 only 7 clubs based in four big cities - Sofia (3), Plovdiv (2), Varna (1) and Haskovo (1) received state subsidy amounting to 667,111 Lv (DM700), 78% of which was awarded for international achievements. The rest of the clubs did not satisfy the CYPES criteria for resource allocation, and received nothing. The early development of the Aerobic Union outlined above points towards a restricted geography and an unviable network of grass-roots clubs, which must impact on its strategies.

The structural relations of the AU involve transmitting information, exchanging resources, and boundary penetration. There are several essential formal and informal channels through which the AU transmits information. These include the CYPES circulars, regulations and letters as well as reports and questionnaires from the Union; circulars, letters, reports and minutes to/from the BGF, the CSF, the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (BOC), clubs and the IAF. These formal channels ensure the day-to-day operation of the Union and are complemented by some informal but no less important ones, such as lobbying, developing a network of private business contacts and patronage. Examples for networking and patronage are the activities of the President of the AU - Agnesa Ilieva, President of the Doverie (Trust) Privatisation Fund, which creates links with business partners and introduces them to the opportunities offered by the Union for sponsorship and other business deals. Another
is the help from business people who are members of Jova Sport in photocopying, shipping, or internet services in exchange for free access to the Centre.

With regard to the exchange of material resources there are three key sources - the CYPES, the IAF and local sponsors. Despite the criteria for funding allocations established by the CYPES, it is still possible for the AU (as for any other federation) to receive more than what has been planned because the final decision for distribution is taken by the Ministry of Finance (MF) after discussion, and is subject to negotiation. This can be achieved if the Union manages to persuade the CYPES' vice-chairman P. Krastev dealing with the budget to clinch a deal at the final round with the MF Commission, and as he himself admitted this had happened on a number of occasions (interview, 31 August 1998).

Another significant source of income (exchange of resource) is the IAF, which allocates resources in the form of direct or in kind support to national associations. This applies particularly to television rights and sponsorship money for organising major tournaments and workshops. Local sponsors are also important, as they contribute 23% of the 1998 AU budget. Nutrasweet, for example, provided $6,000 cash, while the UFA advertising agency paid for participation in the 1998 World Cup tournament in the USA. In return, the AU offers high quality national and international publicity and business opportunities to the sponsors through well run events and by winning European and world titles.

The third element of structural relations - boundary penetration - deserves more attention as it may determine the outcome of the previous two exchanges. It involves the personal positioning of the AU’s officials in the network of national decision-making bodies, and relationships with other agencies. The driving force of the AU, its Secretary General, holds key positions in four bodies responsible for shaping national sports policy. Mrs Blagoeva is founder and director of Jova Sport, the most important structural element of the AU. She sits also on the Executive Boards of the Confederation of Sports Federations, the Bulgarian Olympic Committee and the International Aerobics Federation, and has direct access to first-hand information and
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the decision-making process. As Secretary General of the Union she enjoys an almost unchallenged privilege to define the agenda of the Executive Board meetings, thus setting priorities and alliances and influencing decisions. It has to be noted, though, that any member or club of the Union is entitled to make proposals for the agenda, but it is the Secretary General who decides on the timing and format of their inclusion.

Structurally, the Aerobic Union shares a unique position with another key actor on the national stage - the Bulgarian Gymnastics Federation (BGF). Ideally, the two bodies should have been perceived as partners, not as opponents. This however, is not the case and although the AU is autonomous and licenced by CYPES, the tensions and complex relationships between the International Gymnastics Federation (IGF) and the International Aerobics Federation (IAF) have had repercussions on the relationships between their national counterparts. Despite an agreement for co-operation signed by these international organisations in July 1997, in the Bulgarian case, the BGF demonstrated complete disregard towards the AU as it did not pass important information and correspondence (sent to the BGF by the IGF but concerning aerobics) regarding rules amendments, seminars, invitations for workshops and competitions and other matters, thus seriously undermining the scope of operation of the AU. It appeared that, the leadership of the BGF is dominated currently by academics from the National Sports Academy (NSA): the Chairman and some key officials are staff of the Department of Gymnastics and they pass correspondence and vital information to the aerobics club NSA, instead of the AU. This state of affairs has become known to the IAF, the CYPES and the BOC, which independently, in special letters to the BGF Chairman, insisted that he should settle the issue, and respect both international agreements and national legislation (letters 444 of 25/5/98 from CYPES, and of 21/5/98 from BOC). This example is indicative for the structural environment and policies which influence the behaviour and strategies of the AU.

7.4.2. Forming aerobic policy

This section looks at the policy process by examining two particular strategies put forward by the Aerobic Union. The first, participation in the 1999 World Cup in Tokyo, concerns the main priority of the Union - the preparation of elite athletes and
their performances. This tournament is of crucial importance to the AU for two reasons: it enables its competitors to win medals and ensure ranking, vital for meeting plan targets that guarantee state subsidy; also it is entered in this event that the IAF Executive Board's decides who will host the 2000 AD Grand Prix tournament, and Sofia was one of the favourite candidates. Clearly, participation will be a test for officials and athletes, and its outcomes will have serious implications for the future of the AU.

The second strategy deals with setting up children's aerobics schools, initially for a period of three years but with prospects for expansion. The basic aim of these schools is to serve as places for talent identification and preparation of athletes for the national team. In addition, their design should enable children to fill their leisure time with fascinating activities by doing aerobics and rehabilitation exercises, learning foreign languages and socialising (AUB, 1997). The first stage of this project envisages establishing schools, each with 26 groups and 150 children aged 8 to 14 years, across the country. As these schools are expected to be self-financing, no major investments are projected on behalf of the AU. It has to be pointed out, though, that the formal decision was made in 1997 the project is still in a embryo, with the problems far exceeding the solutions.

With respect to the process of the AU's policy-making, it can be argued that it is the very nature of its structural and strategic relationships which dictate the recognition of a problem in the first place. It is the Executive Board which formally defines the strategy and then the officials responsible generate choices for its implementation. Given the main aims and objectives of the Union, criteria for gauging its effectiveness, and the structure of its revenues, participation in the Tokyo 1999 World Cup is an inevitable priority. Moreover, it will be an essential part of the efforts to raise the $90,000 cash needed for the AU to cover its 1999 international calendar. This represents 83% of the Union's budget compared to 17% ($18,000) required for the rest of its activities.
It is interesting to note that, in the face of this daunting task, the chosen solution did not include co-operating with the omnipotent state body and the local authority. Quite the opposite: the AU addressed the CYPES and Sofia City Council with a clear statement categorically disengaging them from any financial commitment (in principle, and in staging the 1999 Grand Prix in Sofia in particular), but asking for an understanding in leaving the Union in the premises it currently occupies, and not changing the terms of rental. Similar is the situation with the second strategy - of setting up children’s aerobics schools. There are no planned actions, joint programmes or special budgets in the 1999 plan for implementing them.

More peculiar seems the use of these strategies by the AU not for an immediate gain, but for constructing an argument aimed at committing the state closely to what it plans. Mrs Blagoeva claimed that:

> since the elite performance is at the top of the state (CYPES) priorities, it will do a huge justice to the whole sport movement if all Secretaries General of sport associations are paid by the state. More measures are needed for keeping qualified experts in the country as at present, in gymnastics alone (where most of the aerobics instructors are recruited from) 57 experienced coaches work in the USA. Sponsors also have to receive incentives from the state (interview, 5 August 1998).

This kind of thinking portrays the AU as an extension of state policy and not as an independent body capable of setting its own agenda and pressuring the state to co-operate and facilitate it.

### 7.5. Conclusions

Although the emergence of the Aerobic Union can be attributed to the particular conjunctures of the transitional period, it capitalised successfully on the achievements of its predecessor - the National Aerobics Commission - as it did not have to pursue strategies for legitimation, but that ensured no continuity either. Instead, by promoting predominantly strategies of elitism, the AU shifted drastically the image of aerobics from a mass to an elite and entertaining activity but one still attractive for the general public. It also changed its strategic orientation from a mass to an exclusive provider.
The make up, geography and structural relationships of the AU with intra-state and transnational actors have crucial impacts on the process of policy formulation and the pursuit of specific strategies. Nationally, the relations with the CYPES which set the standards for performance, evaluation and resource allocation were critical. Relations with voluntary bodies (BOC, CNSF) were also important, but the most essential one, with the Gymnastics Federation was marked by tension and lack of co-operation. Central (AU) - local (sports clubs) relations did not have great impact on policy formulation. Personal relations appeared crucial giving access to information, resources, and decision-making bodies. Transnational relations proved also vital as they ensured access to major international events and sponsors.

Problem recognition, generating choices for solution, placing the problems on the decision-making body’s agenda and making authoritarian decisions appear to be more under the firm control of the Union executives, and less from its collective organs. This poses an issue about the importance of individual actors’ positions in the policy network and diminishes the role of the agency per se as representing its members’ voices. The implications of such a scenario are threefold: (i) encouraging the pursuit of strategies with a very narrow and short term focus, (ii) preventing the Union addressing the key issue of the relationships between the state and the voluntary sector in sport, and (iii) perpetuating the leading role of the Bulgarian state as the supreme regulator of sport.

The final observation concerns the relationships between the newly emerging private and voluntary sectors in sport. It appeared that the present political and economic environments do not stimulate private initiatives by offering structural privileges. The voluntary (civil) sector has better chances to promote its cause and to play a role in the making of aerobics policy.
7.6. The Case of the National School Sports Federation - Setting the scene

The unfolding of the National School Sports Federation’s (SSF) case will follow the same logic of analysis as for the Aerobic Union. Thus, in order to examine the SSF’s strategic relations and coping strategies, it is necessary to provide background information. School sport was undoubtedly the first clearly identified area of state intervention in setting policies in the field of sport dating back to the early 1880s. Since then, with no exceptions, every state and sport administration has expressed concern about pupils’ health and fitness, and has tried to promote different strategies to tackle these issues.

Historically, school sport has always been within the remit of the Ministry of Education (ME), assisted during different periods by voluntary (quasi-voluntary), public and private agencies. However, due to the Ministry’s organisational structure, which does not contain specialised local bodies (usually only Physical Education experts at district level), the credit for providing services to this group has often been given to the front line partner agencies working in/with schools and students. This specificity, together with society’s sensitivity about students’ well-being, helped to legitimise both national associations and local sport clubs operating in this area.

In a similar way to the Aerobic Union, the SSF emerged as one of the new voluntary agencies after the politico-economic crisis in 1989. In 1992 the Sport for All department of the BSFS responsible for delivering out-of-school sport activities ceased to exist, causing serious disturbances in the provision of school sport for more than a year. This transformation affected all 4,012 schools and 1,212,000 pupils aged 7-19 in the country.

Before 1989 there were 585 centres (outside schools) for child and adolescent sport, aiming to identify talent at an early age and to nurture the elite sport system. In addition, there were more than 1,000 school sport sections, responsible for the regular participation of 50% of all school age boys and girls. The target for involvement set by the BSFS in 1982 envisaged to increase this to 65-70% by 1988. According to
official statistics for the same year, nearly 70% of the pupils have reached the standards for basic physical fitness of the National Fitness Complex (BSFS, 1982).

Issues concerning pupils' health and fitness have been regularly placed on the agenda of various responsible national agencies, including the Ministries of Health (MH), Education (ME) and Defence (MD), youth organisations (Branik and Youth Communist League), and sport unions. A voluminous body of programmes and initiatives promoting different strategies have been produced as well. It has to be noted, though, that despite variations in ideological rationale, all major national programmes have tried to place school sport within a broader concept, like enhancing pupils' patriotism, obedience to the motherland, military preparation, good citizenship, or health and fitness. School sport, therefore, has been seen by different strategies rather as an instrument for achieving external objectives than as means of the self-expression, development and fulfilment of individual youngsters.

7.7. The National School Sports Federation

The National School Sports Federation (SSF) was created on 15th January 1993 as an independent non-profit voluntary organisation based in Sofia. Its mission is to preserve and continue the traditions of school sport, and to create conditions for pupils' involvement in sport by establishing a working partnership between the state (CYPES, ME, MH, and MD) and voluntary agencies (the BSFS, the BOC, the Sport for All Association-SfAA), school authorities, parents, pupils and experts. In this respect, the emergence of the SSF can be considered both as an extension of the efforts of previous administrations, and as an attempt to ascribe a leading and co-ordinating role to a voluntary body for matters concerning the state's social policy.

More specifically, the SSF's main concern from the outset was the organisation of the National School Sports Games (NSSG), which had ceased to exist between 1988 and 1993. The idea of these Games is to encourage as many pupils as possible to get involved in regular competitive activities and to provide a forum for schools' teams to perform in regional, national and international competitions. The SSF's headquarters shares a small office with the editor-in-chief of the Sport & Science Journal in the
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premises of the CYPES. As it has no access to a telephone and very limited use of fax (because of the CYPES' terms for rent), the day-to-day operations are carried out with great difficulties, which lessens their efficiency.

The membership in the SSF is collective, and any school sports club can become a member. There are about 135 member clubs at present but as no membership fee or any other form of feedback is required, the actual number of affiliated clubs and their profiles remains an estimate. The School Sports Federation has never had a budget as such. All the cash received is provided purposefully for organising the NSSG, and only a small contribution, equal to one and a half months minimal salary is set aside to pay for the Executive Director’s job, and for the bare minimum of stationary and postage. The organisational structure of the SSF (Figure 7.2) is almost identical to that of the Bulgarian Aerobic Union.

Figure 7.2. National School Sports Federation - organisational structure

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General Assembly
  Management Board
    President
      Executive Director

School Club  School Club  School Club  total 135 Clubs
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From a management perspective this structure involves one strategic decision-making body (the General Assembly) and three executive organs accountable to it. The General Assembly gathers once every two years to discuss long and medium term policies, but the real driving force is the Management Board. By constitution it must have at least six meetings a year. The Board consists of thirteen members - seven school teachers, two experts, two directors of sports schools, one director of a school (as chairman), one academic, and the executive director - the only paid staff of the Federation. It's concern is to implement short and medium term strategies as well as to develop long term policies. Its composition appears to be strictly expert, as no
people from other areas are included, which poses questions about SSF's proclaimed aims for wider co-operation and partnership. President of the SSF from its creation is Mr. Stoyan Tonchev, director of a High School in Sofia.

7.8. The school sports policy as a social construct and public domain

From a state perspective, sport has always been thought of as a major contributing factor for building young people's character, their military training and obedience as citizens, or as a means of enhancing health and preventing delinquent behaviour. These underlying assumptions have served to construct an area of public concern of great priority, and to legitimise the agencies dealing with the issues. With regard to school sport, or more specifically the curricular activities, though the only agency authorised to deliver them has been the Ministry of Education. Thus, other organisations providing sport services could only do so in out-of-school programmes, but these still have to be sanctioned by the ME, particularly if they involve large populations on a regular basis, and the use of school premises. This suggests that legitimation for non-state organisations on the school sports scene can be successfully achieved only if approved by the state agency. At the same time the state agencies, due to limited human and material resources, need voluntary bodies and their grass-root structures as direct providers of physical activities. Thus, the co-operation between different actors' interests is embedded and presupposed.

