

Anna Nikitin

**RUSSIA AND THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT**

**A study of Russian national identity as described in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport during the Winter Olympic Games of 1988, 1992, 1994, and in the future Winter Olympic Games of 2014**

University of Jyväskylä  
Department of Sport Sciences  
Master's Thesis  
Social sciences of Sport  
Autumn 2010

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ  
Department of Sport Sciences/Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences

NIKITIN ANNA:

Russia and the Olympic Movement: A study of Russian national identity as described in the newspaper *Sovetskij Sport* during the Winter Olympic Games of 1988, 1992, 1994, and in the future Winter Olympic Games of 2014

ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis, 84 pages

Social sciences of sport

Autumn 2010

---

The topic of the thesis deals with Russia and the Olympic Movement, studying Russian national identity as it is described in the newspaper *Sovetskij Sport* during three past Winter Olympic Games (1988, 1992, 1994) and the upcoming Winter Olympic Games that take place in Sochi 2014 in the framework of international politics. The research task is to analyze, what kinds of discourses do the writings of Russian Olympic Committee's leading sports journal *Sovetskij Sport* use in times of the above mentioned Olympic Games in relation to the "West". It is studied, in which way can these discourses be understood as representations of national identity in the framework of political upheavals.

Politics and sport are intertwined. Sport is a traditional arena for states to compete for symbolic, and material benefits. The symbolic development of sport is most satisfactorily comprehended when culture, sport, media, economics and ideology are all maintained as strong terms in the debate. Media is an important channel in influencing the masses with descriptions of reality.

This thesis is grounded in the framework of International Relations theory's approach of interpretive, constructivist thinking, drawing from sociology and symbolic interactionism. The post-positivistic approach introduced instability and change into the study of international affairs. The expressions the Winter Olympic Games produce in a widely published newspaper correspond with the political reality as it is conceived at given times. Years 1988, 1992, 1994 were the times of Olympic Games when national identity had to be represented through the differing political regimes of Soviet Union, the CIS and Russia. The end of the Soviet Union was followed by the rise of 'Westernization' and the subsequent nationalistic tendencies, with attempts to define Russia's place in the international community. Olympic sports mirrored the challenges to the Great Power status and definitions that came with the lack of resources, dispersion of national identity and pride once defined by the powerful, party-led communist regime. The Winter Games in Sochi 2014, Russia represent an opportunity to establish a once again powerful might that is at the same time a recognized partner to the Western community.

Discourse analysis is the research method used in this study. The prevailing discourse categories found in the materials represent nationality, the political system, the ways other countries perceive Soviet-Russia during the Games, the dominant system of sport, and commercialisation. The results show that the eras corresponding with the years of study reflect the state of international politics, and interaction between the different political systems of the 'West' and the Soviet Union/ Russia, drawing insights from the differing cultural aspects and the effects of economic systems. According to the results, national identity is clearly represented in the newspaper discourses, during Soviet Union through the communist propaganda of superiority, in the time of the CIS through the insecurities corresponding to the political system, and for Russia, reflecting challenges faced in disappointments with dealings with the 'West' – but at the same time with emotional notions of a homeland, blessed with the continuity of cultural uniqueness.

Keywords: *Soviet Union, Russia, discourse analysis, national identity, Winter Olympic Games.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION .....	4
2 RESEARCH TASK .....	6
2.1 Research Questions .....	6
2.2 Discourse Analysis as the Method of Study .....	7
2.3 Research Materials .....	9
2.3.1 Sovetskij Sport .....	11
3 THE NATIONAL ASPECT OF GOVERNING and the IOC FRAMEWORK.....	13
3.1 The International Olympic Committee’s Challenges.....	13
3.2 “The West and the Rest” .....	14
3.3 Russia as a Subject of Study; Cultural Tradition .....	18
4 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	21
4.1 International Relations Theory.....	21
4.1.1 Security Studies in a Changing World.....	23
4.1.2 Constructing National Identity.....	25
4.3 Sociology of Knowledge and Social Constructionism .....	26
4.4 Constructivism and its Critics .....	27
4.5 Goffman and Symbolic Interactionism.....	29
4.6 Culture and Identity Studies.....	30
5 SPORT, MEDIA & POLITICS .....	35
5.1 The Political Aspect of Sport.....	35
5.2 ‘Mediated sport’ and ‘Media sport’ .....	37
5.3 ‘Power’ .....	39
6 THREE ERAS – THREE WINTER GAMES.....	41
6.1 The Soviet Era: ”Hand in Hand for the Party”.....	43
6.1.1 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games.....	43
6.1.2 The National-International Axis of State Policy.....	46
6.1.3 Commercialisation - Do two different trends mix? .....	48
6.1.4 Discourses by Categories.....	48
6.1.5 Continuity and Change .....	49
6.2 Commonwealth of Independent States: “Different Nations under the Olympic Flag” .....	51
6.2.1 1992 Albertville Winter Olympic Games .....	52
6.2.2 The National-International Axis of State Policy.....	54
6.2.3 Commercialisation .....	54
6.2.4 Continuity and Change .....	56
6.3 Conclusion: The beginning of the 1990’s, the Olympic Movement and International Relations .....	59
6.3.1 The Discourses of Equality – Difference (National Pride).....	61
6.4 The ‘Great’ Russian State: “Is the ‘Red Team’ still Mighty?” .....	63
6.4.1 The 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympic Games.....	63
6.4.2 The National-International Axis of State Policy.....	65
6.4.3 Commercialisation .....	66
6.4.4 Continuity and Change .....	66
6.5 Conclusion: Towards the End of the 1990’s, the Olympic Movement and International Relations .....	68
7 FROM VANCOUVER TO SOCHI – BRINGING THE GAMES TO THE 21 <sup>st</sup> CENTURY .....	70
7.1 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games 2010.....	70

7.2 Sochi Winter Games 2014, “An Image Battle” .....	71
7.3 Continuity and Change, the Olympic Movement and International Relations in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century .....	73
8 CONCLUSIONS .....	76
9 SELF-REFLECTION OF STUDYING SOVIET-RUSSIA IN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT .....	79
List of References .....	80
Materials.....	83
Internet Resources.....	84
APPENDICES .....	85

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: The Medal table, 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games.....	43
TABLE 2: Terms stated in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport in 1988 referring to main groupings.....	47
TABLE 3: The Medal Table, 1992 Albertville Winter Olympic Games.....	49
TABLE 4: Terms stated in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport in 1992 referring to main groupings.....	54
TABLE 5: The Medal Table, 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympic Games.....	60
TABLE 6: Terms stated in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport in 1994 referring to main groupings.....	63
TABLE 7: The Medal Table, 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games.....	65

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ‘Zemlja, s kotoroj my startuyem’ (The land that is our point of departure).....	86
APPENDIX 2: ‘Pletso k pletsu – k metste’ (Shoulder to shoulder – for one dream).....	87
APPENDIX 3: A letter to the President of the International Olympic Committee by President Vladimir Putin; attached to Sochi 2014 application materials (in Russian).....	88
APPENDIX 4: A letter to the President of the International Olympic Committee by President Vladimir Putin; attached to Sochi 2014 application materials (translation).....	89

## 1 INTRODUCTION

RUSSIA and the OLYMPIC MOVEMENT, A study of Russian national identity as described during the Winter Games of 1988, 1992, 1994, 2014 has its focus on Russia in the Olympic Movement. In this thesis it will be studied, how the national identity of Russia first of all can be defined and secondly what are its expressions during major political and cultural breaches of 1988, 1992, and 1994.

The abovementioned years are the defining moments of the end of the Soviet Union, the rise of 'Westernization' and subsequent nationalistic tendencies. In addition, these were the times of Winter Olympic Games where national identity had to be represented through the Soviet Union, a Commonwealth of Independent States and Russia. The materials selected for this thesis are publications of a traditional sports newspaper *Sovetskij Sport*. It is studied, in what kind of discourses national identity is expressed and described during the Winter Games, since the Olympics have been considered to be the most important arena of nations competing with each other while at the same time uniting the entire world. The definitions of the 'West', 'Europe', 'self', and 'other' are important.

This study looks also to the present day after the Vancouver Winter Olympic Games' disappointments. The upcoming Winter Olympic Games of Sochi 2014, Russia, are analysed using the application's materials and corresponding articles from *Sovetskij Sport* in the year 2010, from the viewpoint that Russia is now able to be in charge and the arena of the Games in a modern context.

Russia in the Olympic Movement is a study of international relations and sport focusing on the expressions of national identity. The research method used in this study is discourse analysis, the theoretical framework through which the process of identity formation is understood is constructivist. The interrelations of media, sport and politics are studied. This study aims to reveal information about the ways national identity is negotiated and represented to both domestic and international audiences.

According to Blain (Bernstein & Blain 2003), we make a number of assumptions about homologies and actual relationships between and among a number of widespread components of social, cultural, and explicitly economic or political life, which we cannot invariably stop to justify. It is believed that behaviour and discourse in sport as well as media coverage of sport can be used to inform our understanding of much broader political questions.

Self/ Other and continuity/ change are used as determinants of analysis. The 'West' has traditionally been the 'Other' for Russia. Continuity is seen as a tendency to uphold the Great Power status and cultural superiority theme of Russia. The Westernization process that started with the Gorbachev -era, on the other hand, is strongly connected to change. There are cycles in the processes of continuity and change that reflect the disappointments and aspirations of the international relations' climate. It was the starting point of this thesis to analyze the materials of the government led *Sovetskij Sport* as commentator of the Soviet-Russian high-level sport performance and compare the results to those of 'international reality' as it was interpreted at the times of Winter Olympic Games. Interestingly, links to state-level definitions of Russia as a nation and its parallel political systems to a great extent indeed follow the definitions that are written in this widely read newspaper. This goes to show the theoretical prerequisites that the defining of national identity takes place in different mediums of a society.

The research task is explained in the following chapter, followed by clarification of the method of study and the selected materials for this thesis. The International Olympic Committee's framework and the aspect of national governing, with all the controversies they entail, are of great importance for this study and will be studied further in chapter three. The expression "West and the rest" is studied, on the one hand, from the perspectives of Russia's claimed cultural uniqueness and, on the other, from its aspirations to belong to the Western community. The theoretical framework of this thesis is interpretive, constructionism combined with insights from symbolic interactionism, identity and cultural studies form basis for analysis of selected materials. These aspects are considered in chapter four in the broader framework of international relations theory. A closer look to the meanings of media representations in chapter five is followed by detailed analysis of newspaper materials (*Sovetskij Sport*) in the years of selected Winter Olympic Games.

## 2 RESEARCH TASK

The IOC's report on the Autonomy of the Olympic and Sports Movement supports the notion that sport has shaped policies and been used for political purposes. Boundaries between sport, politics, economics and other aspects of society are increasingly overlapping. Due to its growing impact on society and industry alike, it appears to be more and more difficult to keep the sports movement autonomous within society. (Mitchell & Baumann 2006.)

In Russia, the government's role in the National Olympic Committee and its effect on using sport as a tool in international relations is under scrutiny in this study.

Sport mirrors reality and the evolution of society. In terms of autonomy, there is no doubt that the 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen sport grow from a small autonomous phenomenon in the fringes of society where legislation was very limited, to a dominant – and less autonomous – phenomenon integrated into a fully developed state of law system. Sport keeps growing, and its success in popularity and economical terms over the past decade brings challenges, which will encourage more interventionism through an equally growing legal order.

### 2.1 Research Questions

The research questions of this study are the following:

- What kinds of discourses do the writings of the Russian Olympic Committee's leading sports journal *Sovetskij Sport* (editorials/ columns) use in times of Olympic Games in four different years 1988, 1992, 1994, 2014) about Russia in relation to the "West"?
- In which way can these discourses be understood as representations of national identity in the framework of political upheavals?

## 2.2 Discourse Analysis as the Method of Study

Discourse analysis studies cultural meanings and how these meanings are connected with relations between people. Discourse analysis (DA) does not ask the direct question 'why', but rather "inner" and "outer"<sup>1</sup> reasons are considered in the very form they are presented in (e.g. in texts). A researcher concentrates on the *describing* and *explaining* that take place in materials. It is not studied in which way the discourses could be "logical" or "truthful", but in what kind of interplay they occur. When the analyzing of the material is completed, it is possible for the researcher to consider the reasons and consequences of these actions. Using a language is not just describing, it is also acting. Actors need to use in the materials they produce certain discourses that are culturally understandable. This refers to e.g. historically and religiously known discourses. Still, discourses are not fixed; rather, known discourses are usually referred to when an action needs to be justified. (Jokinen et al. 1999.)

Discourses that structure culture refer to meanings, metaphors, representations, images, and stories that together produce a certain version of events. If it is accepted that through language it is possible to access numerous versions of events, it means that those same events can be described in different discourses and representations of the world are thus different. Every discourse implies a different way of acting. Claims of the truth and knowledge are a crucial part of studying identity, power and change. (Parker 1992.)

Nixon (2008) analyses how sport is connected to various institutions that make up the society, economics, politics and mass media. Change cannot be understood without a global perspective and so a study of interaction is needed. This relates to the fact that towards the end of the Soviet Union, it started to open up to the West; there was a change in attitudes.

Social relationships are built on a foundation of expectations incorporated in social norms, rules, and roles that tie people together and change over time. We also relate to other people in social networks, e.g. global organisation like the Olympics. When there occur disappointments in the real world, sport serves as a symbolic refuge.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is a dividing point between researchers, some highlight the inner, (see, e.g. Waeuver, Neumann), others the outer factors.



The qualitative discourse themes can include national symbols/ stereotypes, national identity / habitus and the use of personal pronouns, the vocabulary of war, narcissistic language, the reference of invented traditions/ nostalgia and issues related to European (identity) politics. It will be analyzed, whether these categories are present in the media coverage. According to Maguire (et al. 1999) it would appear that, in some countries, global sports are being used to reassert an intense form of national identity discourse in opposition to further European integration.

There might be an internal discursive incoherence as journalists try to maintain the validity of fixed conceptions of national character against inescapable evidence of their inadequacy. There is idealisation of history beneath this discursive conservatism (Blain et al. 1993.)

The theoretical basis of social constructionism is closely linked to discourse analysis considering its starting point language and language's nature for producing meanings. A same kind of sentence or word can be defined in many different ways depending on the context. One can also talk about a same thing in different ways, in different discourses. The context, in which language is used, gives words meaning. In different situations, when using language, one can make claims about reality, and these claims receive their functions in time and place. (Jokinen 1999, 18; Suoninen 1997.)

Discourse analysis is not a unified method of research, there are different traditions.

Jokinen (et al. 1999, 54-66) have introduced four pairs:

- Situational – cultural continuum
- Meanings – the ways to produce meaning
- Rhetorical aspect – responsiveness
- Criticism – analytical perspective.

There are usually elements of both ends of these pairs present in a study. Emphasis can be also in one or the other end of a pair, or in the middle. The emphasis can also change in different phases of a study. Parallel and contradictory meaning systems occur, discourses are always interpretations.

### 2.3 Research Materials

Newspaper publications during the times of past three Winter Olympic Games (Calgary, Albertville, Lillehammer) and one future Winter Olympic Games that take place in Sochi, Russia, are the materials selected for this study.

The newspaper *Sovetskij Sport* was selected as main material for study as it is directed to the general public, it is easily accessible for all<sup>2</sup>, and has been led by governmental institutions. The newspaper can be considered in this framework to represent a medium for describing national identity. Bernstein & Blain (2003) argue that the symbolic development of sport is most satisfactorily comprehended when culture, sport, media, economics and ideology are all maintained as strong terms in the debate.

It is possible to study how the interest of media institutions helps shaping discursive practices, and according to Blain (et al. 1993), the discursive output of the media is inevitably bound up with the interest of the state. The coverage of sport events in different sources become articulations, and a reproduction, of various kinds of ideological positions at the level of state interests by symbolic operation. (Blain et al. 1993, 8.)

The change in rhetoric referring to the International Olympic Committee as a global community in Soviet times followed by the realism of 1990s is obvious in the materials. Sport journalists are motivated by considerations of interest and power - sport journalism is important in the production and reproduction of ideology within societies in general.

Olympic sports is 'official' sport that makes newspaper headlines, mobilizes crowds and excites passions, lends itself to innumerable 'authorized' commentaries or dominates discussions in 'commercial parlours' (Arnaud & Riordan 1998).

The strong governmental influence over Olympic sports, especially in Soviet times, reflected the policy definitions of the state and is clearly present in describing the Olympics. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the criticism for the prevailing system

---

<sup>2</sup> In 1988, circulation: 5 032083, in 1994, 350 000 copies (year 1992 information not available).

became more obvious, and there was a gap in defining identity after a dominant great power status. Newspapers and the power of media are an example of defining powerful discourses in different levels of society, producing and maintaining identity. Media and politics are connected, and textual representations in newspapers can be interpreted as ‘reality’, reflecting interests of given groups. In comparison to distant politics, sport is appealing to human emotions and can raise a considerable amount of attention.

There is a great continuity in the publishing of *Soviet Sport* since the 1920s. All the columns and reports selected for analysis include definitions and evaluations of national identity and Soviet-Russia’s place in international relations. Since the newspaper has altered its structure to an extent during the years, there is not only one type of column or editorial selected. The time period for analyzing the newspapers starts one week before the Olympic Games and ends one week after the Games.

