



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

MILITARY SPORTS DIPLOMACY

by

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June 2020

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE June 2020		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's thesis
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE MILITARY SPORTS DIPLOMACY			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Jessica H. Kawamura				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) Sports events harness a strong appeal mechanism that reaches international and domestic audiences; therefore, sports events are commonly used as a soft-power or a diplomatic tool. Military sports events also can affect national military power projection and military-to-military relations, or may even provide a platform for arms deals. This thesis asserts that sports can enhance military-to-military relations through military sports diplomacy (MSD). Through an analytical comparison between historic and modern military sports and country case studies, this thesis considers the prospects and risks associated with organized military sports events and defines how MSD serves to complement greater diplomatic efforts. The evolution of such major sports institutions as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Military Sports Council (CISM), especially against the backdrop of organized sports and soldiers throughout European history, has lent to military sports a continuous oscillating relationship between peace and violence. More recent examples of military sporting events are less violent, but more subtly deceitful, which is evidenced in the cases of Russia's International Army Games and China's Military World Games. There is a power vested in military athletes to improve relations through international military sports events. Although sports are often considered "war without weapons," MSD has much to offer in terms of international relations and peace.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS military sports diplomacy, MSD, military sports, sports diplomacy, soft power, great power competition, modern diplomacy, International Military Sports Council, CISM, Military World Games, military-to-military relations, cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, military athletes, European military sports, International Army Games, International Olympic Committee, IOC, Prussian military sports, soldier sportsman			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 107	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	

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MILITARY SPORTS DIPLOMACY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(EUROPE AND EURASIA)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

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The evolution of such major sports institutions as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Military Sports Council (CISM), especially against the backdrop of organized sports and soldiers throughout European history, has lent to military sports a continuous oscillating relationship between peace and violence. More recent examples of military sporting events are less violent, but more subtly deceitful, which is evidenced in the cases of Russia's International Army Games and China's Military World Games.

There is a power vested in military athletes to improve relations through international military sports events. Although sports are often considered "war without weapons," MSD has much to offer in terms of international relations and peace.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFSC	Allied Forces Sports Council
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
China-CEEC	China and Central and Eastern European Countries
CISM	Conseil International du Sport Militaire (International Military Sports Council)
IOC	International Olympic Organization
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MSD	Military Sports Diplomacy
MWG	Military World Games
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PLA	People's Liberation Army of China
PRC	People's Republic of China
SDP	Sports for Development and Peace
UN	United Nations

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I whole-heartedly dedicate this thesis to every military-athlete, especially those who serve valiantly, while simultaneously training tirelessly to represent Military Team USA at a CISM event. It is these service-members who embody my vision of the military sports diplomat.

I want to first thank my husband, Colton Kawamura. His ability to be super-Dad to my then 7-month-old son enabled me to travel to China for the 7th Military World Games. He also listened to my ideas, brainstormed with me tirelessly, and lent me his critical ear.

I am beyond grateful to have the opportunity to study with my advisors, Dr. Halladay and Dr. Abenheim. They continue to inspire my learning and curiosity in the world through a European lens, honing my perception and critical thinking. Thank you both for your dedication to my interests and your continued support to ensure that I and my fellow Foreign Area Officers are armed with knowledge as we find ourselves in situations where knowledge is power. Also at NPS, Kate Egerton shared my fascination on military sports diplomacy from our first meeting; her own experiences as an equestrian and her passion for dog sledding facilitated not only Graduate Writing Center style editing, but also fruitful discussions.

Major Athinodoros Moschopoulos, from the Greek military, who successfully defended his PhD dissertation on CISM in February 2020, was my academic rock on the topic of CISM and organized military sports. Major Moschopoulos not only armed me with publications, he also discussed the topic of military sports with me on both historic and academic levels.

Rear Admiral Scott “Jonser” Jones, USN, for his 2018 All-Armed Forces speech and his continued words of inspiration and wisdom. Coach Jim Felty (USN, ret.) for his contribution to numerous military athletic accolades and his decades of service to All-Navy Sports and its athletes; the program was winning on many levels with Jim as the coach—he left a history captured only in the heart, minds, and souls of his athletes, and

that is exactly what matters most. Colonel Stephen Armes, USMC, ret., for his dedication to the Armed Forces triathlon team and his advocacy for the survival of military sports at the highest levels for the good of the Sailors and the Marines who will follow him, even into retirement. 1st Sgt Doug Marocco, USMC, ret., for his inspiring story as the triathlete trailblazer for all of military-sports teams. Colonel Spencer Coconaur, USAF, ret., for his mentorship and believing in me to become his predecessor—maybe in 2025 I will make the cut. John Howard for his 1960s military cycling team stories and continued dedication to the paramilitary-athletes and athletes in general. Col Luiz Fernando Medeiros Nóbrega, from the Brazilian military currently stationed at CISM HQ, for his inspiring passion for CISM. Finbarr Kirwan for his devotion to Olympic athletes, the Olympic movement, and for progressing sports for Team U.S.A. And Steve Dinote, for his incredible insight to the U.S. Armed Forces Sport Committee history; his stories are to a great extent unknown, undocumented, and fascinating—I regret that many of his insights did not fit into this thesis, but I hope I have the opportunity to capture them and share them with the world in another publication.

And finally, I thank my Mom, Johana Hafey, for taking a leap into the unknown in 1995 and moving us to Germany. This move brought me cultural understanding and appreciation that is evident in all my efforts as an adult. And lastly, I thank my Dad, Patrick Hafey, for teaching me to dream big and work hard because it will eventually come together to make something beautiful—I think this thesis is one of those beautiful products he was talking about.

I. INTRODUCTION

Philip Noel-Baker, the only Olympic gold medalist to have won a Nobel peace prize, wrote at the turn of this century: “In the nuclear age, sport is man’s best hope.”¹ In this spirit, there is a growing movement to incorporate sport as a tool for peace operations, global development, and diplomatic relation-building abroad. It is apparent that this modern sports movement is gaining traction in the progress made by such programs as the United Nations Sports for Development and Peace (SDP) and the U.S. State Department’s Sports Diplomacy Division.² These organizations and institutions are making positive impacts on a global scale and legitimizing sports as a constructive diplomatic tool—modern sports diplomacy.³

Sports diplomacy falls into a special category of diplomacy, with notable potential to advance a nation’s soft power “through attraction rather than coercion.”⁴ The current civilian sports movement centers on peace and development, and modern sports diplomacy has empowered a global movement that is proving sports can foster trust between nations. In a military context, however, sports have a less-than-peaceful track record; J. A. Mangan, a leading European military sports historian, wrote that “sport is not a substitute for war, it is a permanent preparation for it” which he supports through events and sports culture leading up to World War I.⁵ Especially evident in the European military sports trajectory after World War II, which in conjunction with the liberal world

¹J.A. Mangan, ed., *Militarism, Sport, Europe: War Without Weapons*, 1st ed., vol. 5, Sport in the Global Society (London and Portland, OR: Routledge, 2003), 187.

²Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD), “Sport for Development and Peace,” United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed April 25, 2020, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/sport-development-peace.html>; “Sports Diplomacy | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs,” U.S. State Department, accessed August 9, 2019, <https://eca.state.gov/programs-initiatives/initiatives/sports-diplomacy>.

³ Craig Esherick et al., *Case Studies in Sport Diplomacy* (Fitness Information Technology, Incorporated, 2017), 29.

⁴ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics* (New York, NY: PublicAffairs, 2009), 2.

⁵ J. A. Mangan, *Tribal Identities: Nationalism, Europe, Sport* (Psychology Press, 1996), 5.

order, transformed organized military sports into a regulated and institutionalized mega-event machine.

Today, militaries around the world participate in various organized and impromptu military sporting events without evidence of war preparation; the United States and Europe could even use such organized or impromptu military sporting events to strengthen trans-Atlantic relations. This research thus asks: How can sports enhance military-to-military relations?

A. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Sports are a sought-after soft-power or diplomatic tool because they harness a strong appeal mechanism that reaches international and domestic audiences. Staging and participating in—and, especially, winning—sports competitions appeals to nations with global power aspirations; evident in 20th-century Olympic games that were often used to further a national leader’s political agenda (i.e., the 1936 Nazi Olympics in Berlin). The 21st century, however, is witnessing a rise in sport-based community outreach programs where the focus is centered on person-to-person interactions. These interactions and the greater purpose of outreach programs can be characterized as a mixed form of cultural diplomacy and sports diplomacy.

The U.S. military already uses sports in several discrete, often impromptu, contexts. U.S. war ships often organize sporting events before joint international exercises, such as RIMPAC in Hawaii, or during port calls in the Pacific or the Mediterranean, such as “goodwill” port calls by the USS *Blue Ridge* (LCC-19).⁶ Less common are events such as the 2008 Africa sports diplomacy tour, which appeared to be a one-off occurrence.⁷ These sport events typically become the centerpiece for the public affairs office port call summary and provide an excellent opportunity for international civilian-military interaction.

⁶ Melvin Orr, “United States European Command,” U.S. European Command, August 26, 2011, <https://www.eucom.mil/news-room/Article/19857/blue-ridge-spreads-goodwill-in-vladivostok>.

⁷ Marc Rockwell-Pate, “Sailors Return From Successful Africa Sports Diplomacy Tour,” Department of the Navy, September 22, 2008, https://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=39907.

Another example is the U.S. armed forces sports program that recruits active-duty athletes who then compete annually through U.S. Armed Forces Sports teams events to qualify for International Military Sports Council (CISM) competitions. CISM is an international military sports organization that coordinates around 26 annual sporting competition for military service members from 140 countries.⁸ CISM provides peaceful venues for military-to-military engagements, as their slogan conveys: “friendship through sport.”⁹ However, the interaction is limited to the participants at the games, the United States is minimally involved with CISM Headquarter operations, and the media coverage—both domestically and internationally—is sparse.

The U.S. government has limited funding for professional sports, and has yet to host a military sport mega-event.¹⁰ In contrast, the Russian CSKA Moscow—Central Army Sports Club Moscow—is a state-sponsored club that falls under the Russian Defense Ministry, which funds and controls Russian national teams and individual professional athletes; these CSKA athletes qualify to compete at CISM as active-duty service members.¹¹ Similar to the Soviet approach to elite sports, the Chinese approach has adopted *juguo tizhi* (举国体制) or “whole country support for the elite sport system.”¹² The unified adoption of *juguo tizhi* has advanced China’s national sports

⁸ “International Military Sports Council, Friendship through Sport!,” International Military Sports Council (CISM), accessed August 14, 2019, <http://www.milsport.one/>.

⁹ “International Military Sports Council, Friendship through Sport!,” Department of Defense, “U.S. Armed Forces Sports,” U.S. Armed Forces Sports, accessed August 14, 2019, <https://armedforcessports.defense.gov/>.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, “The National Youth Sports Strategy” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2019), https://health.gov/paguidelines/youth-sports-strategy/pdf/National_Youth_Sports_Strategy.pdf; Dale Murray, “Reflections on Public Funding for Professional Sports Facilities,” *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 36, no. 1 (May 1, 2009): 22–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00948705.2009.9714743>; “CISM - World Summer Games,” International Military Sports Council (CISM), accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.milsport.one/events/cism-world-summer-games>.

¹¹ Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, “Central Sport Club of the Army,” accessed April 11, 2020, <https://eng.mil.ru/en/index/social/sport/cska/more.htm?id=8716@morfOrgSport>.

¹² Fan Hong, Ping Wu, and Huan Xiong, “Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sports System and Its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no. 4 (July 1, 2005): 512, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360500126336>.

strategy and allowed government funding and power to ensure total adherence to the national elite sports ambitions.¹³

China not only seeks to attain an international appeal through a soft-power sports campaign in the civilian sports sector, it also hosts military sporting events.¹⁴ When the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China hosted the 2019 Military World Games (MWG), the Games displayed a growing divergence from the peaceful CISM Military World Games platform; China used this event to overtly gain momentum on its quest for national power projection through military strength, domestically and internationally. This example demonstrates how a less-democratic power used a military sport event for reasons other than to improve military relations, and thus speaks to the question of how any nation can use military sports for positive international relations between militaries.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic study of sport classically includes extensive country case studies and analyses of noteworthy events. Stuart Murray was the first to dedicate a book to the definition and theory of sports diplomacy in an effort to build a starting point for more studies to follow.¹⁵ Sports diplomacy was inspired by the growing interest by many foreign ministries, therefore inspiring the rise in the number of academic papers on sports diplomacy. To name a few major contributors: the Diplomacy and International Studies (DIS) project team at SOAS University of London and its Sports and Diplomacy project; the University of the West of Scotland's master's degree in Cultural Diplomacy and

¹³ Hong, Wu, and Xiong, 512.

¹⁴ "Wuhan (CHN) Military World Games 2019," International Military Sports Council (CISM), accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.milспорт.one/events/cism-world-summer-games/wuhan-chn-2019>.

¹⁵ Stuart Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, First (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2018).

International Sport; and the University of Edinburgh's Academy of Sport.¹⁶ This academic growth increases expertise and collaboration in order to provide state and non-state actor's implementation guidance, evident, for example, in the new EU initiatives.¹⁷ These universities host seminars and sponsor think tanks to improve on diplomacy methods that incorporate sports.

Nonetheless, military sports and their potential for international diplomacy have yet to receive much focused scholarly attention. To locate military sports in this broader field of inquiry, this literature review provides an overview of modern and traditional diplomacy in general, public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and soft power; it observes the evolution of traditional diplomacy, the onset coming of age of public and cultural diplomacy, and then the global recognition of soft power methods. All these branches of diplomacy are used within the greater context of modern diplomacy. Although more types of diplomacy may border sports diplomacy—for example, network diplomacy or sports club diplomacy—this section focuses mainly on the overarching goal of defining military sports diplomacy.