At present, the provision of sport for school children is viewed by the Council of Ministers' conception for a system of physical education and sport in Bulgaria (CYPES, 1996) as part of the overall physical, intellectual and emotional development of individuals. More specifically, sport is expected to contribute to improving young people's fitness and opportunities for realisation in life; to serve as a basic factor for recruiting talented children, and preventing youngsters from committing crime and other offences, as well as offering normative regulation concerning physical abilities of young recruits for military service, as set out by the Ministry of Defence. This detailed and instrumental vision of sport demanded very little improvisation on behalf of the SSF in order to comply and legitimise itself.
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Here, of course, the long tradition of collaboration between the ME and the BSFS (between 1957 and 1989), comes into play ensuring continuity in terms of strategic objectives, resources and staff. The people who now run the affairs of school sport both in the ME and the SSF are pretty much the same ones who used to do it ten or fifteen years ago. Finally, the process of defining school sport as a public domain was put in the framework of a licencing and contractual scheme by the CYPES (Contract No 024, 27/3/98), binding the SSF to receive state funding against particular services, as is now common in the OECD states in government agency relations. The next sections will look at the struggle of the SSF to be a key player in school sport policy domain, and the strategies it is trying to pursue.

7.9. Becoming a key member in the making of sport policy

The School Sports Federation emerged on a much contested terrain, having to compete in asserting its structural and subject position: structurally, alongside 54 national sport federations and several dozens associations, all claiming responsibility and targeting the school age group in their activities. In an attempt to secure a place on the policy scene and legitimise itself, the obvious strategy for the SSF was to capitalise on the traditions and promises of continuity, and to adopt a complex co-ordinated approach to school sport, a responsibility which no other body could have assumed. Of course, of crucial importance was the partnership with the Ministry of Education, as well as with the CYPES and other sport organisations.

Two other significant steps in cementing the SSF’s role on the national sporting scene were: to take membership first of the National Council for Physical Education, Sport and Tourism (NCPEST) under the chairmanship of the Minister of Education, and second of the International School Sport Federation (ISF), ensuring its position as the only legitimate representative of school sport nationally and internationally. Furthermore, the SSF was affiliated to the BOC, and was a founding member of the Sport for All Association. Within a relatively short time, these developments helped to shape its profile as a unique co-ordinating body for out-of-school sport, and "as a structure which assists the ME for practical realisation of out-of-class sport activities" (SSF Annual Report, 1993/4:6).
The strategies pursued by the SSF are largely determined by a number of political, economic, organisational and structural factors. Politically, the SSF is treated by the licensing body - the CYPES - within a dichotomy of a totalitarian (Communist)-democratic organisation. As the Chairman of the Federation did not have a sporting past, in the spotlight of ideological scrutiny is its executive director, who had had a long career in the Youth Communist League and BSFS sport departments (both considered by the CYPES as pillars of the totalitarian system). The working relationships between the CYPES and the SSF to a great extent depend on loyalty to and support for the state policy promoted by the former, and would not tolerate any form of contestation by the latter. This situation, coupled with the philosophy cited above, automatically presented the SSF as an extension of the state agency and jeopardised its autonomy.

From an economic perspective, the SSF, despite its market potential, also experiences the backlash of the volatile financial and banking system, in addition to the hostile commercial sponsorship environment, contributing to its total financial dependence on the state. Unlike the Aerobic Union, the SSF could not benefit from lucrative commercial deals, such as sponsorship or television rights money. The overall cash burden is eased, however, by occasional successful local sponsorship deals, which make the grass-roots school sport calendar happen.

Organisationally, as its constitution suggests, it is an umbrella governing body set up to represent its members' interests. With some 135 affiliated school sport clubs at present, accounting for only 2.5% of schools and 3.3% of pupils in the country, it is difficult to substantiate SSF's major claims. Although the National School Sports Games (NSSG) with their three-tiered structure of competition (local, regional and national) aimed to involve as many pupils as possible in regular activities, the scope of sports on offer is confined to eight traditional sports - athletics, basketball, handball, volleyball, football, tennis, chess and badminton. In the 1995 Games aerobics, wrestling and chess were also included but the Management Board decided to drop them from the programme in future, due to the lack of interest (though it might be said to be naive to have expected full-scale response in a single year). Thus,
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It appears that the SSF caters for some 2,000 athletes aged 11 to 18 (1,200 competing at regional and 812 at national level). Other sports such as skate boarding, roller blading, martial arts, mountain biking or body building which have become part of youth culture and recently have enjoyed great popularity have not been considered in the SSF-ME development plans.

The fourth factor determining the SSF's strategies is its structural relations in transmission information, exchanging resources and boundary penetration. For running the SSF's affairs on a daily basis, the most essential are the formal and informal two-way channels with the CYPES and the ME. These include circulars, regulations, letters, reports, contracts and questionnaires, as well as personal contacts. It has to be noted that on a personal level, there is a truly professional and tolerant relationship established between the CYPES', ME's and SSF's key officials. Other sources for transmission involve sports clubs (SSG rules and regulations and letters - downward and upward), National Sport Federations (letters and meetings - horizontal), and the ISF (letters, reports, applications-upward and downward). The SSF has no or very little communications with its clubs. Virtually all messages to the grassroots were transmitted by the ME, which is indicative for the degree of penetration into a government agency but also, for the lack of such penetration in its own structures and resources.

With regard to exchanging material resources, there are the same two crucial sources - the CYPES and the ME. As pointed out, the SSF does not have any assets and is fully subsidised by these two state agencies. 50% (13,000,000 Lv) of the SSF's 1998 total revenue and 100% ($5,350) of its budget for international competitions/meetings (including the $750 ISF membership fee) is provided specifically by the CYPES; 38% come from the ME, 10% from the Football Union for the final round of SSG, and a negligible 2% from other sources (basically from interest). On the expenditure side, 92% (24,000,000 Lv) of the budget is spent for organising the School Sport Games finals, and 8% to pay for the administrative costs of the Federation (SSF, 1998). The 1998 financial situation just replicates the picture established from the onset of the SSF in 1993.
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The ISF does not provide any financial or in kind support for its members. Instead, in 1994, after having complied with all requirements for participation in the World Schools Volleyball championships in France, including investments for preparation and travel arrangements, the ISF permitted the host country's decision at the last minute to refuse Bulgaria's SSF (and other countries) teams' participation due to the limited capacity of the tournament.

Structural relations' third element, that of boundary penetration, reveals the degree of dependence and the ability of SSF to position itself on the national sports policy scene. From a structural point of view, regardless of its claims for co-operation and partnership with other agencies, the SSF seems to be a rather introverted organisation, as no representatives from any public, voluntary or private agency sit on its governing body. The only exception is an independent academic on the Management Board. The SSF, though, is a collective member of the Bulgarian Olympic Committee, the Sport for All Association and NCPEST. Lately, there has been a growing disagreement with the SfAA's policy and authoritarian leadership, and effectively, the SSF is not an active member any longer. As SSF could not be a factor in implementing the national Olympic programme, its links with the BOC are based on an ad hoc partnership in running one or two Sport for All events annually (e.g. The Olympic Day Run), subsidised by the International Olympic Committee. There is also no real co-operation with another important agency - the National Centre for Children - which provides a vast range of services and programmes, including sport and tourism, and has structures in all district centres.

For the SSF, the most important relationship is with the NCPEST chaired by the Minister of Education. This is a consultative body aiming to drawing policy guidelines and standards for in-and-out-of-school physical education, sport and tourism, to be later transmitted in practical policies by the Ministry of Education and co-operating agencies. This is the highest forum where the SSF can raise strategic issues and seek solutions, though as the next section will demonstrate, what has been put on the agenda so far suggests that these issues would have fitted better a trades union portfolio, than that of a voluntary sport organisation's profile. Nevertheless, this
membership guarantees SSF a legitimate position in the sport policy making process and an opportunity to voice its concerns as well as form alliances and promote strategies.

International relations are not as vital as domestic ones for the SSF compared to the BAU, despite a clear consciousness that the former could promote a positive image both at home and abroad. The Federation is a full member of the ISF, and took part in its 1998 General Assembly in China. In addition, one representative sits on the ISF’s basketball technical commission, and there is a trend for increased participation of school teams in international competitions. Although being recognised by the IOC and with potential for growth, the ISF remains within a limited scope of operations and financial power, so it could not be yet a decisive force in dictating national school sport policies.

7.10. Forming school sports policy

This section examines the formation of school sport policy by using strategies promoted through the School Sport Federation’s programme for 1998-2000. The aim of this programme is to unite the efforts of all interested parties in “creating conditions for harmonic physical development of the students, for enhancing their physical fitness, developing physical qualities, skills and habits for realisation in life” (SSF, 1998a:2). The objectives include promoting school sport, setting up grass-root structures, effective use of sports facilities, and integration with the ISF.

In order to achieve its programme’s aims and objectives, the SSF is pursuing three distinct strategies. These strategies, as well as the agenda of the Management Board (MB), are largely determined by the Executive Director, Miss Radka Valkova, who exercises almost unchallenged freedom over policy orientation. As she admitted “the General Assembly is a pro-forma body and it is all down to my and the Chairman’s understanding and enthusiasm” (interview, 10 September 1998). Thus, her attitudes, professional qualities and interests become a strategic resource. For example, nothing in the 1998 MB six meetings’ agendas pointed towards a discussion and search for long term solutions on crucial strategic issues. The 16 items (roughly 3 per meeting)
included for consideration were almost identical and revolved around technicalities about the School Sport Games. No policy document was planned for development and pursuit, or for evaluation or adjustment of the 1998-2000 programme.

For the first strategy, the SSF uses its position in the NCPEST to place on the agenda several strategic issues concerning pupils' physical education assessments, teachers' and pupils' insurance, and physical education teachers' job specifications. Clearly, these are all of significance for successfully implementing school sport policies, but have very little to do with the responsibility of SSF as a voluntary body, and its mission to support pupils' and clubs' participation. The Ministry of Education's position on these matters is rather ambivalent. It heavily supports the SSG, but is reluctant to demand greater involvement by physical education teachers in out-of-school activities as no cash or other incentives are in place. The SSG does not have control over communications with schools, and is in the dark about how they are notified regarding invitations to the Games, and rules and regulations. Furthermore, as the school sports clubs are not licenced by the CYPES, they do not qualify for subsidy from the national totalizer, yet another issue the SSF will try to address. The lack of effective leverage for influencing policy orientation could have easily turned SSF's claims into populist statements, and poses a big question mark over this strategy, and demands its re-evaluation.

The second strategy pursued by the SSF concerns the organisation of the School Sport Games and the struggle to ensure the best level of support from the CYPES. This is secured by a means of an annual contract with the state like those for the voluntary agencies, an approach considered by the former as democratic and professional. The 1998 contract consists of a single clause binding the SSF to organise the final stage of the SSG and to present a financial report in return for a state subsidy amounting to 22,000,000 Lv (DM 22,000). It is not a subject of discussion and negotiation, rather a case of 'use it, or you lose it'. Similarly to the first strategy, the SSF does not have effective ways to intervene with the state agency, and will gladly accept any contribution.
The third strategy is also aimed at promoting SSG, but through the integrated efforts of two national voluntary agencies, a local authority, and commercial sponsors. The finals of the football tournament for 11-15 year olds became a crossing point of different interests. The SSF was aided greatly by the Bulgarian Football Union (BFU), the city council of Elin Pelin, two local businesses - the ‘Izida’ and ‘Shamot’ factories, and the ‘Phenomenon’ publishing house. The event was attended by the president of the country, by politicians and by football celebrities. It turned into a massive local festival, and paved the way for a model of a successful partnership to be replicated elsewhere. In this case the alliance was formed on the principle ‘national product-local delivery’, that is, the national agencies had the product (football finals) but lacked the delivery system, and managed to capitalise on the local demand for exposure and promotion of the city. The most powerful voluntary sport governing body, the BFU (which does not get a single penny from the state), and the heavy financially dependent SSF teamed up alongside a local authority and commercial businesses for mutual benefits.

7.11. Conclusions

For the six years of its existence, the School Sports Federation has established itself as a credible body capable of running out-of-school activities on a national scale. The Federation’s profile, however, is not clearly voluntary because of its political and financial dependence on the state. This subordinate position cannot be read simply as a new form of corporatism, as according to its classical definition, the participating parties do have say in policy formulation and their identity is preserved, while still cooperating with the state for mutual benefits. These considerations have determined to a great extent the behaviour and strategies pursued by the SSF. Another contributing factor is the massive gap between the SSF’s proclaimed mission and its practical policies. The latter are rather a mixture of general political aims (enhancing pupil’s well-being), instrumental objectives (assisting the ME), trade unions’ demands (improving physical educators’ status), and needs serving (assisting school sport clubs). Together, these factors define the main strategies pursued by the SSF as short term ones.
Vital for the SSF are the intra-state relations, and specifically with two state agencies - the CYPES and the ME as they provided the contractual framework determining its activities and 100% of resources. Regular organisational relations with voluntary sports governing bodies (sports federations) on national level were also essential, but no links were established with private agencies. Loosely defined relations with local structures (sports clubs) did not have impact on shaping SSF’s policy, in terms of promoting issues on the agenda, and holding the Federation accountable. Personal (good professional) relations between SSF and state agencies’ officials proved important for running school sport’s affairs on daily basis. Transnational relations had no serious effect on forming school sports policy, but served to legitimise SSF domestically and internationally.

With regard to resource mobilisation, the crucial criteria appear to have been the state managers’ ideological commitment and their interpretation of the strategic aims that the SSF should promote. Furthermore, the SSF lacks a well-developed social base - a clubs network and management structure - which could have guaranteed the independence and the success of its strategies. As result of the combined effect of a whole range of influences, the SSF is implementing strategies portraying it as an extension of state policy, (a CYPES department) not as a watch-dog representing the interests of its members. This strategy of complying with the state’s visions has been successful nonetheless, because so far it has guaranteed secure access to state resources and limited privileges at no cost.

**7.12. Strategic Relations and policy making - summing up the lessons from the two cases**

The analysis of the strategic relations in the two cases discussed in this chapter -the Aerobic Union Bulgaria (AU) and School Sports Federation (SSF) - allows several conclusions to be drawn. Both bodies emerged as result of recent transformations in Bulgarian society in order to operate in an area of public concern dominated by the state, and successfully capitalised on the experiences of their predecessors. The process of legitimising the AU and the SSF followed two different paths - of continuity, in the case of SSF, and of discontinuity in the case of AU. The two lines of
development, however, led to a general shift of focus of these agencies, from a mass to an elite orientation, which has had an impetus on their strategies.

Five key reasons explain the line of continuity in the domain of school sport:

- the historically prominent presence of the Ministry of Education during all three periods;
- pupils’ health and fitness was always an issue of great public concern;
- school sport had never been seen as a product for sale and profit, but rather as a territory with a firm state commitment;
- school sports structures and participants, and their control are in the remit of the Ministry of Education;
- the SSF is another non-profit making contractual partner to the Ministry of Education (previously BSFS) for delivering particular services.