In the framework of international politics, the selected years are a reflection of the political (and cultural) upheavals that shook the national identity in Russia. The factors which at given times have justified the use of sport for foreign policy ends must be identified (Arnaud & Riordan 1998). Following this logic, it is considered how the upheavals have affected sports and how does sport in the ‘Olympic family’ (IOC framework) settle in the national framework. Different discourses are representations of identity considered possible, or desired, at given times in the newspaper reports. The years analyzed are 1988 during the Soviet Union, 1992 the Commonwealth of Independent States, and 1994 Russia. The Olympic Games in the year 2014 is both an opportunity and challenge for Russia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of defining its identity in relation to the West. .

The Olympic Games are an example of contestation between nations and ideologies, of promoting political socialization within countries establishing prestige and power in international relations. For Russia, the change in the political system meant facing the commercialization of sports and acknowledging the collapse in resources of once a great Soviet ‘red machine’ - the losing of communist ideology.

The fourth Winter Games to be analyzed are the future Games in Sochi 2014. Russia faces a true challenge in proving to be a substantial power to be taken seriously by the

‘West’. The final Games analyzed tie together the whole picture of continuity and change as there is a need to re-establish the superiority of Russian culture and system of governing. Russia needs to be taken seriously by the Western community. The Vancouver Winter Games and the collapse of the once mighty Russian team are shortly referred to, adding to the pressure of succeeding in the home Games – sport being the main arena to demonstrate the powerful nation. From the Soviet times to the present day, high-level sports still remains a substantial arena to represent national identity. Because of the different nature of the Sochi Games compared to past Games in terms of materials available for research, the Sochi Games are analyzed from the point of view of Russia and international relations, the bid materials, and the statements made after the Vancouver Games.

### 2.3.1 Sovetskij Sport

The newspaper *Sovetskij Sport* is the oldest sport publication in Russia. It was first published in 20.7.1924. Until 1945 it was called *Krasnyij Sport* (‘The Red Sport’). The founders of *Sovetskij Sport* are *ZAO Sovetskij Sport* and The Olympic Committee of Russia and it is published by *ZAO Izdatel’skij dom* and *Komsomol’skaja Pravda*. *Komsomol’skaja Pravda* is the biggest daily newspaper in Russia and it was founded in the year 1925 as the paper of Soviet youth alliance.

*Sovetskij Sport* is commonly recognised as ‘everyman’s daily sport newspaper and it was the most popular daily newspaper in the Soviet Union (e.g. Morton in Gruneau et al. 1982). *Sovetskij Sport* is used to illustrate if and how the tactics of nationalism and political tensions get articulated and how the media frames sporting encounters in ideological and national identity terms.

In *Sovetskij Sport*, under the Soviet Union, the policy on what type of sport news, feature stories and editorials may appear was determined by the Sport Section of the Propaganda Department of the Communist Party (CPSU) and the Committee of Physical Culture and Sport under the Council of Ministers of the USSR, which functioned as a Sport Ministry<sup>3</sup>. Like any newspaper in the Soviet Union, it had a

---

<sup>3</sup> In the cover of the 1988 *Sovetskij Sport*, it states: ”The proletariat all over the world – come together!”

editor who had to sign off on all stories in order for them to get published. This is the ground on which the discourses found in the materials are studied as discourses of the ruling elite. Already in 1982, Morton raised the question of the future in Soviet sport, what would be the official reactions of the leaders when the decline would hit the national teams. Although back then, it was still impossible to foresee the dismantling of the Soviet Union, it is interesting now to analyze the Olympic success (or failure) of the Russian team in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The USSR competed in the Olympics for the first time in 1952, during the Cold War. Both the Soviets and their political rivals, the US, perceived Olympic competition in nationalistic terms. Before the games, the Soviet press, especially *Pravda* and *Izvestija*, was instrumental in extolling their athletes to perform at their best so that their performances would reflect well on them and bring honour to the communist system.

### 3 THE NATIONAL ASPECT OF GOVERNING and the IOC FRAMEWORK

*The Olympic and Sports movement is led by the principles laid out in the Olympic Charter. Autonomy in the Olympic and Sports Movement is enshrined in the Olympic Charter in rule 26 (“International Federations”) and Rule 28.6. (“National Olympic Committees”) and further ensured in the Statutes and Constitutions of all International Sports Federations as well as of the National Olympic Committee. This collection of rules constitutes what can be called the lex sportiva of the Olympic and Sports Movement, which in a unique way forces governments and the Olympic and Sport Movement to cooperate under a precise set of rules. This set of rules and regulations is “complemented” by the various national sports laws around the world, which establish boundaries to the sports movement’s lex sportiva. (Mitchell & Baumann 2006.)*

#### 3.1 The International Olympic Committee’s Challenges

The IOC recognizes that internal and external factors erode the autonomy of the Olympic and sport movement<sup>4</sup>. According to an IOC –report, from the early days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until today various cases have put sports autonomy in jeopardy, and the aim now is to prevent more difficulties in the future. (Mitchell & Baumann 1996.)

The word autonomy indicates the right to self-regulation and self-government. It equally means the right of non-interference in one’s own affairs by external forces. However, in the context of the Olympic and Sports Movement, autonomy does not relate exclusively to political interference. The Olympic and Sports Movement clearly face other challenges as well, such as doping issues or pressure from the media, sponsors, broadcasters, agents, etc. that affect their ability to act autonomously.

The ideals of Olympism include that sport is a universal school of life, the only movement that can unite the world and create a global village, even in times of war and other social conflicts. According to this principle, sport is not merely a field of play nor is it only an economical activity. The reality seems quite different though, there have

---

<sup>4</sup> On governments’ tendencies to link sport with political projects see also Arnaud & Riordan (1998, 8).

been a number of boycotts (such as those of Moscow and Los Angeles Olympic Games) that have shaped the image of the Games as foremost political. Claims of increasing commercialization will receive a closer look in the framework of this thesis in the latter part of it as well.

There are hardly any National Olympic Committees that have no relationship with their governments. The role of governments cannot be undermining statutes of International Federations nor the autonomy of National Olympic Committees and National Federations. Similarly, the role of government cannot be limited to distributing financial assistance assorted with conditions aimed at controlling the operations of NOCs or NFs. The IOC recognizes that a new and recent development to be considered is the tendency showed by regional political institutions, as the likes of the European Union, to regulate sport at their image and needs, affecting sport worldwide, beyond the boundaries of their member countries. Autonomy is however essential to ensure that the sports movement can continue to develop sport and its values. (Mitchell & Baumann 1996; IOC 2008.)

Cases of state interventionism have been reported from all over the world, from developing countries to industrialized powers. Interventions have been witnessed e.g. electoral proceedings, appointment of officials, selective financing mechanisms, influencing voting in National Olympic Committees, creation of parallel structures. A common trigger and cause for intervention is the reality that politicians recognize in sport an inexpensive promotional tool that produces a tremendous political and electoral power.

The incomplete regulatory frameworks of NOCs that are not in line with the Olympic Charter and the lack of internal discipline and international consistency also provoke further challenges.

### **3.2 “The West and the Rest”**

What is the border of Europe? Is Russia part of Europe? Neumann (1996) has studied extensively the notion of a Russian idea and its relation to Europe. Mikkeli (1998) has

written about a European idea and the borders of Europe. According to Neumann, the idea of Europe is Russia's central 'Other'<sup>5</sup>. When Russia discusses Europe, it talks about itself in the process. According to Mikkeli, the study of European integration highlights the II World War victory as the starting point of a new era in European history, which is politically and economically largely acceptable, but may be contested philosophically<sup>6</sup>. The first time the Europeans confronted the 'Other' was at the turn of 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Webber's (2000) dichotomy of conflict – cooperation is a viewpoint to Euro – Russian relations and in the analysis of duality of the 'West' and 'Russia's inner Self'.

The borders of Europe are political, geographic and ideological (Hall 1992). Europe is not one idea with one border. Associated with Europe are civilization, Christianity, democracy, freedom, power of the nation and the notion of West. By 'Western', it is historically referred to societies that are developed, industrialized, capitalist and modern. From the era of Enlightenment, a sense of reason is associated with the European identity. The opposite characteristics are barbarism, paganism, slavery and the East. (Mikkeli 1999, 161; Hall 1992.) Hall emphasizes the historical process in the definitions of Western societies, and so he refers to an idea as opposed to geography. (Hall 1992, 277.) The European Union is one concept of Europe that does not, however, cover the geographical entity<sup>7</sup>. In the map, the Eastern border of Europe is commonly drawn at the Ural Mountains, but "emotionally Europe and European has referred to something far narrower. Russia has been included in Europe only for a few centuries." (Mikkeli 1999, 144.)

In defining the West there is a possibility to categorize societies and initiate a pre-determined way of thinking. It is a group of images that represent how certain cultures are. It also offers a model for comparison according to which one can state that non-European societies are "near/ far/ catching up" in relation to the West. It is an easy way of explaining difference. According to Hall, the West was produced in certain historical

---

<sup>5</sup> For instance, in the 1700's, Russia copied Europe and in the 1900's a Socialist model was enforced.

<sup>6</sup> Politically there has been a concept of Europe understood as the result of Allied Forces victories in 1918, 1945 and 1989. Europe is associated with democracy, constitutional state and economic liberalism. (Webber, 2000.)

<sup>7</sup> On definitions of Europe, also: Diez (2004).



processes under special circumstances, “it is impossible to decide which came first, Western societies or the idea of the ‘West’. However, the idea was crucial in the formation of society” (Hall 1992, 278). The idea of the ‘West’ became defining for global power relations and a concept for a whole way of speaking and talking.

Highlighting a difference between cultures can be traced back to the times of Saussure, according to whom the contrasting parts of the meaning system give each other substance. To function, we need differentiation, and binary oppositions are essential to all linguistic systems and for producing meaning. The saying “West and the rest” is historical by its nature and a linguistic construction that changes over time. A conception of Europe is not homogenous<sup>8</sup>. Europe has had also its inner “Others”, the Jews, East-European barbarians (etc.). The “others” is also a heterogenic concept. The discourses’ essential level is simplifying.

Discourse creates meaning using language (Hall 1992). Producing meanings take place in discursive practices. Due to the fact that every social practice produces meanings, all practices have a discursive aspect. According to Foucault, discourses are not only included in power, discourses are one of the systems of power to spread. Those who produce discourses, have also the power to “make them true”. Whether a discourse is true or not is not important. Rather, if it is effective in practice. When it is effective and organizes power, it can be referred to as the regime of truth (Hall 1992, 295).

When the Soviet Union collapsed and the ideological counter positioning of the Cold War lost its meaning, the defining of Europe became current both in the ‘East’ as in the ‘West’. According to Vjateslav Morozov, the political discourse of Russia is undeniably defined in relation to Europe both in the positive and negative sense, but altogether invaluablely. Morozov analyzes the political collective’s redefinitions with divide that categorizes what is relevant and what is left out. (Morozov 2004; Harle 1993, 145.) The ‘Others’ besides Europe to Russia are the ‘West’, terrorism and the Soviet Union, nation, sovereignty and Great Power status as the historical others. Inner others to Russia are center-periphery, Chechnya. Outer others are the ‘West’, the United States, the ‘East’, the market, social classes.

---

<sup>8</sup> Eastern, Western, German, Latin, Nordic, and Mediterranean Europe.

The ongoing uncertainty of Russian national identity is due to the fact that Europe moves between inclusive and exclusive tendencies. This is not necessarily regarded as negative, but a resource making it possible for change to occur and prevent totalitarianism. After the Europe-oriented times of Peter and Catherine the Great, closer to current times Mikhail Gorbatshev was the one to speak about a common European home.

A difference in relation to the other can lead to changing oneself to the corresponding direction. Although there is always a threat to lose one's own identity, this kind of behavior can still aim at preserving the Self. A state is not always the significant other in international relations. Symbolic interactionism, for example, defines a 'general other'. The Self can have many Others: real, imagined, traits from the past, cultural narratives, historical others. What makes an 'Other' to a certain 'Self', is an empirical question. When studying a country's inner identity, one must concentrate on states' understandings of themselves in domestic and international environments. (Hopf 2002.)

Events both inside a country and abroad offer different meanings according to discourses from a country's own collection of identities. The contextualizing and intertextualizing of identities happen in relation to the historical, inner and outer aspects.

Campbell emphasizes how, for example, foreign policy declarations produce and uphold political identity, not just serve national interest. Instead of a conventional outer threat, danger is defined as irrelevant and so an inner/ outer -type of divisions rise to the centre. This refers to subjectivity in international politics more than the subjects' pre-determined international relations; danger does not exist independently of those, to whom it may cause a threat. An ability to present certain things as foreign is relevant, and representations clarify themselves around danger's referents. Every state is defined by pressure to connect different areas to "imagined political communities". Even though images of threats change, the techniques that present them may very well be stable. (Campbell 1998, 10.)

Discourses that form our identities have implications on what we can and what we should do. Discourses are closely connected to the ways in which societies are being run

and how they are organized. It is in the interest of powerful groups that other discourses receive a label of “truth”. According to Parker (1992, 5), when an object is formulated in a discourse, it is hard not to refer to it as untrue.

### 3.3 Russia as a Subject of Study; Cultural Tradition

The aim of this study has been to take into account the position of a country in relation to others in the Russian and European political climate at given times, while also acknowledging the historical legacy that influences their relationship.

The fortunes of the nation become sedimented as part of the national habitus of its people. The emotional bonds of individuals with the nations they form with each other can have, as one of their levels, “sleeping memories” which tend to crystallize and become organized around common symbols, national sporting teams as an example. These are the determinants of the nature of a nation’s social and political structure and its associated cultural characteristics, historico-cultural explanations (Blain et al. 1993, 8). Symbols and sleeping memories usually go unnoticed, yet they powerfully reinforce the notion of ‘I /we’- relations and form a focal point of a common belief system. (Maguire et al. 1999.)

Alexander Wendt has been widely criticised for his views dividing state between inner and outer worlds. According to Wæver<sup>9</sup> (et al. 1998), traditional enemy- images should not be highlighted in identity studies (on many ‘Europes’, see also Wæver et al. 1998). The changing concepts of nationality and state are closely related to the ways in which ‘Europe’ is described in different ‘we’- communities. The aim of studying international relations should therefore be, what are the preconditions, under which it is possible to argument over ‘Europe’.

Throughout the history of Russia, there have been several consistent characteristics in the symbolism of culture despite the political breaches that have taken place. There is an obvious connection between religious and ritualistic tendencies that overlap centuries

---

<sup>9</sup> Wæver is a member of ‘The Copenhagen School of Thought’ in security studies together with Barry Buzan.

starting from Byzantine and *Drevne Rus'* (the Ancient Russia), that of orthodox religion (*pravoslavie*<sup>10</sup>, “the right belief”).

According to beliefs derived from this tradition, the Russian nation is considered ‘holy’ and there exists a ‘Russian spirit’ (*Russkaja dusha*) that can be read through the classics of Russian literature (e.g. Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky). It is claimed that this special spirit unites people during struggles (e.g. Vihavainen 1986; Pivovarov 2002). According to Orthodox religion, an individual surrenders to the power of the church much more strongly than in the Lutheran belief, in which the sense of individuals conscious has a larger role. Orthodoxy is the religion of ‘the Holy Spirit’ and mysticism (See e.g. Kivinen 1998; Vihavainen 1986). Many scholars have analyzed the referential points of ‘Russian identity’, and its defining myths. The following are the dimensions of ‘the holy trinity’ derived from these analyses: 1) Moscow as the third Rome, 2) Christian Orthodoxy, autocracy (the tsar, *gosudar*, representing God on the face of the earth), and the spirit of the people, 3) Communist ideology.

This has also been stated by Segei Kortunov (1995) as he defines a ‘metahistorical concept’ of national history based on the Russian idea as opposed to rational calculations about Russia’s strategic interests. The concept of Russia as holding a special place in world history developed under Tsarist regime (Hopf 2002). The political culture of Bolsheviks possessed also ritualistic and religious tendencies—behaviour that is peculiar in the sense that the Soviet Union tried to cut all connections to the church. Still, the symbolism carried a considerable amount of political weight. Interestingly enough, in today’s Russia, the national anthem, for example, has the same beginning as the one in the times of the Communist Soviet Union.

Although state power has been a considerable force, it should not go unnoted that there has also existed a counter belief of the people that has been reckoned to have survived ever since tsarist power (e.g. Radzinsky 2001; Kivinen 1998). This belief has been consistent through Soviet times when official churches were torn down (*jurodyvie*, the ‘God’s fools’). “The sacred never reconstructs social reality unproblematically; there is a good reason to analyze subjects that define rituals taking into account also the

---

<sup>10</sup> Sacrecy and the highlighting of the betterness of own ‘species’. (Harle 1993, 42.)

possibility of counter-positioning” (Kivinen 1998, 216). John B. Thompson (1990) suggests there are five modes in the operation of ideology when exploring strategies of symbolic construction and the ways symbolic forms interact with relations of power. These are legitimation (power, leader/ GP-status), dissimulation (political upheavals), unification (Russian nation), fragmentation (Soviet Union) and reification (the Russian Federation). Neutral conceptions of ideology are “systems of belief”, “sets of values” (etc.). References to the “symbolic value” of mediated sport events, are done in the knowledge that their symbolic operation is complex, and with multiple effects, in some of which the concept of ideology may only be marginally useful, sometimes including political and economic interests.

Language is one of the most versatile systems of signs that can be separated from face-to-face communication and that can prevail throughout generations, transferring meanings and experiences. Language can make subjects present even though they are not physically, temporally, or socially available. In Russian, common concepts used to describe the nation are ‘*russkij*’ (original Russians) and ‘*rossiiskij*’ (used to describe society as a whole, including different nationalities). Also, words referring to emotional entities like the motherland, ‘*rodina*’, are all of feminine origin whereas words referring to physical entities and power are of masculine origin.