1. Modern Diplomacy

While traditional diplomacy relied on the professional diplomat's negotiation skills at the highest levels of host-country leadership, modern diplomacy requires the diplomacy to master an array of tools, many of which count as soft power.

The interest in democratizing or at least decentralizing diplomacy, according to Cooper, Heine, and Thakur, began with the abject failure of traditional diplomats and their conventional methods of suasion to prevent World War I, which the authors claim

¹⁶ "Sport and Diplomacy, CISD, SOAS University of London," SOAS University of London, accessed December 17, 2019, <https://www.soas.ac.uk/cisd/research/sport-and-diplomacy/>; "MA Program in Cultural Diplomacy and International Sport (One Year Program)," The Center for Creative Industries and Performing Arts (CCIPA), accessed December 17, 2019, http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/index.php?en_uws_macd-is; "Academy of Sport," The University of Edinburgh, accessed April 26, 2020, <https://www.ed.ac.uk/education/rke/centres-groups/academy-of-sport>.

¹⁷ EU Member State Sport Ministers, "EU Physical Activity Guidelines" (EU Working Group "Sport & Health," October 2008), https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy_documents/eu-physical-activity-guidelines-2008_en.pdf.

highlights the “discredited system of clandestine alliances and secret diplomacy” and resulted in the demand for transparency between the political actors.¹⁸ In response, they cite that the League of Nations initiated new diplomatic procedures such as “multi-lateral diplomacy, public debates, international parliamentary procedures, and collective decision-making.”¹⁹ *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy* is centered on this concept that the addition of new, non-state actors, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private firms, multi-national corporations, civil society actors, and any other stakeholders with an interest in asserting control over various angles of world affairs added to diplomatic complexities and shaped modern diplomacy.²⁰

Among the emerging, modern methods is “networked diplomacy,” in Annie-Marie Slaughter’s turn of phrase.²¹ She explained that the “network” of international actors must be taken into consideration and engaged when mobilizing an international cause, and in order to do so successfully requires diplomats with “the skills that are closer to community organizing than traditional reporting and analysis.”²² Cooper, Heine, and Thakur recognized that transparency greatly increased as the new actors became allowed to the “inner circle of diplomacy and policy negotiation.”²³ This shift toward a diplomatic network set the stage for new actors to fend for influence.²⁴ The art of modern diplomacy can only be mastered when the actor can effectively navigate the network; understanding the network is therefore a reoccurring theme in the world of modern diplomacy.

¹⁸ Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.

¹⁹ Cooper, Heine, and Thakur, 5.

²⁰ Cooper, Heine, and Thakur, 2.

²¹ Anne-Marie Slaughter, “How to Succeed in the Networked World,” June 24, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2016-10-04/how-succeed-networked-world>.

²² Slaughter.

²³ Cooper, Heine, and Thakur, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, 6, 23.

²⁴ Cooper, Heine, and Thakur, 22.

2. Public Diplomacy

The mission of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD) is “to understand, inform and influence foreign publics and to increase the understanding of, and support for, these same [government] activities.”²⁵ Mohammad Fahim describes how a diplomat can preemptively take advantage of a situation by improving the “international cultural understanding” in order to facilitate a clear path to meet the national objective ends through public diplomacy.²⁶ His academic analysis of public diplomacy further demonstrates that public diplomacy can also meet international relations goals in a “legitimate” way.²⁷

Public diplomacy bridges the gap between traditional and modern diplomacy by providing a method for governments to formulate the “characteristics and modernization more clearly” because it recognized the increase in actors and complexity of globalization, as Jan Melissen recognized in a 2005 study.²⁸ Geoffrey Wiseman adds that the inclusion of the state–non-state actor resulted in the evolution of diplomacy practice in the 20th century, which he labeled the “diplomacy’s third dimension.”²⁹ He gives the state and its use of public diplomacy credit for its “innovative capacity” to retain control while working with this “third dimension” and allowing the rise of these non-state

²⁵“United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy,” *United States Department of State* (blog), accessed February 18, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-public-diplomacy-and-public-affairs/united-states-advisory-commission-on-public-diplomacy/>.

²⁶Mohammad Fahim, “Diplomacy, The Only Legitimate Way of Conducting International Relations” (PhD diss., London, UK, Collins Online University, 2010), 76, https://books.google.com/books?id=Q-wcAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA76&lpg=PA76&dq=international+cultural+understanding,+which+the+state+is+a+key+goal+of+modern+public+diplomacy+strategy&source=bl&ots=MEfPQIYFtu&sig=ACfU3U0dAijkg01tQuC8DTZ4AaoJR7RkKg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjv9pmaldznAhXV6Z4KHRQkA_cQ6AEwC3oECA0QAQ#v=onepage&q=international%20cultural%20understanding%2C%20which%20the%20state%20is%20a%20key%20goal%20of%20modern%20public%20diplomacy%20strategy&f=false.

²⁷ Fahim, 76.

²⁸ Jan Melissen, “Public Diplomacy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 437.

²⁹ Geoffrey Wiseman, “Polylateralism: Diplomacy’s Third Dimension,” *Public Diplomacy Magazine* 4, no. 1 (2010): 24–39; Melissen, “Public Diplomacy,” 437.

Geoffrey Wiseman, “Polylateralism: Diplomacy’s Third Dimension,” *Public Diplomacy Magazine* 4, no. 1 (2010).

actor.³⁰ Jan Melissen attributes the influx of think-tank articles on public diplomacy to the unexpected end to the Cold War combined with the changing nature of diplomacy practice under new communication methods; these occurrences subsequently stimulated a hunt for new “opportunities for expanding and updating the repertoire of diplomatic tools.”³¹ It is evident that public diplomacy not only enables Slaughter’s “marketplace of network” but also takes advantage of the new comers by allowing new multi-lateral organizations to work in conjunction with the political elite efforts.

On the other hand, G. R. Berridge critiques public diplomacy for its resemblance to white propaganda: overt government-imposed information on a foreign public.³² While public diplomacy has mostly been accepted as a political norm, its critics identify its propaganda characteristics as political “one-way messaging” due to its sometimes unwelcomed dissemination of education or information in a target country.³³ For example, public diplomacy effected little change in the Muslim world due to an “environment that is not congenial to exchange and engagement of the wider public.”³⁴ The U.S. public information campaign in the 2000s is even accused of “infringing” on its target country’s domestic affairs, which contradicts U.S. adherence to the Westphalian principles of the “society of states.”³⁵

3. Cultural Diplomacy

Many nations have adopted various methods of public diplomacy into domestic and international policies. Throughout the Cold War, such European countries as the UK

³⁰ Melissen, “Public Diplomacy,” 438.

³¹ Melissen, 437.

³² G. R. Berridge, “Public Diplomacy,” in *Diplomacy*, ed. G. R. Berridge (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 179, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230379275_12.

³³ Jan Melissen, *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Studies in Diplomacy (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : New York: Macmillan ; St. Martin’s Press, 2005), http://culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/pdf/research/books/soft_power/The_New_Public_Diplomacy.pdf.

³⁴ Melissen, “Public Diplomacy,” 439.

³⁵ Richard Holbrooke, “Get the Message Out,” *Washington Post*, October 28, 2001, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2001/10/28/get-the-message-out/b298b3c9-45b8-45e2-9ec7-20503dd38802/>.

and Germany conducted public diplomacy through such cultural institutions as the Goethe Institute and the British Council. The mission of these institutions was and remains to influence policymakers by leveraging culture to appeal to a foreign society and align diplomatic ends.³⁶ These initiatives merged with the modernization of diplomacy and solidified public diplomacy's placement for government officials.³⁷

Cynthia Schneider labels cultural diplomacy as “the war of ideas,” especially when applied during a time of conflict or war.³⁸ Patricia Goff pronounces that the foundation of cultural diplomacy's is through “art, language, and education are the most significant entry points,” which have the power to penetrate borders and influence the culture of a foreign society.³⁹ However, due to the extended commitment period and the challenging metric to determine success, progress, and impact, this type of diplomacy is often brushed off as “too soft and peripheral to the real issues of policy.”⁴⁰

Hallmark cultural diplomacy engagement comes in the form of academic exchanges, language instruction, music artist tours, and sports exchanges.⁴¹ All these person-to-person investments aim to deliver a relatable and appealing story to a foreign population that has the potential to change an existing negative view. Although global media has delivered us into an era of information, foreign interactions remain challenging and easy to be misinterpreted due to cultural differences. Cultural diplomacy not only strives to achieve mutual understanding, it also strives to build relationships based on this

³⁶ Goethe Institut, “Culture in an Age of Uncertainty the Value of Cultural Relations in Societies in Transition” (Goethe Institut/British Council, 2018), https://www.goethe.de/resources/files/pdf165/culture_in_an_age_of_uncertainty.pdf.

³⁷ Bruce Gregory, “Public Diplomacy: Sunrise of an Academic Field,” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (March 2008): 279, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207311723>.

³⁸ Cynthia Schneider, “Diplomacy That Works: ‘Best Practices’ in Cultural Diplomacy” (Georgetown University, Center for Arts and Culture, 2003), 3, <https://www.interarts.net/descargas/interarts667.pdf>.

³⁹ Patricia Goff, “Cultural Diplomacy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 419–20.

⁴⁰ Melissen, *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, xxiii.

⁴¹ Milton Cummings, “Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey,” *Americans for the Arts*, May 15, 2019, <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/naappd/cultural-diplomacy-and-the-united-states-government-a-survey>.

mutual understanding. Maurits Berger advises that to achieve international respect and avoid distrust, the actors must display “a genuine interest in the other [nation]: where does it stand, what does it think, and why does it think that way?”⁴² This way there is room for relationship growth “on the basis of equality and reciprocity” where a two-way dialogue is fostered and enhanced by both sides.⁴³

A 2005 U.S. State Department report describes cultural diplomacy as the “linchpin of public diplomacy” and says poetically that it “reveals the soul of a nation.”⁴⁴ This report goes on to suggest that cultural diplomacy could be an antidote to war, but is often neglected and underfunded until conflict requires hard power actions.⁴⁵

4. Soft Power

This thesis is concerned with the application of soft power within the context of evolving diplomacy methods and how soft power is used in the context of foreign policy tools. Although there exist many definitions of soft power, Nye’s early definition—“the ability to get what you [a state wants] through attraction rather than coercion or payments”—is widely accepted as a baseline for a new era of peace.⁴⁶ Nye’s formulation of soft power has been used as a platform to employ new forms of power and enabled many international relations scholars to build on his early work.⁴⁷ This soft power platform justifies Murray’s definition of modern sports diplomacy as it aligns with Nye’s portrayal of soft power:

The conscious, strategic, and regular use of sport, sports people, sporting events and non-state sporting actors by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

⁴² Maurits Berger, *Bridge the Gap, or Mind the Gap? Culture in Western-Arab Relations*, Clingendael Diplomacy Papers 15 (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael,” 2008), 6.

⁴³ Berger, 6.

⁴⁴ U.S. Department of State, “Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy” (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, September 2005), //2009-2017.state.gov/pdcommission/reports/54256.htm.

⁴⁵ U.S. Department of State.

⁴⁶ Nye, *Soft Power*, 72 of 4134; Ying Fan, “Soft Power and Nation Branding,” n.d., 147.

⁴⁷ Janice Bially Mattern, “Why ‘Soft Power’ Isn’t So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics,” *Millennium* 33, no. 3 (June 23, 2016): 584, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298050330031601>; Ernest J. Wilson, “Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (2008): 114.

(MFA) and their diplomatic staffs in order to create collaborative, long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships which, ideally, “maximizes people-to-people links, development, cultural, trade, investment, education and tourism opportunities.”⁴⁸

Nye’s conceptualization of soft power allows for innovative diplomacy.

Soft-power critics claim Nye’s era of peaceful power methods inadequately present the “dark side of the ‘soft power’ coin.”⁴⁹ Joffe contests soft power’s peaceful application by asserting that soft power is merely a new means of competition for cultural power; Eric Fattor even wrote about a book on “Soft Power and Cultural Weaponization.”⁵⁰ Joffe asserts that no amount of soft power can prevent other nations from fearing, and then balancing against, the United States because the American interests and influence are omnipresent.⁵¹ In an assessment on *Measuring National Powers*, RAND echoes his notion and asserts that “soft power then becomes everything short of physical force; it is ‘preparing the battlefield.’”⁵²

The United States has emphasized the use of soft power for decades, despite the lack of empirical evidence and unambiguous employment guidance to facilitate successful soft-power policies.⁵³ Indeed, analysts have categorized the post-9/11 era, in some part, as a soft-power campaign.⁵⁴ Kroenig, in an attempt to assess soft-power mechanisms under a single president’s administration and in the same country, evaluated the three Iraqi campaigns of “winning hearts and minds in Iraq, countering ideological

⁴⁸ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 94.

⁴⁹ Josef Joffe, “The Perils of Soft Power,” *New York Times*, May 14, 2006, https://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/14/magazine/14wwln_lede.html.

⁵⁰ Eric Fattor, *American Empire and the Arsenal of Entertainment: Soft Power and Cultural Weaponization* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1.

⁵¹ Josef Joffe, *Überpower: The Imperial Temptation of America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007).

⁵² Gregory F. Treverton and Seth G. Jones, *Measuring National Power*, Conference Proceedings (Santa Monica, Calif: RAND, 2005), 13.

⁵³ Michael Hirsh, “The Clinton Legacy: How Will History Judge the Soft-Power Secretary of State?,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 3 (2013): 83.

⁵⁴ Matthew Kroenig, Melissa McAdam, and Steven Weber, “Taking Soft Power Seriously,” *Comparative Strategy* 29, no. 5 (November 24, 2010): 413, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01495933.2010.520986>.

support for terrorism, and democracy promotion in the post-communist region” and determined the first two as failures and democracy promotion as a semi-success.⁵⁵ Koenig connected the findings to the conducive, or non-conductive environments, therein a limitation, or restriction, to the implementation of soft power. The currency of soft power is through a mutual attraction of culture, political values, and foreign policies; these components are key mechanism in both soft power and modern diplomacy.