Five reasons help us to comprehend the line of discontinuity in the domain of aerobics:

- the lack of centralised state support, structures and control (notably in the case of the BSFS’s backed Aerobics Commission);
- participation in aerobics is a matter of choice and not a compulsory element of school or adult education curricula;
- aerobics is offered as a product for sale, and its provision is organised as a profitable service, or at least on a self-supporting base;
- the state has no commitments to make provision even, when it benefits from the international success;
- linking up private interests with a voluntary body’s role in a straightforward manner was not possible in the two previous periods.

The existence and effectiveness of both organisations largely depended on the policies and standards set by the state. The state clearly offered certain structural and financial privileges within the ideological framework of a new democratic policy, in return for gaining much-needed social support, but also at the cost of giving up organisational independence. Compliance with the state’s prescribed rules and norms would
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guarantee access to resources and key actors, while failure to do so would result in exclusion from the policy domain.

In its attempt to regulate the sport policy scene, the Bulgarian state acts selectively by granting privileges to voluntary and depriving private actors. There are virtually no private providers of aerobics and school sport, with very limited sponsorship in the latter, mainly in the form of patronage on local and national levels. The structural and financial benefits offered by the state affect severely the grass-root structures of the two organisations. Due to the elitist criteria for performance and evaluation, their clubs receive no financial or other support, which in turn limits their organisational capacity and prevents them from becoming active members of the policy-making domain. Subsequently, this shapes the relations between central and local, that is, SSF, AU and sports clubs in a 'top-to-bottom' manner, and presents the two national agencies as driven by key individuals' interests and visions, and not as transparent, responsive and accountable to their members.

The AU and the SSF’s structural relations included (i) transmission of information, (ii) resources transactions, and (iii) boundary penetration. With regard to transmission of information, there appeared to be three crucial channels - with CYPES, the ME (in the case of SSF) and with the IAF (in the case of AU), highlighting the significance of state and international agencies. The transaction of resources involved chiefly the same agencies - the CYPES, ME and IAF, and commercial sponsorship in the case of the AU. As for boundary penetration, the two governing structures displayed themselves as rather introverted bodies, because virtually no outsiders sat on the executive organ of either. The managers of these bodies, though, were well positioned in the domain and had access to the executive boards of other organisations and to the decision making process.

In an environment shaped by an authoritative state’s ideology and norms, with ill-organised voluntary bodies lacking mass local support, individual agents and managers emerge as the most valuable asset of these organisations. They play a vital role in directing national sport governing bodies’ policy, and in forming strategic
alliances. Personal accounts and practices of the AU’s and SSF’s key officials, as well as of the vice-chairman of the CYPES state agency revealed the importance of their positioning on the national and international sport scene, and of their personal interests and visions in pursuing different strategies.

However, it is not only the state which is selective. The two voluntary organisations displayed great similarities in their selectiveness as well. No serious attempts have been made so far to press ahead these strategies aimed at developing a solid social base - a national network of clubs, serving as a guarantee for being able to pursue less state dependent policies, in creating a clear market or a membership orientation through introducing of new attractive sports (SSF) or services (AU). It appeared that in a self-perpetuated, elitist organisation it is safer to adopt a practical orientation by following state established standards and benchmarks instead of displaying a degree of discontent by struggling to promote the blurred interests of the large fluid group of its members.

Finally, both the AU and the SSF have displayed different degrees of dependence and relationships with their respective international governing bodies, but these only have confirmed the significance of global interconnectedness. The case of the AU asserted that strategies pursued through the IAF can guarantee vital structural and financial privileges equal or exceeding those offered by the national state. This cements the organisation’s position both nationally and internationally, and lessens its dependence on the state. The School Sport Federation’s links with the ISF are less binding, but nonetheless occupy a central place in its international strategy because 100% of the Federation’s international budget is spent on taking part in ISF events. It can be concluded then, that the more spectator - and market-driven an international sport governing body is, the greater its influence over member countries’ strategies, regardless of a state dominated environment and these bodies’ lack of similar orientation.
Chapter 8.

Globalisation, State Responses and Sport Policy Making
This chapter sets out to investigate the transnational linkages and responses to global circumstances in sport policy making of state and core sports actors. As will be revealed, interests, power and strategic relations in both the global and sport orders are not fixed, but are ever changing, particularly in a country undergoing such transformations as Bulgaria. The chapter will pursue the following specific objectives:

i) Examining the changing state's position and interconnectedness in the post-communist transition;

ii) Analysing the state's responses to globalisation and their implications for sport policy;

iii) Investigating strategic relations in the global - national sport nexus.

8.1. The State and global interconnectedness

From a global perspective, it is important to analyse the democratic period of sport policy making for two reasons. First, as previous chapters have demonstrated, the state's social and economic policy was heavily dependent on other nations' interests and policies. The recent transformations challenged these strategic relations and set a new environment which, contrary to the old 'socialist community', involved more interconnectedness and no single centre of power and supreme interests. This situation, which is also referred to as the 'post-Cold War' global order, raised several concerns regarding the protection of Bulgaria's territorial and economic integrity and its political independence.

The events of 1989 did not pose any immediate threat to Bulgaria's territory, but the disintegration of neighbouring Yugoslavia certainly provoked opportunities for reopening the Macedonian issue, including negotiations for its partition between its neighbours. This opportunity, however, was categorically ruled out by all. Thus, Bulgaria was the first to recognise the four former Yugoslav republics - Macedonia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15 January 1992) - even before the population of these countries voted for separation from Yugoslavia. Bulgaria's president Zhelev (1998:159) also successfully lobbied his Turkish counterpart Demirel, who promised support, and in the beginning of February the same year
Turkey recognised Macedonia. This was an important step for strengthening state relations in the Balkans.

Another internationally co-ordinated action - NATO's current (1999) military intervention in Yugoslavia - confronted Bulgaria with an uneasy choice. Following a formal demand from NATO's Secretary General, Solana, in October 1998, Bulgaria agreed in principle to offer its air space for the pact's planes in exchange of guarantees of security of its national territory and sovereignty. According to the state's political strategy, Bulgaria's security is viewed first as part of a stable Balkans, second as part of a unified Europe, and third in a global context. As will be shown, similar priorities are being promoted in sport policy, and relations between sports organisations of the Balkan countries are being used as an important means in that respect. A novelty urged by the global circumstance is that, for the first time in country's recent history, the symbolic meaning of the national territory was extended to include the idea of Bulgaria as a moral and material bulwark of Bulgarians around the world. This was a strategy aiming at consolidating Bulgarian communities in various parts of the world around the notion of motherhood, by encouraging their political and economic participation in reintegrating the country into the new post-Communist global order.

The second state concern regarded its political independence. As Jackson & James (1993:10) asserted:

the principal value of a state system is the political freedom of its component parts... States do not wish to be told, lectured, hectored, badgered, bullied, or otherwise pushed around by other states concerning what they should or should not do within their own jurisdictions.

This is what the society was led to believe was happening during the totalitarian period but, as the rest of this section will argue, political independence is a difficult project to achieve without giving up part of it. This is so particularly if a state aspires to be integrated in a structured community with well defined core players, such as the European Union.
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The Europeanisation project proved appealing, though, with various degrees of consensus from all Bulgarian political parties, which campaigned for joining European political structures. These efforts materialised in May 1992 and October 1993 when Bulgaria was accepted in the Council of Europe and associated in the European Union respectively. In 1994 it also joined NATO's project 'Partnership for Peace' and submitted an official application for membership of the pact in February 1997.

The search for political independence, which represented a transition from a single to several transnational linkages had two important implications for state apparatuses and managers. Firstly, the state apparatus' ability to exercise control over state relations with other states involved in international conflicts was seriously undermined. Two prime examples illustrate the point. The United Nations Security Council's Resolution (661 of 3/8/1990) regarding Iraq's invasion of Kuwait bound Bulgaria to observe a total multinational embargo imposed on Iraq, which resulted in an indefinite loss of $1.2 billion owed to Bulgaria by this country and repayable with petrol. In addition, $160 million losses in 1990 alone were incurred as result of engineering projects, trade and transport services which did not materialise in Iraq and Kuwait. A similar situation but with further adverse international and domestic implications was repeated during the 1991-4 Yugoslav wars. The embargo affected all formal political, economic, and sports links. Besides the state's material losses from trade and transport which, for the first three days of the NATO's attacks in Kosovo alone (25, 26 and 27 March 1999) amounted to DM 6.84 million (£2.3m, Monitor, 30/3/99), a negative image of the region was also created, discouraging foreign investors and businesses ($620 million for 1998 - only half of that planned for the country, BFIA, 1999). In addition, a climate of corruption and clientelism also proliferated as opinion polls constantly put customs officers, judges, police and business people at the top of the corruption table (Sova 5, 3/99).

Second, joining the civilised Europe project was used by state managers and party leaders as a pretext for lessening their accountability to members and society. Faced with the demands to join European structures, they all appealed for short term
sacrifices on the part of society in the name of long term gains. But with an average
government tenure of 13 months (in 1989-1999) indicating political instability, state
management positions were used quite clearly for pursuing group or personal
interests.

The state’s third major concern was preserving its economic integrity. The
disintegration of the socialist economic system posed enormous burdens on the
Bulgarian economy and its restructuring on market principles. Two sets of
circumstances deserve attention here - the country’s foreign debt and the global
economy of ideas. Bulgaria set out on the road to Europe with a foreign debt totalling
$10 billion, 85% of which was to commercial banks. Its debt-service ratio of 77 (all
interest and amortisation on medium-and long-term debt as a percentage of one year’s
exports) in 1990 was the highest in Europe (Baylis, 1994: 158). With fading traditional
trade links and falling industry output (1987-1997 annual average contraction of
6.2%), the state suspended repayments of principal on its debt in March 1990. Unlike
Poland, where foreign borrowings were mostly from Western governments (the Paris
Club) which decided in 1991 to forgive 50% of them, the London Club (the private
creditors) did not offer a similar privilege to Bulgaria. Furthermore, one of the
prominent features of economic sovereignty - the national currency - was tied to the
German mark and a Currency Board introduced in 1997. Subsequently, between 1992
and 1998, foreign investment in the country was led by Germany amounting to
$324.58 million (16.05% of total, BFIA, 1999) and followed a similar pattern in
mutual trade worth DM2.440 million in 1998, indicating a renewed interest in the
country.

Since 1990 two United Nations’ agencies - The International Monetary Fund (IMF)
and the World Bank (WB) - became pivotal in shaping the national economy and
social policy when Bulgaria joined these institutions for the first time. The IMF loans
aimed to bring the budget into balance and to stabilise the currency while imposing
austerity measures. The WB loans were tied to more specific projects and purposes
whose conditions were subject of detailed negotiations. In both cases the loans granted
were conditional and implied dirigiste measures such as wage freezes, simultaneously
tying the state to promise firm economic and social actions. The IMF loans to Bulgaria in 1991 were $634 million (which was spent mostly on servicing the foreign debt) and the World Bank country's portfolio in 1999 comprised 11 projects under implementation (in agriculture, industry and trade) worth $449.5 million (Reuters, 17/3/999). The latter, however, have been delayed until the government met the reform targets.

The role of the World Bank in shaping Eastern European countries' social policy, as Deacon and Hulse (1997:54-8) argued, is even more crucial. In the Bulgarian case, it concerned pensions, family allowances, unemployment benefits and safety nets, and included very specific instruments of intervention such as memoranda, studies and recommendations, rehabilitation and structural adjustment loans and supervision. Essential in this respect, as the authors claimed, was also the role of the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which offered advice, regulation, provision and redistribution through programmes such as DEMOSTHENES and PHARE (with clear implications for sport). Elsewhere, Deacon (1995) stressed the importance of supranationalisation of social policy instruments, policy and provision, and the role of advice, regulation of economic activity and redistribution of resources from one country to another, offered by these supranational agencies to national governments for achieving welfare objectives.

Another critical aspect of the state's economic integrity as discussed in the section on globalisation (2.5.2), concerned the role of Bulgaria in a world dominated by an economy of ideas - communications, informational technologies and electronic entertainment. The demands faced here by the state and elite sport in particular are immense, although the official share of these sectors in the volume of foreign investments for the period 1992-98 was rather modest, comprising 1.87% of the total. Bulgaria was at the top of the list of illegal producers of electronic entertainment (videos, cassettes, games and CDs) in Europe, and was amongst the 25 countries with disloyal trade practices put on the '301 black list' by the USA government (the 1995 Jackson-Vannick amendment to the USA Trade Law giving trade privileges).
According to the Business Software Alliance's office in Bulgaria (BSA - an organisation associating 1400 software companies in America), 97% of all computer products used were illegal, contributing to total global losses of $2.7 billion for the BSA in 1998 (Sega, 18/2/99). An prominent feature of the economy of ideas is the intellectual property rights which are protected by international laws. In 1992 and 1994 respectively Bulgaria ratified international conventions and took the responsibility for regulating this business. A major step in this direction was the contract signed between the government and Microsoft, Apple, Simantech and Novel in December 1998 binding the state administration to legalise its software and to introduce a proper regime in this area. In an attempt to stimulate this process, Microsoft also offered a 60% rebate on the basic price of all its software products until 31st May 1999. Bulgaria’s intellectual property policy is subject to scrutiny by trade representatives of the USA government carried out each year in order to determine American economic policy about the country.

Transnational loans, investments, trade and ideas, though not always clear-cut, had significant effects on state apparatuses. These effects were not unilateral, that is, either undermining or strengthening the state power, rather they had double-edged consequences, and challenged the state’s authority (CE, EU and NATO interventions), competence (WB and IMF measures), form (the Europeanisation project) and legitimacy (the ability to make decisions concerning its territory), as will be discussed in the next section.

8.2. Transnational linkages and state responses

Increased transnational linkages urged the Bulgarian state to intervene in various areas of politics, economy and social affairs, thus diminishing or enhancing existing alliances and relations, or establishing new ones. Several state responses to transnational linkages discussed in previous section and their implications for state-society strategic relations will be considered here.

Table 8.1 shows foreign direct investment in the country by sectors from 1992-98. This represents for industry over half (53.6%) of total investments, followed by trade
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(at 20.7%). The investments in these two sectors however, have an ambiguous nature, as they reflect the contradictions encountered by the transnational agencies which made them, for example, EU for Europe and IMF for USA. While the IMF sponsored investments and loans directly strengthened the role of the state as supreme overseer, the EU’s (PHARE in particular), or the EC’s (OUVERTÜRE) projects involved primarily small private actors and local authorities, enhancing their positions both locally and nationally. This was confirmed by the investment programme of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) for 1998, and by the EU three year PHARE programme (2000-3) envisaging ECU300 million each year for transport, agriculture and ecology. Twenty two out of a total of 28 EBRD projects amounting to ECU 1.263 million were earmarked for private businesses (mainly finance and agriculture) (EBRD, 30/9/98), and 75% of the EU’s subsidy will go to the

Table 8.1. Foreign direct investment by sector 1992-1998 (US$ million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>% of total volume</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>1085.3</td>
<td>53.65</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>418.9</td>
<td>20.71</td>
<td>8331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>205.0</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>102.4</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2022.8</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>10632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


private sector. The case of international trade presents an even more complex problem for the state, as trade involves economic transactions that lie outside the jurisdiction of the state, and which are in principle beyond its capacity to control.
Yet, the state still retains great budgetary and financial control over local authorities and private businesses, as it provides nationally on average 47% of local authorities financing, and major companies are still state owned. As Evans (1992:197) argued in this respect:

*in country after country, intensive penetration of local economies by such transnational actors has, with increasingly shorter lags, been followed by the rise of the state apparatuses that not only gained control over local extractive activities, but in certain cases become the dominant actors in the local economy.*

The effects of transnational loan capital on constructing state actions could be seen as limiting its developmental aspirations and having negative distributional and welfare consequences. As the Bulgarian Prime Minister Kostov (*Democracy*, 2/3/99) stated regarding the EC’s strategy for constantly postponing negotiations on Bulgaria’s membership: “*no society could be inspired by aims lying 15-20 years ahead. No society believes in such aims.*” In addition, he pointed out that, the EC is placing “*a prolonged pointless dictate*” for the closure of a nuclear power station supplying 40% of the country’s electrical power. Otherwise, the EC is prepared to provide loans for Bulgarian energetic against the closure of the nuclear station, thus deliberately limiting state capacity to increase this sector’s output. Similar is the case with the IMF-backed restrictive Currency Board regime which constrains the internal resources for investment.