During historical upheavals in Russia, there has been a search for legitimization of new regimes. Like in the changes in generations, history is in a way disrupted; an obvious continuity in common practices and objectification of legitimization is broken down. In order for this continuum to regain its status, the most important elements of institutional traditions must be explained and justified. (Berger & Luckmann 1966.) In this framework it is understandable, why in Russia characteristics of a strong state and leader are recurrent as well as the references to a ‘generally acknowledged’ *Russian spirit*. The abovementioned legitimization has both normative and cognitive scopes. Institutional practices are demonstrated in a positive light and there is always a manifestation of knowledge involved. Knowledge comes before values, as legitimization explains not only why something *should* be like this, but why *it is* so. A concrete example is the way disappointments in Russia at the turn of the 1980-1990s for not being included into Western institutions resulted in Russia acknowledging the ‘fact’ that it is leading its own historical path independently of Western values.

## 4 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following chapter begins with defining the framework of International Relations theory. This framework clarifies the post-structuralist interpretive approach that emphasises the meaning of language. In addition to constructivist theory, symbolic interactionism is taken into account. The insecurity, connected also to the Soviet Union's collapse, is closely related in theoretical terms to post-positivist thinking, when strict realist positioning of interests becomes somewhat unclear. This understanding leads to the core of 'the sociology of knowledge' school and the object of study in international relations of social order, an object encompassing both the domestic and the international.

### 4.1 International Relations Theory

International Relations theory is the theoretical framework of this study. The developments of International Relations theory and 'the Grand Debates' are used in positioning starting points for this thesis. As the former Soviet Union is at the core of the research questions, it is recognized that there has been a need for re-thinking the traditional security questions of nation-states and communities in the past twenty years, which have not been exhaustively explained in traditional theoretical terms. An interpretive approach is applied throughout this study.

In the current 'great debate' in international relations, constructivism, drawing heavily from sociology, challenges the long-standing paradigmatic dominance of rationalist theories in the analysis of international politics. The debate has initially resulted in mutually exclusive 'environment-agency links' on both sides of the theoretical divide. Since 1970s, critical choices have changed the ontological conceptions and the ways in which research is done. Social constructionism and the linguistic turn in constructing reality rose in 1980s and 1990s; Nicholas Onuf was the first to use the concept of 'constructivism' in 1989<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas Onuf referred to term constructivism in 1989 although Anthony Giddens's structuration theory was already effective since 1979 (Ruggie 1988).

Post-structuralism has abandoned the traditional 'humanistic' conception of subjectivity according to which a human being consciously directs himself. Instead, the meaning of language is enhanced (Wendt 1999, 55). In post-structuralist thinking, also Saussure's *langue vs. parole* – dichotomy has been abandoned and discourses have been studied. Post-structuralism has affected considerably the meaning of language and the rise of social constructivism in social sciences.

It has been stated that "insecurity is needed as a condition". However, drawing insights from social theory and philosophy, a variety of schools of thought united in the critique of the scientific pretensions of mainstream international theorizing and of its central concept of security. A narrow, state-centred and military-focused definition of security served the needs of a discipline confident in its ability to map the international order objectively and to apply the methods of natural science to the relations between states. The incapacity of this mainstream to account, however, for the dramatic turn of events at the beginning of the 1990s led its critics to question the basic assumptions which had directed scholarly inquiry for a generation. (McSweeney 1999.)

Constructivist theory is used for interpreting results to an extent. It is acknowledged, however, that constructivism has been criticized for its' inability to explain agency in international relations theory, and it has many differing alterations. A relatively little studied application of Erving Goffman's symbolic interactionism is also taken into account.

The critique of positivistic approach introduced the instability and change into the study of international affairs; how actors construct their relations in creating and recreating the world is implicated in theorists' observations. Security and insecurity are relational qualities, not material distribution of capabilities, threats and vulnerabilities independent of such relations.

The study of Russia's national identity is divided into the shift towards the cultural and social, ending a positivist, materialist focus. Concepts such as identity gained new meaning. A domestic dimension of politics emerged through the nationalistic tendencies that took place in Eastern Europe. A defining moment for the Soviet Union identity question approached in this study is the turning back inwards after the original

“Westernization” tendencies of the later Gorbachev era, due to disappointments in international relations. A presumed cultural uniqueness that is described in Sergei Kortunov’s ‘Enlightened Patriotism’ (Desire and Identity) (in *Nezavisimaja gazeta* 1995), had to do with one of many attempts by Russian foreign policy experts to formulate a grand strategy for Russia. According to Kortunov, who served in President Yeltsin’s administration developing a new national security concept, the post-Cold War policy needed a strong state, a unilateral foreign policy, and rejection of a Western way of development.

The new emphasis on identity in postmodernist cultural theory reinforced its significance for international scholars, who began to explore its analytical potential for understanding the nature of the international system and the capacity of states within it to learn to manage their security. The retreat into the domestic processes of identity formation was matched by the related extending across national borders of the forces which govern personal and institutional relations. Globalization, the term which expresses this dual process of fragmentation and expansion of social relations, was not a creature of the Cold War or of its ending. But its process was accelerated and dramatically exposed by the end of the superpower confrontation which, until then, had relatively isolated one half of the world from the economic, political and cultural spill over of the other. (McSweeney 1999.)

#### 4.1.1 Security Studies in a Changing World

The relational aspect of country’s attempts to define and re-define its identity is apparent in this study from the viewpoint of the Olympic Movement. The Olympic Movement is an arena that demonstrates international ‘realities’ in good and in bad. Sport has offered a medium of discussing politics in a more positive light.

Sport became truly international only after the First World War. The promoters of sport could hardly have imagined in the final third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that sporting competitions could have an impact on public opinion and become an instrument of foreign policy. The connection between international relations and sport begun in the



first part of 20<sup>th</sup> century setting a pattern for the latter part of the century. This field involved more players, spectators and officials than any other social movement. Politicians became to appreciate its potential as a vehicle of national values and policies, even for demonstrating and advertising the potency of a political ideology. Sport became bound up with international relations. In countries, where the state had direct control over sport, the ‘authoritarian‘ states of the Soviet Union, Germany, Italy and Spain, sport grew to be an adjunct of foreign policy. (Arnaud & Riordan 1998.)

Sport became an arena for counter-positioning communism and capitalism, fascism and liberal democracy, communism and social democracy<sup>12</sup>.

Re-thinking of the concept of security had already begun before the collapse of communism and was stimulating a debate in policy-making and research centres by the end of the 1980s. It was the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the rapid disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the Soviet Union, which followed it that provided the shock to the theoretical systems from which ‘international security’ had been born. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there suddenly existed a “world without an enemy”. Peter Katzenstein (1996) has highlighted the importance of a cultural-institutional political context and of constructed identities of states, governments and other political actors that were not traditionally actors of analyses in international politics. Norms are collective expectancies of how an actor with certain identity should behave. Norms also define identity, and so norms are constitutive. Culture implies evaluative standards (norms and values) and cognitive standards (rules and models, which define what kind of actors there are in the social system, how they act and relate to each other. (Katzenstein 1996.) As criticism to Katzenstein it has been noted that materialistic factors are also part of a culture and affect the system as well.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and of a Great Power –status left the traditional concepts of the ‘West’ and Russia in a state of flux. There was a newfound need to explain Russia’s role in international relations, a super power with ‘unique cultural heritage’ had aspirations towards the ‘West’.

---

<sup>12</sup> There were also internal socio-political struggles that had to do with e.g. religion. There was an effort in the Soviet Union to channel the continuity of Orthodox faith to other symbols of leadership and greatness separately from the religion.

This goes to show the connection to the ongoing debate on Russia's 'Westernization' and the perceived aspirations of both the 'West' and Russia to further both the integration and disintegration, also by textual means as a way of constructing identities.

#### 4.1.2 Constructing National Identity

The analysis of collective identity can be approached from the sociological angle of social constructionism, which focuses on the processes and practices by which people and groups construct their self-image. Or it can be approached from a more objectivist viewpoint, similar to that adopted in respect of the state in Buzan (1991). As McSweeney (1999, 73) states, identity is not a fact of society; it is a process of negotiation among people and interest groups. Being e.g. English is a consequence of a political process, and it is that process, not the label that symbolizes it, that constitutes the reality which needs explication. We cannot decide the status, or even the relevance, of identity *a priori*.

Conflict of interests and problem of security have coexisted, like in the case between republics in the former USSR. The security problem is not there just because people have separate identities it may well be the case that they have separate identities because of the security problem. Nationalism in the Soviet republics was not a cause of repression - it was an effect. Identity is not to be taken as an independent variable, it is often the outcome of a labelling process which reflects a conflict of interests at the political level<sup>13</sup>.

Contrary to the writings of e.g. Buzan, collective identity is not an entity to 'emerge', waiting to be discovered. It is the identity discourse on the part of political leaders, intellectuals and countless others, who engage in the process of constructing, negotiating, manipulating or affirming a response to the demand at times urgent, that is mostly absent for a collective image. Even in times of crisis, this is never more than a provisional image of ourselves as we want to be, limited by the facts of history. Cultural entities, such as language, or identity, only exist as objective properties by virtue of the

---

<sup>13</sup> Russia's turning back inwards after disappointments by the actions of the West.

social practices and social relationship that constitute them. It is the relationship of members to each other, and of the community to other communities, which stands as the irreducible object of security, not the cultural properties chosen to express it. (McSweeney 1999.)

The modern concern with the problem of order locates the source of order in the primal concept of social action, and the debate in the relationship of agency and structure. With Goffman, Garfinkel, Berger and Luckmann, the sociology of knowledge is extended to cover all knowledge, and the analysis of everyday life is seen as an important path to understanding it. The focus on agency in relation to structure moves the sociology of knowledge from the sub-disciplinary to the centre of disciplinary practice.

### 4.3 Sociology of Knowledge and Social Constructionism

The idea that the social order, the object of inquiry in social sciences, is differently constituted to the natural order of material reality, is a core theme of Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Parsons, and specifically of the 'sociology of knowledge' school. The concepts and institutions which make up social reality owe whatever existence they have to the practices of individual human beings, and in that sense we can speak of the 'social construction of reality'<sup>14</sup>. (McSweeney 1999.) Implicit in this view is the idea that the object of study in international relations is the social order, an object, which encompasses both the domestic and the international, the inter-societal as well as the societal.

According to the phenomenological approach of Berger and Luckmann (1966) in their departure from positivism in IR theory, reality is socially constructed, and it is the sociology of knowledge's task to study this process. 'Reality' and 'knowledge' are the main concepts Berger and Luckmann use, and they are adopted in this study as well. These concepts have their background in a long history of philosophical thought. By 'reality' it is meant the world of phenomena which essence is unchangeable by our

---

<sup>14</sup> The social order and our knowledge of that order being socially constructed is a thread linking Marx, Durkheim and Weber, finding different expressions as well in the schools of symbolic interactionism and structural functionalism which marked the great divide in the growth period from the 1930's until the mid 1960s. (McSweeney 1999.)

wishes, by ‘knowledge’ it is meant that these phenomena with all their qualities are considered real. In sociological thought, it is recognized that altogether different ‘realities’ are being taken for granted by people depending on which society they are a part of. The relationship between society and ‘reality’ / ‘knowledge’ is of main importance. When studying Russian international relations behaviour and national identity questions, it is of importance, what kind of knowledge is taken for granted and how it is communicated.

Common processes that result in established practices need to be studied. As in sociological research the exchange of ‘knowledge’ is studied; also the processes according to which any knowledge perception becomes accepted ‘reality’, needs to be studied as well. The Olympic Movement mirrors these processes on different times through a concrete media, in Russia, a state influenced newspaper *Sovetskij Sport*.

Therefore, there is a reason why certain ‘knowledge’ becomes accepted regardless of the fact that it might be false (by any given criteria). In Russia, for example, the long cultural tradition has demonstrated the existence of great leaders and strong Russian spirit. This has endured through the Soviet period (iconic leaders) and the modernization of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Russia (strong president).

Sociology of knowledge has its roots in European thought. The sociology of knowledge focuses on the relationship of human thought to its social background.

#### 4.4 Constructivism and its Critics

Rae (2002) has criticized Wendt for dividing state to possess inner and outer worlds and for how Wendt’s constructivism actually comes close to neorealist theory in thinking that the international system is autonomic and anarchistic, separate from other society.

When studying international relations, the constructing of a nation or a state is a relevant factor in all uniqueness in characteristics. The international environment is influencing this process setting norms on how constructing should take place. According to Rae, as is the point of view also of this paper, the understanding of inner

processes in identity-building is important in understanding international relations. The governing elite aims at enhancing its authority under a consistent identity; this is not inevitable but the result from the choices that are made. These choices have been thinkable and manageable in the cultural contexts of their time. (Rae 2002.)

McSweeney's analysis on security policy serves as a backdrop in this study. The results of identity building processes in the Olympic Movement, as described in *Sovetskij Sport*, are compared to the results attained before in the analysis on Russia's foreign policy and security doctrines. Security is seen to be related to identity, and security policy to the reconstruction of collective identity. In the process of reproducing collective identity lies the key to the production and reproduction of security and security policy. It is argued, however, that a current trend in the literature on identity is deficient in its capacity to explain the facts on the ground in particular concrete instances. (McSweeney 1999.)

Social constructivism is divided into socio-cultural approaches, symbolic interactionism<sup>15</sup> and social constructionism. Unlike in the individualistic approach, in socio-cultural frameworks the social contexts are relevant in forming knowledge, as are the members of the 'Olympic family'. The understandings of the surrounding world are social phenomena, and they must be studied in social, cultural and historical processes, and is the motivation for studying Russia's defining historical breaches. Symbolic interactionism, to which the following chapter implies, has views both from radical constructivism and socio-cultural approaches, and it takes into account both individual tendencies and social interaction in learning processes. Social constructivism studies construction of knowledge in the level of society, the language of a society is of interest.

Whereas IR rationalism combines the assumptions of a material international environment and 'rational', instrumental state action, constructivist approaches not only assume that international environments are culturally structured but also that states follow a non-instrumental 'logic of appropriateness'. According to Schimmelfennig (2002) an empirically relevant aspect of international politics is left unspecified: strategic state action in cultural international environments. In an attempt to 'import' a

---

<sup>15</sup> G. H. Mead's legacy.

classic theory from sociology to IR where it has not received much attention, Erving Goffman and the theory of dramaturgical action is applied. This theory conceptualizes actors in a cultural environment as performers engaged in manipulative presentations of self and framing who are, at the same time, constrained by the script and the consistency requirements of their roles. (Schimmelfennig 2002.)

According to Hall (Hall & Du Gay 1996, 4), following the lines of post-structuralist, constructivist thinking, there is no pre-existing 'essential self' which is then represented or expressed, rather, subjectivity and identity are 'constructed within discourse'.

#### 4.5 Goffman and Symbolic Interactionism

Erving Goffman's symbolic interaction as dramaturgical perspective became widely recognised through his 1956 book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. There is a need, according to Goffman, to act differently in different settings.

Through shared symbolism different actors are able to explain each other's behaviour. When these practices are shattered, it results in confusion and questions of identity and morality. According to Goffman (1967), the control in the interaction must be highlighted, "one must attempt to control the others' behaviour during the interaction, in order to attain the information one is seeking and in order to control the perception of one's own image". Not only do interactions serve as reaffirmation of societal values, they serve to recreate those values in negotiation (Goffman 1959). Goffman's key concepts are 'frame analysis', 'role-distance', 'front/ back stage', 'face', 'demeanour', and 'working consensus'.

Goffman's particular elements were order and the self, the orderly interaction and a view that order arises because there is a 'working consensus'. When this is violated, the interaction potentially collapses and repair measures must be undertaken. (Samra-Fredericks & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009.)

As frame coverage is presented through familiar signs and symbols that are embedded in the routines and conventions of the production and reception process, the

contextualizing factors, recent history, ideological affiliations, political relations, geopolitical goals, cultural affinity match challenge uncomplicated notions of hegemonic frames (Delgado 2003).

Whatever its specific use, the concept of framing offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text. The analysis of frames illuminates the precise way in which influence over a human conscious is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one location, such as speech, news, to that consciousness. (Entman 1993, 51.)

Framing theory operates as a heuristic to analyze how humans are subject to subtle alterations in the statements or presentation of judgement and choice problems. Frames are constructions of information that are composed and structured with the intention of producing particular effects in audiences, although textual frames and perceivers' frames may not be consonant. Media presents to the audience in the hope of achieving several goals. Framing is an active process, a distinctive mode of cultural production informed by a system of professional repertoires, values, and an access to sources that enable journalists to routinely construct and process news discourses. Typically, frame analysis has been attached to print and television coverage of political figures. Media frames perform specific functions, including problem definition, diagnosis, evaluation and policy recommendation that often serve the social interests represented by elite discourses. The consequence is that consumers of these frames are part of the public that is directed to examine public issues in particular ways. (Tucker, cited in Delgado 1998.)

#### **4.6 Culture and Identity Studies**

In social sciences, culture is understood to refer to the structure of society, and the ways in which language, symbols, meanings, beliefs and values arrange social practices. This broad definition has led to many different ways of conceptualizing and classifying. The structuralist studies are widely based on Émile Durkheim's and Claude Lévi-Strauss's cultural analysis. Structuralism's critique has focused on the narrow scope of the possibility to change. According to Max Weber, religious preconditions led to the rise

of the Western, capitalist culture<sup>16</sup>. Research related to change in industrialization, urbanization, and secularization, has analyzed the problems with scientific and rational culture (e.g. the critical studies of the Frankfurt School of thought) and so the meaning of values and beliefs as components of culture have risen.

