

ACCOUNTING FOR MEGA-EVENTS

Forecast and Actual Impacts of the 2002 Football World Cup Finals on the Host Countries Japan/Korea

John D. Horne

University of Edinburgh, UK

Wolfram Manzenreiter

University of Vienna, Austria

Abstract The 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan was the first football World Cup Finals ever to take place in Asia and be co-hosted by two countries. Drawing on data provided by the national and local organizing committees, football's world governing institution, local and international media accounts and first-hand observations made before, during and after the event, the article discusses the contrast between discourses that forecast and described the actual impacts of the 2002 World Cup on its host societies. In particular three aspects are discussed: the specific regional political economy of the 2002 World Cup; the role of sports mega-events in identity construction and promotion; and how such events are both constituted by and constitutive of globalization. While a largely sceptical view of the economic impact informs our article, our conclusion explains the gap between forecast and actual impacts as indicative of the power struggle for determining the meaning of mega-events between different agents.

Key words • Football • globalization • identity construction • Japan • Korea • mega-events

Sporting mega-events, particularly the Olympic Games, acquired central status for city and national government development agendas after the 1984 Los Angeles Games showed for the first time that such mega-events could produce an economic surplus (Andranovich et al., 2001: 124). More generally, as many researchers have noted, investments into sport facilities and sport events have captured a leading position in the consumption-based economic development politics of many late capitalist societies over the past two decades (Baade, 1996; Nunn and Rosentraub, 1995; Schimmel, 2001). Yet virtually all case studies of the economic impact of either sport facilities or sport events have indicated that they are not the growth engines they purport to be (Miller, 2002; Rosentraub, 1997). Zimbalist (2001: xvii–xviii) notes that ‘top-level professional sports teams have an immense cultural impact on their communities but very little, if any, positive economic impact’. We will show that the same applies to hosting sports mega-events. Since most research on mega-events has been based on European, North American and Australian case studies, the 2002 World Cup in Japan and Korea,¹ the first ever to take place in Asia and be co-hosted by two countries,

presented a unique opportunity to carry out equivalent work into the impact of a sporting event in two Far East Asian societies.

The Football World Cup Finals as a Mega-Event

The broader economic, social and political background to the staging of the 2002 World Cup has already been the subject of research (see Horne and Manzenreiter, 2002: *passim*). The collection edited by Perryman (2002) offers probably the most comprehensive account of the English response to the 2002 World Cup finals (see also Moran, 2002). It is not our intention here to elaborate on the economic impact of the 2002 World Cup in detail, particularly because a thorough account of the mega-event exceeds the purely financial level by far. What we have to offer then are some theory-grounded reflections on the contrast between forecast and actual impacts on various realms of the public in both host societies, including economy, politics, and culture, and on the nature of this gap. Our analysis is based on data provided by the national organizing committees (Japan World Cup Organizing Committee or JAWOC and Korean World Cup Organizing Committee or KOWOC), the regional football associations (Japan Football Association, JFA, and Korean Football Association, KFA), and football's world governing institution (Federation Internationale de Football Association, FIFA). The collection of local and international media accounts, academic studies, and interviews with members of national football associations, local organizers, voluntary workers and football fans, was conducted during five periods of field-work in Japan and Korea before, during and after the World Cup.

The peripheral position of the host nations of 2002 in the world system (of football) suggests a need to emphasize power relationships and agencies in the analysis of any actual and anticipated impacts of the World Cup. A promising approach is provided by Maurice Roche's inquiry into the mega-event phenomenon. The sociologist defined mega-events as 'large scale cultural events of mass popular appeal and international importance which are typically stage-managed by a combination of national governmental and international non-governmental actors' (Roche, 2000: 1). Even though the largest sport organizations FIFA and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) are the most outspoken proponents of the 'apolitical nature of sport' in public, they do in fact exercise considerable pressure on political actors in the host countries (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, 2003). While the public display of government commitment is a prerequisite for a successful bid, governmental involvement is essential not least because of the number of guarantees required that are too costly for private business, e.g. security and large-scale infrastructure investment. Despite all the financial risks, governments are willing to take their chances because such spectacular peak-time events attract national and international media recognition for the hosting cities. Due to the varying interests of local organizers, national governments, international sport organizations and multinational event sponsorship, mega-events must be approached as multidimensional and multi-purpose occurrences.

Roche's study discussed world-class events, world exhibitions and the

Olympic Games in terms of three sets of simultaneously exhibited characteristics, i.e. modern/non-modern, national/non-national and local/non-local. The multi-dimensional approach allowed him to demonstrate neatly how elites utilize mega-events to promote dominant ideologies, to mark progress and progressiveness and to establish meaningful continuities with the past. In contrast, publics employ mega-events for their specific needs, including the exploration of others' identities and the celebration of new identities or old collective identities. Previous research on the usage of the World Cup for particular purposes has considered the event itself as a metaphor of multiple meanings benchmarking the sociocultural process of identity construction or the legitimization of central state involvement in staging the World Cup Finals (Dauncey and Hare, 2000). As we will show, employing such a framework for the 2002 World Cup Finals would reveal a similar set of metaphorical usages, in spite of totally different circumstances. Our own analysis basically complies with Roche's multi-layered framework. Reconfiguring the 2002 World Cup as a mega-event, we first outline selected aspects of its specific regional political economy. Second, we consider the role of mega-events for identity construction processes in late modern societies. Third, we examine how mega-events are simultaneously constituted by and constitutive of globalization. While a largely sceptical view of the economic impact informs our article, it will be suggested that football and sports mega-events in general can present novel social contexts within which to produce, display and explore the late modern identity.