Transnational loans have other important effects on the state apparatuses and managers. First, as foreign loans demand state approval and guarantees, this inescapably places the government in an intermediary position between foreign lenders and domestic productive investment. Thus, local businesses needed the help of the state apparatuses in order to obtain these loans, which in turn, creates preconditions for political clientelism and corruption. A prime example was the grain crisis of 1997, when the socialist government of Videnov banned its export but allowed ‘by exemption’ the group Orion (which was close to the Socialist Party) to export and then to import back crop on behalf of the government at higher prices, realising massive profits.
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Second, foreign loans substantially increased the state’s power vis-à-vis the local capitalists. This is because the state did not have to rely on private domestic actors as a major source of resources. Instead, it could use its control over foreign loans, both as an instrument for displacing actors in the process of transition to market economy, and for disbursing capital for implementing local private business projects. The 34 items of the government’s three year programme (1998-2001) with the IMF illustrate the point. Ensuring domestic tax policy compliance with the Fund requirements alone imposed amendments to eight laws, each affecting the interests and the scope of local actors’ operations (Council of Ministers, 1998, Macroeconomic and Structural Measures (matrix) Under the EFF-Supported Program, 1998-2001).

Despite the global character of modern communications, ten years after the transformation the state preserved an unchallenged monopoly in this domain, and eventually, granted a single licence from February 2000 to a private TV broadcaster (Murdock group). Recently, the chairman of the state Committee for Post and Communications, Slavinski, promoted a policy that the state should be able to filter the information on the internet (Capital, 6/2/99). The government further reinforced its position in this area by signing the above mentioned contract with Microsoft and three other companies, committing the state administration to purchase and use only legal software products delivered by them.

To sum up so far, the increased global interconnectedness and the accompanied flows of investments, trade, loans and communications did not caused the eclipse of the state, rather it stimulated and facilitated the expansion of its role in new directions. Although ambiguous in certain cases, these flows suggested an expanding scope of the state economic role, an increased organisational capacity within the state bureaucracy, and strengthening its strategic position vis-à-vis private domestic actors. There is no reason to believe that the effects of globalisation would follow different patterns in sport.
8.3. The global sport nexus and strategic relations in national sport policy making

The analysis of strategic relations in this section drew mainly on evidence from policies and practices of three key transnational agencies - the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Trim and Fitness International Sport for All Association (TAFISA) and the Council of Europe (CE) as well as from other cases involving individual managers and organisations.

The impact of the IOC strategies on Bulgaria’s sport can be seen in two directions - specifically Eastern European and global. First, there were distinct policies aiming to ensure a continuity of the Communist model of elite sports’ contribution to Olympic glory. The IOC’s reaction to the transformative events of 1989 was prompt and clear. In two successive meetings with the Eastern European countries’ new leaderships in 1990 in Lausanne (April) and Varna (November), the changes in the environment and their impact on elite sport and Sport for All were discussed. Although both themes were on the agenda of both meetings, the long-term programme for co-operation between these countries (1990-1996) adopted in Varna made no reference to Sport for All (BSFS, 1990). While the IOC’s position was for a balanced development of the two sides of sporting practice, the real concern was about the situation of Communist elite sport and its further contribution to the Games. A statement from Primo Nebiolo, an IOC member and the IAAF president, made during the first meeting typifies the prevailing attitude: “there is no future without your [eastern countries, explanation added] champions” (IOC, 1990). And, as a gesture of generosity (together with the International Ski Federation and the European National Olympic Committees), he offered Eastern European Athletics Federations free membership of the IAAF, and other privileges. These are now being used by the Bulgarian Athletics Federation for claiming capacity to generate its own resources (around $30,000 for 1998) and to convince the CYPES that it is a viable body which does not rely entirely on state subsidies. The irony is that, this situation is well known by the CYPES, but as the head of Sports Division Iliev (Capital, 16/4/1999) admitted:

we are fully aware of what is going around National Sports Federations but keep providing hard currency for membership fee in international...
bodies and fees for participation in major tournaments, because if we do not do so, the Committee would be accused of slaughtering the Bulgarian sport.

The international link, in this case apparently created an ambiguous situation which served both parties well in promoting their interests, and they seemed unwilling to abandon this double standard.

The overall concern was echoed by Olegario Rana, the ANOC president (Association of the National Olympic Committees, and now an IOC member) from a more general perspective. He reminded the meeting that the money was not the most important factor when it came to Olympic sport. Of greater importance, as he pointed out was "the preparation of the human factor: coaches, leaders and athletes" (IOC, 1990). Clearly, the Communist model of sport was given conceptual endorsement, material support, and encouragement to continue but not from a "paternalistic position" as the IOC president emphasised, but rather as a form of assistance to leading sporting countries.

The IOC president’s view brings us to the second direction of this agency’s impact - global. It should be examined in the context of the global marketing project introduced by the IOC and corporate international business, aiming to bind together the Olympic properties, and multinational companies’ ambitions for world expansion and global domination in what could be termed a ‘brand mark’. The project was also seeking to include “citizen-of-the-world” customer in an alliance where the ideological interpretation of the Olympic virtues is replaced by an economic reading. This new environment, as discussed earlier, is dominated by an economy of ideas, where economic growth become possible because the cost of reproducing an idea is essentially zero and returns increase indefinitely with the scope of the market. In this respect IOC vice-president Richard Pound comment’s (cited in Whannel, 1992:7) was very indicative for the significance of transformations and their impact on the NOCs: "when the only thing you have to sell are the aspirations of the youth and five rings, then misappropriation of intellectual property becomes a very serious matter."
The policy framework of the project was the IOC TOP programme (The Olympic Partners -involving 11 multinational companies), particularly its third, forth and fifth editions (for 1992-2004, see IOC, 1999, Olympic Marketing Fact File). All National Olympic Committees (NOCs which resemble the notion of statehood) were sent a clear message to join the project if they wanted to be part of the modern Olympic movement. In the case of the newly emerged NOCs of Europe (as result of the breakdown of USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia), this approach was used by the IOC as a condition for recognition, a position very similar to the IOC’s attitude towards Eastern European countries after the 2nd World War. However, the TOP project not only enhanced the IOC’s financial and organisational powers, but expanded the organisational capacity of the NOCs in two ways: first, by transforming them from travel agencies and outfitters to professional bodies working 365 days a year; and second, by empowering them as the only guardians, shareholders and managers of the ‘Olympic brand’ for implementing the IOC’s policies on their national territories.

Eastern European and Bulgarian NOCs, despite their lack of experience and financial power, were not prepared to accept the IOC’s marketing approach unquestioningly. As the marketing principles were gaining superiority over other considerations, the Eastern European sport organisations have started to develop a relevant marketing consciousness about the real market value of their products. The issue “who gets what” was addressed unequivocally by the IOC vice-president and member for Hungary Pal Shmitt at the IOC 1994 Executive Board meeting in Paris (IOC, 1994). He suggested the adoption of new criteria for distributing the Olympic wealth according to the quality of the athletes and their contribution to Olympic success. The IOC Olympic Solidarity subsidy for all European NOCs taking part in the Seoul 1988 Games was $6.73 million and 25% of it was allocated to the eight Eastern European countries, whereas they won 70% of all European and 50% of the total medals. In Barcelona 1992, and Atlanta 1996, some 29% of the total subsidy was provided, while 42% and 25% of the medals were won respectively (see IOC, Olympic Solidarity 1983-1992, and 1996 Reports). The IOC spent on its pavilion at the Seville 1992
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World Expo $7.3 million while for the same display in Expo 1996 in Budapest (the first Expo held in Eastern European country), it designated a modest $600,000.

Insofar as the IOC policy for distributing Olympic funds is based on rather general, quantitative criteria, it does not consider the qualitative aspects (the market value in commercial terms) - the role of the main actors (East European athletes) on the Olympic stage. The introduction of the United Nations' economic classification relating to a country's GNP per capita in 1995 can be viewed as an attempt at a more adequate approach to IOC budget allocation. According to this categorisation, Bulgaria is in the lowest Group C (under $4,000 per capita), Russia is in the middle Group B ($ 4,000 - 12,000 per capita), and there is no ex-Communist country amongst the wealthiest twenty (Group A-$12,000 or above per capita). While these principles of the IOC (EBRD, 1994) comply with the spirit of the basic Olympic values, such as equality and internationalism, they are in strong disagreement with the capitalist philosophy behind the economic success of the Olympic Games endorsed at the same time. Thus, it would be justifiable for the transforming Eastern European sport, and Bulgaria's sport in particular, to be pledged a bigger share of Olympic wealth, which would represent more fairly its contribution.

The IOC position towards transformations in Bulgaria cemented sport leaderships' resistance to changes, as they managed to endorse conceptually and as a machinery the same old system, with the state as a key player, by shaping an environment lacking powerful local governments and a well developed voluntary sport sector. Because of historically settled state-voluntary sector relationships, Bulgaria's sport organisations never represented a real public voice as we have seen in Chapters 4 to 7, so they could not put pressure on the state directly, only via international bodies, and specifically the IOC. At the same time the IOC pressed hard for new sports legislation, asserting the NOCs as independent and powerful bodies. For this purpose, the IOC organised a series of seminars with leading experts (NSA, 1998) and provided scholarships for two young Bulgarians to specialise in international law through study in Switzerland. It also sought ways to promote Sport for All nationally through direct subsidies of two events annually and charged the city of Varna with
hosting the 4th International Sport for All congress in 1992, along with financial aid of $100,000.

The impact of TAFISA on Bulgaria’s sport policy was directly linked to the IOC approach to Sport for All. TAFISA - the major player on the international Sport for All scene (recognised by UNESCO, World Health Organisation and the IOC) - was created in March 1991, but in fact succeeded the older Trim and Fitness movement organisation in Europe set up in the early 1960s. It now incorporates over 100 member-countries, represented by voluntary or public sport governing bodies. Bulgaria was an active supporter of the movement before 1989 through the Sport for All department of BSFS, was amongst the five founding members of TAFISA, and benefited from the exchange of ideas in information. After that, it discontinued participation for two years.

The establishment of the Bulgarian Sport for All Association (BSfAA) in 1993 (see Chapter 6) became possible due to a substantial amount of 1,000,000 Lev (from interests and a little reserve fund) left over from the IOC’s contribution to the Varna congress in 1992, and coincided with the launch of TAFISA’s first global project - the Challenge Day. The Challenge Day campaign sought to encourage cities, sport organisations, (through a marketing agency impact) - national and international sponsors to form partnerships and promote active participation for people from all walks of life in a friendly global competition held every last Wednesday of May.

In 1993 and 1994 the BSfAA existed only on paper and was not even involved in organising the first Challenge Day, which was a great success and paved the way for this campaign in Bulgaria. The Association, however, took over gradually and used this project to legitimise itself nationally. As BSfAA did not have its own structures, facilities, human or material resources (only a central body with one full-time staff member), seven years later the Challenge Day and another TAFISA project, the World Walking Day remained the main activities in BSfAA’s portfolio to justify its presence in the sport policy domain (see Table 8.2). The peculiarity of a transnational link in this case was that it proved equally appealing to local, vocational (the Sports
Association of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) and national agencies, and provided the strategic bond. The BSfAA owes its functioning mainly to two established structures - one local sport club, Levski (Sofia), and the Sport Association of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (aka, The Police Sports Association). The former, due to its nature, cannot be a partner in major international undertakings, and otherwise is struggling to provide for mass participation. The latter, simply replaced the focus of its mission, from a more vocational service to members of the police force and their families, to involvement in this prestigious international project bringing financial privileges and instant access to key policy actors and state managers such as ministers, mayors, companies and media executives. Sport organisations' self-approved norms allow them to set their own regulations for staff financial inducements; this meant that BSfAA managers could have cashed in personally up to 20% of any sponsorship deal they secured, and benefited further from bonuses of surpluses after a campaign was over. In the BSfAA's first three year report (for 1994-1996 of 11/2/1997), no financial account was published.

These developments, despite its lack of organisational capacity, have turned BSfAA into an intermediary between global and domestic Sport for All movements by strengthening its role as a partner of the state (through contacts with municipalities and central government agencies) and private businesses (through sponsorship). This position will be further reinforced by a recently signed contract between TAFISA and the Australian based company MaxxPlay (Document, 11/12/98) promoting greater public access to sport and active recreation through specially adapted programmes, services and products. The nature of this global Sport for All programme under the name 'MaxxAxxess' follows closely the format of the IOC TOP project and is based on the same principle of using intellectual property rights (the TAFISA logo), and licenced products, programmes and materials (over 40 on offer) by TAFISA member countries. If the BSfAA opts to sign up, it would obtain the exclusive rights to promote throughout Bulgaria and benefit from MaxxAxxess programmes, services, games and products (between 20%-30% of the revenue) which have been endorsed by TAFISA. This would place a greater demand for professionalism and business-like
methods of daily working, and would meant developing a new approach to relations with the state apparatuses and commercial sector regarding Sport for All.

Table 8.2 illustrates the development of the two global campaigns - the International Challenge Day (ICD) and the World Walking Day (WWD) and the involvement of state apparatus.

Table 8.2 Participating municipalities and political patronage of the ICD and the WWD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ICD</th>
<th>WWD</th>
<th>Political Patronage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mayor of Sofia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mayors of Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chairman of the Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Chairman of the Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Chairman of the Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Mayors of Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Mayors of Cities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: author and BSfAA statistics (1997:4-6)

Another transnational linkage with clear implications for sport policy making and strategic relations in sport was with the Council of Europe and European Union. Contacts with these two structures after 1991 were in the remit of the state Committee for Youth Physical Education and Sport (CYPES) and were implemented chiefly within the framework of SPRINT and PHARE programmes. The SPRINT (Sports Reform, Innovation and Training) programme was designed specifically to assist Eastern European countries to comply with European cultural conventions and ensure that sport becomes accepted as an important part of government activity and receives appropriate funding. The PHARE has broader social aims, which can include sports projects.