The historical concept of culture relates to the idea that only certain individuals and groups of people had sophisticated manners and only some nations (mainly European) had a high level of civilization. In the spirit of the Enlightenment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, culture referred to social development in which Europe was in a central role. In social-anthropology, the definition of culture refers to the shared meanings of groups and nations especially on a symbolic level and from the point of view what culture does (what are the social practices) more so than what a culture is (as in 'civilization'). This perspective places language in the centre of research (signifying practices). Already in 1950s, Karl Deutch analyzed language and communication, but it was not until Benedict Anderson in 'Imagined Communities' introduced a new way of the relationship between language, text and identity. The meaning of language as a symbol of continuity and source of identification was strengthened<sup>17</sup>.

Since at least the 1980s the importance of cultural politics that move far beyond analysis of nation state has been acknowledged. Although there was a crisis in the positioning of identity in the study of war and peace at the end of the 1980s together with the crisis of behaviouralism, 'studies related to self/ other'- relations were able to prevail. Neumann has analyzed practices and culture in International Relations studies. As Neumann supports the idea of narrative storytelling, he also sees the relation of discourses and stories to everyday practices as important; it is the practices that unite the actors together. However, change is also highlighted, since adopting new practices entails adjusting them to the old ones. (Neumann 1999.)

In the Finnish Research field, Moisio, Lehti, Aalto, Joenniemi, and Smith have approached identity research in International Relations. There has been a tendency in line with the popularization of constructivist thought to resign from traditional realist

---

<sup>16</sup> Despite their different viewpoints, both Marx and Weber argued through juxtapositioning that resembles the divide 'West and the Rest' and 'developed-underdeveloped', 'internalist-externalist'. (Hall 1992, 316.)

<sup>17</sup> It should be noted that for Anderson, national identity rose from the 'bottom-up', and official state-nationalism is developed as counter-reaction to natural development.



rational models of research based purely on motives and interests. Compared with international developments, identity studies have been generalized in Finland relatively late. Lehti (2003) has taken identity studies to the direction of historical and nationalistic studies.

Here it is understood following the post-structuralist theory that identity is unstable and *not* a pre-determined entity. This constitutes the predominant strand of thought about identity in Cultural Studies, and it is different from, and sees itself as largely opposed to, what is conventionally thought of as 'identity politics' (Hall & Du Gay 1996). At issue is the power of media frames to define particular aspects of reality in ways that support specific social interests within the field of public discourse. (Tucker, cited in Delgado 1998, 143.) Frames are not unified, they may have multiple dimensions, e.g. two frames can be operating and in conflict with each other. There are already existing modes of reception among readers; identity is always unstable since it is dependent on the exclusion of that which is the 'Other' (Hall & Du Gay 1996).

Hall's own intervention in the debate about identity is to recast the terms in which identity is understood: not as a hidden essence to be uncovered, but as an active process of representation or discursive construction. It is for the same reason that West prefers to write of the 'cultural politics of difference', rather than identity politics. (Hall & Du Gay 1996.)

Cultural studies have been criticised for lacking a clear sense of agency. It is an open question as to whether one wants to keep using the category of the subject in cultural theory and elsewhere. The concept of the subject has been shown to be socially constructed and the notion of a unified, coherent and essential subject illusory.

Hall has been criticised for slipping to two apparently contradictory positions (Philo & Miller 2000). On one hand there is the view that our sense of ourselves is constructed by, or is 'an effect of', discourse: 'discourse "speaks" through us', tend to lack any sense of agency'. Yet on the other hand, there is also often an emphasis on the active role that people play in constructing identities: 'that is, identities are not determined by socioeconomic forces, but are "creatively" put together'. The underlying problem in both positions is 'a tendency to slip into cultural and epistemological relativism and

therefore...an inability to analyse or discuss the real natural, material and historical circumstances in which identities are forged'. What is seen to be lacking is 'an empirical account of how people actually construct their sense of self in real social relationships in the context of competing forces and interests'.

The nation can be seen as an abstract collectivity, which is too big to be grasped by the individuals, and so the sense of belonging has to be continually engendered by opportunities for identification, for which the media are potential agents, sport providing important symbolic material for the facilitation of such emotions (Scannell & Cardiff 1991). There are also 'international communities' characterised by common ethos and high interaction density. According to Goffman's theory of dramaturgical action strategic actors are not only forced to commit themselves to, and legitimize their action on the grounds of, the community ethos, but also to act consistently in accordance with the constitutive values and norms of the community in order to preserve their image as a community member in good standing (cited in Schimmelfennig 2002).

Sport is one legitimate arena in which national flags can be raised and other patriotic rituals exercised. Elias (in Maguire 1993) notes that "sport continues to constitute an area of social activity in which overt emotional engagement remains publicly acceptable". A level of national sentiment can be found in the sport section of a newspaper, which is hard to imagine elsewhere. Some go so far as to suggest that sport is a substitute for war (Tomlinson & Whannel 1984). Although not appealing for all sections of the population, international professional sport provides a compelling means by which the nation can be represented as positive and dynamic (Rowe 1995).

Identity can constantly be questioned, reaffirmed and upheld through language (Burr 1995, 46). The use of personal pronoun pairs such as "we/they" and "us/ them" have a powerful effect in generating feelings of exclusion and inclusion. The sports media have an influential role in the propagation of "us/them" discourses in the minds of the general public through the language in their reports (Blain et al. 1993). Foucault is also widely recognised for textualizing what has been considered factual accounts of real events. By the 1980's there was an acceptance that to talk of the media representing or mediating a

real world involved some sort of philosophical decision. It became legitimate to acknowledge that the media fabricate versions of social and cultural reality while at the same time, there is beyond discourse a real set of historical circumstances which comprise the latest stage in European political development.

## 5 SPORT, MEDIA & POLITICS

### 5.1 The Political Aspect of Sport

Sport sociology has a relatively short history, with most of the scholarly work produced over the past 35-40 years. The complexity of sport is now studied from many different disciplinary perspectives.

As sport itself has been of interest in a variety of disciplines, the study of the ways in which media and sport interact crosses boundaries and can be found in literature concerned with sociology of sport, history of sport, gender studies, cultural studies, journalism, leisure studies and others. As in the 1980's the 'materialist paradigm' was attacked, politics of sport was merely a superstructure. Now, in social studies, it is recognised, that symbolism and culture are important by themselves. Sport is considered to give meaning to life, sense of achievement and identity. (Hall & Du Gay 1996.)

Europeanization and universalization of sport are the remarkable traits of the post-1918 world. Major press coverage helps expand sport and sporting spectacle into a universal phenomenon. Sport nationalism exacerbated after the First World War and the stadium became an arena of 'revenge' (Arnaud & Riordan 1998, 6).

Much of the writings of sport and the media have to do with a vast field of representation, identity and globalization, as well as aspects of the political economy of the media (on national identity and media e.g. Bernstein & Blain 2003; Maguire et al. 1999). Blain (Bernstein & Blain 2003) argues that the symbolic development of sport is most satisfactorily comprehended when culture, sport, media, economics and ideology are all maintained as strong terms in the debate. Sport's dispersal through various zones of culture and modes of reception reconstitutes it as a primary cultural force, even if the media drives some of its central cultural and social roles.

Various other scholars have commented on the political and ideological import of sports as well (Allison 1986; Arnaud & Riordan 1998; Hargreaves 1982). Viewed from this

point, sport becomes yet another arena for nations and communities to engage in conflict and to compete for the symbolic, and sometimes material benefits (Delgado 2003). According to Birrell and Hart (1981), sport is an important social phenomenon because of its ritualistic<sup>18</sup> overtones, “the significance of sport is based on the status of the athlete as exemplary role incumbent with power to mediate between the individuals who comprise the audience and the moral order of the community”.

It is impossible to separate sport from politics. According to Hargreaves (1986) of all the apparatuses involved in the achievement of hegemony none is more implicated in sports than mass media. Also, *the propaganda model of media* (Herman & Chomsky 1988) asserts that the media echo, maintain and propagate the viewpoints of postmodern societies’ governments and/ or industrial elites<sup>19</sup>. Following the sport and politics thesis, it is easy to see how particular sporting events become sites of ideological and nationalistic rhetoric. The Olympic Games is an example of contestation between nations and ideologies and of promoting political socialization within countries and to establish prestige and power in international relationships<sup>20</sup>. Boycotts have been, for example, used as a tool for international politics. There are pressures underlying the construction of what is presented to audiences that cannot be simply read off the content.

Because the Olympic Games are watched all over the world, they have become the perfect medium in which to demonstrate political power and causes. Added to this is the organisational structure and rituals of the Games, although the rhetoric of the IOC suggests the opposite. When investigating the political influences, which have impinged on the Games, it is possible to see trends in the types of such intervention: internal politics within the nation where the Olympic Games are being staged have affected the games. International rivalries based on either political or ideological disputes, between

---

<sup>18</sup> Sport as ritual: as a social situation during which individuals engaged in problematic and consequential action communicate to one another, they understand the ideal demands their roles place on them, agree with values assumed by those ideals and are capable of fulfilling role expectations.

<sup>19</sup> The Marxist Gramscian notion of hegemony has been a call for a significant amount of research into sport. In its traditional sense, hegemony has literally been taken to mean the ideological/ cultural domination of one class by another achieved by engineering consensus through controlling the content of cultural forms and major institutions.

<sup>20</sup> The Olympic Games have been the focus of much of the writings in this context, the link between collective identity and sport has been traced by some to the Greek Olympic Games.

nations when games have been used as a tool for own agenda. Competitors have used the games as forum for political demonstrations. Non-participants have used the Games to further their political causes. Nations have attempted to equate Olympic success with their social, economic and political superiority. Examples of the interconnections of sport and politics are the following: In 1936 Hitler's use of "Nazi Olympics", U.S. athletes in 1968 and 1972 Olympic Games engaged in politics protesting against racism with demonstrations at the victory stand. In 1972 Munich Olympic Games terrorist attacks killing Israelis, Atlanta 1992 blasts in the Olympic park, 1980 Carter's boycott and Los Angeles 1984 soviet leaders' retaliation to protest the excessive capitalist influence over the organisation of the games, which were organised by a private corporation rather than a city for the first time. (Tucker 1998 cited in Delgado 2003.)

*"The aura of success and the prestige of foreign sport victories are of great importance to Soviet leaders for reasons both domestic and international. At home foreign sport triumphs, officially presented as proof of socialism's superiority over capitalism, are primarily used to stimulate feelings of national pride and Soviet patriotism to aid in preserving national unity in a polyglot society which has over 100 nationalities, and in which the ruling Russians no longer hold the majority."*

(Morton in Gruneau et al. 1982.)

Considering the source of power, it is in their interest to operate media sport through naturalizing. Sport is physical and governed by natural laws and so it can be claimed to have nothing to do with politics. The main way that sport and social order are naturalized in media sport is through the fiction that sport constitutes a separate reality. National unity in a manner consistent with dominant class's preferred view is subject to control and influence. It is predominantly the cultural capital of dominant groups that is put to work in the staged ceremonial.

## 5.2 'Mediated sport' and 'Media sport'

Key concepts related to sport and media studies are '*mediated sport*' and '*media sport*'. According to Blain (Bernstein & Blain 2003), in '*mediated sport*' there is a textual emphasis. In academic writings it can be seen that it is almost not possible to discuss sport without media, its role is that central.

*'Media sport'* does not just present world as it is, already constructed, there are referential frameworks that underlie media events. An interpretive framework implies the specific features selected, the language, the visual imagery, the stylistics of the representation, which constitutes an inducement to the audience to interpret the reported on world in preferred ways (Hargreaves 1986, 141). If the uses of language create understandings of 'Self', it is worth studying how they are constructed (Burr 1995, 46). According to Tucker (in Delgado 2003), while there may be more than one frame operating within the media discourse about a specific issue, a dominant frame usually is fixed within the discourse to become the preferred reading of an issue, event or character (Delgado 2003).

In respect for referential frameworks, there is a link to combining Goffman's symbolic interactionism (beginning from a theory established in 1956) in building comprehensible frameworks for understanding. In order to make the audience of media understand and interpret the documented events "in preferred ways", the inferential framework must be related to the culture of the majority of the audience. It draws on the audience's knowledge, values and expectations. According to Goffman (1956), there is a need to sustain a known pattern of behaviour. Here as well the link of Goffman's theorizing to sport is obvious, sport is about structured competition and the orderly resolution of conflict, and unpredictable, deviant, rare and violent aspects are newsworthy since they threaten change and change for the worse (See Hargreaves (1986) on example of structured sport and newsworthiness).

According to Blain (et al. 1993), a full analysis would have to take into account a number of relevant factors in social and cultural formation of the press and readers, including also the economic context. A larger topic would be the relationship between the types of cultural and social agreement by the readership over various symbolic propositions of an article and on the other hand the maintenance and/ or development of existing sets of power relations characteristic to a given society. (Blain et al. 1993, 12.)

An example of sport as a separate reality is the way gold medals in major competitions are celebrated. The victories make their way into national news with the ceremonies and rituals surrounding them. There are also elite figures of national unity, such as the

president, who participates in the ceremony and invokes feelings of identity. The award ceremony is of national achievement and glory.

It should be, however, bore in mind that the construction of national identity through sport is not in any way unproblematic. Thus far, as a socio-cultural and historical phenomenon, sport has proved resistant to critical analysis, and by far the most intractable aspect remains the question of the relationship between sport and power (Hargreaves 1986). Hargreaves's insight in understanding the way in which sports as a cultural formation may, in certain respects, be connected with the power apparatus (and how it is structured) lie at the intersection of political theory and the sociology of culture. According to Hargreaves (1986) and Blain (et al. 1993) in the late 1980s, relatively little academic research about sport as a cultural form and its power relations in social science and political theory had been done. Since then, social history, sociology and to a lesser extent cultural studies have done much to establish a body of work concerned with the cultural, economic and political significance of sport (Blain et al. 1993, 12).

### 5.3 'Power'

'*Power*' does not refer to an entity, the mere possession of that which enables an individual or collective agent to dominate another, but to a relationship between agents, the outcome of which is determined by the agents' access to relevant resources and their use of appropriate strategies in specific conditions of struggle with other agents (Hindess, 1982). It should be noted, however, that Hindess's definition of power as an entity that is not situated in any single location or level of the social formation differs from the situation in Russia, as Hindess refers to the allocation of power also to the civil society. In Russia, the development of the civil society has taken a different path from that of the West, as there were no possibilities for the same level of rising of the bourgeoisie class and changing of the structure of society. According to Foucault (1969), conceptualization of power is also diffused through all social relations. There is a broad variety of ways in which a state, working through a range of governmental and non-governmental, formal and informal institutions seeks to exercise authority over its citizens so that they may be disciplined, obedient subjects of the state.



In this study, Hall's and Hargreaves's conceptions of treating sport as a social phenomenon is applied, as it is set in the context of power and culture (Hall in Hargreaves 1986). As in the broader framework of understanding power relations, it is impossible to study a nation and its identity formation without taking into account the specifics of history and culture. According to Stuart Hall (1996), in the debate about identity there should be a redefinition about the terms in which identity is understood: not as a hidden essence to be uncovered, but as an active process of representation or discursive construction. Sport has been articulated in different ways in different periods of time. In conclusion, the relationship between sport and hegemony and the maintenance of a particular structure of power and social authority through society are determinants of study in the formation of national identity.

## 6 THREE ERAS – THREE WINTER GAMES

In chapter six, the results of analyzing the materials in *Sovetskij Sport* are structured as follows. First, the ways of extracting discourses is described in detail. Second, beginning from the subchapter 6.1 “Three eras – four Winter Games”, all the Olympic years under study are analyzed thoroughly under their own headings. Analysis of all the past Olympic years studied in this thesis include tables that describe the success of the Soviet-Russian team, and the main categories of discourses that can be found in the materials. It is possible to compare the different years/ Olympic Games in the international-national axis of politics, since the categories remain the same and so represent the dominant discourses of national identity. A more detailed analysis of Soviet-Russia’s international politics position is presented after the discourse categories. The future Olympic Games of Sochi 2014 are analyzed considering the shortcomings of team Russia in the Vancouver Olympic Games as well as picturing the political framework in which Russia is forced to prepare for the Games.

The ways of extracting different discourses in this study are the following. Change and continuity are the two main threads that live in cycles in both Russia’s cultural identity and political reality. Webber’s (2000) themes of conflict and cooperation are equally important ways to describe the international politics’ setting in expressing Russia’s national identity through the Olympic Movement. Examples of these categories are “A strong Soviet Union” and “positive relations with the West according to state policy”.

Concrete qualitative discourse themes can include in this framework e.g.:

- National symbols/ stereotypes
- National identity / habitus
- The use of personal pronouns (I/ We/ She> feminine motherland (*rodina*) possessing emotional qualities; masculine fatherland (*otetsestvo*) representing negative, hard opinions)
- Referring to nationality Russian/ *Russkij* (as original Russian national) or *Rossiiskij* (referring to all the people living in the Russian soil with different nationality)
- The vocabulary of war
- Narcissistic language
- The reference of invented traditions/ nostalgia
- Issues related to European (identity) politics

Morozov (2004) points out the political collective's definitions with divide that categorizes what is relevant and what is left out. The 'Others' for Russia are:

- Europe
- West
- Terrorism
- The Soviet Union
- The United States

In this study, the authoritative bodies' expressions of Russia's role in the Olympic Movement are analysed through a state owned newspaper. It is of interest whether sport is used as a tool in international relations for both domestic and international purposes. There are also the possibilities that sport offers when disappointments to government policies occur – the symbolic value of sport is almost limitless.