The Regional Political Economy of the 2002 World Cup

Awarding the finals to Asian nations for the first time in history, FIFA laid proof to its claim to bring football to the people of the world. The decision, however, had a downgrading impact on the economies of the game. In Europe, football's most developed market, broadcasters found it comparatively difficult to sell advertisement slots for the matches that were transmitted midday because of the time difference. In Asia, where football is in keen competition with other mass sports but hardly vying for the first rank, problems arose primarily because of the co-hosting decision. This decision, that forced FIFA to change its own regulations, provoked the formation of a fragile alliance between the two East Asian states and their people whose relationship is still deeply tainted by memories of the Japanese annexation of the Korean peninsula in 1910 and the colonial oppression during greater part of the first half of the 20th century (McCormack, 2002b). While the initial Japanese bid contained the highest number of venue cities ever and an unprecedented assurance of gearing up for the World Cup, the co-hosting arrangement dashed all hopes of significant financial returns for either of the hosts. Total costs surged immediately due to the requirements of staging virtually two simultaneous World Cup finals competitions, yet income opportunities and chances to promote a particular and undistorted image of the World Cup hosting nation became severely limited. According to slightly belated reactions published by the *Asahi Shinbun*, a leading Japanese newspaper and later one of the 'Official Suppliers of the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan', Japan would stand to lose

as much as 50 billion yen due to the roughly 50 percent decline in estimated income (AS 2 October 1996).²

Throughout the 1990s, football in Japan was utilized as a prime mover for regional development. The launch of Japan's first fully professional football league (the J. League) in 1993 was inextricably linked with economic restructuring policies and the fostering of local identities as a counter-weapon against urban concentration and rural migration (Horne and Bleakley, 2002; Ubukata, 1994). Inside Japan, the World Cup bid was proposed in identical terms, and JAWOC as well as the local authorities of the host cities emphasized regional economic regeneration and sports infrastructure development as two out of five of their major goals (Maeda, 2001). Football stadia, in general, were built, rebuilt and run at the expense of regional authorities with the notable exception of the private-public initiative in charge of building and managing the Sapporo Dome. A full account of hosting the half World Cup must include the US\$ 4.6 billion investment Japan spent on ten state-of-the-art stadia, as well as the huge costs of maintaining the prestigious yet mainly useless 'white elephants' with capacities exceeding average J League spectator demand by more than 100 percent. Due to the close personal linkages between organizing committees and regional governments, which dispatched its employees to staff the local JAWOC branches at the venue cities, resistance to spending taxpayers' money in the production of the World Cup was close to nil. Thanks to extended public expenditure, as well as some corporate sponsors, JAWOC was able to declare proudly that hosting the finals ended in an economic surplus (NKS 9 Sept. 2002). Yet, both local and central government debt as a result of financing public works projects have been a persistent problem (NW 27 May 2002: 6).

What happened in Japan was by and large a residue of traditional, infrastructure-led, development policies. Within the country's entrenched pork-barrel politics, emphasizing wasteful and often environmentally damaging public works, a powerful parliamentary lobby known as the 'construction tribe' largely dictates the public works spending spree. McCormack (2002a) refers to this as Japan's *doken kokka*, or 'construction state', which can best be understood as an equivalent to the 'military-industrial complex' term first applied to the USA in the 1950s. It focuses attention on the construction industry and public works as Japan's major industry and the close links between the construction industry, the bureaucracy and government. Despite recent cutbacks by the Koizumi administration, Japan's spending on public works still tops 4–5 percent of GDP, which is at least double what one finds in other OECD countries. While football stadium construction might not always correspond with popular demand, it certainly did respond to parliamentary demand. The construction period stretched over six years, during which Japan was mired in a prolonged recession. Arguably, the recession would have been even deeper in those areas that received hundreds of millions of yen for stadium investment.

Promoters and profiteers of boosterism and growth machine ideology include virtually all of Japan's infamous *zenekon*, or 'general contractors'. These include Kajima Corporation, general contractor for the four World Cup arenas Saitama Stadium 2002, Miyagi Stadium, 'Big Swan' Niigata Stadium and Shizuoka Stadium 'Ecopa', and other contractors such as Takenaka, Taisei and the Sato

Group who were chiefly involved in World Cup stadia production. Their representatives are central actors in political parties, lobbying groups and non-governmental organizations. One prominent example is the industrialist Tsutsumi Yoshiaki, one of the richest men in Japan and board member of many influential sports committees. Under his presidency, the Japan National Olympic Committee was turned into a professionally run sport agency, and it was probably his presidency of the Japan Ski Association that drew the Morioka World Cup (1994) and the Nagano Winter Olympics to Japan (Seki, 1997: 374–95). While the Nagano Olympics were reported to have generated a surplus income of JPY 2.5 billion, the profits largely bypassed national taxpayers. The local population were left standing in the rain with the hardly used bob sled, ‘Nagano Spiral’ and the giant speed-skating venue ‘M-Wave’, another beautiful, but heavily loss-making, sport arena built by the Kajima Corporation.