The level and effects of intervention of these European institutions in various countries mirrored the overall political context and differed from clearly
interventionist in the case of the Czech Republic to advisory in Bulgaria. Apart from regular mobile (problem specific) and regional (general topic) seminars, the CYPES also demanded a parliamentary hearing seminar (category B - "activities of significance to the development of sport policy in a political context" of the SPRINT programme) where the Sports Law (1996) proposal was consulted and certain comments were taken into account before it was entered into the hall of parliament. The CYPES also used a protocol letter from George Walker - the Secretary of the CE’s Committee for Sports Development (CDDS) - as a strong argument in favour of the credibility of the conception for the system of Physical Education and Sport (CYPES, 1996, discussed in chapter 6).

Two other CE policy documents - the Conventions on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events (and in particular at Football Matches) (1985), and on Anti-Doping (1989) had strategic impacts on the national sport policy domain. The former was endorsed by parliament and brought into force in 1 December 1996, while the latter came into effect for a much shorter period - in 24 April 1992. However, both demanded state co-operation and respective legal, administrative and financial measures. In addition, these conventions empowered state apparatuses in areas where they previously had little or no involvement. The CYPES was entrusted with the power of controlling the standards of safety at sports grounds, and sports organisations’ strategies concerning continuing education of athletes and crowds and obedience to the norms of fair play. In the area of doping control transnational linkages resulted in a Council of Ministers’ decree (142 of 13/7/1995), creating a new governmental structure - a National Commission for Doping Control (NCDC) under the supervision of the CYPES. An additional impact concerned a further enhancement of the role of the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (BOC) as a core player in setting elite sport policy.

The CE and the EU represented pan-European bodies with a clear mission to assist transformations in Eastern European countries, but their policies and degree of support were far from uniformly supported. As S. Ranev, head of the CYPES' International Relations Department commented (interview, 31/8/1998):
we have established very good relations with the Council of Europe and enjoy their professional co-operation and assistance. But it is completely different picture all together with the European Union. They would try to avoid direct links and keep 'sending' us to the Greeks for advice and support for all matters concerned.

This was perceived as a lack of real concern and professionalism on the part of the EU because the successes of Greek sport over the previous two decades was achieved to some extent due to significant outflows of Bulgarian expertise, know-how, athletes and staff, not to mention the hundreds of Greek students who graduated every year from the National Sports Academy in Sofia.

Although European co-operation is deemed important, it could not cater for all the diverse needs of sport. Gradually, the CYPES and voluntary sport organisations started to re-discover regional linkages in the Balkans, not at least because of geographical accessibility and lower cost. There is at present co-operation in 27 sports with over 100 events yearly (CYPES, 1998). The CYPES is trying to capitalise on the proximity and similarity in climate conditions and signed up a protocol with the Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG) in Athens 2004 to provide acclimatisation training camps and expertise for national teams from all over the world.

However, the disintegration of the national sport movement after the transformations did have a negative impact on transnational linkages, and particularly on the role of the state as an initiator of political relations in sport. Until 1989 the BSFS and national sport federations were members of 51 International Sport Associations with 89 Bulgarian representatives occupying various positions and performing 110 functions. These numbers have been reduced to some 17 representatives and involved the loss of critical seats in many international sport governing bodies (BSFS, 1998). Two main reasons were responsible for this state of affairs. First, the new democratic state apparatuses (the presidency and the government) took a position of disinterest in employing sport as a tool in international diplomacy. As S. Ranev elaborated (interview, 31/8/1998):
contrary to the socialist period when most of the sports contacts, particularly with the third world countries developed as result of intergovernmental agreements, today it is virtually impossible to include sport in the agenda of international presidential or governmental meetings. All our efforts in this respect so far have failed. Inevitably Bulgarian sport is losing its international positions.

Second, it was the undemocratic and ‘staying in office at all cost’ attitude of sports organisations’ managers that caused damage to the image and strategic positions of particular sports. Volleyball - the second most popular sport in the country - is a case in point. In 1998, after six years as president of the national Volleyball Federation, Zhajakov, one of the three most influential key figures in the sport policy domain described in chapter six, had to face serious accusations about mismanagement and misappropriation of funds and transfers fees. In an extraordinary session of the Federation he was unanimously voted out of office by all 126 clubs’ representatives. He, however, refused to obey this collective decision on the grounds that the meeting was illegal, and a second national volleyball federation emerged. This resulted in a whole chain of negative events ranging from the FIVB suspending Bulgarian volleyball from international competitions to the loss of Nike’s sponsorship contract. A domestic argument had now to be solved by an international organisation - the FIVB - which called for a reconciliation meeting of the two federations to settle the issue as a precondition to Bulgarian volleyball being admitted back to the international arena. R. Acosta, president of the FIVB, even went further and demanded that Zhajakov should preside over the meeting if its results were to be considered legitimate. Faced by the prospect of a lengthy court hearing, a deal arbitrated by Slavkov, chairman of the BOC and an IOC member, appeared to have been arranged: Zhajakov would withdraw his obstruction to the national federation in exchange for keeping his position on the FIVB’s umpire commission (he could only be there as a representative of a national federation). This deal was entertained personally by the president of FIVB, Acosta, as he aspired very strongly to become an IOC member, and Slavkov could help him in this (Personal communications with sport officials).
8.4. Conclusions

The preceding discussion on transnational linkages allowed to draw four conclusions concerning their impact on the role of the state, voluntary sport governing bodies and managers. Table 8.3 summarises the instruments used by four key international agencies for shaping national sport policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Effects on Sport Domain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council of Europe (CE), EU</td>
<td>Recommendations, Funds, Programs, Courses, Advice</td>
<td>Legislations, Decrees, International co-operation, Structural changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Olympic Committee (IOC)</td>
<td>Contracts, Funds, Advice, Programmes</td>
<td>Structural changes, Funding, Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFISA</td>
<td>Advice, Contracts, Programmes</td>
<td>Structural changes, Professional management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, the ever increasing global interconnectedness did not lead to the eclipse of the state, although it did challenge its authority, form, competence and legitimation. While placing limitations on the state’s competence on the one hand, foreign investments, loans and projects enhanced the role of state apparatuses and managers on the other, by expanding their economic, political and executive powers. This was confirmed by the expansion of the CYPES’s role in areas not previously occupied by the state, resulting from the CE intervention. The state apparatuses now act more as intermediators between global and local interests, and it is often unclear where the facilitating and adaptation role of the state starts and finishes, and where its empowering and catalytic functions emerge. Apart from the case of the Olympic Games Organising Committee for Athens 2004, there was no evidence to support the idea of improved catalytic capacity of the state (i.e. the CYPES) to establish regional or international alliances and maximising the benefits for the national sports movement.
Second, transnational linkages enhanced the voluntary governing bodies’ independence from the state (especially BOC and BSfAA) and served as a vehicle for legitimating their role in the sport policy domain. The local success of these global projects in which BOC and BSfAA participated, however, will depend to a great extent on their ability to establish strategic relations with state apparatuses in other to promote the necessary legislative, administrative and financial measures. Given the contingent character of state-voluntary sector relations, this will be a challenging task, a view supported by D. Haralampiev, co-ordinator of the Foundation Bulgarian Sport, who commented that:

> at present all projects implemented by the Foundation have been paid for by foreign programmes combating social exclusion of young people, and thus we had to move away from the original focus of our mission aiming at supporting sporting talents (interview, 5/8/1998).

Third, transnational linkages clearly empowered local actors, but they also posed a great threat for the newly constituted voluntary sport sector. Becoming a partner in a global project turns a national sports governing body and its managers into an ‘off shore’ zone. This means that they are not accountable any longer to members or state institutions, and that they can easily justify their domestic policy with the pressure from the international actor, as they could explain failure to conform with global requirements on the adversity of local circumstances. Besides, all conflict of interests were to be settled in courts beyond the state territory and control - in Switzerland (IOC), and Australia (MaxxPlay).

Fourth, sport managers’ personal placement and their strategic relations in the sport policy domain remained a key asset in deciding the outcomes of transnational linkages.
Chapter 9.

Strategic Relations in Bulgarian Sports Policy:
Conclusions
This project set out to investigate the transformations in Bulgarian sport policy in the 20th century, and more specifically the role of the state and various societal forces in shaping and controlling the sports domain in the three periods - Capitalism (1878-1944), Communism (1945-1989) and Democracy (1990-1999) as outlined in Chapters 4 to 7. The research was theoretically informed by the premises of the Strategic Relations approach and of Critical theory. One of the most obvious lessons brought out by this study was that building a new stateness as a crucial element of the state project at different historical conjunctures represented a structural-creative process with critical implications for the conceptualisation, structuring, production and consumption of sport, and for the strategic relations in the domain.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to relate the findings of empirical research to the key propositions posed by these two theoretical frameworks identified in Chapters 2 and 3, and to answer the research questions. In achieving that it will seek to draw conclusions with regards to:

i) The state as a social relation
ii) Conceptualising state social relations in sport policy making
iii) Operationalising strategic relations in sport policy making
iv) Lessons from applying Critical theory to sport policy analysis.

9.1. The state as a set of social relations

A comprehensive appreciation of the construction of sports policy in the Bulgarian context can be established if it is placed in a wider framework of the state as a social relation. This in turn allows the identification, conceptualisation and operationalisation of strategic relations in sport policy making. Moreover, none of these have received so far empirical testing, even in Jessop’s works, and as he himself (1990:267) admitted, they remain “at the level of assertions and guidelines”. Jessop’s (1990) notion of the state as a social relation asserted that it can be analysed as the site, the generator and the product of strategies. He argued (1990:260) that the state system is first, the site of strategy because:

it can be analysed as a system of strategic selectivity, i.e. as a system whose structure and modus operandi are more open to some types of political strategy than others... I believe this notion of strategic selectivity
is more fruitful than that of structural selectivity because it brings out more clearly the relational character of this selectivity.

Secondly, Jessop saw the state as the generator of strategies because it offered the strategic terrain where the state system's formal unity (e.g. as a sovereign state) and substantive unity (e.g. as the social basis of support and a hegemonic project) can be established. An important implication of this unity concerned the actions of the state as a united political force, where, as he commented:

...the role of state managers is crucial in understanding how a relative unity is imposed on the various (in)activities of the state and how these activities acquire a relative autonomy from the conflicting pressures emanating from civil society (1990:261).

Thirdly, Jessop understood the structure and modus operandi of the state system in terms of their production in and through past political strategies and struggles. He claimed that “in this sense the current strategic selectivity of the state is in part the emergent effect of the interaction between its past patterns of strategic selectivity and the strategies adopted for its transformations” (1990:261).

As the empirical evidence for the construction of the Bulgarian state in the three major transformations suggested, the constitutional settlement of the capitalist and communist forms of the state favoured an authoritative power symbolised by a central figure - the head of the state (the Prince/Tsar or the Chairman of the Communist Party and the State Council). This authoritarian tendency was simultaneously underpinned and reinforced by the process of capital accumulation. Because of its geographic location, its level of industrial development and its place in the global geo-political mapping of the world, the state positions and access to resources were seen and used by political, economic and sport managers as a source of privileges, and not as a means through which to gain wider benefits for society and the sports domain in particular.

Chapters 5 (Capitalist), 6 (Communist) and 7 (Democratic periods), demonstrated that the form of the state and its basic structural mechanisms were not constituted out of the existing institutional elements, rather these elements were imposed from outside
forces. The Russian (1878-1944), German (1933-1944) and European (1990-1999) interventions support the point. An important implication of this process was the preconditioning of the state as the site, the generator and the product of strategies. This was particularly well illustrated during the Communist period (1945-1989), when individual interests and strategies were subordinated to the general interest of the Communist Party’s elite, which, though still illusory, were highly effective because of society’s total submission. The key difference between agents, interests and strategies in capitalist and communist environments is that while the capitalism still influenced outcomes of struggles, the Communism inscribed all political and non-political agents in the state system. Subsequently, this predetermined their ability to advocate transformations by promoting strategies which did not conform to the general interest, yet as defined by the state.

In a study of the Greek sport policy (between 1980 and 1993) Nassis (1994:211) argued that “the relation between the strategies of those agents and the sport policy system is said to be dialectic...and simultaneously may result in the reproduction or transformation of the structure of sport.” The totalitarian state system (although seen as a tendency and not as an absolute) to a large extent made possible only the reproduction of the structure of sport. Individual sport managers and structures did not have say in the strategic orientation of sports policy, and obeyed the guidelines set by the party-state and echoed by the umbrella governing body, the BSFS. Although less explicit, the reproduction of the state-sport system relation as opposed to its transformation seems to have dominated much of the capitalist and communist periods as well. The evidence gathered in this respect confirmed the need to differentiate between state-society closure or separation because of the limitations posed by the closure on the agents’ ability to promote transformative strategies and to form alliances based on interests other than general. This challenged Jessop’s claim, that as long as state-society boundaries remained uncertain, state-society closure or separation did not matter. He could not have envisaged this, but nonetheless was intrigued by the revolutionary movements of 1989 in Eastern Europe for providing some interesting and invaluable lessons about our understanding of Strategic Relations (1990:271).
Another implication resulting from the outside imposition of a particular form and particular structures on the state concerned the conflict between outside interests which subsides domestic agents’ real interests, and reinforced the state’s authoritarian position. Several examples illustrated the dual nature of these interests, that is, why specific strategies identified as agents real interests have not been pursued. For example, the leading slogan of the Communist project was ‘Everything in the name of the person’, but the concept of people’s needs was never discussed in a sport policy document of that period. In the same vein, as the case studies demonstrated (Chapter 7) state apparatuses and sport organisations virtually did nothing to empower their members as the democratisation project dictated it should. State regimes usually were related to a social base only retrospectively, that is, in order to rationalise past actions. The latest example was the decision of the Bulgarian government and Parliament (in April and May 1999 respectively) to offer the state airspace to be used for NATO military operations in Kosovo in the hope of speeding Bulgaria’s acceptance to NATO and the European Community, whereas over 75% of the population strongly opposed any involvement in the Yugoslavian crisis.

The authoritarian tradition in the state system and its effects on sports policy complied with Jessop’s proposition about the state as ‘the product of strategies’, in the sense that the continuity of this tradition in each of the three periods was in part presupposed by the patterns of strategic selectivity employed for its transformation. The three great transformations each began with a total negation of previous settlements and achievements, thus introducing a ‘new’ strategic selectivity, but one based on similar principles.

Finally, the analysis of the state as a social relation complemented empirically the notion of the state as a mediator of strategies. The overt and covert foreign interventions in the state constitution as well as state interventions in sport policy made by mediating global strategies (Russia’s double military intervention in 1878 and 1944 was part of a world global remapping) support this conclusion. Just the successive projects for building a capitalist, communist and democratic state were all political constructs and lacked in various degrees the necessary formal and substantive
unity, none of them managed to mobilise wide public or organisational support without some form of coercion.

9.2 Conceptualising state-social relations in sport policy making

This section looks to conceptualise four key relations pertinent to the study research questions in the three periods (as set out on pp. 66-7 of Chapter 3) concerned between:

- the state project and the sport project;
- forms of state intervention in sport and various socio-political environments;
- the construction of power in sports policy and state-society interactions;
- transnational and local forces in helping to shape sport policy.