Incoherence in maintaining government policies and fixed conceptions of national identity is evident in newspaper reports, as reporters try to maintain powerful discourses, but at the same time the reality for example to athletes is quite different (e.g. in terms of CIS economic realities).

Discourses occur in interaction, in this case, the materials include the reporters comments on how Soviet-Russia is perceived abroad. These reports were evident and widely commented on.

In the following chapters one can see how discourses are made understandable in a cultural context. Although continuity – change is the main axis of analysis, it should be noted that in Russian cultural and political history certain themes have always been present; a strong leader, a belief in superiority of faith. There are claims of the truth and certain representations of events, these claims receive their functions in time and place.

When categorizing a society belonging (or its aspirations to belong) to the 'West', there are images of how certain cultures are. The Winter Games of 1988, 1992, and 1994 have all been a struggle for determining Soviet-Russia's place in the international politics at times of domestic political upheavals. The upcoming Sochi Games, on the other hand, are a possibility for Russia to show its place in the Western community, not forgetting its "cultural uniqueness".

When a discourse is effective and organizes power, it can be referred to as the regime of truth (Hall 1992).

### 6.1 The Soviet Era: "Hand in Hand for the Party"

*"When we are talking about the Games, we are talking about life itself. A game is not just a matter of sport, but a matter of culture. National cultures are demonstrated and propagated through sports."*









Sovetskij Sport, 1988.

#### *Year 1988 – The Soviet Era*

- *Mikhail Gorbatshev as the leader of the country*
- *Years of Perestroika and Glasnost*
- *The politics of détente and negotiations with the West*
- *The degradation of economics*
- *Opposition of nationalistic forces*
- *The rise of Boris Yeltsin*
- *Independence movement in the Baltic states*
- *The national Olympic Committee of the Soviet Union was founded and recognized in 1951.*

#### 6.1.1 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games

**Table 1. The Medal table, 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games**

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	 Soviet Union (URS)	11	9	9	29
2	 East Germany (GDR)	9	10	6	25
3	 Switzerland (SUI)	5	5	5	15
4	 Finland (FIN)	4	1	2	7
5	 Sweden (SWE)	4	0	2	6
6	 Austria (AUT)	3	5	2	10
7	 Netherlands (NED)	3	2	2	7
8	 West Germany (FRG)	2	4	2	8
9	 United States (USA)	2	1	3	6
10	 Italy (ITA)	2	1	2	5

According to a *Sovetskij Sport*'s statement "the Olympic Games do not have a comparison in international unity, equal attention and moral value to the human race. All teams are equal. The Olympic Games underline every state's and every individual's right to equal appreciation. The Olympics are a miniature model of ideal type relations between states and nations in our restless planet."

In the Calgary Winter Games the risen level of competition, friendly atmosphere and the hospitality of the hosts were experienced during the Games. This is foremost related to the warming relations in political climate and international arena, in accordance with the direction the Communist party is following, *Sovetskij Sport* writes. (See Table 2, discourse category: 'Perceived by others: positive').

The ideal type Soviet citizen is reflected in comments on the Olympic Games in the spirit of discourse category 'Nationality' (see: Table 2). "One should not forget that the leading athletes are examples of patriotism, manhood, and from whom young generations learn a sense of nationalism and self respect." An aspect of communist sport was, in fact, the evolution of a model of sport or physical culture for an industrial modernizing society. Sport was employed for utilitarian purposes to promote health, defence, labour productivity, and integration of multi-ethnic population into unified state, what might be called nation building and seeking international prestige through sports competitions (Riordan & Cantelon 2003). In most communist states, sport had a revolutionary role of being catalyst for social change, with the state political leadership as pilot<sup>21</sup>.

The link between Soviet policy's key determinants is more than obvious: "Victory should be shared with everyone who understands the meaning of sport from the viewpoint of national wellbeing. In this relation we see a number of familiar faces, such as factory superiors (but also a regular worker), who have created an atmosphere fruitful for sports. There are a lot of these people, but we need more". The collectivist ideals of the Soviet Union are present in Olympic sports: "The victory is achieved hand in hand with team mates. You can feel the pulse of one heart – the team. All for one and one for all!" (See Table 2, discourse category: 'Political system').

---

<sup>21</sup> There was not a leisure class around to promote sport for its own purposes as in e.g. Victorian England (Riordan & Cantelon 2003).

Table 1 shows the golden era of Soviet sports with the first position in the medal table<sup>22</sup>.

“A clear victory for the Soviet Union’s athletes realized in the XV Winter Games.” *Sovetskij Sport* refers to the emotional term of homeland, *rodina*, as the national hymn was heard 11 times “in American soil – in faraway Calgary”, highlighting the glory of Soviet victories on the Cold War opponent’s continent. To this same emotional feeling refers also Sergei Tsepikov<sup>23</sup>, describing the national hymn as the most powerful moment comparing it to the moment when an airplane touches the ground. Once again, the victories are not individual achievements, but “the victory of the whole team!” Following the same principle, Tamara Tikhonova<sup>24</sup> stated: “We felt great pride of our country when standing on the podium, and the flag of our home country was lifted”. In the name of the veterans, Ljubov Kozyreva<sup>25</sup> congratulated the winners: “You have brought honour to our country”.

*The Soviet Union received 29 medals, which is the best result in the white Olympics. We are proud of You, Olympic athletes!*

“You are from the Soviet Union, the land of Winners”. According to the Soviet principles of Socialism, there are references to the value of work that extends the pure sporting world; “Without work there is no victory. The acts of Soviet athletes in Calgary show, how the quality of work defines the results.” Even though admitting that most of the competitors were equal both physically and technically, Vyacheslav Koloskov, manager of the Soviet hockey team said that the Soviet Union’s team had however the most of high class players, tactical abilities and coaches’ talent to lead the game.

In discussing Olympic Games as competition between states (not nations), we are dealing with ‘state-athletes’ mandated by their government to represent their political regime or to be agents of its cultural, industrial or economic influence. The selected

---

<sup>22</sup> The Soviet Union dominated the Olympic Games, summer and winter, ever since it made its debut in 1952, the only challenger being the German Democratic Republic, which gained more medals than the USSR in the 1980 and 1984 Winter Olympics. The only interruption to victory was in 1968, when the USSR was second to Norway in winter and to USA in summer, and in 1984, when the major communist sporting nations boycotted Los Angeles.

<sup>23</sup> Biathlonist, who competed in four Olympic Games and represented three different teams: 1988 Soviet Union, 1992 the CIS and 2006 Russia.

<sup>24</sup> Former Soviet Russian cross-country skier who competed from 1984 to 1992. She represented the USSR at the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, where she won three medals with golds in the 20 km and the 4×5 km relay, and a silver in the 5 km.

<sup>25</sup> Former Soviet cross-country skier who competed in the 1950s and 1960s for VSS Burevestnik.

athletes have been the ‘ambassadors’, the ‘official representatives’, of a political regime or of their ‘national culture’. (Arnaud & Riordan 1998.)

References to Socialist fabric workers’ ethics did not go unnoticed, as one worker welcomed the athletes back home to homeland, *rodnoj zemle*, saying that their examples have encouraged thousands to do sports.

An example of a strong nationality and political system –discourse (see Table 2), hard patriotism with a familiar twist of emotion-laden references to homeland, *Sovetskij Sport* describes a meeting in Moscow between the leadership of the Ministry of Defence, the political administration of the Soviet Army and Navy, and athlete representatives of the Winter Olympics. The Calgary Games were a great victory for the Soviet Olympic athletes, and the Olympic Games “formed a holy era in Soviet sports, our team won more medals than any other country”. 21 out of the 42 Olympic champions represent Soviet Army Sport clubs. According to the Minister of Defence, the Soviet Olympic athletes showed exemplary qualities of a Soviet-man:

*Patriotism, loyalty to communist ideals, love for the socialist homeland, (rodina).*

Since many communist states lived under the constant threat of war, terrorism and subversion, defence was a prime consideration. Sport was often subordinated to the role of military training (also: ‘militarisation of sport’).

### 6.1.2 The National-International Axis of State Policy

There are mixed interpretations about others’ ways of perceiving the Soviet team. Discourses of ‘Perceived by others: positive/ negative’ (see Table 2) are both present in the reports of 1988 Olympic Games. On one hand, the team is warmly welcomed at the airport, with all the important media representatives there. On the other hand, a reminder of Cold War –positioning is evident, when the Canadian immigration officers intended to have a “red phone” in the Olympic village, where the athletes were asked to inform on political tips. Few other examples support the signs of counter positioning, as a reporter writes about his ride on a public bus: “Somebody urged us to go back to the Soviet Union.” “Another thing was a film on television that was not friendly towards us”.

The negative attitude towards the Soviet Union was reported when Canada's senior coach commented on Soviet Union's skiers' success. Martin Hall implied that the answer to the Soviet Union's team's medal shower was blood doping. According to *Sovetskij Sport*'s reporter, Mr. Hall would most likely also want to gain such glory, but the reality to the Canadians is different. The reporter downplays Hall's comment further suggesting that "...this is not the first time that the West has not acknowledged Soviet Union's victories, *Soviet Sport* has reported how Sergei Bubka has allegedly also used doping." Bubka works as a great example being one of Soviet-Russia's most appreciated athletes to date.

In line with the Party's policies, and due to them, the improving relations in the international environment are, however, evident; the hospitality of the hosts, friendly atmosphere and risen level of competition were left as good memories from the Olympic Games.

Analyzing the performance of the whole Soviet team, the Russian Federation is recognized as the most competent representative. However, the representatives of the Goskomsport and Olympic Committee noticed a strong development in winter sports in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Kazakhstan received also compliments unlike the Ukraine, ('Ukraine' > *u kraine* = in the border). The state of high level sports has to be analyzed according to the administrative bodies, because the state of Russian athletics (*rossiisikij* = not just Russians, but all the people living in the area of the Soviet Union) is evaluated according to the results of the 'team Soviet Union', in the most prestigious international competition – the Olympics. (Table 2: 'Soviet Union sports').

M. V. Gramov, the representative of Goskomsport and Soviet Union's Olympic Committee congratulated the athletes at the airport and noted that "the Soviet Union's Communist Party and Soviet government are grateful for the attention that our country receives in the development of sports."



### 6.1.3 Commercialisation - Do two different trends mix?

”Money, money, money...where is the sport?” *Sovetskij Sport* writes, criticising the commercialism of the Games.

*Sovetskij Sport* reports that two parallel lines are apparent to many in Olympic sports. The traditional, full of experiences and excitement, where one can relate to great human emotions - the other one is business. The presence of money and politics has affected the spirit of the Games for a long time, starting from Berlin in 1936.

*”Is it useful to sell oneself? Do two different trends mix or not?”*

A member of the International Olympic Committee commented anonymously that the Calgary Games were the first to downplay a traditional festive atmosphere. ”The Calgary Olympic Games became as commercial a business as the summer Games.” More money was spent in Calgary than in Los Angeles four years earlier.

The increasing influence of the press and television was commented by Mr. Gramov “in the revolutionary process in all branches of society and economy.”

### 6.1.4 Discourses by Categories

Table 2 includes discourses by categories describing the highlighting of nationality, the political system, others conceptions of the Soviet Union, the state of Soviet sport and commercialisation. These are the categories that stand out from the text and are related to perceptions of nationality in Olympic sports. All of the above mentioned discourses can be read in full detail in their context above in the chapters 6.1-6.1.3. The categories are compared in the years 1988, 1992, and 1994 giving a clear, plain picture of the differences in these periods.

**Table 2. Terms stated in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport in 1988\* referring to main groupings**

<p>➤ <b>Nationality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nationalism/ self respect</li> <li>○ (Masc.) patriotism (2), manhood; (fem.) <i>rodina/ rodnaja zemlja</i> (3)</li> <li>○ National wellbeing</li> <li>○ National hymn</li> <li>○ Flag of home country</li> <li>○ Honour to the country</li> <li>○ Love for Socialist homeland</li> <li>○ Equality between states and nations</li> </ul>	<p>➤ <b>Political system:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Soviet factory workers (2), superiors; collectivity (2);</li> <li>○ Work equals victory;</li> <li>○ Athletes showed exemplary qualities of a Soviet-man: loyalty to communist ideals;</li> <li>○ Resources create possibilities</li> <li>○ Representatives of the Ministry of Defence, Soviet Army &amp; Navy, Soviet Army Sports clubs</li> <li>○ Grateful for the attention country receives</li> <li>○ Nostalgia: a holy era in Soviet sports</li> </ul>
<p>➤ <b>Perceived by others: positive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Warmly welcomed at the airport</li> <li>○ Hospitality of hosts</li> <li>○ Friendly atmosphere of Games</li> </ul>	<p>➤ <b>Perceived by others: negative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Informers requested</li> <li>○ Public comments</li> <li>○ Television and movies</li> <li>○ Implying doping</li> </ul>
<p>➤ <b>Soviet Union sports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High-level sports to be analyzed according to the administrative bodies of the SU, including the whole Russian (<i>Rossiiskij</i>) team</li> <li>○ SU-team the most competent representative</li> <li>○ A strong development in winter sports also in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, Kazakhstan</li> </ul>	<p>➤ <b>Commercialisation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The presence of money and politics since 1936</li> <li>○ Calgary first to downplay traditional festive atmosphere</li> <li>○ The increasing influence of the media</li> </ul>

\*Analysis of materials starting from the week before the Games and ending a week after the Games. In brackets the times mentioned (if more than one).

### 6.1.5 Continuity and Change

*"Shoulder to shoulder – for one dream".*  
(See: Appendix 2.)

In comparison with the international politics' reality, the Olympic Games represent an arena for the Soviet Union to define itself as a qualified member of the world community, of the way things ought to be. It is assured that the international relations are warming in line with the official state policy.

There is a direct link to patriotism and a sense of self-respect that is related to success in sports. In terms of nation-building, sport has helped regimes to promote the building of strong nation states, sport with its relevance to education, health, culture, and politics and its capacity to mobilize people may uniquely serve the purpose of nation-building and help foster national integration<sup>26</sup> (Riordan & Cantelon 2003).

In listing identifiable and known tensions in international relations, it remains for the researcher to identify the nature and extent of means used in political usage of sport. Thus, politically challenging situation between countries, or e.g. in this case the Soviet Union and the 'West', may be translated into a domain of international sports relations. Through propaganda, sports victories by a national team contribute to reinforcing the image of respect in the world, strength and vitality, and even the legitimacy of a political regime.

In 1988, there was a sense of "holiness of the Socialist system", the system producing great results, and the athletes showing great appreciation for their homeland. There were reports of athletes dedicating records to the Party. After the fall of the Soviet Union, it was stated that in the Soviet Union sport was deeply politicized. The winnings of athletes demonstrated the very essence of Socialism. In the Olympic arenas Russian stars (*rossiiskie*) and the Russian national school were flourishing. "The achievements of the Soviet Union's team are not however propaganda."

The continuity of Russia's historical past is reflected on the Great Power status the Soviet Union represents. Though not stating the 'sacred Russian spirit', there is a holiness of the Socialist system that leads into great results. The newspaper reports strongly support the official line of the leadership in international relations, and the change –aspect presents itself in the perceived positive attitudes of the Western community and equality of the nations.

The strongest discourses are those representing national pride and respect; terms such as homeland are often mentioned. Military authorities and Soviet-type factory managers are linked with sports without a conflict. In opinions of others, there are suspicions of

---

<sup>26</sup> The Soviet Union was a multinational federation of over 290 million people comprising more than a hundred nationalities.

the Communist system, although the reports highlight that the Soviet team was warmly welcomed.

Since the end of World War II, a major aim of several communist states was to attain sports supremacy over capitalist nations, particularly through the Olympic Games. Where other channels have been closed, success in sport seem to have helped countries like the Soviet Union and East Germany to attain a measure of recognition and prestige both home and abroad. Sport was the only medium in which communist countries were able to take on the economically advanced nations, and was seen as a 'battle of ideologies' for influence in the world. (Riordan & Cantelon 2003, 96.)

Although commercialism in Olympic sports started to increase, it still has a marginal role in the reports of the newspaper *Sovetskij Sport*.

## 6.2 Commonwealth of Independent States: "Different Nations under the Olympic Flag"

### *Year 1992 - The CIS Era*

- *Founded in 1991, the CIS recognized the independence of its members ending the Soviet Union*
- *The original member states were Armenia, Azerbaidzan, Kazakstan, Kirgistan, Moldova, Tadzikistan, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Russia, Turkmenistan, Georgia, Ukraine*

### 6.2.1 1992 Albertville Winter Olympic Games

**Table 3. The Medal Table, 1992 Albertville Winter Olympic Games**

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	 Germany	10	10	6	26
2	 Unified Team <sup>1</sup>	9	6	8	23
3	 Norway	9	6	5	20
4	 Austria	6	7	8	21
5	 United States	5	4	2	11
6	 Italy	4	6	4	14
7	 France	3	5	1	9
8	 Finland	3	1	3	7
9	 Canada	2	3	2	7
10	 South Korea	2	1	1	4

Host nation is highlighted. (<sup>1</sup> combined team with athletes from 6 nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States; the team only appeared in these Winter Olympics).

The possibilities of the Olympic Games in image building, and the power of the media are recognized stating that the Gulf War received two times less viewers on CNN than the XVI Winter Olympic Games opening ceremony. Politics as such are condemned as not interesting to the masses.

The unified team of the Commonwealth of Independent States gained second place in the medal table of the Albertville Winter Olympic Games (Table 3).

Together with the fall of the Soviet Union seems to come the downfall of sports. “To live is to see. According to some, our athletes have lost the main motivation for winning – the strengthening of Communist ideology. Still, we know, that in this competition, like before, our young athletes compete for the honour of their country, for the love of sports, and for the sake of strengthening themselves. These three goals remain: homeland (masc. *otetsestvo*), sport and accomplishment.” (See Table 4: ‘Nationality’).