Since local governments had promised their electorate for years the soon-to-come benefits for the huge investments into stadia, communication, transport and other related facility infrastructure, most Japanese were all too willing to believe in the economic multiplier effect of the mega-event. This image of the World Cup was prominent in political rhetoric on both sides of the Japan Sea. Public opinion polls conducted in January 2002 revealed over 80 percent of Koreans and 60 percent of Japanese believed that the World Cup would provide a significant boost to their economies (*Far Eastern Economic Review* 7 March 2002). Such confidence was undoubtedly also fuelled by research carried out by think tanks in both countries. Forecasts on the economic impact of the World Cup, albeit in progress since the decision to bid for the event, began to abound in the media just over a year before the kick-off.

In March 2001, the Korean Ministry of Finance and Economy promised to develop a multi-faceted strategy to maximize the economic impact of the World Cup. The state-run Korean Development Institute predicted the creation of 350,000 jobs and additional industrial output of US\$ 8.82 billion, with a 22 percent share going to the construction sector (*KT* 4 June 2001). In Japan, a number of highly optimistic forecasts circulated through the national and international media during the first months of 2002. Dai-Ichi Life Research Institute estimated an economic impact of 370 billion yen pushing up GDP by 0.3 percentage point (*NKS* 2 April 2002). The NEC Research Institute pegged the total economic benefit of the core event at some 141.7 billion yen, equal to 0.1 percent of GDP (Amagai, 2002: 1). The most impressive figures, forecasting an impact of up to JPY 3.6 trillion (*NKS* 12 December 2001), were provided by the Institute of Social Engineering and Dentsu Institute of Human Studies, the research unit of the advertising agency that did so much to promote world football.

However, with the kick-off approaching, forecasts got gloomier. According to the private Samsung Economic Research Institute in 2001, the World Cup would not generate the economic benefits that the Seoul Olympics did in 1988, unless there was a dramatic recovery in the global economy (*KT* 5 October 2001). Even before Japan was eliminated in the second round, economists now emphasized that the larger part of World Cup related spending had already occurred during the construction period. On the day before kick-off (29 May) Dentsu itself

declared that the World Cup effect would be almost neutral because of lukewarm interest inside Japan and reduced government spending after the event. Irrespective of this, even the most optimistic forecasts were only indicating a rather insignificant contribution to a US\$ 4.2 trillion economy.

A number of economic studies indicated that even the reduced estimation was likely to be over-optimistic. The Japan Research Institute also doubted whether the World Cup added any significant upward momentum to domestic consumption. According to the Electric Big-Stores Association NEBA, sales of appliances other than television sets mostly dropped. The Cabinet Office's 'economic watchers' survey of close-to-the-street workers fell for a second straight month in June and remained below the 'boom or bust' level for the 23rd month in a row. Disappointed faces abounded among retailers and even more in the hotel and restaurant sector. While home delivery service encountered some of its busiest days ever, damage was inflicted upon bars, family chain restaurants and others when their customers stayed at home watching the TV broadcast games (NW 8 July 2002). The 'replacement spending' effect obviously did not only apply to government expenditure but domestic consumption and tourism as well.

For Korea, the economist Chang Se-Moon (2002) reviewed the growth rates of all World Cup finals host countries since 1954 for the pre-World Cup and the post-World Cup years.³ Of the 12 occasions, the post-World Cup year growth rate was higher than the pre-World Cup year growth rate eight times and lower four times. The average growth rate for post-World Cup years was 3.083 per cent, while the average growth rate for pre-World Cup years was 2.233 per cent, with the difference being 0.85 per cent favouring post-World Cup years. While these figures argue in favour of the host country effect hypothesis, they do not separate the World Cup effect from the usual cyclical experience. Thus sports economists should not be surprised by the contrasting outcomes for the two host countries. According to OECD statistics, Japan's post World Cup growth (0.3%) was lower than in 2001 (0.4), while Korea's GDP rose from 3.1 percent in 2001 to 6.3 percent in 2002. The Bank of Japan (2003: 1–2) reported in July 2003 that Korea's economy expanded during and immediately after the World Cup, yet domestic demand in South Korea cooled off after 2002, partly due to the SARS epidemic, affecting both exports and industrial production in Japan.

Szymanski (2002) has observed through comparison with long-time averages, the cyclical norms and equivalent figures for similar economies at the same stage of the business cycle suggest there is no statistically significant positive macro-economic impact on GDP for World Cup hosts. The sports economist in fact concludes that countries should stop inventing economic benefits from sporting events, and simply treat them as expenses, or investments, in national promotion. As our next two sections will show, the World Cup has also been utilized in this regard, as an opportunity to construct or promote identities, not only top-down from the state but also bottom-up from publics.