9.2.1 State projects and sport projects

The state projects - Capitalism (1878-1944), Communism (1944-1989), and Europeanisation (1989-1999) pursued during the three periods were hegemonic by nature, and sought to endow specific identities and interests, and to mobilize wide social support by offering structural and other privileges to various classes and groups. As the capitalist period (1878-1944) evidenced, modern sport emerged in Bulgaria more as a necessity for military training of the population in defence of the new state's independence, and, not as in Western societies, a typical leisure pursuit of affluent classes. The state project set two clear priorities - the unification of both Bulgaria's lands and people. This general strategy needed structures for its implementation, and because the Berlin Treaty (1878) prevented the state having a regular army and any form of military training, sports societies (shooting and gymnastics) appeared to be the only legal ways to mobilise the population around the national cause. Subsequently, these were encouraged and supported by the state.

After the first World War, the state project for regaining a hegemonic position in the Balkans (including former Bulgarian territories) in alliance with one of the great powers, Germany, dictated the nature of the sport project. It was constructed around the notion of 'sportive manhood', and ideologically and structurally followed the
state's project guidelines for preparing a military capable and obedient to the Tsar and the state youth, and clearly copied the example of fascist Germany and Italy. It could be argued then, that throughout the communist period, the sport project was set and shaped by utilitarian reasons and served them diligently, and because of its intrinsic values did not have the chance to develop as an independent domain of activity appealing to wider social groups.

The building of a Communist society was the state project during the communist period (1945-1989). Accordingly, state-society relations were grounded on its ideological and organisational tenets. The sport project promoted essentially mass participation, elitism and communist virtues. It was also tied closely to and mirrored the aspirations of the state, and its contribution ranged from support in establishing the power of local Communist Party committees to gaining international prestige for the state regime. With no exception, all sports policy strategic documents were based on and proclaimed that the sports organisations' paramount aim was to fulfil the tasks set by the Party-state. In return, the sport establishments received support and privileges, although still in a very selective manner.

The project for building a democratic state (Europeanisation) promoted in the democratic period (1990-1999), in spite of its pluralistic nature and rhetoric, brought no convincing evidence for a change in state-sport relationships. The sport project for democratisation, more opportunities and choice followed the state's visions, and remained highly strategically selective. In essence, it perpetuated the relationships established in the previous period and excluded effectively from the policy decision making process the large number of sports organisations' members and the newly emerging private sector agents.

The core of the state-sport projects' relations in the three periods constituted an authoritative form and state structures imposed by foreign forces which were coupled with an uncertain process of capital accumulation and short lived political regimes in the first and third periods. As grass root formations and their members were traditionally excluded from policy formulation, and their interests were never really
taken into account, this turned the state apparatuses into the main source of support, and of resources and privileges for sport. Sports organisations’ uncritical acceptance of this relation throughout the whole history of Bulgarian sport made them tacit supporters of the notion of the general interest as seen and promoted by the state, and nurtured a culture of clientelism. This clientelism was just as strong but less oppositional than that of Greece, as demonstrated by Henry and Nassis (1999).

9.2.2 Forms of state intervention in sport and various socio-political environments

The relation between the state’s forms of intervention in sport and different environments was clearly manifested in this study. The form of state intervention was presupposed by the nature of the state project, and had clear implications for pursuing strategies in the sport policy domain in the three periods. They included how issues were recognised, how domains were structured, the general and sport-specific laws passed, how policy aims were formulated, how structural elements were set and how key appointments were made, how resources were allocated, controlled and outcomes or success/failure assessed (Table 9.1; for key interventions see also introductory boxes to Chapters 4, 5 and 6). They varied in degree of concreteness and harshness, but virtually all of them were imperative and did not invite an interactive participation and discussions on behalf of non-governmental and private agents concerned. A similar process was in place in other Eastern European countries as argued by Keohane and Hoffman, 1993, and Janos, 1994). Forms of state intervention in the three periods displayed great consistency in terms of policy aims formulation, assessment and control, and their impact on all domain actors. Indicative for this type of relations was the trend for centralisation of sports domain, displayed at the outset of each period, despite various state and sport administrations proclaimed concern for democratic set up and participation in policy making.

9.2.3 The construction of power in sports policy and state-society interactions

The state-society relations described throughout this research determined the nature of power in the sports policy domain. The binding of sports policy to the state project
highlighted the importance of three factors for constructing the social base of the state’s power in sport.

Table 9.1. Forms of state intervention in the sports policy domain (1878-1999)

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<th>Communist forms of intervention</th>
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First, it was well justified ideologically, with concerns ranging from defence of the country to improving individual fitness and well being so as to appeal to wider social groups outside sport (the ‘hegemonic project’ in Jessopian terms). Second, state power
was based on a strategic configuration of the non-governmental sport sectors in ways such that they would always be supportive of the state regime. No state project ever allowed the voluntary sport organisations to unify in a body representing the collective voice of their members that could have become a powerful political actor. This was partly permitted to happen with the forming of the BSFS in the totalitarian period, but only in a fashion strictly controlled by the Party-state, ensuring representative support without real mass backing. Third, it was the source of consensus and the means of channelling demands upwards and flows of resources downwards needed to establish and to maintain the state’s power in sport. The former was chiefly achieved through recruiting politically loyal sport managers, while the latter was ensured by political clientelism, and depended very much on the placement of individual actors in the sport domain, that is on structural but not on interpersonal relations. This is underpinned by compelling evidence from the three periods. The construction of state power in sport shed light on to why the Bulgarian sport policy community has always been disintegrated and dominated by key state or individual actors, and excluded the interests of large groups. Figure 9.1 shows the composition of the sport policy community in the three periods. The state power in sport displayed very little penetrative (the ability of state and voluntary agencies for direct intervention with the population) and extractive (the ability to extract resources from society for constructing a viable voluntary sector), and only limited negotiated (the ability for collaboration between state political apparatuses and sport agencies) capacity.

9.2.4 Transnational and local forces in shaping sports policy

The study provided ample evidence for conceptualising the relation between transnational and local forces in shaping sports policy. Although the English and Swiss concepts of sport diffused in most European countries and then the rest of the world, they did not succeed during the Capitalist period in Bulgaria because they lacked state backing. Instead, the Russian and German sports doctrine, which enjoyed political patronage, penetrated and shaped the visions of Bulgaria’s state and sport managers. Until the second World War the international sports movement was ill-organised and its influence on national sport policies was rather symbolic. In this
period Bulgaria became a member of only five international sport federations, and marked a modest participation in four of ten Olympic Games mainly in military oriented sports such as shooting, riding and fencing which reflected the utilitarian character of sport policy.

With the growing commodification and legitimation of international sports competitions, a second powerful element was added to the political rationale underpinning the transnational-local relation in the totalitarian and post-totalitarian periods. Transnational sports linkages dictated not only the rules and forms of sports but offered various tangible and intangible benefits. Sport was assigned a clear ideological mission by the Communist regime but brought relative autonomy and substantial financial incentives to some sport associations in the Democratic period (for athletics, and the BSFAA). There was one noticeable exception in the case of the agreement between the CYPES and the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games Athens 2004 for using acclimatisation training camps in Bulgaria, evidence of using transnational linkages to increase the catalytic capacity of the state. Figure 9.2 summarises the conceptualisation of state-social relations in sport policy in the three periods.

9.3 Operationalising strategic relations in sports policy making

Having identified and conceptualised these four key state social-relations in sport, it is now possible to offer a greater degree of concreteness by spelling out how the two main types of strategic relations - intra-state and transnational - identified by this research worked. These will be divided into three categories (Figure 9.3) in accordance with Jessop, and with the author's claim that, in both state apparatuses and sport policy there were core and peripheral agents trying to promote their own projects, and to change or to sustain their places in the domain.
Figure 9.1 Sport policy community during the Capitalist (1878-1944), Communist (1944-1989) and Democratic (1989-1999) periods

**Capitalist**

- Ministry of Education
- Branik
  - Unak
  - BNSF
  - CNSF
  - 24 NSFs
  - 600 Sports Clubs

**Communist**

- CC BCP
  - Ministry of Education
  - Ministry of Defence
  - Ministry of Internal Affairs
  - BSFS
    - 46 NSFs
    - BOC
    - 324 DFS
    - 2,960 Sports Clubs

**Democratic**

- Ministry of Education
- CYPES
  - BSFS
  - CNSF
  - BOC
  - 120 NSFs
  - 1,600 Sports Clubs
The first category concerns strategic relations between the sports domain and non-domain agents:

i) between state political apparatuses and non-governmental sports organisations, i.e., political parties, political youth organisations, parliament and sports governing bodies

ii) between non-governmental and sports organisations, i.e., social movements, voluntary groups and sports governing bodies
iii) between sports governing bodies and transnational agents, i.e., sports organisations and the IOC, CE, EU and International Federations.

The second category includes relations between the domain's core and peripheral agents:

iv) between national and local sports organisations, i.e., national sports governing bodies and grass root clubs, sports and members;
v) between state apparatuses and non-governmental sports organisations, i.e., governmental sports agencies and voluntary sports organisations.

The third category involves relations between the domain’s core and non-domain agents:

vi) between domain core and non-domain individual actors, i.e., key officials of sports organisations and domestic political and transnational actors

vii) between domain core individual actors, i.e., key sports officials.

The rest of this section operationalises each of these relations in turn.

i) Relations between state political apparatuses and non-governmental sports organisations

Relations between various political parties, their youth organisations, or the parliamentary groups and voluntary sports organisations followed similar patterns of development in the three periods. They were used for achieving social unity as part of the state-sport project, or for narrow political ends. A clear trend for encouraging and establishing loyal sports governing organisations by political parties in power was identified. The Confederation of National Sports Federations, the National Sports Federation or Branik in the capitalist period were all proponents or facilitators of the dominant pro-Nazi political ideology (particularly after 1920) in a way which lead to a profound politicisation of the sports domain. This was manifested in the introduction of a body politics underpinned by the notion of sportive manhood, and based on military drills and their use in asserting the unity of the nation.

Following the same political rationale during the totalitarian period, all capitalist sports structures were dismantled by the Communist party and replaced by the Party-state controlled creature, the BSFS (by a decision of its Central Committee, 1957). Sports organisations’ strategies stemmed from the party doctrine and clearly aspired to achieve political goals. A similar scenario occurred in the Democratic environment: since the Communist Party managed to remain in power after the 1989 transformations, it did not have to replace BSFS as a supreme governing body. This only happened when the opposition UDF took over in 1992 and established the
CYPES. The BSFS was declared a ‘totalitarian’ structure and had to be demolished, which was eventually achieved in 1998 by ‘democratic’ means, because the democratisation project presupposed pluralism, and would not want to be associated with the brutal interventions of the previous regime.

The relation between state political apparatuses and sport organisations had a significant impact on key strategies pursued in the sports domain including defining sports projects, setting policies, determining membership in the domain, issues recognition, setting up structures, resource allocation, forming loyal leaderships and setting standards for performance and effectiveness.

**ii) Relations between non-governmental and sports organisations**

Although evidence substantiating relations between social movements, voluntary or interest groups and sports governing bodies was found, nonetheless it remained limited to Unak and workers'-bourgeois’ sports clubs in getting access to resources and structures (in the Capitalist period); to vocational affiliation - co-operation in promoting mass sport between the Trade Unions or the Communist youth organisation and the BSFS (during the Communist period), and to deprived groups - joint projects between Foundation Sport and sports federations for abandoned or children and those with disabilities (in the Democratic period), and were relatively little elaborated. No data concerning organised interests of gender groups and women in particular were discovered which could have brought in an interesting aspect of relations.

**iii) Relations between sports governing bodies and transnational agents**

This type of relation proved to be of significance because it brought various tangible and intangible privileges for governmental and non-governmental sports governing bodies. First, links between domestic sports organisations and transnational agencies served to legitimate structures and actions in the domain. These were confirmed by the cases of the Sport for All Association’s (SfAA) assertion on the national scene (initially by an indirect, but lately curtailed financial IOC contribution) and TAFISA’s global Challenge Day participation project; by CYPES’s activities (legislative and organisational) in previously untouched areas, and the Council of Europe’s resolutions...
on doping and security measures during sporting events and the national sport law
hearings; or strengthening the Aerobic Union’s national position (in winning medals
and getting state subsidy) and the IAF’s policy for promoting aerobics internationally.

Second, the national-transnational nexus was used by voluntary sports organisations
for putting pressure on state apparatuses to solve issues. The most illuminating case
was of the Bulgarian National Bank’s abuse of the five Olympic rings for commercial
gains without paying royalties to the BOC, which was empowered by the IOC as the
sole national proprietor of this intellectual property (discussed in chapter 2). In
another example, a transnational actor - FIFA - was called in by the Bulgarian
Football Union to persuade the CYPES that the latter was a legitimate body, and to
abandon the governmental campaign against it.

Third, there is the usage of this relation for mutual benefits between domestic and
international actors. The IOC needed the support and contribution of Communist elite
sport for sustaining Olympic glory globally, and offered in return material resources
and other concessions. The CYPES plan to offer the Organising Committee of the
Games in Athens 2004 the use of acclimatisation training camps in Bulgaria extended
sports organisations’ opportunities for structural and financial privileges.

iv) Relations between national and local sports organisations

The constitution of the sports policy domain was a structural-creative process
involving various state and social actors. The position of core and peripheral actors
was presupposed by a mixture of criteria, both utilitarian (usefulness - military,
defence, obedience), structural (Olympic-non-Olympic sports) and performance-based
(medals, formal registration). No evidence was found suggesting a change from a
peripheral to a core status within any particular period. However, transformations in
the state’s form and regime did bring about such changes as in the case of the Aerobic
Union - from a marginal commission with a limited remit to a core member of the
domain, or as in the case of the CYPES, from non-existence to the role of a central
player in the post-totalitarian period. The opposite process - degrading from core to
peripheral status - was found to be true in the cases of Unak and BSFS during the Capitalist and Democratic periods respectively.

Relations between national and local sports organisations reflected the boundaries and interaction between the state and civil society in each period. As discussed, the process of legitimation in the national sports scene - that is, of grass root clubs coming together to form national governing bodies, was rather premature, taking on average only seventeen years compared to the gradual consolidation that occurred in Western Europe. Although most central organisations have always tried to develop wider networks of clubs, they never really incorporated grass root structures in their strategic decision making bodies. Throughout the totalitarian period no representative of 365 DFSs (local multi sport societies responsible for winning success into international arena) ever sat on the BSFS Executive Board. Similarly, local sports clubs did not have a say in the capitalist period, and they were denied by the state apparatus (CYPES) any individual or structural representation in decision-making in the democratic phase. CYPES provided financial support only to 40 of over 100 organised sports in the domain.

The exclusion of a large number of local actors from decision-making process was possible partly because of the criteria previously described, but also because the majority of local sports organisations never had a clear membership profile. Membership as well as the fee was usually collective (e.g. for a school, or factory), that is, no recognition of individual members’ interests was given. A striking finding was that the notion of people’s needs was never used as a rationale for justifying strategy in any sports policy document, and no sports governing body ever set out specifically to satisfy its members’ needs. In contrast, the interests of the sport system (this was the dominant phraseology) as defined by a small elite were put forward and pursued.