The obvious shift in discourse categories’ substance becomes clear in reference to the athletes’ connection to the political system (in comparison: Tables 2 & 4 ‘Political system’). Years ago, figure skater Irina Rodnina dedicated her record-breaking result

crying “To You, Party!” It is hard to imagine nowadays that some athlete should come to think of dedicating his record to democracy. It is of course true, that the Party was able on its behalf to offer its national and ‘cousin’ -champions apartments, cabins and cars, but the current regime can only wish for a prosperous future. The poor standard of living comes up repeatedly in connection to democratization in the newspaper’s reports.

The XVI OG opening ceremony was anticipated with great anxiety, the former Soviet team, and its former republics’ wishes to formulate their independent national teams had resulted in difficulties for organizers in Barcelona and Albertville. The International Olympic Committee concluded this debate in Albertville, deciding that the National Olympic Committees of the CIS will receive a fast recognition under the prerequisite that they will perform under one united team this Olympic year.

The nationality discourse (Table 4) is strongly present in newspaper reports, as the different nationalities of CIS member countries are afraid to cause conflict. However, all the tensions remained in the air. “Thank God nothing happened. There was no apparent singing or applauding on behalf of different nationalities of the former Soviet Union. Maybe just a little bit more for the Lithuanian team, but they did however start their fight for independence a bit earlier. All and all the West stayed true to its principle: You can live as you wish, just do not interfere in other’s affairs.”

The united team marched under the white Olympic flag, with emblems of independent states in their hands, small national flags. There were no longer traditional signs of the times of Ivan the Terrible like furry hats (see: Appendix 1).

Elena Vålbe said that it does not matter to which team she competes, the Soviet Union or the CIS. “I am almost never home anyway”. Although there is nothing left, our skiers ski, and not bad for that matter. A Soviet –type note is given on the Olympic hockey team, as it is something “we can especially be glad and proud about. I hope our hockey players will give joy to everyone back home (*rodina*) with their good game. Maybe the president will understand how much hockey means to people.”

*Thank you for everything! All was like before in many other previous Olympiads. And at the same time different. We have started to look at everything slightly differently though, for good and for bad. Now it is however easier to talk about everything.*

### 6.2.2 The National-International Axis of State Policy

*"A team without money and flag"*

The CIS team was commented on the French newspaper *le Monde* in the above sentence. Still, the team was expected to gain 10 Olympic medals.

"Can our athletes gain the number one spot?" This question bothers the *Daily Mail* that analyses the state of the CIS -team as well. "There is no more of 'the great red machine', there is no more Soviet Union, the giant that won 1212 medals starting from the Games of 1952." In 1988 the Soviet Union led the medal table in summer and winter Olympics winning 66 gold medals. Even specialists find it hard to predict how the year 1992 will turn out."

The journalists conflicting expectations of the CIS team's success are evident in the discourse categories 'Perceived by others Positive/ negative' (Table 4). Although hesitant themselves, the scepticism of others seems offending. "To us, the haste in tragic conclusions is somewhat annoying, although for other parties they might come in handy", *Sovetskij Sport* states. All and all, the possibilities of the CIS team are valued the highest according to the booker agencies in Europe.

"The white Olympic flag with five different color rings does not mean just the symbol of Olympism to our country, but a step to friendship."

### 6.2.3 Commercialisation

The substantial shift in the meaning of growing commercialism is reflected in lengthy reports of interaction with the West.

Nowadays, when everything is falling apart, the state, politics, standard of living, it is not easy for the athletes either. Coach Leonid Tjagatsev states: "for me, Yeltsin is the most important person". This may seem a bit strange since the state subsidies have been taken away from his team, but now it seems to Tjagatsev that everything is more open. "I can grow relations with international partners, there are friends and economic opportunities in the West".

The first impression of the Olympic atmosphere in Albertville is that it is not an Olympiad at all, but some different competition. Stating a reporter Arthur Verner (Cologne), the Olympic Games have transformed themselves a long ago from a purely sporting matter to something between worldwide record making, fashion and show. One of Coubertin's main principles was that victory is not the most important thing, participation is. However, only winners can receive large amounts of money and useful contracts for professional careers. This is why the XVI Winter Olympic Games in Albertville are a huge spectacle, and why it seems that the only thing related to winter sports is that everything takes place in the winter time. The Games in France receive negative evaluations, one needs to travel to different locations that are far away. If there is something 'Olympic' in the air, it is the prices, but not the Olympic spirit. What about the unification of athletes, despite their color or nationality? Nobody speaks to one another, they live separately and the media has no business going near them. The technical development is the positive aspect of the Games.

The altogether more pessimistic view of the Games is multiplied with the comment that the reality in the Games is terrorism, protests and politics.

*Sovetskij Sport* describes at great length a meeting that took place in the old part of Albertville, in hotel Million, in the plaza of Liberty.

*People do not believe in symbols anymore. They represent destinies and predetermined positions. There were, however, two symbols in this rainy night. The name of the hotel in the rooftop, and these words of freedom and million wishes, when the presidents of CIS National Olympic Committees arrived together with high representatives of financial organizations.*

The organization of CIS Olympic Committees organized the visit, the initiator of this meeting was, however, presumably the vice-president of the IOC, Mr. Vitalij Smirnov. In addition to Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan, Armenia, Azerbaidzan and Gruzia, there were representatives from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. There were also media from television and *Sovetskij Sport*. Otherwise there were not that many people, but the ones present were extremely influential. These included representatives from Adidas, IMS studio 6 (international marketing), a Japanese "Baseball" –magazine, an executive from the CNN, and an American marketing professional. Göran Takats, an agent of financial issues at the NOC of the former Soviet Union stated that times change, but sport never



ceases to exist. "There is a huge potential in people and results. Sport is based on a free will, but that alone is not enough, and we promise to make use of all our experience in marketing". "We did not choose this hotel by accident, its name is 'Million', and that shall be the symbol of our future". Adidas's Thomas Harrington was grateful for the information that *Sovetskij Sport* gave before the Games about the agreement with Adidas and said: "the world which we live in has changed. ... There have been changes in Adidas and nowadays bankers own it. When there was a transformation in the Soviet Union there were people in Adidas who wanted to strike a deal with the CIS. You should know that Mr. Smirnov turned to us so that it would be possible for the unified team to take part in the Games in Albertville and Barcelona."

"Although everything should fall apart in a country, sport remains. And so it is, sport has so far remained. In the end, eight gold medals and second place in the medal table is not a bad achievement, considering the poorness in which the country has been struggling with." Viktor Ivanov, the head coach of the combined team had a more skeptical view, "it is basically our last resources, if the state does not pay more attention to sport, in the following Olympics we will be left far behind. A skier does not receive more than a thousand rubles as his salary. Juniors get basically nothing. Without help we will not make it."

#### 6.2.4 Continuity and Change

*Nostalgic statements for the former Soviet Union, the 'Great Red Machine' are understandable, but now we need decisions.*

"We must seek for financial support. It is in business's interest that our athletes will not go into different directions. The West understands that if we lose people, the world loses. We have to think about the athletes and help them." State-driven sport-structures can continue to exist, and they should, but they should not interfere with the territory of Olympic Committees. Without state-structures we cannot reach great territories with the time that we have. But we need strong Olympic Committees."

In the meeting between the Olympic Committees of CIS and financial institutions, the vice-president of the IOC, Mr. Vitalij Smirnov stated: "It is good that the media is present in this meeting, as the ears and eyes of the people. There are interesting transformations taking place, as Europe is unifying, we are actively falling apart. In this situation, a quicker disintegration is better for us, so we can quickly also be united as well.

The Olympic movement is one of the best ideas the human race has developed. We have an important mission to uphold this movement. Tsakats states: "Alone we are weak, but together strong, there is hope for cooperation in the air".

The greatest rhetoric shift between the Soviet Union and the CIS can be summoned in the next sentence: "History is not made by people, but individuals."

**Table 4. Terms stated in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport in 1992 referring to main groupings**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Nationality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sport for honour of country</li> <li>○ <i>Otsestvo</i> (masc.), <i>Rodina</i> (fem.)</li> <li>○ Anxiety in terms of how diff. Nationalities will be expressed</li> <li>○ Does not matter for which team one competes</li> <li>○ No more great red machine</li> <li>○ Nostalgia in part for the SU</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Political system:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nobody dedicating medals to democracy; not enough resources and in that sense the superiority of the Soviet system</li> <li>○ History is made by individuals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Perceived by others Positive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hopes for cooperation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Perceived by others negative</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Serves others interests to paint the picture of possible failures of the CIS team in advance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>CIS sports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ With fall of SU the fall of sports</li> <li>○ "Lost the main motivation for winning – the strengthening of Communist ideology"</li> <li>○ Strengthening <i>oneself</i> (not communal)</li> <li>○ Uncertainty of possibilities of the team</li> <li>○ More opportunities through opening up to relations with the West</li> <li>○ Games with protests and politics, threat of terrorism</li> <li>○ Need for stronger Olympic Committees and less of state-led policy</li> <li>○ Power of media</li> <li>○ Sport interesting to masses compared to politics (image building)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Commercialisation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To great extent, altering the original meaning of Olympism</li> <li>○ Greater cooperation with Western companies and media</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the carefully developed link between the Soviet man and the accomplishments of the Communist system's athletes three goals were stated to remain: homeland (masc. *otsestvo*), sport and accomplishment. The underdeveloped political system of democracy and its lack of nostalgic, emotionally laden power are clearly stated in the reports that one finds it hard to believe that anyone would shed tears for the new system in valued sporting moments.

The national identity in the framework of the Olympic Movement is described as having taken a hard hit to the Great Power image of Soviet times. The Russian national

emblems were toned down and there were fears of outbursts concerning the former Soviet subordinates.

There is a great pressure to succeed, even though the resources for the athletes are not the same as during the Soviet times. Although the opening up of relations came with risks, the new possibilities are respected all the same. The declarative words of positively developing international relations were clearly left behind with the extensive growth of commercialism. The political aspect is recognized as well.

Individuality has replaced at this time the communist ideals of the Soviet Union. With the unification tendencies of Europe, the need to better cooperation is recognized.

The tremendous shift to change caused contradictory feelings on images of Russia. The challenge to find adequate resources had negative connotations, although a more individualistic turn and increasing possibilities bore hope. The fear of outbursts of different CIS nationalities faded away the traditional Russian spirit.

### **6.3 Conclusion: The beginning of the 1990's, the Olympic Movement and International Relations**

The Foreign Policy Doctrine of Russia is shortly reviewed here in comparison to the above stated results of the newspaper writing on national identity in the Olympic Movement. This should more clearly explain the perceived realities and needs for image-building in the international relations arena.

Comparing the first Document on Foreign Policy (1993) after the collapse of the Soviet Union to the perceived realities of international politics, one can describe it as optimistic by nature in Russia's reach towards the West as an equal partner. On the other hand the divide is still obvious and support for the role as a Great Power is searched from the Near Abroad. The beginning of the 1990's was difficult for the relationship of Russia and the West. In Russia, the positive attitudes did not reach beyond the challenges unveiling the transition period. There were growing opinions supporting the notion that the West, including the EU, was aiming at deliberately destroying the historic might of wealth and force of Russia (Haukkala 2003).

*Our aim is to create fruitful circumstances for the full membership of Russia in a worldwide community as a historical super power, which has a unique geopolitical position (The Foreign Policy Doctrine of 1993).*

The Foreign Policy Doctrine of 1993 is the first official definition of foreign policy guidelines after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the divide of the Cold War. Characteristic of this period is to highlight the transition period and change. “The changing of Russia to a democratic society changed the core of the power divide. The absence of the threat of a global war gave prerequisites for constructive cooperation in regional and global level.” Especially the change of reference point to the regional level is worth noting. Highlighting the Great Power status is obvious, and it is made clear that the end of the Cold War does not automatically mean a solid ground for the international environment; military factors have still a large role. When it comes to the Europe-relations, the document states that “In practice, Russia takes into account the new development, on one hand the formation of a narrow European community and on the other, new kinds of challenges that pose a serious threat to a traditionally stable Europe.”

The following statement of the foreign policy doctrine makes an interesting comparison of the foreign policy objectives emphasized during the 1988 Winter Games. “It should be noted that Russia’s foreign policy objectives are not defined by ideological prerequisites or demands of the Party, but elementary common interests<sup>27</sup>. In Soviet times the direction of the foreign policy was affected by a two-fold divide that followed the abstract, new thinking about conflict prevention and on the other hand old conceptions of a two –system counter positioning. Despite the gains of this new thinking, the weaknesses are also related to the divide.” A turn into democracy serves as a solution to this problem, the fight of ideology ended. In the foreign policy doctrine, economy, diplomacy and military capabilities are the key points, in addition to which the endurance of civil society and renewal of the federation are priorities.

It is made clear that Russia has nothing to do with the Soviet tradition of handling foreign policy.

---

<sup>27</sup> The traditional definition of foreign policy defined by national interests.

### 6.3.1 The Discourses of Equality – Difference (National Pride)

*We must lay grounds for the equal partnership with neighbours, leading democracies and the economically most developed countries building on Russian values and interests. Russia must cooperate with such countries that can be helpful regarding national revival. These countries include the neighbouring countries, economically and technologically developed Western countries and the new industrial countries. With these countries, Russia shares common values (of the World Civilization), matters of maintaining security, and the success of Russian reforms. Sharing opinions cannot, however, be taken for granted or considered a “payment” for assistance.*

The Foreign Policy Doctrine, 1993.

The interest –driven approach has been consistent in developing a foreign policy, compared to the common values and identity –question persistent in the European Union. Emphasizing common values might in fact be an answer to Western countries’ call in defining identity. In the Concept, it is acknowledged that first and foremost the success of goals depends on Russia itself. Russia does not refer to itself as part of the West, but actively aims for partnership by highlighting its’ trustworthiness. The counterpart is referred to as “the leading countries of the West” and “other foreign partners that are interested in the stable development of Russia”.

Although national interests refer to equality (“it is in the interest of the Federation to form equal relations with the CIS- countries and other Near Abroad”), Russia’s role is once again referred to as a Great Power, it should be noted in accordance with its’ position in international processes. For the first time, to the discourse on equality is referred to through international organizations such as the United Nations and OSCE<sup>28</sup>.

The Concept refers to the balancing of the international situation and the absence of reasons to maintain a closed “Western community”. “Western solidarity of the Cold War lost its meaning after the counter positioning ended“.

The emphasis after the Cold War shifts to economics. According to the concept, the West seizes to be a military-political concept in a traditional sense. But still, it is “one of the most important centers in the world economy and international affairs – in the

<sup>28</sup> Tendency to emphasize organizations that are not in the hands of a super power creating an image of equality.

global civilization process”. One defining characteristics will be the battle between different centers (The United States, Western Europe, Japan) and the US’s aim to preserve leadership, although “it has lost ground after the Cold War”, the Concept states. This marks the divide in conceptualizing the US and Europe in the definition “West”. Still, Russia’s distance from the West remains.

The conflicting tendencies of equality – difference –discourses are again obvious as Russia is on one the hand regarded as part of the democratic nations’ community, but on the other hand threats are numerous: ethno-political turmoil, the problems of Western Europe’s unification, the crisis of federalism, the instability of the continent, etc. The European unification should be regarded, according to the document, as an independent global factor, and the tendency towards integration is conceived as threatening. “These problems, together with challenges inside Russia, pose a threat to Russia’s further alienation from Europe”.

The discourse of national pride is emphasized especially when it comes to Eastern Europe. Although referring to equality first, it is stated that “Russia must prevent a birth of a buffer zone between Eastern and Western Europe, and on the other hand, one must be cautious that the Western European countries do not push Russia away from Eastern Europe”. There is in principle a new strategy between the relations of Russia and Eastern Europe. “After gaining independence, it is typical to exaggerate distance from Russia. Despite a somewhat artificial exclusion from Russia politically, the countries are economically and culturally oriented towards Russia and the CIS”. Concerning the CIS –countries, it is argued that they are in the process of seeking new political identity.

## 6.4 The ‘Great’ Russian State: “Is the ‘Red Team’ still Mighty?”

### *Year 1994 – Russian Era*

- The 1<sup>st</sup> Chechen War 1994
- The National Olympic Committee of Russia was founded in 1989 and recognized in 1993, after which Russia has taken part in the Winter Olympic Games since 1994.

### 6.4.1 The 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympic Games

**Table 5. The Medal Table, 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympic Games**

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	 Russia	11	8	4	23
2	 Norway	10	11	5	26
3	 Germany	9	7	8	24
4	 Italy	7	5	8	20
5	 United States	6	5	2	13
6	 South Korea	4	1	1	6
7	 Canada	3	6	4	13
8	 Switzerland	3	4	2	9
9	 Austria	2	3	4	9
10	 Sweden	2	1	0	3

Host nation is highlighted.

*Propaganda over propaganda.*

*Sovetskij Sport* writes: “In the land of the Soviets one thing was said and another done. Sport was deeply politicized. The winnings of athletes demonstrated the very essence of Socialism. In the Olympic arenas Russian stars (*rossiiskie*) and the Russian national school were flourishing. The achievements of the Soviet Union’s team are not however propaganda.”



The Russian Olympic Committee spent in the years 1993-1994 in preparing for the Lillehammer Games 883 M RB (757 000 USD). These resources came from the budget of the Russian president by order. Team Russia was able to regain number one spot in the medal table (Table 5).