Branding the Nation, Consumer Nationalism and Fashion Nationalism: Mega-Events as an Opportunity for National Promotion

When the Sumitomo Life Research Institute took a closer look at Japan's past experiences of hosting large-scale cultural events, results were disillusioning. Of 10 events, including the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, the Nagano Olympics in 1998 and the Osaka World Expo in 1970, only the last one showed any significant impact on consumer spending (Yamamoto, 2002: 3). The Tokyo Olympics, which were staged in the midst of Japan's high economic growth period, have often, albeit mistakenly, been referred to as an example of the positive effects of mega-events, even by economists (e.g. Harada, 2001: 307). In 1964, the public display of national achievements and virtues helped Japan to return to the international stage and to mark itself as a modern technology nation. In the public imagination, the 1964 Olympics acquired a meaningful position marking the nation's progress towards the top of the industrialized world. Four decades later, Japan no longer necessarily needed it, but Korea took the World Cup as an opportunity to rebrand itself as an advanced (post-)modern society and economy. The 1988 Seoul Olympics already showcased South Korea's newly industrialized economy and the end of military dictatorship. Yet for many years, 'South Korea remained better known for its dog-eating customs than for its world-beating broadband network . . . despite having Asia's third-largest economy and one of the world's best educated and most technology-savvy populations' (*The Financial Times* 21 May 2002). Having learnt from the Summer Olympics of 1988 that sports mega-events provide a major opportunity for attracting worldwide attention to the country's products and services, Korean Deputy Prime Minister Jin Nyum told journalists before the competition started that the World Cup was about 'the brand-making of Korea', rather than making money directly (*Newsweek* 17 June 2002). Hence Korea found in the 2002 World Cup the perfect vehicle for hastening recovery from the recession of 1997 and the subsequent economic restructuring imposed by the International Monetary Fund.

Due to the mediated nature of the event, and the PR campaign as well, media technology and subscriptions to related services were the main commodities to benefit from the 2002 World Cup in the domestic markets of Japan and Korea. In Japan, sales of JVC digital satellite TV sets jumped by 70 percent as the World Cup began, while the shipment value of TVs and videocassette recorders increased 100 percent and 80 percent, respectively. Fuji Xerox, having passed out World Cup tickets to sales personnel who produced strong sales figures, doubled sales of its high-end colour copiers year on year in April and May. Subscriptions to J. Phone, Vodafone's representative in Japan, and SkyPerfecTV! all increased considerably just prior to the kick off (*NW* 3 June 2002). Yet some 190,000 new subscribers to its 3 million customers stock in 2002 could still not save the pay-TV company from operational losses of JPY 19.4 billion over the period April to June (*NKS* 21 August 2002). The sixfold increase in annual losses was chiefly caused by the broadcaster's massive investment in acquiring the Japanese broadcasting rights for all World Cup finals games, arguably for the highest price ever paid for a single sport event.

Korean media technology corporations also capitalized on using the event as a marketing vehicle. Samsung, the only Korean firm in the world's top 100 companies, spent some 100 million (US) dollars on a global advertising campaign to promote its mobile phones, computers and DVD players. Official World Cup Sponsor Korean Telecom estimated that its brand recognition improved by 95 percent. A massive public relations campaign was started to promote the new Korean image that was presented to the world in the World Cup opening ceremony. Viewed by an estimated 2.5 billion people worldwide, the multimedia show blended traditional Korean culture with cutting edge technology. Visitors from abroad were entertained by the displays of the functionality, variety and design of futuristic high-end gadgets, high speed internet technologies, wireless LAN and third generation mobile communications devices. While Japan could confirm its name value as an advanced technological society, Korea managed to draw level with Japan, threatening to overtake in the future (Wieczorek, 2002: 444).

A Japanese consumer survey identified both SkyPerfectTV! and the beverage producer Kirin Group as the brands most closely related with the World Cup (Jp.Aol.Com, 2002). Kirin Beer, official sponsor of the Japanese national team, rolled out a special low-malt brew in cans with messages from the Japanese national team written on them. The World Cup beer met especially high demand and sales exceeded the initial forecast by 400 percent. Soon after the World Cup the Kirin Group renewed its sponsoring contract with the national team for JPY 6 billion. Other winners in the domestic World Cup market place included the producers of official world cup merchandise and the sellers of unlicensed replica shirts. Nike opted for its traditional guerrilla-style advertising approach — linking its name to a variety of events surrounding the tournament, but not to the World Cup itself (Spitaler and Wieselberg, 2002: 190). FIFA's long-time official partner Adidas meanwhile sponsored an additional 10 out of the 32 teams in the finals at a cost of US\$ 35 million. Yet Adidas (Germany) was finally defeated by Nike (Brazil) in the replay of what is becoming a traditional football kit 'sign war'. Adidas Japan sold more than a million footballs and 600,000 Japan national team shirts — 'authentic jerseys' selling for 13,000 yen and 'replica' ones selling for 9900 yen. In Korea, and in 'Korean' districts of Japanese cities, the alternative T-shirt of the national team — carrying the slogan 'Be the reds' — easily outsold the national shirt manufactured by Nike. The apparel manufacturer was criticized for its pricing policy trying to get most out of Korean consumer nationalism.