C. RESEARCH DESIGN AND OVERVIEW

This thesis depicts the fundamental sports diplomacy playing field, the role of sports institutions, examples of sports used to further national objectives, and the newest developments in sports for community building. In order to define and contextualize military sports diplomacy in the 21st century, this thesis considers all of these topics and the modern developments associated with them.

I attended the Chinese-hosted CISM Military World Games in October 2019 as the triathlon team representative, a role that offered a significant amount of interaction with participating nations’ sports leaders. This event demonstrated that military sports are not consistently used to enhance military relations. Within this thesis, military sports diplomacy is defined as: an organized or impromptu sporting activity between service members of a country’s armed forces, or defense forces, to enhance international military relations through sports, which should simultaneously improve unit cohesion and/or individual service member physical readiness, and thereby strengthen the armed forces as a whole. The inconsistent use of military sports prompts an assessment that requires a complete understanding of the power of international military sports.

Chapter II distinguishes between traditional and modern sports diplomacy and highlights how sport engagement’s range from peaceful to violent. This chapter also demonstrates the power of sport institutions, specifically the International Olympic Organization (IOC), and how the IOC operates as a non-state actor as well as a multi-lateral corporation.

⁵⁵ Kroenig, McAdam, and Weber, 417.

Chapter III covers the overlap between military sports history and diplomacy. It first defines what military sports diplomacy (MSD) is and how MSD can ideally be maximized to build positive international relations. Then, it considers examples from European history when sports were used by nations to optimize a political standing amid the prevailing political environment. And lastly, the history of CISM is the highlight of this chapter as it reveals how institutions also change with the changing political environment. A thorough understanding of CISM's legacy and current status as an International Sports Organization uncovers how many foreign militaries use athletes to leverage their global standing and other propaganda pieces to complement an overall national strategy and national interests.

Chapter IV covers two military sport events: Russia's annual International Army Games, and the 2019 7th Military World Games hosted in China. This chapter demonstrates how and to what extent governments use sports to appeal to domestic and international audiences. The selected examples do not encompass these country's entire strategy; instead, the events highlight how different countries implement sports strategically to further their respective governments' interests. The chapter concludes with an analysis on whether these events can be considered platforms for military sports diplomacy, as defined in Chapter III.

Chapter V concludes the thesis with international, European, and CISM recommendations to maximize military sports diplomacy.

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II. CIVILIAN SPORTS AND DIPLOMACY

Sports and sporting events are regularly used as overt and covert diplomatic tools by states and non-state actors; therefore, scholars have categorized this tool as sports diplomacy. Over the last few decades, the emphasis on the political use of sports underwent a shift from professional athletes and mega-events to amateur athletes and community building. The most compelling and contemporary evaluation of sports diplomacy distinguishes between traditional sports diplomacy and modern sports diplomacy: Traditional sports diplomacy refers to mega-events and elite athletes, in contrast to modern sports diplomacy which refers to a smaller-scale team-sport collaboration between local citizens and amateur athletes and coaches who are employed by foreign ministries or other non-state actors.⁵⁶ This chapter describes how international sport institutions became global powers somewhat akin to highly influential “diplomatic actors,” and how traditional sports diplomacy withered and modern sports diplomacy grew.⁵⁷

A. INTERNATIONAL SPORT INSTITUTIONS: EXAMPLE IOC

The IOC created the premier platform for traditional sports diplomacy: the Olympics. This section demonstrates how the IOC evolved from an international peace movement, to a political platform of national leaders, then into an industry where the athlete is still king, but the money is central. The evolution of such sport institutions as the IOC illustrates the transition from traditional to modern sports diplomacy.

Many sport institutions became international actors due to the large audiences and international following, and therefore have an interesting ability to influence global

⁵⁶ Stuart Murray, “Sports Diplomacy,” in *The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy*, ed. Costas Constantinou, Pauline Kerr, and Paul Sharp (London, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2016), 418, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473957930>.

⁵⁷ Stuart Murray and Geoffrey Allen Pigman, “Mapping the Relationship Between International Sport and Diplomacy,” *Sport in Society* 17, no. 9 (October 21, 2014): 1100, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2013.856616>.

politics as “international organizations.”⁵⁸ The IOC became an international actor and gained influence in the international system because the institution earned its legitimacy as a highly effective political platform, then the diplomatic system opened itself to non-state actors.⁵⁹ Today the IOC even has the power to demand countries adhere to its set forth standards when hosting an Olympic game.

The IOC governs all facets of the Olympics. It is a not-for-profit organization and claims the mission of “building a better world through sport.”⁶⁰ The IOC publicly states that more than 90 percent of income earned through marketing programs is “redistributed to the wider sporting movement, which means that every day the IOC provides the equivalent of USD 3.4 million to help athletes and sports organizations at all levels around the world.”⁶¹ Murray and Pigman stated that the IOC and FIFA practice a distinct and effective form of diplomacy “by virtue of [their] volume, frequency and ability to engage the hearts, minds and wallets of the global public.”⁶² The fame and hype that surrounds the Olympics summer and winter games every four years make the event an ideal venue for external influence of the masses and national showcasing.

Beyond the generic governance purpose of sports regulation, the father of the modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin, placed a social mission within the heart of the Olympic movement and formulated the term “internationalism” as the principle of equal opportunities, fair-play, peace for intercultural contact and international relations.⁶³ Therefore, the design of the Olympic rings: “five interlocking rings representing the five continents with one or more of its five colors—blue, yellow, black, green, red—

⁵⁸ John Hoberman, “Toward a Theory of Olympic Internationalism,” *Journal of Sport History* 22, no. 1 (1995): 36.

⁵⁹ Cooper, Heine, and Thakur, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, 6.

⁶⁰ “International Olympic Committee,” International Olympic Committee, January 10, 2020, <https://www.olympic.org/the-ioc>.

⁶¹ “International Olympic Committee.”

⁶² Murray and Pigman, “Mapping the Relationship Between International Sport and Diplomacy,” 1099.

⁶³ Holger Preuss and Karsten Liese, eds., *Internationalism in the Olympic Movement: Idea and Reality Between Nations, Cultures, and People*, 1st ed, VS Research (Wiesbaden, Germany: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011), 76.

encompassing those of the flags of all nations of the world.”⁶⁴ The original intent of the IOC is quite contradictory to the tales of political misuse throughout the last century.

The IOC succumbed to commercialization in the 1960s and grew to a “multi-billion-dollar global business.”⁶⁵ Olympic movement critics have presented that the “‘Olympic idea’ itself would inevitably fall victim to the logic of development inherent to the professionalization and commercialization of elite sport.”⁶⁶ And indeed, it is even accurate to categorize the IOC as a multinational corporation in addition to its primary label of ISO, which takes away from the philanthropic original purpose to the five rings of Olympism.⁶⁷ Although the original intent of the IOC was to unite nations through sports, the primary beneficiary of the Olympic movement today is the sports industry. But more importantly, the platform remains a powerful medium, and athletes continue to strive for an Olympic gold medal.

The global influence of the Olympic games has become political in nature. The IOC and its members-nations address and pursue an increasing number of social issues in host nations and member-nations, i.e., environmentalism, international development, and nation legitimization. The growing international influence of the IOC is evident “from the earliest days of the IOC (when Finns and Czechs wanted separate National Olympic Committees (NOC) from the imperial Russian and Austrian ones) that the IOC’s recognition of national sports associations aided many policies in making de facto claims to diplomatic recognition.”⁶⁸ The IOC walks a fine line between influence and control to maintain its status as an international actor; despite their unelected board, the IOC must act like a state in that it does not overstep its role as an international sport organization.

⁶⁴ Preuss and Liese, 5.

⁶⁵ Chris Gratton et al., *The Global Economics of Sport* (London, UK: Routledge, 2012), 12.

⁶⁶ Hoberman, “Toward a Theory of Olympic Internationalism,” 1.

⁶⁷ David Black and Byron Peacock, “Sport and Diplomacy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 709.

⁶⁸ Black and Peacock, 713.

Although the IOC is responsible for the execution of the Olympics Games, it must also deal with the political games that surround the actual sport games.

The IOC is “the sole authority to recognize a National Olympic Committee (NOC),” this means the IOC is also the sole authority to determine participants at the Olympics.⁶⁹ The ability to make this determination demonstrates the power vested in the IOC to elevate the status of a countries once formally admitted as a NOC, i.e., the debate around Team Taiwan and Team Korea. Although gold medals win national pride and can be considered a layer within the political great power competition, membership and participation alone can earn a nation legitimacy on the international stage.

Winning an Olympic gold medal is the quintessential achievement of an athlete anywhere in the world. For the individual athlete, it is the highlight of an athletic career; but more important to the topic of sports in a great power competition, a gold medal is the universal sign of national superiority. Institutions enable this superiority.

International sports institutions are a product of the traditional sports diplomacy era, but still relevant to the modern sports diplomacy movement today. The original purpose of sports institutions was limited to rules regulation, and to provide a body to govern the sports and supports international competitions. Civilians and military sports institutions alike were founded to perform these duties. Enduring and influential organizations include the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), International Cricket Council and CISM.

B. TRADITIONAL SPORTS DIPLOMACY

In traditional sports diplomacy, the government can be considered the main actor, and the medium the media or the stadium. The most common examples of traditional sports diplomacy are when a nation hosts a major sporting meet or game, uses a sport event as an informal summit, or employs a celebrity sportsperson to amplify a state’s

⁶⁹ “National Olympic Committees (NOC) - Olympic Movement,” International Olympic Committee, February 20, 2020, <https://www.olympic.org/national-olympic-committees>.

diplomatic message.⁷⁰ Critics may regard traditional sports diplomacy as “the opportunistic use, strategic exploitation and, in some cases, abuse of elite sport, sportspeople and sporting events in order to advance a state’s foreign policy objectives.”⁷¹ But proponents insist that traditional sports diplomacy has been used to unite people, open relations, provide informal summits, and build nations.⁷²

1. Sports, Intended for Peace

Traditional sports diplomacy, in its most peaceful state, is embodied by the early Olympic movement: mega-events that centered around international cooperation. The year 1896 marked the revival of the Greek Olympiad when Pierre de Coubertin affirmed the trajectory of the Olympic institution as an “international sport [for peace] movement;” this pronouncement laid the foundation for the globalization of mass-sporting events in the 20th century.⁷³

The first modern-day Olympic Games—1896 in Athens, then 1900 in Paris and 1904 in St. Louis—were successful in that the events brought athletes from many corners of the world to a common playing field, but the Olympics were not recognized as opportunistic for international relations until the 1910s.⁷⁴ As the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations states in 1948, “in my lifetime you [IOC] have taken sport to every continent. These Games, I hope, will take the mind of the peoples from conflict to cooperation; in a fear-stricken, struggling, and suspicious world, the Olympic movement stands out, a virile and noble thing.”⁷⁵ During the 1920–1940 inter-war period iterations of Olympics, the Games were attended by as few as 16 countries and as many as 49 countries. The rise displayed the attraction and interest toward the Games, but the

⁷⁰ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 59.

⁷¹ Murray, 61.

⁷² Murray and Pigman, “Mapping the Relationship Between International Sport and Diplomacy,” 1107.

⁷³ Philip Noel-Baker, *Man of Sport, Man of Peace: Collected Speeches and Essays of Philip Noel-Baker, Olympic Statesman 1889-1982*, ed. Don Anthony (London: Sports Edition Limited, 1991), 16.

⁷⁴ Noel-Baker, 16.

⁷⁵ Noel-Baker, 14.

fluctuation revealed an inconsistency that can be attributed to nation's uncertainty toward the Olympic movement and a questioning of its value added for the individual country.⁷⁶

During the early years of the Olympics, Europe experienced an “extraordinary upsurge in the sports phenomenon,” which was evident in the increased press coverage of the Olympics and higher attendance at national and international (European) football games.⁷⁷ The rise in demand for sporting events as entertainment strengthened the global sports movement and empowered sports to be used as a tool for “international goodwill,” as initially intended.⁷⁸

Philip Noel-Baker, a Nobel peace laureate for his post-WWII disarmament work, carried the Olympic movement during his lifetime from 1889 to 1982.⁷⁹ He combined his life work as a politician with his passion for international sports and attempted to merge sports into his diplomatic capacity in British parliament as an antidote for conflict. As a statutory member of the League of Nations, he saw the Olympic Games as a “Sporting League of Nations” and claimed that “they are breaking down the ignorance, the suspicion, and the distrust which made us think of ever foreigner as a perfidious schemer for our destruction. They are breaking down the atmosphere, the beliefs, and the emotions that led to war.”⁸⁰ He stood by the peace-bringing aspect of the Olympics until the end of his life, despite his observations of the calamitous political abuses of international sports toward the end of his life.

Traditional sports diplomacy is effective for some cases of bilateral relation building through its ability to facilitate informal political summits and open the door for

⁷⁶ “Winter Summer Past and Future Olympics,” Olympic Games, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.olympic.org/olympic-games>.

⁷⁷ Jim Riordan, *The International Politics of Sport in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group, 1999), ix, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/detail.action?docID=170269>.

⁷⁸ Noel-Baker, *Man of Sport, Man of Peace: Collected Speeches and Essays of Philip Noel-Baker, Olympic Statesman 1889-1982*, 9.

⁷⁹ “The Nobel Peace Prize 1959,” The Nobel Prize, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1959/noel-baker/biographical/>.