The wavering line of the category 'Nationality' (Table 6) is well defined in the following report. In 1994, Yevgenij Redkin, a biathlete, is the author of perhaps two of the biggest sensations winning a fierce German in 20 km, and a resilient Italian, Tsingerle, as well as a brother-in-arm Sasha Popov, and all the others. Many remember Redkin as Russian, but he studies in the fitness institute of Belarus and has changed his citizenship. "Will there be a scandal over this? No, not a scandal, maybe a small commotion that will quiet down with time. I think everyone has a right to choose their residence, especially if they are offered better living standards", the reporter writes.

In hockey, the favorites are considered to be Norway, Germany, Italy, Canada and the USA. Team Russia is to perform for the first time under the tricolored flag. Even the president of the Olympic Committee of Russia is afraid to make predictions of the Olympic team's success beforehand. Still, in the Opening ceremony, team Russia seemed great with national costumes.

At first, there were statements like "victory is not the most important thing, participation is". When it started to seem like the Russian team might do well, the tone shifted. "Of course, patriotism was struck hard by perestroika, but something remained – there could have been even more left." There were no obvious signs of supporters of the Russian team, such as flags and shirts as during the Soviet times.

Ljubov Jegorova, a multiple winner in skiing in the Olympic Games, states in the newspaper that after demanded victories for the Soviet team she now feels responsibility foremost to her coach and then to herself. Jegorova, however, does not plan on moving abroad either. (See discourse category 'Political system' on individuality in Table 6).

“We have always shaken the world with our furs demonstrating well-being, nowadays our team is nothing compared to the Russian spirit, the way we should all be. But that is in the future, when – nobody knows”, the reporter writes. Watching Ljubov Jegorova in the pedestal, the reporter states that at the same time as he sees traits of a clever farce, the Russian (*rossijane*) must feel pride. The fatherland (*otetsestvo*) has reduced its sons and daughters to poverty, inflation, and criminality. Patriotism in the light of history has fallen into darkness.

#### 6.4.2 The National-International Axis of State Policy

Festive voices were echoing from the Olympic village together with the tricolored flag rising to the flagpole. The Russian delegation, with Mr. Vitaly Smirnov of the Olympic Committee as its lead, greeted the mayor of the Olympic village, Mr. Kjäll B. Einarsen, who was confident, that the Games ahead and the Russian team participating in them served as affirming world peace and mutual understanding throughout the planet. There are 123 athletes from 23 areas of the country in the Russian team. The most athletes come from the Moscow, St. Petersburg and Tseljabinsk areas. The athletes are planning on participating in 58 sport events out of 61. The mayor wished the team a warm welcome as an independent team for the first time.

At the time of the Opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games, “the world wants peace and quiet – a truce”. According to *Sovetskij Sport* it is hard to believe though, since the Olympics take place in a country that is a NATO member state and a military base.

The war in Bosnia was remembered in the Opening ceremony with silence, respecting also a former host of the Olympics, Sarajevo.

### 6.4.3 Commercialisation

A reporter of *Sovetskij Sport* finds it next to impossible to get insight to stories of athletes or their trainers, they are that well protected from the media. Still, for foreign media representatives it seems on the contrary that the cooperation works well, press equals image, contracts and money. In Russia it is not understood, according to the reporter that the publicity works for popularity of the sport, brings sponsors and spectators and also new generations.

Patriotism has suffered hard from the rising of professional sports, such as hockey with valuable contracts. *Sovetskij Sport* ironically states that even President Yeltsin congratulated the players that were able to receive such contracts even though they do not have a permission to play in the Olympic Games.

The success of the Russian team brought questions from the foreign press on how it was possible? According to a report in *Sovetskij Sport*, the success gives an artistic impression of the state of Russian sports, of the wellbeing of its citizens. However, great resources are needed, and state support is crucial, otherwise the keeping of high level trainers and coaching the younger generations becomes impossible.

### 6.4.4 Continuity and Change

*It's a peculiar nation – the Russian.*

Stating the continuity in Russian success: “It is like there are no difficulties in the homeland (*rodina*), with all that we have we are trying to ensure Europe and the world that everything is ‘okay’”, *Sovetskij Sport* writes. Despite the difficulties, the reporter cannot stop wondering how some athletes perform so well. “They are the future of Russia”.

All and all, “patriotism is when the Russian flag is lifted in the flag pole and the national hymn is played. That is when one is proud of his homeland (*rodina*) which is only one and a great one. Let’s just hope it stays that way”.

“The Olympic Games are the moment of truth when it becomes obvious that the planet is our common home. And if it is in the human blood to be competitive, let’s be competitive in sports.”

In the Closing ceremony, it was safe to say to the sceptics of the new Russia that Russia was able to gather a team that worked through the Games with honour. It was a new team by behaviour and spirit.

**Table 6. Terms stated in the newspaper Sovetskij Sport in 1994 referring to main groupings**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Nationality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Competing for other nationalities</li> <li>○ Some vocabulary of war, ”brother in arms”, opponents Germany and Italy</li> <li>○ Patriotism struck hard by Perestroika</li> <li>○ Repeatedly statements of the Olympic Movement uniting the world, although acknowledging that the Games take place in a NATO member country</li> <li>○ Homeland (fem. <i>rodina</i>) referring to the false statements of reality in Russia; also positive emotional feelings of “one and only” homeland</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Political System</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mixed feelings: pride for the country but at the same time negative feelings for the system that resulted in poverty of its “sons and daughters” (referring to <i>otetsstvo</i>, fatherland)</li> <li>○ With the Olympic Movement representing world peace, “lets bring the competitiveness into sports”</li> <li>○ Individuality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Perceived by others Positive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mayor stating the Games with team Russia affirming world peace</li> <li>○ A warm welcome</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Perceived by others negative</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sceptical views of team Russia’s possibilities before the Games in the changed framework</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Russian sports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Better living standards elsewhere&gt; changing nationalities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Commercialisation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The power of media not yet recognized in Russia</li> <li>○ The rising power of foreign resources</li> <li>○ Still the need for government support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The team Russia, performing for the first time in the Olympic Games struggled in the shadow of the old might. The national emblems were downplayed together with the diminished sense of patriotism. The traditional Russian spirit had to struggle with the

realities of “farce-like” traits of lack of resources. There remains, still, the notion of an emotional “one and only homeland (*rodina*)”.

In the international politics’ framework it is clear to Russia that the Games take place in a NATO member country, which Russia is not a part of, although speaking of the Olympic principles of world peace.

The aspect of commercialization is clearly in conflict with the traditions of Russian sports, the relations between media are not yet fully understood.

In reports of *Sovetskij Sport*, the criticism for the current system and the need for resources is all the more clearly stated. The situation more clearly reflects the international relations reality and is not covered in the government’s propaganda the way it was in the Soviet times, when all the reports went through extensive scrutiny.

### 6.5 Conclusion: Towards the End of the 1990’s, the Olympic Movement and International Relations

*The influence of Russia to key questions of international activity has diminished... Countries’ tendency to weaken Russia’s position in political, economical, and military fields have affected these circumstances .*

(The 1997 Concept of National Security).

Following the situation of the 1994 Olympic setting, the Concept of National Security outlined the main trends of the 1990s moving on to the latter part of the decade.

In the year 1997, a formulation of a multi polar world was the way to describe the state of international politics. It is obvious that the optimism of Russia’s role in international politics had diminished. The above-mentioned three main fields: political, economical, and military, all refer to the former Soviet Union Great Power identity. The ‘weakening’ of Russia’s status is the result of the ideological vacuum that the collapse of the Soviet Union left together with the shortcomings in introducing democracy in Russia. This same observation was clearly stated also in the reports of *Sovetskij Sport* in 1992 and 1994.

The economical crisis and the weakening of military might followed. In the Concept that Boris Yeltsin signed in 1997, threats were considered as non-military by nature.

NATO's military action in the former Yugoslavia despite the protest of Moscow changed the situation. NATO's disregarding the UN meant for Russia the losing of face. In addition to that, the military power demonstrated in the Balkan's made it obvious that Russia had been left behind. Under the Yeltsin administration, Vladimir Putin began formulating the Military Concept up to date, and when finishing, he was acting as the president. The festive notions of the beginning of the 1990's joining the West were long ago demolished.

The categories "West", "Europe", and the "United States" are left behind in the 1997 Concept. A stable development of the CIS and Russia's Near Abroad is mentioned repeatedly.

A multi polar world means the strengthening of economic and political positions for a substantial proportion of countries as well as their integration in international politics, in financial and information processes. Cooperation refers more and more to Western unions' inner strength separate from Russia.











## 7 FROM VANCOUVER TO SOCHI – BRINGING THE GAMES TO THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY

### *21<sup>st</sup> Century Russia*

- *The era of strong leadership of Vladimir Putin*
- *Russia's need to perform well in Vancouver before home Games*
- *Upcoming opportunity to present a developed and cooperative Russia in 2014 Sochi not forgetting the national specialities*

### 7.1 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games 2010

**Table 7. The Medal Table, 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games**

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	 Canada (CAN)	14	7	5	26
2	 Germany (GER)	10	13	7	30
3	 United States (USA)	9	15	13	37
4	 Norway (NOR)	9	8	6	23
5	 South Korea (KOR)	6	6	2	14
6	 Switzerland (SUI)	6	0	3	9
7	 China (CHN)	5	2	4	11
7	 Sweden (SWE)	5	2	4	11
9	 Austria (AUT)	4	6	6	16
10	 Netherlands (NED)	4	1	3	8

Host nation is highlighted. Russia ranked 11<sup>th</sup>.

“Russia must rebound from its disastrous performance at the Vancouver Olympics by topping the medals table at the 2014 Winter Games on home soil in Sochi”, Deputy prime minister Alexander Zhukov<sup>29</sup>, the new head of Russia's national Olympic committee, has stated. Leonid Tyagachev, the former head of the Russian Federation's Olympic Committee, resigned after the catastrophic result of the Russian team in Vancouver. The sports official said that neither the Olympic Charter, nor Russian legislation hold the National Olympic Committee liable for the results of the Olympics. “The Russian Federation's Olympic Committee provided all required logistic and technical conditions for the Russian Olympic team in Vancouver in compliance with the Olympic Charter of the International Olympic Committee. Yet, at the Olympics in Vancouver we did not display the results that our fans expected of us,” Tyagachev said in his official statement.

## 7.2 Sochi Winter Games 2014, “An Image Battle”

*We are able to be proud of our rich sportive traditions with our champions and records. The choosing of Sochi to host the 2014 Winter Olympic Games would be a recognition of the place of Russia in the Olympic Movement strengthening the ideals of Olympism.*

President Putin, 2006 (see: Appendix 3.).

Sochi’s bid materials include a vision according to which Sochi has an opportunity to communicate a singular, compelling vision of Olympism infused with the vibrant culture, rich heritage and unique character of the Russian people. “A Sochi’s public opinion poll confirms that Russians believe that the Sochi 2014 Winter Games would help re-ignite a sense of national pride and purpose. Sochi 2014 will utilize the Olympic values and ideals to galvanize and unite the nation”.

Publishing the Russian National Olympic Committee’s ten year strategy, Alexander Zhukov, President of ROC, said: “The Russian Olympic Committee will be one of the most effective National Olympic Committees and will ensure that Russia remains a global sporting powerhouse.” “Providing the best conditions for the preparation and success of Russian sportsmen is incredibly important. Russian Olympians inspire people

---

<sup>29</sup> Russia has disparate sports authorities, which include a ministry, several Olympic-related organizations and dozens of sports federations.



across the whole country and generate a feeling of national pride,” added Mr. Zhukov. “Over the next two years the ROC will strengthen its position as a reliable partner for sports federations, become an advocate for the interests of sportsmen and coaches and promote Olympic education and the ideals of the Olympic Movement.”

Speaking in a sports forum titled “Russia – a sporting nation”, President Medvedev stated: "The representative nature of the event and the wide range of questions on the agenda indicates Russia’s authority as a world sporting power." Dmitry Chernyshenko, Sochi 2014 President and CEO, hosted a special roundtable to discuss the long and short-term benefits that the Games bring, including the impact that it will have on the global image of Russia. "The round table participants agreed that the Games in Sochi are both the starting point and an indicator of positive changes in the social, cultural and sports life of the country. The Sochi 2014 project will be the key element in enhancing the positive international image of Russia. It is important for the Games to find a character, understandable for most people of different ages, professions and nationalities.” The theme of "Innovation and digital communications in sport” is being given an important role in the Forum. Engaging the young population with the Olympic movement is an important task within the digital revolution, which was repeatedly highlighted by the representatives of the IOC. Digital communication allows for increased exposure for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the ideals of Olympism and the image of the host country to be conveyed to millions of people around the world.

Sochi Winter Games budget is currently 1.9 billion USD/ 185 MRD (a total of 950 MRD rubles to the whole Olympic project) rubles, out of which 80 are government financed and the rest comes from private investors, according to government source Dmitri Kozak on July 2010. The revenue from the first 9 national sponsors is amounting to 1 billion USD. The cost of one Olympic medal is estimated to be 388 MLN rubles.

A Cultural Olympiad was launched in May 2010.

### 7.3 Continuity and Change, the Olympic Movement and International Relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

”There was no concept (during Soviet Union), but security – that it was”, Russian generals stated when talking about the concept of national security in 2000. The Foreign Policy concept 2000 is referred to as “The Ivanov Doctrine”, by the authors Igor Ivanov, Minister of Foreign Policy (in 2000) and the president of the National Security Council Sergei Ivanov. According to this concept, leading the way to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including democratic institutions, organs of state power, parties and public unions in to the actualization of the concept reflect the dynamic development of Russia in the year 2000.

Europe, and the ‘West’ –discourses are not separated in the same way as in the previous two documents. Emphasis has shifted even more to a unipolar worldview and power politics.

For Moscow, acting as a hegemonic power, maintaining strategic nuclear parity with the United States, securing its borders and coping with the current economic and demographic crisis and the need to reform its armed forces is not an easy task.

The Russian-Georgian conflict demonstrated that Russia will not permit any neighboring country to use force and act autonomously in a region where Russia has special interests. The “Five Day War” in Georgia confirmed the declarations of President Medvedev that are found in the Foreign Policy Concept (2008). According to this document, Russia supports collective actions and wants to be a guarantor of security, but it also has every right to act unilaterally when its national interests are involved. Obviously, the voices within the transatlantic community varied, since Russia is no longer the Cold War enemy, but a crucial international actor, a business partner and an energy supplier.

The political reality once again interferes with sports as the Winter Games in Sochi occur within close distance from Abkhazia (12 miles from its border), a territory Russia broke off from Georgia by military force in 2008 recognizing it as an independent state. Despite the American support for Georgia's controversial president, Mikhail Shakhshvili that has remained a sticking point in the "reset" in US-Russia relations, there are few

suggestions that the United States and Europe should boycott the Games, like in Moscow in 1980 (on opposing view, see Brzezinski 2008). On the contrary, one can imagine the Winter Olympics could become a catalyst for resolving longstanding conflicts. Abkhazia expects at least \$300 M of investment in construction materials, while the Russian government says it will station 100,000 workers there due to cheaper living costs.

The uneasy situation in Russia's northern Caucasus is also a potential threat to the security of the Games, the conflict-ridden republics of Ingushetia, Chechnya and Dagestan lie due east of Sochi. As opposed to the analysis of democratic tendencies in Russia, there are also future visions of Russia being overtaken by nationalistic tendencies and returning to a Soviet –type supranational entity.

Russia rejects any external influence from other states on its domestic and foreign policy issues and accuses the United States and NATO of influencing the policymaking of some of its neighboring countries. As a result, Moscow is reluctant to participate in western coalitions and tries to reinforce a number of regional integration associations. The Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) are all examples of efforts to counterbalance western organizations and strengthen Russia's role in Central Asia. (Dimitrakopoulou 2010.)

During the Putin era, Russia reestablished itself as an important global actor in the international arena. Russia fears further NATO enlargement, and has used the energy card in order to test the limits of its geopolitical influence in Europe. Russia perceives other powerful actors - the EU, China and India - as necessary partners against global threats. It also promotes cooperation with the United States in terms of an equal strategic partnership in fields of common interests, making references to arms control, non-proliferation, counterterrorism and conflict settlement. There is an altered perception of the Russian leadership that tries to combine elements of the past and the future and set on a realistic basis Russia's relation to the rest of the world. The NSS reflects the restoration of Russia's great power identity (*derzhavnost*) that took place during the Putin era, but the question of how Moscow will cope with these challenges remains open. Echoing Dmitri Trenin, Russia needs reimagining its foreign policy.

There is a need to strengthen the geopolitical role in the Eurasian continent, elaborate closer relations with the member-states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It is not only a matter of prestige for Moscow to sustain a leading role among the post-Soviet countries, but also a way to secure stability in its near abroad, where it has enormous national interests. (Dimitrakopoulou & Liaropoulos 2010.)

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, it was set to examine how the national identity of Russia can be defined and what are its expressions during the major political and cultural breaches of 1988, 1992, and 1994 using as a material the newspaper *Sovetskij Sport*. Linked to this differentiation of eras of the Soviet Union, the CIS and the Russian Federation is the axis of continuity and change. Identity is not perceived as a constant quality, but changing into representations that take different forms. However, there are familiar traditions and frameworks through which identities are being interpreted and commented on. The major components of change have been in the 1980-2000, with the opening up to the West beginning from the Perestroika and the following democratization tendencies in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The disappointments in the 'Westernization' process resulted in cycles on the rise of nationalistic tendencies and the return to the traditional statements of Russian cultural superiority and strong leadership.