The highly visible, passionate and apparently tightly organized support for the South Korean team as it made its way to the semi-finals by the self-styled 'Red Devils' national supporters group created many of the most keenly scrutinized and unforgettable moments of the 2002 finals. As one journalist noted, Mao Zedong himself may never have seen anything like the sea of red that engulfed South Korea — even during the Cultural Revolution (AT 25 June 2002). *Dae Han Min Guk* (Great Country of the Korean People) or *Oh pilsung Korea* (Oh, victorious Korea), chanted repeatedly by millions of the 'Korligans' for minutes and seemingly hours at a time, left medical services over-stretched trying to treat ear, nose and throat injuries sustained as a result (Brodkin, 2002).

The Korean 'consumer nationalism'⁴ did not spring up spontaneously over-

night, however, but was meticulously prepared months ahead of the World Cup. While the Japanese media had once more set about the task of teaching their nation the rules of the game, the Korean media had instructed their nation how to cheer for national success. *Oh, pilseung Korea* is an adapted version of a football cheer sung by K-League team Bucheon SK supporters. With new lyrics befitting the national team, it made its World Cup debut during the qualification rounds in 1997. The tune, complete with the choreography of heaving the upper part of the body in unison during the chorus, gained public recognition in Korea through television commercials featuring the popular movie actor Han Seok-Kyu with hundreds of Red Devils supporters in the background. The immensely popular advertisements instructed the audience 'How to sing *Oh, pilseung Korea*' or 'How to clap *Dae-han-min-guk* properly' (Seo, 2002: 32–3). There was no doubt that official Korea strived towards cashing in on this nationalist enthusiasm. President Kim, who linked the victory over Spain as the greatest day in Korean history since the god-king Dangun, the legendary founder of the Korean nation 5000 years before (AT 25 June 2002), awarded a one-off national holiday to the Korean people after the finals. World Cup monuments have continued to stay on display and new textbooks published for use at all school levels feature texts and images of the World Cup and the Red Devils (KH 26 June 2002).

While the Korean public administration was in full support of the national verve, local authorities in Japan showed a more appeasing attitude as if embarrassed at the prospect of any over-zealous displays of patriotism. Although demand was skyrocketing, public viewing in Japan was limited to selected and secluded areas. Massive squads of riot police, who had been dispatched to cope with foreign hooligans, showed some signs of irritation in dealing instead with the young Japanese who acted out the transnational rituals of victorious football fans: pouring into the streets, ignoring (and sometimes climbing on top of) traffic signals, waving flags, fraternizing with complete unknowns, and chanting 'Nippon! Nippon! Nippon!' all through the night. Jumping into the Dotonbori River from Ebisubashi in central Osaka was derived from the rather recent tradition of baseball fans who had started to celebrate the local baseball team Hanshin Tigers' (rare) title crowns in a similar fashion two decades previously. Without the direct involvement of the state, whose representatives later praised the young generation's patriotic sentiments, football had become a symbolic battleground for a 'new Japan', in which some of the old arguments about the singing of the national anthem — especially for its connection with militaristic nationalism — were being challenged. It was, in fact, only in August 1999 that the Japanese government, still facing fierce opposition, passed legislation that formally designated *kimigayo* as the national anthem and the *hinomaru* as the national flag of Japan. In contrast to the highly disputed usage of these symbols at schools, public ceremonies and domestic sport events, singing the *kimigayo* in the stadia and waving the *hinomaru* in the midst of thousands of excited fans, all dressed in the blue national team jerseys, was considered a safe form of expressive nationalism. Particularly for young adults and teens, Japan's most important segments of football supporters, the World Cup provided a rare opportunity to overcome the diffidence many people had felt about overt displays of nationalism and expressions of national identity since 1945.

In Korea, where more than 50 million watched the semi-final, as well as in Japan, internationals involving the national team usually attract much higher TV audience rates than league games. In Japan, international football games achieved some of the highest audience rates in the history of broadcasting. All four of Japan's matches during the World Cup finals, including daytime broadcasts, recorded average ratings between 42.6 and 66.1 percent (Japan's 1–0 victory over Russia), the second highest for any sports event ever topped only by the legendary women's volleyball final at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics between Japan and the Soviet Union (66.8%). At the 2002 finals, public awareness also embraced the performance of the co-host's selection on the pitch. When Japan dropped out of the finals, the national media redirected public support towards Korea, the only team from Asia left in the tournament. Matches of the Korean squad were closely followed by mass television audiences, recording rates of up to 48.3 percent for the semi-final. While the media played a crucial role in hyping the 'Asian football identity', the willingness to take sides with the Korean underdog fighting the football powerhouses was another illustration of the apparent plasticity of Japanese loyalties. Japanese men and women face-painted and dressed themselves in support of virtually all of the teams competing in Japan, but especially Japan, Brazil and England — as if fan identity could be acquired by the purchase of the correct shirt. Notwithstanding different kinds of agency and purposefulness, both state patriotism and 'fashion nationalism' in Japan and Korea support Roche's observation that mega-events provide distinctive cultural resources for resisting systematic threats to personal identity generated by the social order of late modernity (Roche, 2000: 225).