⁸⁰ Noel-Baker, *Man of Sport, Man of Peace: Collected Speeches and Essays of Philip Noel-Baker, Olympic Statesman 1889-1982*, 50–51.

reconciliation talks. The use of informal political summits is a topic in-and-of-itself, however, to remain on track with sports summit opportunities specifically, Pakistan and India's relationship and history with cricket illustrate sport's capability and function as an informal summit.⁸¹

The two countries' long-standing territorial disputes led to poor trade relations, mutual hostilities, and brought them to the brink of war, even nuclear war, on multiple occasions.⁸² As determined by Jason Brightman: "Cricket has served as both a proxy for war, as well as a vehicle for building confidence and trust."⁸³ In this example, the cricket stadium doubled as an opportunity for political leaders to discuss future relations. Cricket diplomacy does not necessarily ease tensions; it can only open the door for a bi-lateral dialogue. The politicians still must discuss, negotiate, and make concessions.

In 1987, a conflict between India and Pakistan brought the two nations to the brink of nuclear war. In effort to engage in a peaceful bi-lateral dialogue, Pakistani General Zia ul-Haq flew to test cricket match Jaipur, India, unannounced.⁸⁴ Zia, a collegiate cricketer, appreciated cricket's political capabilities, and was quoted as saying, "My sole purpose was to come and watch good cricket and in the process meet with the prime minister and see how we could solve our problems."⁸⁵ Within a few months, the tensions eased, and the negotiations were successful in preventing the worst-case scenario of a nuclear war. Sporting event continue to be used to open dialogue in order to circumvent disaster.

⁸¹ Stuart Murray, "The Two Halves of Sports-Diplomacy," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 23, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 583, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2012.706544>.

⁸² Murray, 579.

⁸³ Jason H. Brightman, "Cricket's Contribution to India's National Solidification" (Thesis, Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School, 2009), 73, <https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/4838>.

⁸⁴ Stuart Croft, "South Asia's Arms Control Process: Cricket Diplomacy and the Composite Dialogue," *International Affairs* 81, no. 5 (2005): 1040, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2005.00501.x>.

⁸⁵ Rone Tempest, "War Talk Evaporates on First Pitch : Zia's Cricket Diplomacy Gets High Score in India," *Los Angeles Times*, February 23, 1987, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1987-02-23-mn-3286-story.html>.

One of the most famous examples of sports diplomacy as an “irregular ad hoc summit”—now popularly referred to as ping-pong diplomacy—which resulted in the opening of bi-lateral relation between the United States and China during the Nixon administration after two decades of closure. The thawing of relations started with a positive interaction between a Chinese and an American ping-pong player in Japan, that caught the attention of the media and, more importantly, Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Mao then ordered his foreign ministry to offer the U.S. ping-pong team an official invitation to compete in China. The team members were soon thereafter the first American delegation in China since the withdrawal of the U.S. embassy in 1949, amid Nixon’s secret diplomacy with China at the time.⁸⁶ The invitation broke news around the world and became a feel-good story that heightened peace and mended relations.

However, the impromptu Chinese-U.S. ping-pong tournament was primarily for strategic diplomatic initiatives by both administrations.⁸⁷ China’s relations with the Soviet Union were on the brink of collapse, which made the American alliance more attractive. Washington desired a victory in Vietnam and to ensure the containment of communism in the world. The concept of using China to counter-balance Soviet influence in Asia came to be known as “the China card” and justified normalizing relations despite the ruling communist party. The move to leverage the universal language of sports altered the perception of the Chinese by many Americans.⁸⁸ Mao would later describe his decision to invite the American team as “the small ping-pong ball that could be used to move the big ball of the world.”⁸⁹

Lastly, traditional sports diplomacy was the cornerstone of South Africa’s nation-building success in 1995. South Africa’s political ideology from 1948 through 1995 supported a deleterious racial form of apartheid and created a separate and unequal

⁸⁶ Margaret MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed the World* (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2008), 179.

⁸⁷ James Mann, *About Face*, 1st ed. (New York: Random House, 2000), 28–29.

⁸⁸ MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao*, 179.

⁸⁹ MacMillan, 179.

development between whites and blacks in the country. The 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa marked the epitome of soft power in sports diplomacy because it used its integrated national team's victory to evoke emotion in an entire people and change their long-standing norms. In the words of Nygård and Gates, the event was used as “a mechanism to move toward the reconciliation and integration of a divided nation.”⁹⁰ The rugby wave swept the country and set the stage for further integration within society. Nelson Mandela's speech at the culmination of the championship resounded throughout the world: “Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. Sport can awaken hope where there was previously only despair. Sport speaks to people in a language they can understand.”⁹¹ Traditional sports diplomacy has a powerful capability to evoke change for the better in a world filled with hate and violence, but the dark side is irrefutable and must be addressed.

2. The Dark Uses of Sport

Even scholars who praise sports as an effective diplomatic tool mostly acknowledge its malignant potential. Sporting events are often hijacked by states to spread an ideology or to stoke nationalistic sentiments of superiority. Even worse, as Murray elucidates, the event itself can become plagued by the sportspeople or other interested parties through “corruption, graft, violence, cheating, racism or blatant displays of jingoistic pageantry.”⁹² Any use of sports that contradicts the original Olympic sports for peace movement degrades the efficacy of sports diplomacy—as was overtly apparent in Germany's misuse of the optics and substance of the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

When the IOC approved the Germany's bid to host the Olympic Games in 1931, it considered the country, then more than a decade into its first democracy, the Weimar

⁹⁰ Håvard Mokleiv Nygård and Scott Gates, “Soft Power at Home and Abroad: Sport Diplomacy, Politics and Peace-Building;,” *International Area Studies Review* 16, no. 3 (September 18, 2013): 235, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2233865913502971>.

⁹¹ SportGen (Netherlands), *Nelson Mandela The Power of Sport*, 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=23&v=5lvHnYQsTBU.

⁹² Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 2.

Republic, as needing a chance to prove its legitimacy on the world stage.⁹³ The 1933 election of German Chancellor Adolf Hitler and the rise of his Nazi party changed the scene as German leadership grew increasingly anti-semitic and they recognized the opportunity in the Olympic platform.⁹⁴ Goodhart and Chataway assessed the 1936 Berlin Olympics Games as a “major political intrusion” into the IOC and counter-productive to the Olympic movement.⁹⁵

Leading up to the Games, Hitler resisted IOC rules and demanded selective attendance to put the right face on the propaganda pictures, literally and figuratively.⁹⁶ The IOC president resisted where he could; in 1936, for example, he ordered the removal of anti-semitic signs and stated: “when the five-circled flag is raised over the stadium, it is no longer Germany. It is Olympia, and we [the IOC] are the masters then.”⁹⁷ The Nazi regime prepared to replace the Olympic games of 1936 with “Aryan Games” in the event of an international boycott; Hitler is quoted stating that in the Games of “the future there would be only *Aryan Games*.”⁹⁸ The 1936 Olympic Games are infamously labeled the “greatest Nazi German propaganda successes” and aggrandized by the first motion picture to cover the Olympics titled: “Olympia 1. Teil — Fest der Völker (Festival of Nations) and Olympia 2. Teil — Fest der Schönheit (Festival of Beauty).” This film depicts how the regime used the international sporting stage to showcase the Aryan race athletic prowess and promote Nazi ideology—the same model used by Soviet Communists and Italian Fascist regimes.⁹⁹ Although Jesse Owens caused Hitler “two diplomatic walk-outs...to avoid congratulating” the African-American on his victories,

⁹³ Anrd Krüger and William Murray, *The Nazi Olympics: Sport, Politics and Appeasement in the 1930s* (University of Illinois Press, 2010), 2.

⁹⁴ Krüger and Murray, 46.

⁹⁵ Philip Goodhart M.P. and Christopher Chataway, *War Without Weapons: The Rise of Mass Sport in the 20th Century and Its Effect on Men and Nations* (London, UK: W. H. Allen, 1968), 16.

⁹⁶ Krüger and Murray, *The Nazi Olympics: Sport, Politics and Appeasement in the 1930s*, 46.

⁹⁷ Black and Peacock, “Sport and Diplomacy,” 746.

⁹⁸ Krüger and Murray, *The Nazi Olympics: Sport, Politics and Appeasement in the 1930s*, 1.

⁹⁹ Leni Riefenstahl, *Olympia Fest Der Völker (1936)*, 1936, <http://archive.org/details/LeniRiefenstahlOlympiaFestDerVolker1936>.

the medal count and the entire event enabled the promotion of the Nazi ideology as a carefully crafted political campaign.

After the defeat of the Axis powers in 1945 and in an attempt to bring peace through sports to the post-WWII world, British and Russian leaders decided to bring Moscow's armed forces soccer team *Dynamo* and Britain's national team *Chelsea* to a common soccer field to promote friendly competition.¹⁰⁰ The event represents the Janus-face of sports: some viewers saw it as a great success, while others saw the event as another demonstration of "war without weapons."¹⁰¹ George Orwell notoriously summarized the event: "It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence: in other words, it is war minus the shooting."¹⁰² In the case of the Dynamo vs. Chelsea football match, a foreign ministries' attempted use of an international sporting event to instigate cooperation went awry.

Goodhart and Chataway's 1968 book *War Without Weapons* used the 1945 *Dynamo* and *Chelsea* match to support their main claim that sport competitions are violent and war-like by nature and should therefore be separated from political affairs completely.¹⁰³ Although the match was meant to mend Anglo-Soviet relations, Orwell describes the fierce anti-Russian media narrative leading up to the game, and how these sentiments were imposed on the players, referees, and spectators, e.g., when a British and Russian player broke out in a fight or the immense controversy over the British team composition.¹⁰⁴ They exhibit how the importance of winning sporting events has morphed into a "kind of warfare" used to showcase "representative sports" where spectators are drawn to it because "they identify themselves with their representatives;"

¹⁰⁰ George Orwell, "The Sporting Spirit," in *Shooting an Elephant and Other Essays* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1950), http://orwell.ru/library/articles/spirit/english/e_spirit.

¹⁰¹ Goodhart M.P. and Chataway, *War Without Weapons: The Rise of Mass Sport in the 20th Century and Its Effect on Men and Nations*, 16; Peter Donnelly, "From War Without Weapons to Sport for Development and Peace: The Janus-Face of Sport," *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 31, no. 1 (April 14, 2011): 69, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sais.2011.0015>.

¹⁰² Orwell, "The Sporting Spirit."

¹⁰³ Goodhart M.P. and Chataway, *War Without Weapons: The Rise of Mass Sport in the 20th Century and Its Effect on Men and Nations*, 3.

¹⁰⁴ Orwell, "The Sporting Spirit."

this football match demonstrates how an international competition can set the stage for conflict.¹⁰⁵

Nonetheless, governments continued investment in sport mega-events and athletes which demonstrates that traditional sports diplomacy is still a desirable “means of improving a nation’s image, credibility, stature, economic competitiveness and (they hope) ability to exercise agency on the international stage.”¹⁰⁶ For these reasons, governments invest in stadiums to host international sporting events to then use the international sports stage not only to showcase a country on the international stage, but also to advance a political agenda domestically, i.e., the Soviet Union’s human performance optimization through inhumane experimentations with doping to promote nationalism.¹⁰⁷

An alternative form of political use of sport mega-events is through boycotts. A boycott “happens when a state, a group of states, a political leader, or individual athletes refuse to participate in a sports event, usually for political reasons. Most boycotts are directed against the host of the event or the sports organization.”¹⁰⁸ The 1980 Moscow games and 1984 Los Angeles Games are memorable in that the IOC provided two venues for peace and reconciliation talks, but instead were met with political statements against one another in a typical Cold-War manner.

The Carter administration’s decision to boycott the 1980 Moscow Olympics were intended to “punish [the Soviet Union] for its actions in Afghanistan” and contain the spread of communist propaganda.¹⁰⁹ The end-goal was to convince enough countries to

¹⁰⁵ Goodhart M.P. and Chataway, *War Without Weapons: The Rise of Mass Sport in the 20th Century and Its Effect on Men and Nations*, 3.

¹⁰⁶ Jon Grix and Donna Lee, “Soft Power, Sports Mega-Events and Emerging States: The Lure of the Politics of Attraction,” *Global Society* 27, no. 4 (October 1, 2013): 25.

¹⁰⁷ Steven Ungerleider and Bill Bradley, *Steven Ungerleider and Bill Bradley, Faust’s Gold: Inside The East German Doping Machine* (Macmillan, 2001).

¹⁰⁸ Michał Marcin Kobierecki, “Sports Diplomacy of Norway,” *International Studies. Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal* 20, no. 1 (December 20, 2017): 134, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ipcj-2017-0021>.

¹⁰⁹ Derick L. Jr. Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan, and the 1980 U.S. Boycott* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1990), 17.

boycott the Games in order to prevent the games all together. Quantitatively, the United States was only partially successful; only about half of Olympic delegations agreed to boycott the Games, insufficient to put a stop to the Games, but the legacy of the 1980 Games remains tainted and the prestige diminished. It is said that the Kremlin's primary purpose of hosting was to "overcome its inferiority complex relative to the world."¹¹⁰ In an equal and understandable response, the Kremlin boycotted the 1984 Olympics, albeit even less successfully. Boycotts are testament that sport competitions will match, and even amplify, the political rivalries—for better or for worse.

Beyond political statements and sentiments, sports tend to arouse crowds to action. An article in *Sports in Society* notes that "between 1972 and 2005, 171 sport-related terrorist attacks [were] logged."¹¹¹ The list includes such incidents as the 1969 Honduras-El Salvador "soccer wars" where a soccer game marked the beginning of the 100 Hour War, the 1972 Munich Olympics where 11 Israeli Olympic team members were taken hostage and killed, and the 2004 Asian Football Cup in China where Japanese players were assaulted by Chinese spectators.¹¹² Additionally, excessive passion in sport enthusiasts can instigated violence riots, for example, soccer hooliganism in the United Kingdom where a lost game inspired more than one fan to murder a player to slake the national disappointment.¹¹³

Sporting events and competitive matches are a powerful force to rouse the masses, for better or for worse. In response to Coubertin's efforts to keep the Olympics true to the sports-for-peace movement while balancing the burdens of the inevitable political environment of the years, the fifth president of the IOC summarizes the challenges faced by the IOC and speaks implicitly to the degradation of traditional sports diplomacy:

¹¹⁰ Hulme, 76.