The Olympics are considered to be the most important arena of nations competing with each other when at the same time uniting the entire world. The definitions 'West', 'Europe', 'self', and 'other' were of key importance in this study, as they offered a model for inclusion/ exclusion and comparison according to which one can state that non-European societies are "near/ far/ catching up" in relation to the West. The 'West' has traditionally been the 'Other' for Russia.

The main discourses were divided under six categories, nationality, the political system, others conceptions of the Soviet Union, the state of Soviet sport and commercialisation. All of these categories were linked to the international situation according to which Soviet-Russia mirrored itself. The 'nationality' aspect highlighted the affectionate expressions of homeland, the national pride. 'The political system' transformed from the Socialist system to the one aspiring to present itself as democratic. During Soviet times, the system outlined an "openness" towards the West, in line of which in the newspaper it was reported that the West positively perceived the Soviet Union. 'Others conceptions', both positive and negative go to show the interplay of negotiating identities to the frames that are available at given times. After the Communist strategy

of direct comparison of a strong Soviet man to athletes and performing to the homeland, on one hand, in the CIS, the motivation for winning was lost together with the fall of the Soviet Union. The power of the media and sport were understood in a different light, interesting to the masses, capable of hiding political realities. A Western, individualistic approach occurred. In Russia, the increasing commercialism affected the athletes choosing of home country and the possibilities for valued contracts and sponsorships. 'Commercialism' of Western origin could not but affect the definitions of Olympic Games, already starting in Calgary, but increasingly in 1992 and 1994, the commercialisation of the Games started to be present in the reports of the Games. Commercialism meant that the sentences of the idealistic goals of Olympism were in fact not represented in the Games to a great extent.

All and all, host countries' attitudes and foreign presses' comments were carefully studied. In Soviet times, there remained scepticism for the representatives of the Socialist system. Later on, there were doubts that the athletes could perform well after the fall of a Great Power. The lack of resources was also commented upon. Clearly, Russia was not an evident part of the West after the collapse of the Soviet Union either.

In international politics, the disappointments of NATO actions marked clearly the divide between Russia and the member states. The expanding unification of the European Union also took place separate from Russia. The foreign policy objectives were defined not by ideology but national interests. Although cooperation with the Western countries is needed and 'common values are shared', Russia states the cooperative channels to be foremost international organizations. The shortcomings of the democratic model in Russia and disappointments in cooperation with the West led by 1997 to the definition that the Western world was set out to diminish Russia's role economically, politically and militarily. This tendency in the shortcomings of the new system is also present in the reports of *Sovetskij Sport* already in 1992 and 1994.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Russia has introduced a strong leader with the re-establishment of a former Great Power might. The Vancouver Games were a disappointment for Russia, not supporting this powerful image. The upcoming Sochi Games in 2014 are a great challenge to Russia that seeks to perform well both in terms of athletics as well as in the international arena in general. The path to Sochi is by no means uncomplicated, the

turmoil and showings of Russian might in Georgia and Northern Caucasus are potential threats to the success of the Games.

It is the identity discourse on the part of political leaders, intellectuals and countless others, who engage in the process of constructing, negotiating, manipulating or affirming a response to the demand at times urgent, mostly absent for a collective image. Even in times of crisis, this is never more than a provisional image of ourselves as we want to be, limited by the facts of history. Cultural entities, such as language, or identity, only exist as objective properties by virtue of the social practices and social relationship which constitute them. It is the relationship of members to each other, and of the community to other communities, which stands as the irreducible object of security.

According to Goffman's theory of dramaturgical action actors are conceptualized in a cultural environment as performers engaged in manipulative presentations of self and framing who are, at the same time, constrained by the script and the consistency requirements of their roles. Frames are constructions of information that are composed and structured with the intention of producing particular effects in audiences.

According to the results, the discourses in the material can be understood as representations of national identity. They strongly reflect the changes in the political system. There is a clear difference between the Soviet reports and the reports in the 1990s. In the former case, the state action was perceived as positive and defining for the countries success. The athletes' performance was equal to the might of a Great Power and followed the political system. With changes in the latter case came a different reality, an ideological vacuum. Still, they represented national identity, now more challenging and complex. Although an obvious form of patriotism diminished, all the time the pride and affectionate attitude towards the 'one and only' homeland remained.

## 9 SELF-REFLECTION OF STUDYING SOVIET-RUSSIA IN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

Overall, the process of writing this thesis has been interesting and educating. When starting to develop the original idea, I had an idea about connecting the study of Russia in the Olympic movement from a national identity point of view to my previous study on Russian foreign policy and security doctrines, which also dealt with the issue of Russian perceptions of the Self and the Other.

However, as I studied the materials and the wider framework further, it became even more clear that the connections in talking/ writing about as wide a topic as national identity were there; the links appeared in different context, but were all the same recognizable.

The subject is of course too wide to be exhaustively studied in one or two thesis and much interesting traits remain to be completed, one being the upcoming Winter Olympic Games in Sochi – a true test to Russia's ability to host a globally celebrated event.

The main risks in the method used in this study are the meaning of translation and the hidden connections in the complicated net of administrative bodies in Russian sporting agencies. The materials were originally read in their original language, Russian. Then, translation work had to be done between Russian-Finnish- and finally English. There is always a risk that the meanings of the original language suffer to an extent.

Were the administrative bodies more transparent, it would be easier to see the true connections between political and sporting life. Having said this, it is still one of the main aspects of this thesis to try and find signs of these relations and describe how they are presented.



## List of References

- Allison, L. (ed.) (1986). *The politics of sport*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Arnaud, P., & Riordan, J. (eds.) (1998). *Sport and international politics*. London: E & FN Spon.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Bernstein, A., & Blain, N (2003). *Sport and the media: The emergence of a major research field/ Sport, media, culture: Global and local dimensions*. London: Frank Cass Publishers.
- Birrell, S., & Hart, M. (1981). *Sport in the socio-cultural process*. Dubuque: Brown Company Publishers.
- Blain, N., Boyle, R., & O'Donnell, H. (1993). *Sport and national identity in the European media*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. New York: Routledge.
- Campbell, D. (1998). *Writing security: United States foreign policy and the politics of identity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Delgado, F. (2003). The fusing of sport and politics: Media constructions of U.S. versus Iran at France '98. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 27, 293-307. Sage.
- Diez, T. (2004). Europe's others and the return of geopolitics. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17(2), 319-335.
- Dimitrakopoulou, S., & Liaropoulos, A. (2010). Russia's national security strategy to 2020: A great power in the making? *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* Vol. 4 (1), 35-42.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication* 43 (4), 51-8.
- Foucault, M. (1969). L'archéologie du savoir. (Kilpeläinen, (2005) *Tiedon arkeologia*. trans.). Tampere: Vastapaino.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books.
- Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face behaviour*. New York: Anchor Books.

- Gruneau, R., & Cantelon, H. (eds.) (1982). *Sport, culture, and the modern state*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Hall, S. (1992). The West and the rest, discourse and power. In Hall, S., & Gieben, B. (eds.) *Formations of Modernity* (275-320). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hall, S., & Gieben, B. (eds.) *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hall, S., & Du Gay, P. (eds.) (1996). *Questions of cultural identity*. London: Sage Publications.
- Hargreaves, J. (1986). *Sport, power and culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing consent. The political economy of the mass media* New York: Pantheon Books.
- Hargreaves, J. (1992). *Freedom for Catalonia? Catalan nationalism, Spanish identity and the Barcelona Olympic Games*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harle, V. (toim.) (1993). Eri-laisuus, identiteetti ja politiikka. *Rauhan- ja konfliktintutkimuslaitos, tutkimustiedote* No 52. Tampere: Rauhan- ja konfliktintutkimuskeskus.
- Hindess, B. (1982). Power, interests and the outcomes of struggles. *Sociology*, 16(4), 498-511.
- Hopf, T. (2002). *Social construction of international politics: Identities and foreign policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- IOC (2008). Rapporteurs' Summary: Second Seminar on the Autonomy of the Olympic and Sports Movement. Lausanne.
- Jokinen, A., Juhila, K., & Suoninen, E. (1999). *Diskurssianalyysi liikkeessä*. Tampere: Vastapaino.
- Katzenstein, P. (1996). *The culture of national security: Norms and identity in world politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kivinen, M. (1998). *Sosiologia ja Venäjä*. Helsinki: Tammi.
- Kortunov, S. (1995). Partnerstvo nuzno spasat. *Nezavisimaja gazeta*.
- Lehti, M. (2003). Identiteeteistä mielenmaisemaan, vahvat ja heikot tarinat maailmanpolitiikan tutkimuksessa. *Uusi maailmanpolitiikka – konferenssi* 12.12.2003.
- Maguire, J. (1993). Bodies, sports cultures and societies. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. No. 28, 33-52.

- Maguire, J., Poulton, E., & Possamai, C. (1999). The war of the words? Identity politics in Anglo-German Press Coverage of EURO 96. *European Journal of Communication*, Vol. 14(1), 61-89. Sage.
- McSweeney, B. (1999). *Security, identity & interests: A sociology of international relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mikkeli, H. (1998) *Europe as an idea and an identity*. Wilshire: Palgrave.
- Mitchell, R., & Baumann, P., (prepared by rapporteurs) (2006). *First Seminar on the Autonomy of the Olympic and Sports Movement, Final Document (21-22.9.2006)*. The IOC, Lausanne.
- Morton, F. L. in: Gruneau, R.; Cantelon, H. (eds.) (1982). *Sport, culture, and the modern state*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Neumann, I. B. (1996) *Russia and the idea of Europe: a study in identity and international relations*. London: Routledge.
- Neumann, I. B. (1999) *Uses of the other. The East in European identity formation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Nixon II, H. L. (2008). *Sport in a changing world*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
- Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse dynamics: Critical analysis for social and individual psychology*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Philo, G., Miller, D. (2000). Cultural complience and critical media studies. *Media, Culture & Society*, 22 (6), 831-839.
- Pivovarov, J. (2002). Russia's political history and foreign policy. *International Affairs: A Russian Journal of World Politics, Diplomacy and International Relations*, 48(4), 119-131.
- Radzinsky, E. (2001). *Rasputin*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Rae, H. (2002). *State identities and the homogenisation of peoples*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Riordan, J., & Cantelon, H. (2003). The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In Riordan, J., & Kruger, A. (Eds.). *European cultures of sport: Examining the nations and regions (89-102)*. Bristol: Intellect.
- Riordan, J., & Kruger, A. (eds.) (2003). *European cultures of sport: Examining the nations and regions*. Bristol: Intellect.
- Rowe, D. (1995). *Popular cultures: Rock music, sport and the politics of pleasure*. London: Sage.

Ruggie, J. G. (1988). What makes the world hang together? Neo-utilitarianism and the social constructivist challenge. *International Organization*, 52(4), 855-885.

Samra-Frederics, D. & Bargiela-Chiappini, F. (2008). Introduction to the symposium on the foundations of organizing: The contribution from Garfinkel, Goffman and Sacks. *Organization Studies* 29(5), 1-24.

Scannell, P., & Cardiff, D. (1991). *A social history of British broadcasting: 1922-1939 serving the nation*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Schimmelfennig, F. (2004). Goffman meets IR: dramaturgical action in international community. *International Review of Sociology*, 12(3), 417 – 437.

Suoninen, E. (1997). Selonteot ja oman toiminnan ymmärrettäväksi tekeminen. *Sosiologia* 34 (1), 26-38.

Tomlinson, A., & Whannel, G. (eds.) (1984). *Five ring circus*. London: Pluto.

Vihavainen, T. (1986). *Vallankumouksesta toiseen maailmansotaan. Venäjän ja Neuvostoliiton historia*. Päätoimittaja Kirkinen, H. Keuruu: Otava.

Wæver, O., Buzan, B., & de Wilde, J. (1998). *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Webber, M. (ed.) (2000). *Russia and Europe: Conflict or cooperation?* Hampshire: MacMillan Press Ltd.

Wendt, A. (1999). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Materials

Sovetskij Sport (1988). Publications (No. 30-56) between February 6<sup>th</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup> 1988. ZAO Izdatel'skij dom "Komsomol'skaja pravda". Suomen Olympiakirjaston arkisto.

Sovetskij Sport (1992). Publications (No. 27-42) between February 8<sup>th</sup> and March 3<sup>rd</sup>. ZAO Izdatel'skij dom and Komsomol'skaja Pravda. Suomen Olympiakirjaston arkisto.

Sovetskij Sport (1994). Publications (No. 20-37) between February 5<sup>th</sup> and March 3<sup>rd</sup>. ZAO Izdatel'skij dom and Komsomol'skaja Pravda. Suomen Olympiakirjaston arkisto.

Sochi 2014, Gateway to the future (bid materials) (2006). Moscow: The Hennegan Company. Suomen Olympiakirjaston arkisto.

### Internet Resources

Brzezinski, Z. (2008). Staring Down the Russians. *Time Magazine*, Europe Edition, Vol. 172 (8). Retrieved August 15, 2010 from:  
[http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1832294\\_1832295\\_1832699,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1832294_1832295_1832699,00.html).

Haukkala, H. (2003) A Problematic Strategic Partnership. In Lynch *EU-Russian Security Dimensions*. Occasional Papers, European Union Institute for Security Studies. Retrieved August 30, 2010 from:  
<http://www.iss-eu.org/occasion/occ46.pdf>.

Morozov, V. (2004). Inside/ Outside: Europe and the Boundaries of Russian Political Community. *CSIS, Russia/ Eurasia Program*. Ponars Working Paper 23. Retrieved February 22, 2005 from:  
<http://www.csis.org/ruseura/ponars/workingpapers/023.pdf>.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1. *'Zemlja, s kotoroj my startuyem'*

(*'The land that is our point of departure', with Kreml as a backdrop.*)



Советские олимпийцы на Красной площади.

4.2.1988 Sovetskij Sport.

**APPENDIX 2. 'Pletso k pletsu – k metste'**  
(Shoulder to shoulder – for one dream)



Sovetskij Sport 28.2.1988.

**APPENDIX 3. A letter to the President of the International Olympic Committee  
by President Vladimir Putin; attached to Sochi 2014 application materials  
(in Russian)**



**ПРЕЗИДЕНТ  
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ**

« 18 » декабря 2006 г.

№ Пр-2202

Москва, Кремль

Уважаемый господин Президент!

Хотел бы выразить свою искреннюю поддержку выдвижению города Сочи в качестве столицы зимних Олимпийских и Паралимпийских игр 2014 года.

Мы по праву можем гордиться своими богатейшими спортивными традициями, именами прославленных чемпионов и рекорсменов. Выбор города Сочи местом проведения зимних Олимпийских игр 2014 года станет достойным признанием существенного вклада России в развитие Олимпийского движения, укрепление идеалов Олимпизма. И, конечно, возможность впервые принять зимние Олимпийские игры будет иметь большое значение для развития массового спорта в нашей стране, продвижения ценностей здорового образа жизни, особенно среди молодежи.

Уверен, что Сочи тепло и радушно встретит спортсменов и многочисленных гостей со всего мира. Мы сделаем все возможное, чтобы обеспечить успех этого масштабного и торжественного события.

С глубоким уважением,

В.Путин



**APPENDIX 4. A letter to the President of the International Olympic Committee by President Vladimir Putin, attached to Sochi 2014 application materials (translation)**



**VLADIMIR PUTIN**  
President of the Russian Federation

Le président de la Fédération de Russie  
18 décembre 2008  
N° Pr-2202  
Kremlin, Moscou

A l'intention du Dr Jacques Rogge, président du Comité  
International Olympique.

Cher président Rogge,

Je tiens à exprimer mon franc soutien à la ville de Sochi qui brigue le droit  
d'accueillir les Jeux Olympiques et les Jeux Paralympiques d'hiver de 2014.

Nous pouvons, à juste titre, nous montrer fiers de nos traditions sportives  
des plus riches ainsi que du renom de nos champions et recordmen.  
Conférer les Jeux Olympiques d'hiver de 2014 à la ville de Sochi  
constituerait un acte de reconnaissance approprié de la contribution  
importante qu'a apportée la Russie au développement du Mouvement  
olympique et au renforcement des idéaux de l'olympisme.

Et, à l'évidence, cette première occasion d'accueillir les Jeux Olympiques  
d'hiver exercera une incidence majeure sur le développement du sport de  
masse, dans notre pays, et sur la promotion, notamment chez les jeunes,  
des atouts d'une vie saine.

Je sais que Sochi se montrera chaleureuse et hospitalière pour accueillir  
les athlètes et les nombreux invités venus du monde entier. Nous sommes  
résolus à faire tout notre possible pour assurer la réussite de cette  
manifestation exceptionnelle et solennelle.

Veuillez agréer, monsieur le président, mes salutations sincères.

**Vladimir Putin**

President of the Russian Federation  
18 December 2008  
N° Pr-2202  
Kremlin, Moscow

To the President of the International Olympic Committee  
Dr. Jacques Rogge

Dear Mr. President,

I would like to express my sincere support for the candidature of the city  
of Sochi to become the Host City of the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic  
Winter Games.

We can be rightly proud of our rich sports traditions and of our famous  
champions and record-setting athletes. Selecting the city of Sochi as  
the place to hold the Olympic Winter Games in 2014 would be a fitting  
recognition of the significant contributions of Russia to the development of  
the Olympic Movement and the strengthening of the Olympic ideals.

And, of course, the opportunity to host the Olympic Winter Games for  
the first time will have a major significance in the development of popular  
sports in our country and in promoting the values of a healthy lifestyle,  
especially among the youth.

I am sure that Sochi will warmly and hospitably welcome the athletes and  
our many guests from around the world. We shall do everything possible to  
provide for the success of this great and celebratory event.

Sincerely Yours,

**Vladimir Putin**