The 2002 World Cup and the Global Cultural Economy

The shifting global economy of the 1990s has exerted a lasting impact on the market value of professional football everywhere. Although the pioneering entrepreneurs of sports marketing always considered football as a core commodity of international sales strategies (Manzenreiter and Horne, 2002: 10), football's central event, the World Cup, has long remained in the shadows of the Olympic Games. Now, due to its ever-refined attractiveness to the commercial trinity of sponsors, advertisers, and television, football has demonstrated itself to be the ultimate global commodity, a dominant paradigm of global popular culture, and a portal to the world's most distant regions. Under the neo-liberal influences of global capital accumulation and transnational marketing strategies, football, more than any other single sport, has become inextricably linked to agents, structures and processes of global capitalism. Not even at the 1994 World Cup Finals in the USA had hosting the event been so openly associated with business prospects and even closely related to its macroeconomic impact.

Due to the de- (or re-)regulation of national media systems and pay-TV entering the stage in the 1990s, the global reach of the 'people's game' and the scarcity value of its core event, broadcasting rights and corporate sponsorship climbed into unprecedented heights. For the 2002 World Cup, FIFA granted the worldwide broadcasting rights to a private sport-marketing group for a guaran-

teed minimum of US\$ 800 million, approximately a tenfold increase on what the international consortium of public service broadcasters had paid for the previous tournament. In addition, 15 of the world's leading companies, including 12 multinationals, paid an average of US\$ 35 million to join the 'FIFA partnership program' of sponsors of World Cup 2002. The chance to brand themselves as global players was particularly appealing for companies with head offices in the host region. Six out of the 15, including Toshiba, Fuji Xerox, Hyundai and a joint project of the regional telecommunications giants NTT and KT, seemingly fulfilled their national duty, with the remaining JVC and Fuji Film (in line with Coca Cola and Gillette) having been FIFA's Official Partners since corporate sponsorship entered world football two decades previously. While FIFA is likely to profit greatly, even though the global football business bubble imploded just prior to the finals, it is a different question whether the World Cup is also a lucrative enterprise for corporate sponsors and media companies, or the local organizers and the economies of the venue cities.⁵

While great expectations were placed on the psychological effects of the World Cup spurring consumer sentiments, states and provinces regarded the World Cup as a huge opportunity to market themselves to billions of potential investors and tourists. Enhancing the name value of the region was also a major incentive for localities hosting either World Cup games or training camps. Part of the aim of hosting the World Cup was to attempt to reroute global tourist flows and establish new parts of Japan and Korea as tourist destinations. The message was also inward-bound: although the host nation Japan was very aware of the global attention, the Japanese host and camp cities set out to redefine Japan's regions through professional football largely for a domestic audience.

Roche (2000: 199) argues that live events act as 'social spatio-temporal "hubs" and "switches" . . . that channel, mix and re-route global flows'. They act as moments of global condensation involving the localization of global events within specific places. Mundane places, towns and cities, become the sites of unique events for global tourists (Roche, 2000: 224). However, despite earlier predictions expecting more than a million visitors to the World Cup host countries, the anticipated tourist (and thus financial) flows were over-optimistic. While 482,000 foreign visitors entered Japan between 31 May and 30 June 2002, this marked an increase of only 30,000 people over the same period for the previous year. For Korea, where World Cup spectator turnout was lower by an average of 5500 per match, the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism reported 463,000 visitors — the same number as the previous year (*NW* 8 July 2002: 4). Distance, time, costs and publicity about measures taken prior to the World Cup — in particular regarding the policing of hooliganism — may have dampened the enthusiasm of all but the most committed fans. For neighbouring Chinese fans, visa restrictions also hampered the road to the World Cup, particularly to notoriously xenophobic Japan that exempted only the people of two Asian states from visa requirements (compared with visa-free entrance to Korea for 22 countries from the same region; Kawabuchi, 2001: 35). Clearly the rerouting of global tourist flows requires more than just an attractive sporting event.

Concerning the impact of globalization on sports mega-events, the World Cup provided ample opportunities to witness the de-nationalization of playing

styles and the creolization of fan cultures, even though some media ignored this trend and continued to exploit cultural stereotypes (Arimoto, 2003). Regarding the global engagement of transnational corporations serving as a primary source of revenue for FIFA, the move to hand the finals to the football periphery was clearly not just driven by the humanist desire 'to bring the game to the people of the world'. The decision in favour of Germany — and against South Africa — to host the 2006 world championship provides some confirmation of the continuance of a 'deeply embedded Eurocentrism within FIFA's corridors of power' (Darby, 2002). We believe that the choice of Japan (and co-hosting with Korea) was clearly propelled by the prospect of getting a foothold in the underdeveloped Asian market (see also Sugden and Tomlinson, 2003). Thanks to such market penetration strategies, globalization provides customers in Japan and Korea with all the icons, brand names and products of the global cultural (football) economy. Yet the reasons why consumers are attracted by similar products worldwide are manifold, surpassing any simple appeal of the game.