¹¹¹ Steven J. Jackson and Steven Haigh, *Sport and Foreign Policy in a Globalizing World* (Routledge, 2013), 349.

¹¹² Wolfram Manzenreiter, "Football Diplomacy, Post-Colonialism and Japan's Quest for Normal State Status," *Sport in Society* 11, no. 4 (July 1, 2008): 414–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430430802019359>.

¹¹³ Eric Dunning, Patrick J. Murphy, and John Williams, *The Roots of Football Hooliganism (RLE Sports Studies): An Historical and Sociological Study* (Routledge, 2014), 72.

In the golden age there was an Olympic truce and all warfare stopped during the period of the games, but now after 2000 years of civilization, we stop the games and continue our wars. One of the objectives of the games is to develop international goodwill. Alas, the Olympic movement has no soldiers and no money. It, therefore, cannot stop warfare, but it can and does set a good example, and only when politicians of the world adopt those principles of fair play and good sportsmanship which prevail on the field of amateur sport will there no longer be necessity for wars.¹¹⁴

The IOC president addresses a “good example” that requires the politicians to “adopt those principles of fair-play and good sportsmanship,” but only if the politicians remove ulterior motives from the equation of sports will it achieve its original goal of peace.¹¹⁵ Unfortunately, as evident in events that followed his speech—the continuation of boycotts between the Soviet Union and the United States—politicians were unable to remove ulterior political motives from the Olympics.

C. MODERN SPORTS DIPLOMACY

Sporting events remain a powerful political tool, but the explicit political use is not socially acceptable; thus, the emergence of a new method to use sports internationally. Stuart Murray exclaims that the emergence of modern sports diplomacy can be attributed to the “somewhat limited, out-of-touch, and anachronistic” character of traditional sports diplomacy as seen in the dark side examples.¹¹⁶ With the theory of an antiquated use of sports diplomacy, Murray coined the term “modern sports diplomacy,” and asserted that sports are again adapting to appeal to today’s society and political climate that seeks cooperation above violence.¹¹⁷ The modern method of sports diplomacy does not entirely replace traditional sports diplomacy; instead, it complements it, in that it promotes “soft power, plurality and engagement over hard power, statism and division.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan, and the 1980 U.S. Boycott*, 3–4.

¹¹⁵ Hulme, 3–4.

¹¹⁶ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 60.

¹¹⁷ Murray, “Sports Diplomacy,” 2016.

¹¹⁸ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 80.

Modern sports diplomacy aligns with the broader appeal of political soft power and the original vision of the Olympic sports for peace movement. Modern sports diplomacy employs state-actors, non-state actors, international government organizations, non-government organizations, volunteers, amateur athletes, professional athletes, or coaches, as a means to an end.¹¹⁹ An emphasis on amateur athletes and coaches is facilitated through foreign exchanges, initiative, and programs that are endorsed by state departments and other institutions. Many official reports, those of the United Nations and U.S. State Department's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, claimed success and found value added through human-to-human connections facilitated through these engagements.¹²⁰ As Murray summarizes, these networks use sport to "engage, inform and create a favorable image among foreign publics, governments, and organizations to shape their perceptions in a way that is (more) conducive to the sending government's foreign policy goals."¹²¹

The relatively recent emergence of modern sports diplomacy is with the U.S. State Department's experimentation of soft-diplomacy tools built around athletic exchanges, such the sports diplomacy department titled SportsUnited.¹²² In the U.S. government, sports programs fall under the State Department's Bureau of Cultural Affairs' (BCA) and its SportsUnited Division. There are three SportsUnited's flagship programs: 1. the Sport Visitor Program where foreign coaches and athletes are welcomed to America for two weeks of technical training in "nutrition, strength and conditioning, gender equity in sports, sports and disability, and team building, along with technical training [with] special emphasis is placed on the visitors' development of personal action plans so that they can apply their experiences and newly learned skills once they return home." 2. The Sports Envoy Program, which works in collaboration with the U.S. Olympic Committee to facilitate professional U.S. athletes to travel aboard and conduct

¹¹⁹ Murray, "Sports Diplomacy," 2016.

¹²⁰ Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD), "Sport for Development and Peace."

¹²¹ Murray and Pigman, "Mapping the Relationship Between International Sport and Diplomacy," 1101.

¹²² Murray, "Sports Diplomacy," 2016.

sports “clinics and workshops...and engage with leaders of the host country government, educators and the local business community.” 3. The Sport Grant Programs is managed by U.S. non-profit organizations who organize one and two-way exchanges for youth (7-17 years) and/or coaches to travel abroad for various areas of interest.¹²³ Another example of the BCA efforts in sports diplomacy is the World Cup Sports Initiative in 2006 that aimed to “work at the grassroots level to help young players discover how success in athletics can translate into the development of life skills and academic achievement” by bringing youth ages 13–18 years from 13 countries together.¹²⁴

The success of these programs, in addition to various sports liaisons in embassies, is testimony that the U.S. government acknowledges the impact capability of sports, and the State Department is responsible for the proper execution and maximization of U.S. sports diplomacy.¹²⁵ SportUnited received an in-depth evaluation in 2013, which offered a full decade of data, via surveys, since its establishment in 2002. The key findings of the evaluation claim that “after the program, approximately 80 percent of respondents or more reported ‘moderate’ or ‘extensive’ knowledge of freedom of speech, ethnic diversity, and religious diversity.”¹²⁶ These programs spread American values through small-scale, community-focused, people-to-people interactions; although their immediate impact are not as ubiquitous as mega-events or mass media campaigns can be, the key findings demonstrate that these programs positively impact individuals and improve the American perception abroad.

Similarly, in Europe, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office initiated International Inspiration, a youth program for developing countries to benefit from sports and education. International Inspiration is said to have “exceeded all initial key

¹²³ Bureau of Cultural Affairs (BCA), “Eca Evaluation Division Study of ECA’s SportsUnited Programs Key Findings” (Evaluation Division, December 2013), https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/studyofsportsunited_key_findings.pdf.

¹²⁴ Bureau of Public Affairs, “State Department Hosts Youth from 13 Countries for World Cup Sports Initiative: A Time to Make Friends” (Washington D.C.: Department of State), accessed February 6, 2020, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/67782.htm>.

¹²⁵ Bureau of Cultural Affairs (BCA), “Eca Evaluation Division Study of ECA’s SportsUnited Programs Key Findings.”

¹²⁶ Bureau of Cultural Affairs (BCA).

performance indicators... in over 25 million children and young people were enriched; 55 national policies, strategies and legislative changes were influenced and over 250,000 practitioners (teachers, coaches and leaders) trained in over 21 countries.”¹²⁷

International Inspiration has avoided the use of “high profile politicians and professional sports people preferring amateurs such as teachers, coaches and children.”¹²⁸

Previously, sports envoys were celebrity athletes who Murray describes as “a pool of unconventional diplomats at their [the state’s] disposal who already represent their country.”¹²⁹ World renowned sportspeople were the critical ingredient to sports in international relations until the programs changed their purpose into the modern style of public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy which ensure a two-way dialogue; a non-famous sports envoy is sent to teach and listen, whereas a famous one is sent to showcase. The change demonstrates a shift in purpose and method of appeal: The purposes is for relationship building through slow and recurring engagements and the method is to appeal to the target country in a cultural-diplomacy sense, with sports as the medium.

Another example of modern sports diplomacy in action is the United Nations Sports for Development and Peace (SDP). As a leading intergovernmental organization tasked with maintaining international peace and security, the 2003 SPD program was designated a “low-cost, high impact tool” and the UN claim the programs are successfully “promot [ing] education, health, development and peace.”¹³⁰ Today, the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs joined the United Nation’s (UN) initiative through the implementation of *SportsUnited* which Esherick et

¹²⁷ Ecorys, “Final Evaluation of the International Inspiration Programme” (British Council, June 2014), https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/ecorys_international_inspiration_final_review_2014_1.pdf.

¹²⁸ Murray, “Sports Diplomacy,” 2016.

¹²⁹ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 103.

¹³⁰ Ingrid Beutler, “Sport Serving Development and Peace: Achieving the Goals of the United Nations through Sport,” *Sport in Society* 11, no. 4 (July 1, 2008): 359, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430430802019227>; “Final Report: International Year of Sport and Physical Education” (United Nations, 2005), 1, <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/document/manuals-and-tools/international-year-sport-and-physical-education-2005-final-report>.

al. cite have brought together “tens of thousands of people from more than 100 countries” through their visitors, envoy, grants, and global mentoring programs.¹³¹ In 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that “our sports exchanges are the most popular exchanges we do. When I go to other countries and we talk about what kind of exchanges that people are looking for, very often a leader will say, how about a sports exchange?”¹³² These exchanges are in high demand, and once the opportunities to “achieve much with little” is recognized in other countries of such programs will possibly grow to other nations.¹³³ In an era of globalization and interconnectedness, international relations thrive on these new and innovative methods of building partnerships through sports.

¹³¹“Sports Diplomacy | Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs”; Esherick et al., *Case Studies in Sport Diplomacy*, 24–26.

¹³² Hillary Clinton, “Remarks on the Launching of the Women’s World Cup Initiative,” U.S. Department of State, June 6, 2011, //2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/06/165054.htm.

¹³³ Australian Government, “Australian Sports Diplomacy Strategy 2015-18,” Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, accessed August 14, 2019, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australian-sports-diplomacy-strategy-2015-18.aspx>.

III. MILITARY SPORTS

Much of historical and modern literature is centered on politics, war, art, and sports because these features breed a nation-specific culture, which often facilitate nationalism. Organized physical activities in the early 19th century often tripled as leisure and educational activities, and thereby befitted a socially acceptable method to militarize a society, or rather, prepare a nation for war. This chapter further demonstrates the bridge—and evolution—between sports and war as it acts as both “civil and violent, spiritual and devilish, and diplomatic and warlike, all at the same time,” in the words of Murray.¹³⁴

A. THE DEFINITION OF MILITARY SPORTS DIPLOMACY

Considering civilian sports diplomacy and the history of military sports, this thesis defines military sports diplomacy (MSD) as an organized or impromptu sporting activity between service members of a country’s armed forces, or defense forces, to enhance international military relations through sports, which should simultaneously improve unit cohesion and/or individual service member physical readiness, and thereby strengthen the armed forces as a whole.

In any military sport event, military-athletes are the actors, sport is the medium, and governments are stakeholders and facilitators. The practice of intersecting military athletes, sports, and diplomacy is becoming increasingly common and different than civilian sports diplomacy, therefore warrants an increased academic assessment. Although it could be said that military sport events are merely a form of sports diplomacy with athletes who happen to be in the military, this section demonstrates how the impact of a high-level *military* sport event, or spectacle, has potential for a vastly different and decisive outcome than common sport events. As in traditional or modern types of diplomacy, which became more complex with the increase in actors and the acceptance

¹³⁴ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 44.

of non-state actors as players in international relations, the diverse actors must act in-line with positive relations at the core of the event to qualify to qualify as MSD.

The definition of MSD addresses is densely meaningful. The component parts of the definition warrant closer examination on their own terms:

1. “An organized or impromptu sporting activity”:

MSD can range from the traditional sports diplomacy style of sports mega-events such as the CISM MWG to impromptu competitions between small units. As previously mentioned, an organized military sport is defined as “any sporting activity or set of sports activities of the Armed Forces of a country, under the central control, supervision and coordination of a multidisciplinary authority, both at the organizational and at the executive level.”¹³⁵ Considering CISM and its role in organized military sports, covered later in this chapter, and China’s sports strategy, covered in Chapter IV, it is rational to deem organized military sports a form of MSD, if and only if, the event and its objectives meet the other criteria set forth in this definition.

Impromptu sports events will typically be smaller and have fewer demands on an organization because these ad hoc events will usually be in conjunction with a multi-national military exercise. An impromptu event complement modern sports diplomacy in that the event’s main purpose is one of uniting people and improving relations. Murray states that modern sports diplomacy is “the conscious, strategic and regular use of sport, sportspeople, sporting events ... in order to create collaborative, long term and mutually beneficial partnerships which, ideally, maximize people-to-people links.”¹³⁶ For the U.S. military, multi-national military training evolutions and exercises are paramount to building foreign relations and “honing the skills of those carrying out the” mission.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Athinodoros I. Moschopoulos, “The Establishment of the C.I.S.M. and the Early Contribution of the Hellenic Armed Forces for ‘Friendship through Sport,’” ed. Christodoulos Faniopoulos and Evangelos Albanidis, *Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of the European Committee for Sports History (CESH)*, 2015, 223.

¹³⁶ Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 94.

¹³⁷ Commander, Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet, “Training and Exercise Initiative” (Department of the Navy, n.d.), <https://www.public.navy.mil/surfor/Pages/TrainingExerciseEvents.aspx>.

Surrounding formal multi-national exercises, it is common practice for the host country to organize time and space to execute non-military sports competitions between guest and host nations. As a sailor recognized during the 2018 RIMPAC basketball finals, which the article describes as “an international sports competition to build relationships with fellow RIMPAC participants,” he states: “It’s great we get to experience working with foreign navies [and] build upon our relationships through sports.”¹³⁸ The impromptu events bring in a welcomed piece of leisure and fun into the arduous aspects of the military exercise.

2. “Members of a country’s armed forces”:

Military sports diplomacy must be a sporting engagement between service members who are actively serving, or on reserve to serve, in their respective armed forces. These members of the armed forces who have sworn to defend their country with their life if necessary. MSD, as defined, has the potential to play a small role in sculpting a country’s military character and facilitating a positive trend of international relations by strengthening military-to-military relations through people-to-people interactions.