For seven years (1992-1999) the CYPES failed to produce any report informing society, policy-makers, or even experts of the outcomes of its policy. A culture of transparency and accountability of national sports organisations to their members
including a code of behaviour, regular reports and audits never developed. Annual reports were virtually exceptions and were viewed with disdain by the majority of national organisations, while such documents simply do not exist at a grass root level. Similar practices not only hindered research, but deprived the leaderships of latecomer organisations from having realistic ideas about past strategies and devising substantive outcomes, thus dooming the policy process to constant improvisations. These observations give substance to Marsh’s (1995) fifth hypothesis, that policy networks in sport restrict democracy.

The relations between national and local sports organisations, however, were not all residual. The case of the AU (chapter 7) signalled the emergence of practices tying up a private sport club (Jova Sport) with a national sports governing body (AU), in a mutually beneficial relationship, driven by key actors' personal interests. There is also evidence from other sports, such as martial arts (which was not documented in this project) for similar relations.

vi) Relations between state apparatuses and non-governmental sports organisations

Three notable examples from each period evidenced this relationship. The relationship reflected the degree of state intervention in sport according to the state project and how it was reflected in identifying and placing core and peripheral actors in the policy domain.

The promotion of body politics in the capitalist period put a governmental agency - Ministry of Education (ME) - at the very heart of the sports domain. It was entrusted with enormous power, and effectively exercised unrestricted control over all voluntary sports organisations, including a veto on their decisions, on key appointments, and it could suspend organisations. In 1941 most of the ME's role was transferred to the universal state youth organisation Branik.

In the communist period similar relations, though partly disguised, re-emerged. It survived in two different governmental forms and served different missions. First was
in the form of the Supreme Council for Physical Culture and Sport (SCPCS, 1949-1957) with the purpose of establishing state control over sport and constructing the policy domain. Second, it existed for five years (1971-76) in the form of a Committee for Youth and Sport (CYS) with wide responsibilities. However, because of society's total subordination to the Party-state, it became apparent that the CYS was duplicating the functions of the BSFS, and it was dissolved. Despite being a voluntary organisation by constitution BSFS was in fact an extension of the Communist Party and the government it controlled, so strategy formulation, supervision and leadership appointments in sport were first of all a political matter.

The relation between state apparatuses and voluntary sport sector in the post-Communist period was one of continuity rather than of change as might have been expected. Shortly after the CYPES was set up in 1992, it took over all key aspects of sport policy - conceptualising, structuring, financing and representation. Moreover the CYPES empowered itself with the role of supreme regulator in the domain. It established new rules for becoming a domain member through a formal legal registration, a procedure which was also misused selectively for repression of individuals and organisations. The application of this mechanism reached its absurdity in 1999 when the CYPES managed to obtain a court decision, and declared the Bulgarian Football Union illegitimate (for a spurious omission in its charter, while the real battle was to eliminate its president Slavkov from the domain), including all its grass root structures and leagues.

Another key state apparatus with responsibility for Physical Education and sport - the capitalist Ministry of Education - had lesser influence over and degree of involvement in sport policy. Before 1944 voluntary sport organisations links' were clearly autocratic, followed by a period of more interactive relations during totalitarianism, and a strategy of co-operating with school sport, but still from a paternalistic position.

Finally, the evidence from the three periods suggested clear residual patterns of conceptual, structural and financial dependency of the voluntary sector on state apparatuses. It has to be noted that the leading role taken by the state in the sports
domain was strongly advocated by non-governmental organisations as they never made any serious attempt to change this balance, but rather tried to comply with the guidelines imposed on them. As a result of this, non-governmental sport organisations assumed many conflicting responsibilities ranging from expelling from their ranks those who did not subscribe to the dominant ideology (in the capitalist and communist periods) to assisting a political party, for instance, in forcefully changing the names of the Bulgarian Muslim population (BSFS under-totalitarianism; the staff and structures of the Union took part in this process), or in winning elections (the BSFS in the democratic period). In turn, these relations discredited non-governmental organisations as politically dependent and clientelistic, and widened the gap between them and their own members.

vi) Relations between the domain core and individual non-domain actors:
This category of relation was established on an individual level, and involved sports organisations’ key officials and domestic political patrons on the one hand, and sports officials and transnational actors on the other. The former was evidenced in each of the three periods and was presaged by the nature of the state’s intervention in sport. Key positions in the sport policy domain were always considered as political appointments, and a clearly declared political loyalty was essential for becoming a top manager not only in government but also in non-governmental agencies. The pursuit of major strategic projects was possible only with heavy political backing. This was illustrated in the case of Sofia’s 1992 and 1994 bids for the Winter Olympic Games.

The links between domain managers and transnational actors was more subtle, but still influential for their placement, and was displayed in the democratic period. The IOC membership of the BOC chairman Slavkov proved critical for his survival in the domain. When he was arrested and for three years (1991-94) was not allowed to leave the country, the president of the IOC, Juan Samaranch and Director General Carrard three times visited the Bulgarian president and other governmental officials to seek a solution. Another highly influential international colleague of Slavkov - Blatter, the president of FIFA, was called in to save the BFU and his position as chairman. In a similar vain, when the president of the volleyball federation Zhajakov was made
vii) Relations between the domain's individual core actors

Evidence for this relation was provided in the analysis of the democratic sports policy. It was revealed that a handful of sports officials were sharing the key positions in the domain and exercising great control in channelling strategies and placements. Particularly indicative was that three of them (Slavkov, Hadjiev and Zhajakov) together occupied the leadership positions of BOC (President, Board member and Secretary General), BSFS (Chairman, vice-Chairman and a Board member) and CNSF (President and vice-presidents). However, despite the power they mutually shared, no evidence was found to suggest a collaborative strategy existed involving the institutions they represented to address such fundamental issues for the voluntary sector as the heavy dependency on the state. Conversely, they all advocated a great state intervention in sports policy formulation. These findings in our view support Marsh’ (1995) third and fifth hypotheses advanced in Chapter 3, that: i) policy networks were based on structural rather than interpersonal relations, and ii) policy networks are a restriction of democracy because they are characterised by the exclusion of most interests.

9.4. Lessons from applying critical theory to sports policy analysis

As discussed in chapter 3 (Methodology), the application of critical theory aimed, amongst other things, to overcome possible weaknesses of the Strategic Relations approach in analysing sport policy. In order to achieve this, the rest of this section relates the empirical evidence found in the study to the main assumptions of critical theory.

The preceding section asserted the dominance of imperative strategies and relations in sport policy making in Bulgaria in the 121 years examined in this study. A key element of these imperative strategies was the existence of a central authority (a state apparatus) initiating the transformation process by laying down new systemic rules and forcing participants in the domain to respect them. These were related to state
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hegemonic projects in which social, political, economic and cultural conditions impacted on sport policy. An alternative to this strategy could have been an interactive strategy whereby the same central authority stimulated a process whereby the rules of the sports domain were constituted while allowing participants to put forward their views, needs and interests. This is a situation wholly foreign to the country’s experience. This peculiarity of Bulgaria’s case helps the reader to comprehend the empirical lessons from applying critical theory.

Having established the persisting features of the sports domain (imperative strategies and a central authority), we refer briefly to the empirical evidence in relation to the three key assumptions of critical theory, selectivity, emancipation and power. According to critical theory, the presence of a central state (or state controlled) authority, responsible for devising policies and standards in the sports domain, implies that versions of sports policy (the attainment and use of knowledge for achieving particular ends) were socially constructed, and that we have to critically assess our knowledge about them. As demonstrated by this thesis, the outcomes of sports policies in each of the three periods corresponded very little with their proclaimed aims, and depended on an authority’s visions, capacity and relation to the state project. From a strategic perspective, the process of knowledge construction (forming sports policy) followed a particular pattern of:

i) negation by a central authority of previous dominant ideas about sport, related practices and achievements. The Europeanisation project (1990) rejected the totalitarian concept of sport, in the same way as the Communist project (1945) neglected the bourgeois sport policy;

ii) producing new knowledge (ideas and policies) in a non-transparent and accountable manner, which was not based on an objective analysis of socio-economic processes, thus did not recognise different groups and interests. Virtually no national sport policy in the three periods ever made a serious reference to particular political, social, economic, demographic, or global processes to justify practical actions;

iii) assertion of the new knowledge (setting standards for performance and control) in an incontrovertible way, and accompanying measures to ensure compliance
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with it, and allowing no contestation. Sport policies were not promoted as a framework, rather as ultimate ends to be aspired by all players in the domain;

iv) avoiding any sport policy analyses from which might follow systematic conclusions and recommendations, which might permit let alone encourage access to knowledge available to policy-makers (as in Western Europe and North America). No public or voluntary sport administration, or academic expert produced a coherent piece of work addressing key issues of sport policy making.

The research findings from the three periods confirmed that the visions of the state as formulated by its key managers (party or state leaders) were presented as the interests to be pursued by all actors in the sports domain. The lack of communication (or distorted interaction as in the case of the AU, Chapter 7) between individual members of sports clubs and the sports governing bodies and their member clubs nurtured further the notion of the supreme interest and domination, and prevented the formation of sports communities of interest. Clubs largely remained fictitious entities with no real identity and members, and virtually all strategic sport policy documents reflected the ‘needs of the system’ and not that of the major actors involved. Instead what Goodin (1998:545-6) termed communities of regard and subsumption emerged. The former served as sources of standards and benchmarks, that is, when an actor entered the sports domain he/she knowingly submitted himself to the judgement of the state as its supreme regulator. This was well illustrated by numerous measures, regulations and interventions for controlling the sports domain imposed by all state administrations (see introductory boxes in Chapters 3 to 5 for key state interventions). The latter (seen as an extension of the community of regard involved the loyal leaderships of voluntary sports organisations) were also described by Goodin as a ‘total institution’ demanding loyalty both in conceptual and structural senses.

The processes of knowledge construction (forming sport policy) and of forming sports communities of interest signal the social, political, economic and cultural selectivity of sport policy. Drawing from the analyses in Chapters 4 to 8, the key ways in which this selectivity was produced can be summarised in the following way:
(i) the social selectivity consisted of instilling state supremacy over civil society;

(ii) the political selectivity consisted of coercively imposing a dominant ideology in the capitalist and communist periods, and in the post-totalitarian period, of a covert ideological mechanism which subjected managers and organisations perceived to be totalitarian, to repressions and limited support;

(iii) the economic selectivity established centralised forms of resource allocation; and

(iv) the cultural selectivity promoted particular models of sport consumption/production, for example, collective forms during the communist period.

The critical theory sees emancipation as a process of alleviating the suffering of oppressed people and interests by empowering them. Jessop termed this process 'interpellation', which referred to the ideological mechanism through which subjects were endowed with identities and social positions. Empowerment required, in the words of Kieffer (cited in Chalip, 1996:313) a transformation from victim to agent. The three major transformations clearly brought to the fore of the sports policy domain groups and individuals who were not present before, but clearly were not victims either. This was done in a manner which had very little to do with the influence of organised group interests, although the transformations in sport were made in the name of empowering more people to have access to sport and to its process of decision-making. For example, the cases of the chairman of CYPES Barchovski, and Zhajakov as chairman of the Volleyball Federation, or various associations which were not present in the previous period, and were created by small groups without grass-root support. Empowerment in the three periods was firstly an ideological construct and its practical realisation was seen in terms of discriminating against any competing views, and secondly the know-how of complying to systemic rules laid down by a central authority. These required institutional structures, but given the process of knowledge production (imperative strategies) employed by state sport administrations, they have in fact sustained the very inequalities which the process of empowerment was trying to redress. Ray (1993:122) identified this as a
socio-cultural process of organisational attachment to the organisational culture of the former system.

In the Bulgarian case, the empowerment was given rather than recognised and grasped by those who aspired to it. As Gruber & Trickett (1987, cited in Chalip 1997:4) argued: "if knowledge is merely conferred from persons claiming to be expert to those classified as nonexpert, it can be more disempowering than empowering." The communitarian model of a sports policy community dominated by the state as developed during the capitalist, communist and democratic periods demanded that agents lost their independence when they came together to discuss issues, to the point where they had no independent stance from which to disagree. This was ensured by coercive measures either overtly (in the laws of the 1878-1989), or covertly (in post-communist governmental contracts with voluntary sports organisations, as explained in Chapter 7).

Athletes, grass roots sports clubs and private providers as well as many minor sports were neither identified as potentially active agents, nor given a place at the policy-decision table. But disempowering becomes possible even in an "expert environment", as in the case of NOCs and the IOC global TOP marketing programme. Indeed, based on the use of intellectual property rights, the programme gave power (opening up the possibility to act) to NOCs to benefit from the sale of Olympic symbols within a national territory. A positive result of this was that the BOC was able to stop the abuse of Olympic coins by the National Bank. However, the terms of 'exclusivity' embedded in the programme prevented the BOC (and all NOCs) from benefiting from sponsorship from other companies which offered services or products in the same product/service category as the exclusive rights holder - member of TOP. For example, although the American insurance company John Hancock (a TOP partner) does not operate in Bulgaria, no other insurance company is allowed to enter into agreement with the BOC. In other words, empowerment in sports policy could be seen more as statisation of sport rather than improving the process of policy making by creating a culture of transparency, responsibility, consultation and accountability, which would enable more agents to freely take part.
In critical theory to date emancipation has referred to benefiting individuals or groups. But the analysis revealed that it should be interpreted from the point of view of all key members of the domain. In other words, emancipation should be viewed as opening up possibilities not only to individual agents (participants or managers), but to agents and agencies on the three other levels: between clubs and national governing bodies; between clubs/governing bodies and the state; and between the state and international agencies. These four levels of emancipation seem to be interdependent as individual autonomy can be seen as a precondition for the greater freedom of clubs and associations, in the same way as state emancipation (cultural, political or economic) is likely to increase possibilities for individual autonomy.

9.5 Strategic Relations' applications outside capitalism

Studying Bulgaria's sport policy in the 20th century from the Strategic Relations and critical perspectives proved a challenging and rewarding venture. They provided a useful framework for comprehending and interpreting events, the actions of agents and strategies in sports policy domain, and demonstrated that sports policy is not an abstract concept, but a strategic relation. So far as it can be ascertained this was the first study to apply the Strategic Relations approach in a non-capitalist state. Together with a similar study on Greek sport policy (Nassis, 1994), the two accounts provided some empirical evidence to substantiate Jessop's theoretical claims. This study also offered different interpretations of some of Strategic Relations' premises, particularly those concerning the role of the state and the notion of interests in sport policy making, in that of the state as mediator, and interests dual nature.

Covering a century-long period was a daunting and exhausting task because ensuring consistency in details and comparability between three periods proved not always easy. Conceptualising and operationalising Strategic Relations allowed for three overriding tendencies pertinent to Bulgaria's sport policy to be highlighted. The first was **continuity** - in terms of state forms of intervention and state-voluntary sport sector relations and domain constitution. The conceptualisation and construction of modern sport in Bulgaria emerged more as a response to threats of the disintegration of the national territory and nationhood, than as a typical popular leisure pursuit. This
had a huge impact on shaping interests and sports policy community identity. Although the 20th century saw the advance of three starkly different projects - Capitalist (1878-1994), Communist (1944-1989) and Europeanisation (1989-1999), each imposing new socio-political arrangements, the underlying ethos of sports policy remained the same. The continuity in sport policy was presupposed to a great extent by territorial and constitutional aspects of the state which were subject to complex geo-political developments.