Recent research into football in East Asia, for example, has provided novel insights into its relationship to new ideals of masculinity, attitudes to full-time paid work, attitudes towards place of residence and expressions of national identity. The 2002 World Cup stimulated several new developments, for example, stage-managed display and enactments of national identity or various initiatives in civil society capturing the spirit of voluntary activity (Takahashi, forthcoming; Yamashita and Saka, 2002). Alongside officially sponsored volunteer groups, non-governmental organizations flourished particularly in venue cities and training sites. Organizations such as 'Alliance 2002' in Niigata were set up without government involvement to coordinate voluntary activities in the host city. Even after the World Cup, the 'Spirit of Niigata' continues to exert influence on the leisure-time activities, lifestyle and citizenship of a great many in the region. Like the Korean Red Devils, these organizations relied upon new information technology in order to recruit new members and disseminate their messages (Takahashi, 2001). These cybercultural practices are distinctively new, with technological innovation offering room for a greater degree of cultural pluralism in Japan as well as in Korea. But research into the organizational structure of the volunteer groups suggests that their actions might only signal a slight alteration of a dominant principle of cultural exclusion. Alternative readings imply that new kinds of social groups with a higher degree of permeability revived traditional cultural values to enact resistance against globalization at the grass-roots level. Similarly, the actions of both co-hosts provide examples of two East Asian nation states attempting to manage globalization through control of their respective global cultural images.

Conclusions

Reconfiguring the 2002 World Cup as a mega-event, we showed, first, the borderless vitality of the mega-event strategy in both national and regional development politics, and second, how the World Cup has been put to specific usages by elites for addressing either local or global audiences. Depending on the kind

of audiences, elites in Japan and Korea employed discourses on the World Cup as either a metaphor for political relations, social change, regional development, economic growth, football promotion, a new sport culture or a potential launch pad for a political career. When asked how he felt the tournament would best be remembered a Japanese friend told us: 'The Japanese like festivals. Koreans like Korea. Some people like football.' Mega-events such as the Football World Cup Finals provide multiple meanings for different groups of agents — as they happen, when they have taken place and, perhaps especially, as they are being bid for. Hence we know that advocates of hosting mega-events will deploy a range of discursive strategies to win over public opinion. Since the late 1970s (and the Montreal Olympics, which the residents of Montreal have only recently stopped paying for in local taxes) a major concern in considerations of sports mega-events has been the gap between the forecast and actual impacts on economy, society and culture. That there is likely to be such a gap is now fairly predictable. Pro-hosting advocates tend to gather and project optimistic estimates, anti-hosting groups articulate concerns.

Sports venues and mega-events such as the World Cup can be utilized by dominant forces in society to convey particular worldviews of the present and memories of the past, rather than the actually existing plurality of inconsistent and contested meanings. Some social and cultural meanings are more evident and persistent than others because of imbalances in the power of definition. Korean and Japanese narratives were far from being identical, even though the same event was addressed, as both countries followed their own aims. Japan appeared to be satisfied with becoming a recognized part of the world 'football family', as FIFA refers to itself and thus subjugated itself to the imagery envisioned by FIFA itself. As no host so far had been eliminated in the first round, advancing to the second therefore was a matter of national importance. Hosting the World Cup as a *rite de passage* also involved bringing football to regions where previously no professional sports had existed. Sapporo, Niigata and Oita are three prominent examples of football's new significance for community life in the domestic peripheries.

In contrast to the coming-of-age ceremony for Japan's football, Korea sought to celebrate its coming-of-age as a mature society, particular in comparison to its closest neighbours Japan and China. This functionalist attitude is consistent with the 'overdetermined significance' (Moorhouse, 1991: 201) that football has had in Korean society for most of the 20th century. In relations between dominating and dominated nations, sport, and culture more generally, gains great symbolic potency for the 'submerged nations'. For Korea, football always enjoyed a special position as a sport at which they could regularly defeat the Japanese, and thus sustain some national prestige (Lee, 2002). Occasional defeats by Japan were even reported to impact on productivity and workers' susceptibility to manufacturing errors (Kim, 2001: 39). The KFA bid to host the first Asian World Cup Finals on their own soil, rather than in Japan, also was a direct result of Korea's defeat by Japan in a World Cup qualifying match in 1993. Bilateral struggles over the official name order, ticket price policies, visa issuing, currency exchange and stadia construction in parts resembled competitive hosting rather than cooperative hosting.

The issue of peaceful collaboration between a former colonial power and its colony underpinned much of the 2002 co-hosting ideology. Without enhancement of bilateral relations the complex tournament logistics, involving travel and communication between two countries separated by sea, could not have been mastered so successfully. In the end, clearly improved relationships between the co-hosting nations, either on the practical working level of bureaucracies or on the conceptual level of mutual perception, laid the foundations for the smooth and congenial procedure of the event. Instead of scandals and high-quality football, it was the colourful, cheerful, and at times breathtaking, atmosphere in the stadia and streets that impressed the watching world and gave the event its distinctive character as the 'World Cup of Smiles' — as it was later dubbed by FIFA president Blatter and others in bluntly orientalist fashion (FIFA, 2002: 4). In this regard, the final communiqué of the local organizing committees and football federations reflected deep satisfaction, even thankfulness, towards FIFA. Even Chung Mong-Joon, chairman of the Korean Organizing Committee, FIFA vice-president and aspiring candidate in the presidential election race following the World Cup, finally abandoned his instinctive retaliations against Japan (cf. Chung, 2001, 2002) and expressed his deep gratitude 'that the 2002 FIFA World Cup has helped to bring the people of these two countries closer together' (FIFA, 2002: 8). Chung's political ambitions were thwarted later in the year, but the wider diplomatic impact of the World Cup may turn out to be its most pervasive heritage, in East Asia at least. Flows of tourism and other inter-cultural exchanges between the two countries, including TV series, pop music, fashion, cuisine and language learning, continued and thus outlived the football exaltation.