Although the facilitator may be a form of non-military government, the onus of igniting MSD falls on the military commanders because they are in the position to weigh the value of time and effort. Questions such as: Will a day dedicated to sports benefit the overall mission of the multi-national exercise over the next ten days be worth it? What is the added value of these interactions? Per modern sports diplomacy and its ability to unite people through the universal language of sports, it is in the service member’s best interest to take the time to strengthen relations through sports because positive relations will enhance the overall exercise due to early interactions between players.

3. “To enhance international military relations through sports”:

The function of international military sports must be to build and strengthen alliances between militaries. This verbiage seeks to separate the dark side of traditional

¹³⁸ Daniel Zink, “USS Preble Wins RIMPAC 2018 Basketball Tournament,” Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS), DVIDS, July 2, 2018, <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/283134/uss-preble-wins-rimpac-2018-basketball-tournament>.

sports diplomacy, where sports mega-events, such as the Olympics, are often misused for nation-branding and ideology spreading; instead, the focus on relations seeks to align the concept of MSD to modern sports diplomacy and cultural diplomacy.

Grassroots style of modern sports diplomacy through programs such as the U.S. State Department's foreign sports exchanges are delivering a new global sports movement that encompasses the peaceful and compassionate aspects of sports. Modern sports diplomacy and MSD are at their beginnings and thus have the confidence and optimism that the movement will retain its original purposes of peace through relations and outreach. Military sports diplomacy is no less apt to fall victim to the dark side; therefore, this segment of the definition is critical to preserve the original intent of relation-building and uphold the positive capabilities it can have on international military relations.

4. "Improving unit cohesion":

The greater purpose behind sports is at the heart of the small unit. As evident throughout European history, sports can prepare society for war without explicitly calling the preparations military training. Sports are credited as military training because many aspects of competitive sports have parallels to the battlefield; thus, sports have been called "an imitation of war."¹³⁹ Actively participating in sports can strengthen units, as a collective, and instill discipline in individual service members.

Improving unit cohesion is important because it offers that MSD should not be tethered to an exclusively international purpose. Rather, there is and must be a degree of buy-in from the individual service member. As Gregory Semenza counters the argument that views "certain sports as microcosms of the military conflict" by quoting Donald G. Kyle: "Seeking the original stimulus for athletics...[m]ilitary considerations may be relevant since many early sports appear related to primitive warfare. One can appreciate the cathartic effect of athletics in providing an outlet for hostility other than death and

¹³⁹ Norman Fischer, "Competitive Sport's Imitation of War: Imaging the Completeness of Virtue," *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport* 29, no. 1 (April 1, 2002): 22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00948705.2002.9714620>.

war.”¹⁴⁰ Training for sports certainly complements training for war and improves readiness by improving internal cohesion through a common goal of training for a sporting event; military sports may subtly also satisfy a need to go to war.

In today’s increasingly militaristic world, the military must be ready to respond to threats and it will be called upon to fight in the country’s wars if diplomacy fails. If countries incorporate every opportunity for cooperation, the military service members are more likely to be able to retire alive, with pride in their country’s defense postures and diplomacy measures. Military sports diplomacy may only be a small slice of the diplomacy pie, but it adds value and therefore is a worthy endeavor.

B. THE HISTORY OF THE SOLIDER-SPORTSMAN

J. A. Mangan, one of the most prolific writers on military sports history, wrote in 1996 that “sport is not a substitute for war, it is a permanent preparation for it.”¹⁴¹ But preparation for war is only half of the story; the other half is evident through nationalism and national identity because these national values bring nations to war. The connection between sports, war, and nationalism shaped England, France, and Germany in the century preceding the Great War.

In Mangan’s assessment of the military influence in English education before the turn of the 19th century, he determined that “militarism and imperialism [through] sport [was] the pre-eminent instrument of the socialization process.”¹⁴² Military drill and physical exercises were integrated into grade school curriculum for disciplinary purposes, to heighten patriotism, but most importantly, to enhance military recruitment in a preemptive counter to the mounting German threat.¹⁴³ The incorporation of military drill

¹⁴⁰ Gregory Semenza, *Sport, Politics, and Literature in the English Renaissance* (University of Delaware Press, 2003), 67.

¹⁴¹ Mangan, *Tribal Identities*, 5.

¹⁴² Mangan, 2; Murray, *Sports Diplomacy*, 2018, 50.

¹⁴³ J. A. Mangan and Frank Galligan, “Militarism, Drill and Elementary Education: Birmingham Nonconformist Responses to Conformist Responses to the Teutonic Threat Prior to the Great War,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 3–4 (March 1, 2011): 581, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2011.546946>.

into schools was met with heated civilian disagreement and intense reluctance to integrate children into a national defense strategy.¹⁴⁴ Despite controversy, military drill was viewed as a critical “aid to national defense” by preparing “the common people... from an early age for an orderly and compliant role in society, and be ready to participate in the defense of that society as occasion might demand,” therefore, a necessity.¹⁴⁵ The incorporation of military drill into physical education for all of the British children from 1870–1916 was undoubtedly beneficial to the mobilization of soldiers during WWI.¹⁴⁶ Eugen Weber embellished Mangan’s assertion on drill by questioning the purpose of the English training compared to German school training during the same period. Weber offers that English games “stress [ed] character over discipline [and] team over individual,” whereas the German “turned to service of the nation and the state.”¹⁴⁷

The rise of organized sports in Prussia can be linked to the Battle of Jena in 1806 where Napoleon’s French Army defeated the Prussian Army which ultimately led to the French occupation as well as “social, political, and military reforms” in Prussia.¹⁴⁸ It was in these years of reform that the Prussian military found its place in society which can be in part attributed to Friedrich Ludwig Jahn’s Turnkunst (“art of gymnastics”). Jahn advocated that his Turnkunst should be used for military training if the Prussians desired to reverse the string of defeats and end foreign occupation, “and in due course, forge Germany unity.”¹⁴⁹ Jahn’s creation of the Turnverein (“Gymnastics Club”), in addition to other nationalist fraternization, provided “something that would [both] physically prepare young German men for battle as well as strengthen the spirit and restore dignity to the German people.” Despite a Prussian (and allied) victory at the Battle of Leipzig,

¹⁴⁴ Mangan and Galligan, 573.

¹⁴⁵ Mangan, *Militarism, Sport, Europe: War Without Weapons*, 5:78.

¹⁴⁶ Mangan, 5:78.

¹⁴⁷ Eugen Weber, “Gymnastics and Sports in Fin-de-Siècle France: Opium of the Classes?,” *The American Historical Review* 76, no. 1 (1971): 71, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1869777>.

¹⁴⁸ Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army: 1640-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 37, <https://global.oup.com/ushe/product/the-politics-of-the-prussian-army-1640-1945-9780195002577?cc=us&lang=en&>.

¹⁴⁹ Weber, “Gymnastics and Sports in Fin-de-Siècle France,” 70.

which ended French domination in Europe, Jahn's vision of a united Germany was suppressed and he was sent to jail for his advocacy of Völkische Bewegung ("People's Movement"). Jahn's vision of a united Germany is one that would live on and eventually inspire the "blood and soil" slogan of the Nazi party. Jahn's gymnastics movement also lived on to instill physical and mental discipline in the formidable Prussian army.

Similar to Germany, albeit later, France also used organized physical activity and competitive sports for "explicitly patriotic purposes" and "national revivification."¹⁵⁰ After the defeat of Napoleon's Army in 1814, the French were intrigued by the Prussian's swift modernization methods and adopted Jahn's Gymnastics. Organized gymnastics became a critical piece of French military training and the foundation of the French Joinville education system which is home to top military and non-military nationally sponsored athletes today.¹⁵¹ The Club Alpin Français (French Alpine Club), established in 1874, was cited by Eugen Weber as "'a school of physical energy and moral vigor,' training French youth to be 'more virile, more apt to bear military life, more prepared to face a long, conflict without discouragement,'" as well as "excellent guides for our armies might be recruited in its ranks."¹⁵² Thereby it is evident that the defense of the nation close to the social mission of community leisure clubs.

To complement the defense of the nation, the Tour de France, established in 1903, was labeled an "ideological tool" by Richard Holt, and functioned to evoke nationalism in all French citizens by "teach [ing] the French public about the riches of their own nation."¹⁵³ Holt depicts how the tour was designed to express "the unity of France as conceived by its conservative backers who were staking their claim to ownership of the

¹⁵⁰ Mangan, *Tribal Identities*, 40, 72.

¹⁵¹ Jean Saint-Martin and Michaël Attali, "The Joinville School and the Institutionalization of a French-Style Physical Education, 1852–1939," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no. 6 (April 13, 2015): 740–53, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2015.1037292>; "Le Bataillon de Joinville | CNSD," accessed April 22, 2020, <http://www.sports.defense.gouv.fr/content/le-bataillon-de-joinville>.

¹⁵² Weber, "Gymnastics and Sports in Fin-de-Siècle France," 72.

¹⁵³ Richard Holt, "Contrasting Nationalisms: Sport, Militarism and the Unitary State in Britain and France before 1914," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 12, no. 2 (August 1995): 42, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523369508713894>.

national idea.”¹⁵⁴ The Tour strategically passed, and still passes, through many provinces and regions of France which generated income through commercialization and entertainment through the media hype. Although the race has always finished in Paris, the final stage’s finish line was eventually set at the emblematic Arc de Triomphe. As Chris Sidwell describes, the finish is “a perfect combination of stone and garden, it’s where an invading army paraded and a liberating one brought hope.”¹⁵⁵

These examples demonstrate that sport, through organized physical activities, must be included in the underlining factors that shaped European history and led to World War I.

C. INTERNATIONAL MILITARY SPORTS COUNCIL (CISM)

The modern relationship between soldiering and athletics became institutionalized with the founding of CISM in 1948. Organized military sports is defined as “any sporting activity or set of sports activities of the Armed Forces of a country, under the central control, supervision and coordination of a multidisciplinary authority, both at the organizational and at the executive level.”¹⁵⁶ Although sports are considered a complimentary training method to produce quality soldiers and capable commanders, CISM as an institution strives to unite the military athletes of the world through sports. CISM almost represents an overlap of the traditional sports diplomacy mega-event and the modern sports diplomacy person-to-person interaction. Nevertheless, like the IOC, CISM also had to first achieve sufficient international recognition before it could truly find its place in the world with its enduring mission of “friendship through sport.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Holt, 43.

¹⁵⁵ Chris Sidwells, “Icons of Cycling: The Champs-Élysées,” *Cycling Weekly*, July 29, 2018, <https://www.cyclingweekly.com/news/racing/tour-de-france/icons-of-cycling-the-champs-elysees-169930>.

¹⁵⁶ Athinodoros I. Moschopoulos, “Olympic Games and C.I.S.M. Villages: The Outreach of the International Military Sports Council in the Olympic Games,” ed. Christodoulos Faniopoulos and Evangelos Albanidis (Democritus University of Thrace, Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, Thessaloniki, Greece, October 2014), 223.

¹⁵⁷ “International Military Sports Council, Friendship through Sport!”

1. Organized Military Sports Before CISM

Before CISM, there were a series of organized military games, all of whom paved the way for CISM today. It all started in 1919 in Paris with the Inter-Allied Games, which planted the seed for international military sports. Although the American General John J. Pershing is the most common name associated with the Inter-Allied Games, Elwood Brown deserves a lot of credit for the event. He was the YMCA athletic director who, in the preceding decade, established the first Far Easter Games in 1913 in the Philippines—which was a precursor to the Asian Games that continue to occur every four years—and then transferred to France as a result of his request for war service.¹⁵⁸ Thanks to the thorough documentation by the U.S. Army-led Games Committee in 1919, the origins, results, and other details of the Inter-Allied Games were captured and provide insight to the mission of the Games as envisioned by Elwood Brown:

But his underlying aims far outran the mere encouragement of athletics in their most natural field, among the young men of the forces of his own country. In the armies of the Allies, struggling in varied and widely separated fields all over Europe, Mr. Brown saw multitudes of men bound together by strong ties of sympathy in the common ideals for which they were fighting, yet often knowing each other not at all. He believed that, after the triumph of the cause for which they all were striving, as many of these men as possible should be brought together in order that they might know each other face to face and thus lay the foundations for those enduring friendships which can come only from personal contact and which, in this case, were of such fundamental importance to the future welfare of the world. In what manner could they be brought together which would be most revealing, most harmonizing, most natural? The answer was obvious: by bringing them together as athletes.¹⁵⁹

Brown's recognition of both the power of sport and the importance of occupying allied troops before their return home resulted in four recommendation for a "proposed athletic program for demobilization period" to the American Expeditionary Forces General staff, of which the "inter-allied athletic contests—open only to soldiers of the Allied Armies—a great set of military Olympic Games" option was swiftly acted upon. In

¹⁵⁸ Daniel Bell, *Encyclopedia of International Games*, Reprint edition (Mcfarland, 2011).

¹⁵⁹ George Wythe, *The Inter-Allied Games, Paris, 22nd June to 6th July, 1919*, ed. Joseph Mills Hanson (Paris, 1919), 14, <http://archive.org/details/cu31924014114353>.

January 1919, General Pershing sent 29 invitations to allied nations, 18 of which participated, and convinced the French to construct a new stadium, although financed by the U.S., and named it Pershing Stadium.¹⁶⁰ The event was a success in that the concept of Allied athletic military events was organized, and the concept of inter-military games was born, despite the lack of an immediate repeat.¹⁶¹

After WWII, the second inter-allied Military Games were held in Berlin, but the competition was limited to track and field and football.¹⁶² As a result, the allied leaders, who were mostly in roles of occupying Germany, formed the Allied Forces Sports Council (AFSC).¹⁶³ The purpose of the AFSC was to “cement further inter-allied relations and to concave, formulate, and to put into efficient operation plans and rules which would encourage, regulate and control contests or any large tournaments between the Allied Forces.”¹⁶⁴ Unfortunately, the council only lasted a few years due to politics and finances and only organized 11 small-scale and poorly documented competitions during its time in existence. From 1946 to 1948, 11 competitions were organized by this inter allied sports council: Two track & field competitions in 1946 and 1947, two swim meets in 1946 and 1947, two fencing tournaments in 1947 and 1948, two football matches in 1946 and 1947, one cross country race in 1947, and one military pentathlon in 1947.¹⁶⁵ The Soviet Union and the United States were the primary culprits of demission, but also smaller soviet influenced states “following [the] Cold War policies of their

¹⁶⁰ Bill Mallon, “The 1919 Inter-Allied Games,” *OlympStats* (blog), November 10, 2018, <https://olympstats.com/2018/11/10/the-1919-inter-allied-games/>; Wythe, *The Inter-Allied Games, Paris, 22nd June to 6th July, 1919*, 14.