The second trend in sports policy could be termed *statisation*, and reflected a process of neutralising and channelling popular initiatives in favour of continued domination of the political leadership. It involved gradual growth and oppressive presence of state apparatuses in the sport policy domain as initiator, mediator, facilitator, allocator and controller of strategies. Different justifications were used for legitimising the statisation of the sports domain, from the need for defence and military training to people’s well-being and allegedly greater free choice. The call for more government was equally popular in the political and sports domains, and was promoted by the state and voluntary sports organisations managers in all three periods. As sports organisations never managed to establish a clear membership orientation, they could not rely on mass support. Therefore, the material and other privileges offered by the state were seen as more valuable and worthy of pursuing. It is possible to suggest that, together with the first trend of continuity, there is in place a process of active reproduction of social structures in sport promoted both by state and voluntary organisations managers aiming at sustaining their positions and privileges. A similar process in Canadian sport, though, from a class struggle perspective was identified by Gruneau in his revision of *Class, Sports and Social Development* (1999:14-6). Statisation of sport is also a dominant moment of the social construction of sports policy because this process had always occurred within the framework of building a new stateness. Thus, the sports domain developed along side the constitution of relatively weak states, which were not interested in promoting other powerful actors like voluntary or private groups. Even in the post 1989 period the voluntary and commercial sports sectors have not developed to the stage where they have become worthy and necessary partners in a shared governance of sport, as is common in
Western Europe (Meier, 1988), North America (Chalip and Johnson, 1996), Australia (McKay, 1986) and Japan (Nakamura, 1996).

The final trend - incongruity - depicted the lack of correlation between state sports projects and their outcomes. The outcome of no state sport project in the three periods corresponded to what was originally envisaged. As a rule, sports projects were ideologically constructed and had very little ground in reality. Virtually no strategic sports policy document was based on a comprehensive analysis of society, and consequently they failed to address the interests and needs of those who were subject to these policies.

Strategic relations in the sport policy domain were formed around what was perceived as a priority by the state hegemonic project. An essential condition for promoting particular strategies was the placement of individual agents. Traditionally, such a large group as membership of sports organisations, athletes and private actors were not well organised, and so found themselves excluded from the policy making process.

Sports policy’s major transformations followed the changes in state projects and constitutional arrangements which in the three periods were imposed substantially as a result of outside forces. Because of that, they inevitably involved interests different from those of the state and local communities. This often triggered conceptual and behavioural responses learned in the previous environment because agents and organisations found it difficult to cope with demands of transformations. Thus, the empowerment of agents who were to carry out the new policies was given from above and not accrued, and served to reinforce the statisation of sport.

9.6. Future research opportunities

Finally, it is believed that similar studies will unveil new avenues for further research, enlightenment and empowerment of scholars, policy makers and organisations which will alter Bulgaria’s sport policy in the 21st century. In this respects, it seems that there are several promising ideas which this project brought to light and might be pursued.
First, as it became clear, various agents establish relations in the process of pursuing either their personal or the interests of the organisations they represent. As they do that, they also create new relations which were not necessarily envisaged before. Such relations that deserve further considerations emerged between the opportunities for participation, which all state and voluntary sports administrations tried to enhance, and the opportunities for control in sport gained both by participants and spectators as knowledgeable agents.

Second, establishing Strategic Relations is a structural and a phenomenological process, that is, one which involves actors' perceptions and social settings on which they act. It would be important then to investigate the relations between sports policy aims and the structures accompanying them.

Third, another set of Strategic Relations which this research did not address concern the relations between political actors and core sports domain members such as the groups of ethnic minorities and women, which are otherwise well politically organised, but lack representation in the sports policy domain.

Fourth, the democratisation project calls for attention to Strategic Relations which will develop between local authorities and grass-roots sports clubs and participants. In the light of a century-long authoritarian state dictate in sport, it is more likely demands for participation to be met by municipalities (still a governmental agency), but under the pressure of better defined local interests. In addition, local authorities might voice more decisively these demands to the central government and become involved closely in sport policy-making process.

Fifth, it is essential for a sport policy process and managers to identify the dominant, residual and emerging Strategic Relations as a factor in shaping policymakers' placement and visions. In his analysis of the Bulgarian post-Communist political system Karasimeonov (1998:338) identified four types of cleavages - residual (those inherited from the pre-Communist society and manifesting themselves in post-Communist society), transitional (those which determine political divisions during
initial changes of the regime), actual (new cleavages marked by specific contradictions of post-Communist society) and potential (those major issues which might transform into actual cleavages). These are, however, also informing for the relations that may have to be established in order to outline the cleavages.

Sixth, when applied to an analysis of Strategic Relations in sport policy making, the duality of critical theory’s main concerns about emancipation and power have to recognised. For example, what may be seen from a local perspective by agents involved as a dependency situation, may well be defined as empowerment from a global perspective. The workings of this duality is illustrated by the IOC global marketing programme TOP, promoted as a means of empowering the NOCs. In reality, there are indications suggesting that despite structural and financial benefits, the programme imposes simultaneously constrains on its beneficiaries, which may outweigh the gains.


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Interview with Mr. Christo Meranzov
(Conducted on 1st September 1998, Sofia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958 - 1962</td>
<td>Head of Sports Department, Youth Communist League</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963 - 1980</td>
<td>Vice-Chairman, Bulgarian Sports Union (BSFS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980 - 1989</td>
<td>Deputy head of Bulgarian Communist Party Central Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisational Department; Chairman National Weightlifting Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990 - 1996</td>
<td>Bulgarian Sports Union (BSFS) consultant</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996 -</td>
<td>Executive Director, Bulgarian Powerlifting Federation</td>
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How did you get involved in sport policy making?
Firstly I was appointed by the Party (Bulgarian Communist Party-BCP) in 1958 as a head of the sports department of the Youth Communist League (YCL). Sport was perceived by the Party as a powerful means for mobilizing the youth in building the socialist society. After the 1958 BCP’s decision to establish a mass voluntary sports organisation - BSFS - many of us from the YCL’s sports department were transferred to leadership positions in the BSFS. There were no trained staff, and we were entrusted with the power to set up the new sport organisation in line with the Party’s visions. For 17 years after 1963 I served as BSFS vice-chairman responsible mainly for the national Olympic teams, and the system of elite training. At the beginning, we did not have great experience and benefited a lot from our Soviet friends. BSFS invited Soviet experts to advise on setting the foundations of sport training and various organisational issues, including staff training.

What was the role of the state in devising national sports policy?
The state (and the Party of course) promoted the idea that state affairs had to be decided with the participation of voluntary bodies. This was a process whereby the state delegates functions to various voluntary organisations, provides resources and holds them responsible for implementing policies. The BSFS was assigned the responsibility of implementing state policy in the field of sport. These functions were fixed in the 1949 Sport Law, which allowed the Council of Ministers to supervise and intervene in sport policy making, particularly when something was going wrong. It was an objective necessity - it was impossible for sport to do without the state. It was clear, of course that the BCP had a supreme leading role in society.

Can you describe the actual process of strategic policy formulation at the time?

As you are well aware, society’s general courses of action had been decided by the Party, and communicated from its congresses. The Party’s postulates always contained directions for sport, and it was a BSFS responsibility to put them into particular strategies and practical policies for implementation. We, believed however, that sports policy making should involve public discussions, and insisted on the participation of various partners, such as the YCL, the Trade Unions, the Ministry of Education, and others. There had been several declarations in this respect (in 1958 and 1962), but the first attempt at similar discussions was organised in 1965, during an extended Plenary session of the BSFS which aimed to evaluate the national Olympic teams’ participation in the Tokyo 1964 Olympics, and to devise a strategy for the Olympic Games in Mexico in 1968. The strategic outcome of these discussions was the establishment of a well defined policy for elite sport, which was endorsed by the 3rd congress (1967) of the BSFS. It was in fact, a whole system for talent identification, nourishment and performance, which was gradually put in place, with the objective of implementing state policy for achieving better results in the international sport competition. The concept behind the system was to implement the state policy with voluntary efforts.

There were, of course, arguments in favour of greater centralisation and professionalisation of the system, which gradually took precedence. But the idea of having professional athletes was inconceivable.
Why then were certain sports given greater privileges than others?
It was mainly because we lacked material and human resources. There was simply not enough in the coffers to spend, and it was not possible to rely on natural selection (that is, on young people coming through Sport for All programmes, explanation added) of athletes. So we had to put a system, which was actively seeking to identify and nurture sporting talents. That is why a wide network of sports boarding schools was suggested as one solution.

How was the whole system financed?
There were several financial leverages. We had always claimed that we were performing particular functions on behalf of the state. Therefore, sport was entitled to resources allocated by the same state. In addition, we had developed purposeful programmes for Olympic preparation which were financed by the Government. A third source of support was the setting up in 1965-67 of departmental Olympic teams (what is meant here is the teams of the Army, Police, and Army construction forces, which were directly financed by the respective ministries, explanation added). We did not hesitate to ask for more money for elite sport should there be a need, and usually it was given to us. The truth is, however, that the BSFS never knew what exactly its budget was. We always spent more than planned.

Can you give some examples of the role of Party officials in deciding the outcome of particular strategies?
You may be aware that amongst the members of Politburo, there were several fanatical sport fans. It was well known that the Defence minister, Dobri Djurov, and Todor Zhivkov’s ‘right hand’ Milko Balev were CSKA supporters, while Boris Veltchev, who was in charge of the ideology and culture was a Levski fan. In addition, because of his background, one of the oldest Politburo members, Pentcho Kubadinski, a close friend of Zhivkov from the resistance, was a keen supporter of equestrian sport and wrestling.
In 1985 a very dangerous situation emerged. The spark that ignited the fire was an ugly incident between the old rivals CSKA and Levski during the final match of the football cup. Members of the Politburo and other senior party officials who were not happy with the concept of departmental sport were prompt in wanting to settle the matter by issuing a party decision to dismantle these clubs. Such a solution would have been disastrous for the whole system of elite sport, and we tried desperately to contact officials in an attempt to persuade them not to proceed with the decision. The next day I went to see one of the Central Committee's Secretaries, Georgy Atanasov, who was a close mate from the years in the Youth organisation. He was very concerned and puzzled, and explained that there was nothing he could do, and advised that this was just not the right time for arguing. He agreed, however, to argue for a more ambiguous wording of the Party decision, which would allow, once the dust was settled, to restore in a disguised form what used to be departmental sport.

The BSFS was not even consulted. A harsh decision was made public on the next day and we had to obey and to reshape a significant part of the sports system.

I can also tell you another personal encounter with Baj (a nickname for uncle) Pentcho. At the time he was chairman of the Wrestling Federation. He loved very much the mass wrestling festivals held in villages, followed by mass cavortings. Wrestling was doing very well but we clearly needed more resources to ensure its place as a major contributor to Olympic Success. The best solution in our view was to have a Council of Ministers’s decree. We also knew that, had we tried to promote this decision through official channels, it would not stand a chance. So I send the proposal for a decree to the Prime Minister but he categorically denied to consider it. Then I went to see Baj Pentcho who explained that there was another way to get this proposal through. He promised to persuade the head of the Politburo, T. Zhivkov, to sign the proposal first, and then it could be processed with no obstructions in the Council of Ministers. And this is exactly what happened. The government issued its first decree relating to a single sport, and the resources needed for wrestling were secured. So lobbying and having influential patrons was essential for the success of sport policy.
Were there any contingent issues between the various branches of state administration and the sport governing body?

Various contests and rivalries were a permanent feature of sports policy-making. As I said earlier, at the beginning sport did not have its own leadership cadres, and many of us who worked in the Youth organisation were transferred to leadership positions in the newly formed Bulgarian Sports Union (BSFS, 1958). Because sport was predominantly a youth activity, and due to many youth leaders placement in the sports union, a sense of closeness and co-operation was created between these two spheres. Thus, when in 1967-8 the Party first tried to establish a state structure responsible for youth and sport, this was seen as a real treat by the Youth organisation. The YCL refused to accept the supremacy of the state Committee for Youth and Sport (CMS), and asked the Party’s central committee to appoint one of the secretaries of the Youth organisation to be in charge of sport. Moreover, the YCL also demanded that one of the BCP’s Central Committee’s Secretaries should be made responsible for sport and the CMS.

The strategic idea behind the introduction of the CMS was a statisation of the Youth organisation and sport, a squabble which lasted until 1976. Bulgarian sports achievements at the Mexico 1968 and Munich 1972 Olympic Games clearly raised the ambitions of Party and state officials for greater control over sport, and in 1971 a second attempt for direct state governance of youth and sport was made, with the setting up of another CMS. This created enormous bureaucracy, overlap of functions and posts between voluntary and public agencies. Eventually, the Party July’s plenary session (1976) brought this situation to an end, when the CMS was dissolved and the YCL and the BSFS were left as the only players in their fields, without duplicating state structures.

There were, of course, tensions between different sports competing for greater shares of the cake, which were fueled by local ambitions of many party and sports officials, who was also part of the game. There were numerous attempts for promoting projects favoring particular locations, say for setting up of a sport boarding school or a
swimming pool which ran counter to the general strategy for talent identification and elite sport development.

The East-West ideological tension was clearly mirrored in sport, and the striving to outperform the ideological opponent urged the use of drugs. What was the role of BSFS in supplying drugs to athletes? At the time you were president of the weightlifting federation, and as we know, four Bulgarian weight-lifters had been stripped of their Olympic gold medals for drug taking.

There had been many speculations about this issue. I have said several times in reports and interviews that the BSFS was never involved in importing and supplying of drugs to athletes. Indeed, we did have a well organised medical service for monitoring athletes which involved administering drugs for treatment, but supplying and encouraging drug taking was never part of our policy. It is also true that some coaches were prepared to push their athletes to extremes in order to win, and that involved taking performance enhancing substances.

People must recognise that there were other issues at stake, and that a positive drug sample is never simply a case of misfortune or foolishness on the part of athletes and administrators. I don’t understand the people who want to discredit Bulgarian sport.

How do you see the role of the BSFS after the transformations?
A lot has been said about transformations, and the way sport should develop in the future. I think that it would be political short-sightness not to use the rich experience of the sports union due to its ideologically subordinate position in the previous regime. Unfortunately, due to its ambivalent position with regard to transformations, and its inability to take a clear stance, BSFS is very open to criticism. We developed in 1994 a clear conception for its role in the new environment, but this was never put into practice. It is important that the state differentiates between the functions to be performed by the state committee for sport (CYPES) and the voluntary organisation (BSFS). It is a shame that the BSFS is manifesting itself as an opposition to the ruling class and not as a voluntary body committed to providing sports services.
There has been and there will always be a need for voluntary sport organisations, and BSFS should play an important role here. I believe that the state will recognise this necessity and sooner or later will put things right by giving the voluntary sector greater freedom and will start to consider it as its partner, and not as a totalitarian creation.