Research into the 2002 World Cup finals reveals the close relationship between mega-events and the globalization process: they are simultaneously driven by globalization, and promote globalization. Economic interests (among others) drive and promote the mega-event, as their activities drive and promote globalization. The cultural significance and signifiers of the mega-event, including sport heroes and their role as pop-cultural devices, the fashion-language of the apparel industry, and the multinational production of the event (both on-stage and off-stage) are carriers, channels and transmitters of the globalization process. Technological progress enables the whole world to participate via the media, while a small but important minority actually takes part in the event. The accumulated TV audience of 40 billion was the largest ever created by a single event, and a total of 2,705,197 spectators attended the 64 matches, although admittedly average attendances of 42,269 per match proved to be the lowest since the 1982 World Cup in Spain. Further exploration of the dominant role of the global industries of finance and media as 'sport partners', and by extension the gendered order of world football, which we do not have space to discuss in this article but consider elsewhere, will help to render this argument more precisely.

The Korean team's unexpected success demanded an explanation that the popular imagination found in the particular leadership of the Dutch head coach, Guus Hiddink. The business world, politicians and the media revered him for the way he got rid of the notorious 'three *yon*': *hyolyon*, *chyon* and *hakyon*, meaning the 'family', 'local and regional' and 'school' social connections. These well established essentials for upward mobility that usually permeate Korean society

were replaced by openness, fair competition, a focus on fundamentals, a clear vision and steady implementation. References to the ‘Hiddink Effect’ entered political speeches, discourses on management styles and business tactics (AT 26 June 2002). Equally in Japan, the ‘footballization’ of Asian society was most clearly visible in discourses that combined references to the beauty of the game with broader social and economic developments. Japan’s coach Philippe Troussier took the maniac atmosphere in the stadium after the draw with Belgium as an indicator of a ‘New Japan’ (AS 5 June 2002). A Morgan Stanley analyst ascribed the success of the Japanese Eleven to the international experience some Japanese players had gained in Europe, as global competitiveness requires playing at a global level. He also recommended football essentials, i.e. teamwork, a huge amount of individuality and good judgement as qualities to aspire to for Japanese companies (Reuters 12 June 2002). The blending of sports and economics, incited by the corporate class, appears to be inevitable in this era of the beatification of business.

Notes

1. For the purposes of this article, ‘Korea’ will refer to the Republic of Korea, commonly known as ‘South Korea’. While most of the focus is on Japan, reference to Korea will be made for comparative purposes. The authors would like to acknowledge the financial support of the United Kingdom Sports Council, the Japan Foundation, the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, the Moray Endowment Foundation and Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, all of which enabled some of the research upon which this article is based to be undertaken and communicated. We would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers whose critical comments helped us to clarify our argument.
2. Newspapers and journals we refer to frequently are abbreviated as AS (*Asahi Shinbun*), AT (*Asian Times*), KH (*Korea Herald*), KT (*Korea Times*), NKS (*Nihon Keizai Shinbun*) and NW (*Nikkei Weekly*). At the time of writing US\$ 1 was worth approximately JPY 122, GBP 0.69 and EUR 1.14.
3. The names of the host countries with the hosting year as well as economic growth rates for pre- and post-World Cup years in parentheses are as follows: Switzerland (1954; 4.0 and 5.5%); Sweden (1958; 1.9 and 4.0%); Chile (1962; 3.2 and 1.8%); England/Great Britain (1966; 1.4 and 3.0%); Mexico (1970; 2.9 and 5.2%); Germany (1974; 9.5 and 4.7%); Argentina (1978; 0 and 5.6%); Spain (1982; -0.6 and 0.5%); Mexico (1986; -2.2 and 0.6%); Italy (1990; 2.4 and 0.9%); United States (1994; 2.4 and 2.3%); and France (1998; 1.9 and 2.9%).
4. For a more detailed discussion of the concept of ‘consumer nationalism’ applied to South Korea see Nelson (2000).
5. The spectacular bankruptcy of FIFA’s sport marketing partner in 2001 created losses of at least US\$ 30 million, with some estimates as much as ten times this amount (AS 16 May 2002). Despite the scandal FIFA president Sepp Blatter gained re-election in the summer of 2002 (see Sugden and Tomlinson, 2003).

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Dr John D. Horne, Senior Lecturer, Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Sport and Leisure Studies,

Address: Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Sport and Leisure Studies, University of Edinburgh, St Leonard's, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AQ, Scotland, UK.

Email: John.Horne@ed.ac.uk

Dr Wolfram Manzenreiter, Assistant Professor, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna,

Address: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna, Spitalgasse 2–4, A-1090 Vienna, Austria.

Email: wolfram.manzenreiter@univie.ac.at