¹⁶¹ Wythe, *The Inter-Allied Games, Paris, 22nd June to 6th July, 1919*, 14.

¹⁶² Moschopoulos, “The Establishment of the C.I.S.M. and the Early Contribution of the Hellenic Armed Forces for ‘Friendship through Sport,’” 223.

¹⁶³ Moschopoulos, 221.

¹⁶⁴ “History of International Military Sports Council,” International Military Sports Council (CISM), accessed January 24, 2020, <https://www.milsport.one/cism/cism-history>.

¹⁶⁵ Moschopoulos, “Olympic Games and C.I.S.M. Villages: The Outreach of the International Military Sports Council in the Olympic Games,” 4.

respective [Soviet-influenced] governments.”¹⁶⁶ Fortunately, soon after the AFSC was disbanded in late 1947, CISM was founded in 1948.

2. Early CISM

CISM, which stands for “Conseil International du Sport Militaire,” and translated as “International Military Sports Council,” was born in 1948 under five founding nations: France, Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. All of whom shared a global vision for CISM to “operate as a medium for the Armies of the World to establish friendly contacts among them in the sporting fields.”¹⁶⁷ CISM founders used the lessons learned from the failed AFSC and implemented an improved process and direction for CISM. The founders decided “the main target of the Council was to ‘advance,’ and thus established four primary objectives: (a) to increase the numbers of the member-nations, (b) to ensure the success of the international military sport events, (c) to manage the current financial difficulties by organizing profitable athletic competitions and, (d) promoting them through the press.”¹⁶⁸ The greatest hurdle was the financial burden, which could only be overcome by hosting events that attract the militaries of the world. Subsequently, the CISM doctrine and slogan was formulated: “Friendship through Sport.”¹⁶⁹

In an attempt to overcome the financial hurdle and “advance,” which can be viewed as achieving international recognition as a global institution, CISM found its place by not only organizing military sporting events but also provided military sports scientists a place for collaborating and publishing, which in turn bolstered CISM’s reputation and legitimacy as an international platform.

The most critical distinguishing factor between AFSC and CISM was that the AFSC limited participation to “allied only countries,” whereas CISM practiced all-

¹⁶⁶ Moschopoulos, 4.

¹⁶⁷ Moschopoulos, “The Establishment of the C.I.S.M. and the Early Contribution of the Hellenic Armed Forces for ‘Friendship through Sport,’” 20.

¹⁶⁸ Moschopoulos, 222–23.

¹⁶⁹ Moschopoulos, 223.

inclusivity. CISM was the first military institution to allow membership despite political alliances, which Greek Major Moschopoulos, a leading CISM researcher and armor officer, exclaims is proof “that [military] sports are beyond political guidelines;” rarely do foreign military service members with estranged relations meet in peaceful settings.¹⁷⁰ The global perspective of a military institution that allows enemies to use sports as a medium to cooperate on a field certainly is attractive to any diplomat who is navigating state bureaucracy. Although a football game may *only* be a spectacle on the field, the official event may be followed by an interaction between military service members in the locker room, or at a pub, that will facilitate a level of international military understanding, hence, “friendship through sport”—or so it may have been envisioned by the founders of CISM.

3. Modern CISM

The mere fact that CISM, as an international sports institution, has endured modern history’s global conflicts is a testament to the resiliency, demand, and strength of military athletics. Not only did it endure, it strengthened and grew. From 1948–1994, CISM was responsible for organizing numerous military sports championships for a growing number of sports. Then, first MWG were held in Rome in 1995, a debut event with 93 participating nations and 17 different sporting events.¹⁷¹ Since 1995 the MWG have been held every four years and has grown in participation and as a publicity attraction with every iteration. It appears the desired outcome was met, as the official CISM history section states, “all participants and institutions recognized that CISM and the Armed Forces are important players in the Sport for Peace Movement, and agreed that partnerships are the most relevant learned lesson that can concretely foster the use of sport as a development tool in conflict areas.”¹⁷² The U.S. Armed Forces Sports Program 2020 information paper echoed CISM’s desired outcome of the games: “The ultimate goal of CISM is to contribute to world peace by uniting Armed Forces through sports as

¹⁷⁰ Moschopoulos, 225.

¹⁷¹ “History of International Military Sports Council.”

¹⁷² “History of International Military Sports Council.”

well as promote solidarity and technical assistance within nations.” CISM’s continued organization of military medicine seminars, military cadet competition, and MWG demonstrates that CISM strives to meet these long-term goals set forth by its founders.

4. The Military-Sportsman

It is evident through sporting event results and personal discussions with athletes, coaches, and Chief of Delegations during the 2019 MWG that there are an increasing number of athletes at CISM who are not affiliated with the military; most countries employ professional athletes and their national teams, some even hire foreign athletes to compete in CISM events.¹⁷³ Some countries employ professional athletes under the a military/government funding umbrella and can therefore consider these athletes militarily employed, despite a dearth of military experience and full-time athletic employment, i.e., German “Spitzensport/Sportfördergruppen der Bundeswehr,” French “Bataillon de Joinville,” or the United States “World Class Athlete Program.”¹⁷⁴ In these cases, the service members legitimately hold the requisite military identification card and uniform to participate according to CISM standards.

The uneven qualification standards form a gray zone that deviates from the original intention to connect soldiers with soldiers. The 1998 CISM member statement was adjusted and emphasized the soldier component to CISM competitions: “Soldiers, who may previously have met on the battlefield, now meet in friendship on the sports playing field.”¹⁷⁵ The inclusion of the professional athlete could pose a threat to CISM’s continued influence because it inevitably means an exclusion of the military-athlete.

¹⁷³ Steve Dinote, “Email from Chief of U.S. CISM Delegation,” April 16, 2020.

¹⁷⁴ “Spitzensport: Der Sportförderer Bundeswehr,” Bundeswehr, accessed April 22, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/ueber-die-bundeswehr/sport-in-der-bundeswehr/spitzensport-der-sportfoerderer-bundeswehr>; “Le Bataillon de Joinville | CNSD”; Army Moral Welfare and Recreation Programs, “World Class Athlete Program (WCAP),” World Class Athlete Program, accessed April 22, 2020, <https://www.armymwr.com/programs-and-services/world-class-athlete-program>.

¹⁷⁵ “History of International Military Sports Council.”

5. U.S. Involvement in CISM

Stephan Dinote, the U.S. Armed Forces Sports Secretariat and U.S. CISM Chief of Delegation at the MWG in China, spoke on the topic of U.S. Armed Forces Sports consistent participation in CISM since 1951 to the present day. In 2013, Dinote facilitated the Strategic Plan update and it was unanimously approved by the General Assembly, however, the plan never came into fruition due to ever-changing rotation of Board of Director members and a change in CISM Headquarters leadership at the time.¹⁷⁶ Currently there is a U.S. service member on the Board of Directors, two presidents of CISM Sports Committees, and seven members of Sports Committees.¹⁷⁷ Additionally, Dinote sits on the CISM Sports Commission and Para-Sport advisory board. U.S. Armed Forces Sports host one CISM Championship each year—only Brazil hosts more championships on average within the last ten years.¹⁷⁸

In amateur military sports, the U.S. Department of Defense Armed Forces Sports program is instructed, per U.S. Department of Defense Instruction 1330.04, to represent “CISM activities and in civilian national and international amateur sports competitions.”¹⁷⁹ In 2019, the Armed Forces Sports program facilitated 263 U.S. athletes to compete in in Wuhan, China for the 7th Military World Games.¹⁸⁰ Interestingly, and quite contrarily to the Olympics, the military Team U.S.A. rarely made it to the podium and finished middle of the pack in overall medal count—Military Team U.S.A. finished 35th out of 109 nations in the medal count at the MWG in China. These poor standings are a source of frustration for U.S. athletes and reflect a greater issue within CISM and the regulation of athletes who meet the definition of amateur and military. However, the U.S. Armed Forces also competes full-time military athletes through the World Class

¹⁷⁶ Dinote, “Email from Chief of U.S. CISM Delegation,” April 16, 2020.

¹⁷⁷ “United States of America (USA),” International Military Sports Council (CISM), accessed April 22, 2020, <https://www.milsport.one/cism/members-nations/america/united-states-of-america-usa>.

¹⁷⁸ “United States of America (USA).”

¹⁷⁹ Department of Defense Instructions, “Armed Forces Participation in National and International Sports Activities, DoDI 1330.04,” August 31, 2010, <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/133004p.pdf>.

¹⁸⁰ Dinote, “Email from Chief of U.S. CISM Delegation,” April 16, 2020.

Athlete Program; these athletes can be considered professionals as they are paid to meet Olympic standards and compete at the Olympics.

In sum, military sports seem to have distanced themselves, at least for the most part, from the nationalist aspect of the 19th century and instead taken organized military sports into a more collaborative and peaceful direction. The movement is geared to follow and embrace military sports diplomacy, which will benefit international relations and the perseverance of the liberal world order.

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IV. MILITARY SPORT EVENTS AND NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Russia and China are increasingly doubling non-traditional military sports platforms to support such peaceful national policy goals as international cooperation, but also to provoke international military intimidation. The following examples demonstrate how China and Russia weaponize military sports events to advance national policy and how these examples are contradictory to CISM's vision of military sports and the modern sports diplomacy movement.

A. RUSSIA AND THE INTERNATIONAL ARMY GAMES

The Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu grew a military tank competition into an internationally attended military-skill competition among 30 nations: The International Army Games—Army Games for short. Mark Galeotti, who attended the 4th International Army Games in 2018, stated in a *Foreign Policy* article that “Russia’s successful blending of sport, warfare, soft power, and spectacle is a high-octane form of public entertainment. But it also shows how the Kremlin sees its military force as its Swiss army knife, a tool for all occasions.”¹⁸¹ Moscow funds this international military spectacle, the Army Games, because it complements some of Vladimir Putin’s national objectives: to bridge the civilian-military gap in society, to win arms sale deals, and invoke international intimidation directed at the West.

1. The Event and its Objectives

Since 2015, the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) hosted the International Army Games, where armed forces units compete in 28 military events to include: tank biathlon, sniper competitions, field kitchen cook-off, Suvorov’s attack (an obstacle course for tanks), reconnaissance course, seaborne assault, artillery firing, Aviadarts

¹⁸¹ Mark Galeotti, “The International Army Games Are Decadent and Depraved,” *Foreign Policy* (blog), accessed April 15, 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/24/the-international-army-games-are-decadent-and-depraved/>; “Live Action World of Tanks: The Best Moments of Army Games 2018 - Sputnik International,” accessed April 15, 2020, <https://sputniknews.com/videoclub/201808051066968474-army-games-2018/>.

(precision flying of yak-130), K-9 races, medical race relay, maintenance competition, diver competition, and drone hunt.¹⁸² Although these games do not categorize neatly as a sports competition, the competition atmosphere has all the trappings of a civilian sport mega-event. As an Israeli Lieutenant-Colonel stated: “We don’t show our strength, we show our level of combat training, not only Russia but all the countries taking part in the Army Games. The teams are simply happy to assign their tasks and represent their countries. There is no military subtext — only sport.”¹⁸³

The participation has increased from 17 countries in 2015 to 30 in 2019, all of which have military ties to Russia. For example, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela are the only participating countries from the Americas, and all three have increased military relations with Russia in recent years.¹⁸⁴ The majority of the participating countries are in Asia and Africa, with active bilateral military relations with Russia.

In January 2020, the Defense Post reported that “Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu invited ‘troops from 90 countries including NATO members,’” to participate in the Army Games in 2020.¹⁸⁵ By hosting these games and inviting NATO countries, the Russian MoD demonstrates that Russia is expanding its international alliances and proves to

¹⁸² “Closing Ceremony of the International Army Games 2018 to Take Place in Alabino,” Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, October 8, 2018, https://eng.mil.ru/en/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12190521@egNews; “Suvorov Onslaught,” Russian Military, accessed March 21, 2020, <http://mil.ru/files/files/armygames/natisk-en.html>; Damien Sharkov, “What Are Russia’s International Army Games?,” Newsweek, July 28, 2018, <https://www.newsweek.com/what-are-international-army-games-russia-china-iran-and-others-kick-combat-1045765>.

¹⁸³ Keith Walker and Lucy Taylor, “Russia Holds Fourth Annual Military Olympics: International Army Games,” Deutsche Welle, October 8, 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/russia-holds-fourth-annual-military-olympics-international-army-games/a-45030813>.

¹⁸⁴ Dimitri Simes, “Putin Is Resurrecting Russia’s Cold War Pact with Cuba,” *The Spectator*, February 6, 2020, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/putin-is-resurrecting-russia-s-cold-war-pact-with-cuba>; “An Assessment of Russia’s Military Presence in Latin America,” Foreign Policy Research Institute, June 18, 2019, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2019/06/an-assessment-of-russias-military-presence-in-latin-america/>; “Participants of the International Army Games 2020 Discuss the Procedure for Carrying Out Competitions,” Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, December 12, 2019, https://eng.mil.ru/en/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12266531@egNews..

¹⁸⁵ Staff Writer, “Russia Invites NATO Members to International Army Games Exercise,” *The Defense Post* (blog), January 27, 2020, <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2020/01/27/russia-nato-international-army-games-exercise/>.

NATO that Russia is “not internationally isolated.”¹⁸⁶ Although Greece participated in 2018 as the first and only NATO-member, the rest of NATO members have respectfully declined. A NATO official is quoted justifying the decline: “such invitations are no substitute for proper transparency and confidence-building measures—such as OSCE observation of military exercises—which Russia routinely avoids.”¹⁸⁷

Andrew Roth highlighted how the Army Games are used to showcase Russian military prowess to Russian citizens—so he has dubbed the Games “the War Olympics.”¹⁸⁸ Roth noted that these events are often held in conjunction with other MoD-funded “events and celebrations in Russia to promote the military” as a vehicle to gain public support for the military modernization program—a 22-trillion ruble (\$343 billion) investment—implemented after the deteriorating relations with the West post-Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014.¹⁸⁹ The Army Games also serve as a “military theme park for the entire family.”¹⁹⁰ Galeotti recalls observing “as parents take proud photos of 7-year-olds holding AK-74s almost as tall as they are, girls chase each other around the latest self-propelled howitzers, and courting couples sport his-and-hers camouflage T-shirts and pilotka military caps.”¹⁹¹ Galeotti demonstrates how Moscow molded the Army Games to be a “celebration of military life, values, and hardware” which aim to bridge the gap between society and the military.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁶ Damien Sharkov, “Russia Invited NATO Militaries to Join Tank Olympics, But They ‘Aren’t Ready,’ Says Russian General,” *Newsweek*, July 31, 2020, <https://www.newsweek.com/russia-wanted-nato-showdown-tank-olympics-maybe-they-are-not-ready-says-moscow-644074>; Galeotti, “The International Army Games Are Decadent and Depraved.”

¹⁸⁷ Sharkov, “What Are Russia’s International Army Games?”; Staff Writer, “Russia Invites NATO Members to International Army Games Exercise.”

¹⁸⁸ Andrew Roth, “Russia Holds Its First International Army Games,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/08/08/russia-holds-its-first-international-army-games/>.

¹⁸⁹ Roth.

¹⁹⁰ Galeotti, “The International Army Games Are Decadent and Depraved.”

¹⁹¹ Galeotti.

¹⁹² Galeotti.

Similarly, Galeotti titled the games an “arms fair,” and cited the example of an \$80 million deal (T-72B1 tanks) sealed at the games between the Armed Forces of Nicaragua and the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.¹⁹³ Moreover, this aforementioned arms deal is not the only example of arms deals during or following the Games.¹⁹⁴ The Russian defense ministry not only invests annually in the event execution and coordination, Galeotti’s Foreign Policy report also illustrates that the Russian hosts “fete, schmooze, wine, and dine their guests.”¹⁹⁵

The Army Games are a demonstration of the Russian multi-purposing of a military sport spectacle: international military intimidation, arms deals, and domestic civil-military relations improvements. These Games appear playful and welcoming at first glance, but after a deeper dive the darker reality of the international Army Games becomes readily apparent.

2. Russian Soft Power

Alexander Sergunin et al. determined that the Kremlin adopted methods of soft power that deviate from Nye’s definition, which relies on the ability to attract rather than coerce; instead, Russian soft powers are “instrumentalist, pragmatic, and interest-centric” and are “helpful for achieving foreign policy aims by means of civil society instruments, [and] information technology.”¹⁹⁶ Of particular interest is the use of information technology to coerce eastern European nations into, what Eleonora Tafuro labeled, a “fatal attraction,” which aims to corral nations unwillingly, and often unknowingly, into a

¹⁹³ Tatyana Rusakova, “Russia Supplies 20 Tanks to Nicaragua,” United Press International, May 5, 2016, <https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2016/05/05/Russia-supplies-20-tanks-to-Nicaragua/1021462468867/>.

¹⁹⁴ “Russia and Mali Sign Military Cooperation Agreement,” DefenceWeb: Africa’s Leading Defense Newsportal, June 27, 2019, <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/featured/russia-and-mali-sign-military-cooperation-agreement/>.

¹⁹⁵ Galeotti, “The International Army Games Are Decadent and Depraved.”

¹⁹⁶ Alexander Sergunin and Leonid Karabeshkin, “Understanding Russia’s Soft Power Strategy,” *Politics* 35, no. 3–4 (November 1, 2015): 347–63, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12109>.

power balancing scheme through “Soviet-style propaganda.”¹⁹⁷ She demonstrates that the “Kremlin-driven use of soft power alongside hard power...undermine Russia’s attempts to become a genuine pole of attraction.”¹⁹⁸ In-line with Tafuro’s assessment of the Army Games, NATO member states’ repeatedly but respectfully decline to participate.

Ulises Mejias analyzes Russian soft power in the wake of the ongoing Ukraine-Russian conflict and the intensive use of the Russian disinformation campaign through the internet.¹⁹⁹ The Russian use of coercion is particularly unsettling because “citizens themselves actively participate in their own disenfranchisement by using social media to generate, consume or distribute false information, contributing to a new order where disinformation acquires increasing authority.”²⁰⁰ The line between soft power and the fake-news/propaganda campaigns is gray in the case of Russia and the old eastern bloc.²⁰¹

There, Russia has put a hard-power edge on sports recently. Russian modern sports history is riddled in controversy and scandals, from the Cold-War doping scandals through the 2016 Rio Olympics All-Russia Athletic Federation ban. Specific examples include when Russia blatantly disregarded the Olympic truce during the 2008 Beijing Olympics: Russian troops invaded South Ossetia, a breakaway province of Georgia, only three days before the opening ceremony. Or in 2014, when Russian troops invaded Crimea immediately after the completion of the Sochi Winter Games. As such, the

¹⁹⁷ Eleonora Tafuro, “Fatal Attraction? Russia’s Soft Power in Its Neighbourhood,” *Fride - A European Think Tank for Global Action*, no. 184 (May 2014): 5, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/180660/Fatal%20attraction_%20Russia%E2%80%99s%20soft%20power%20in%20its%20neighbourhood.pdf.

¹⁹⁸ Tafuro, 1.

¹⁹⁹ Ulises A Mejias and Nikolai E Vokuev, “Disinformation and the Media: The Case of Russia and Ukraine,” *Media, Culture & Society* 39, no. 7 (October 1, 2017): 1027, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716686672>.

²⁰⁰ Mejias and Vokuev, 1027.

²⁰¹ Whitney Cissell, “Deterrence in the Danger Zone: How the United States Can Deter Russian Gray Zone Conflict” (Monterey, CA, Naval Postgraduate School, 2020).

international community will remain suspicious of a Russian-hosted event.²⁰² These acts display how Russia has repeatedly taken advantage of the IOC and the international community which aim to strengthen the Olympic movement for peace. The secondary effect of these incidences is that the Olympic movement is weakened. In other words, Moscow's penchant for politicizing, if not weaponizing, athletic competition may limit any diplomatic advances at events like the Army Games because one misused event results in a degradation of the entire sports for peace platform.

B. 2019 MILITARY WORLD GAMES IN WUHAN, CHINA

The fervor with which the Chinese Communist Party hosted the 7th CISM Military World Games (MWG) in Wuhan, China, in 2019 demonstrated how sport continues to be used to advance Chinese national objectives. The MWG guaranteed a platform and audience through which to display the modernization of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), as well as their athletic superiority—China won 239 medals, with Russia in second place with 161 medals.²⁰³ This section demonstrates how China's use of military sports took advantage of the CISM platform, through a form of soft power, to further its national policy ambitions.²⁰⁴

Although the President of CISM praised the 2019 MWG as a successful, and even “historic,” CISM-event, the PLA's mission for the MWG did not align with CISM's mission and slogan of “friendship through sport.”²⁰⁵ While CISM strives to provide a neutral playing field for allied and enemy militaries alike, China used the MWG to gain political momentum on its quest to show national power projection through military strength, domestically and internationally. The 2019 MWG was hosted in the strategic

²⁰² Robert W. Orttung and Sufian N. Zhemukhov, *Putin's Olympics: The Sochi Games and the Evolution of Twenty-First Century Russia* (Taylor & Francis, 2017).

²⁰³ “Wuhan 2019 7th Cism Military World Games Bids Adieu in Style,” International Military Sports Council (CISM), www.milспорт.one, accessed May 6, 2020, <https://www.milспорт.one/news/news-post/102019-october-2019/wuhan-2019-7th-cism-military-world-games-bids-adieu-in-style>.

²⁰⁴ Note: I had the opportunity to attend the 7th MWG as the Team USA Captain for the Triathlon team. The following section highlights my experiences and observations on this trip.

²⁰⁵ Futian Shi, “CISM President Praises 7th Military World Games as ‘Historic,’” China Daily, October 27, 2019, <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201910/27/WS5db53480a310cf3e35573cf0.html>.

pursuit of Xi Jinping's 'Chinese Dream' because the organized military sports platform guaranteed an international and domestic spotlight on the PLA's athletic prowess and ceremonial grace—both keys to military power projection.

1. 7th MWG Assessment

According to Eleanor Albert, who covered the 2019 MWG for The Diplomat's Asia-Pacific section, "sports diplomacy seems to have become a preferred tool of China in its pursuit of improving its global standing and public diplomacy, although its success is not guaranteed."²⁰⁶ However, she recognizes that "these large-scale events are not purely rooted in building confidence and promoting friendship and peace, despite the public discourse" and that the host nation is opening itself up for scrutiny by hosting an internationally attended mega-sports event.²⁰⁷ For example, although the 5G technology provided unprecedented viewing of the events, it was an opportunistic platform to showcase the advanced 5G infrastructure as the politics surrounding the China-based technology become increasingly controversial.²⁰⁸

The more significant incidence is the Chinese Orienteering team's cheating scandal. The Chinese team swept the field in the orienteering competition—Chinese females finished first, second, and fourth place, and a Chinese male second—which evoked suspicion within multiple national team captains and resulted in the filing of a joint protest charging an "unfair advantage."²⁰⁹ The follow-on investigation determined that "the Chinese runners had received illegal assistance from spectators as well as 'markings and small paths prepared for them and which only they were aware of,' reported the International Orienteering Federation," which led to the disqualification of the Chinese orienteering team.²¹⁰ This incident quickly became global news, even

²⁰⁶ Eleanor Albert, "China and the Military World Games," The Diplomat, November 4, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/11/china-and-the-military-world-games/>.

²⁰⁷ Albert.

²⁰⁸ Albert.

²⁰⁹ Keoni Everington, "Chinese Orienteering Team Disqualified for Ch...," *Taiwan News*, October 23, 2019, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3801701>.

²¹⁰ Everington.

Taiwanese news, but not Wuhan or Chinese news, which is likely a result of the CCP's tight control on domestic media outlets and internet censorship.

Upon arrival to the games, the national delegations of athletes were greeted by a clean, and impressively LED lit-up city, but surrounding the athlete village, and most of the competition sites, the streets and apartment buildings were empty—it did not feel like a city with a population of 10 million.²¹¹ The roads surrounding athlete village and the routes used to transport athletes and spectators to competitions were mostly empty, lightly trafficked, or completely blocked off. In an article written by a human rights journalist column, Xiao Baiming covers the human rights violations that occurred to support the infrastructure and city beautification project.²¹² He cites that factory owners were ordered by the government to shut down production to ensure clean air quality for the Games which resulted in months of lost of profits and buildings with windows facing the stadium were “evacuated and their windows sealed” to prevent any display of poverty within potential eyesight of a foreigner.²¹³ In another article by Bitter Winter, Cai Congxin documents how the city of Wuhan forced families to give up their farming land, without compensation, in support of the new underground railway to support transportation to the Athlete's village site.²¹⁴ She notes that other parts of the city were concealed with three-meter high walls because they did not meet the “vanity project's” standards.²¹⁵

Among participants, it was common to joke that the event felt like Disneyland—newly constructed athlete village, beautiful gardens, excessive amounts of helpers (who were students from the city's colleges and were all impressively friendly and helpful),

²¹¹ “Population of Cities in China (2020),” World Population Review, accessed May 4, 2020, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/china-population/cities/>.

²¹² Xiao Baiming, “The Human Price of Wuhan's Military World Games,” Bitter Winter: A Magazine on Religious Liberty and Human Rights in China, February 5, 2020, <https://bitterwinter.org/the-human-price-of-wuhans-military-world-games/>.

²¹³ Baiming; Cai Congxin, “Building China's Image on the Ruins of Citizens' Wellbeing,” Bitter Winter: A Magazine on Religious Liberty and Human Rights in China, August 29, 2019, <https://bitterwinter.org/building-chinas-image-on-the-ruins-of-citizens-wellbeing/>.

²¹⁴ Congxin, “Building China's Image on the Ruins of Citizens' Wellbeing.”

²¹⁵ Congxin.

pro-active logistics, many non-sports activities in Athlete village, freedom to explore Wuhan, excellent food, dedicated English-speaking Chinese assistants for every high-ranking officer, and smiles with a happy 你好 (Ni Hao?=How are you?) greeting from every security entrance and exit point. The flowery façade held strong throughout the Games, but it was tarnished by cheating and other oddities I personally observed or heard about second-hand while attending the MWG which are elaborated upon in Appendix A.

It seemed like the Chinese main goals at the MWG were to win gold medals, exhibit a pristine city, and display military strength through sports—by all means. The military sporting event spotlight functioned as an appeal mechanism by which Chairman Xi Jinping could further China’s geopolitical ambitions and shift the global power axis from the West to the East. These Games, as well as other international Games hosted by the PRC, are embedded within a sports and mega-event soft-power strategy because sport provides a global appeal mechanism which can offset the negative and controversial actions of the PRC, such as the repression of the Uighurs through reeducation camps or the violence in Tibet.²¹⁶ Chinese soft power is increasingly important for the CCP to achieve the ultimate Chinese Dream of “leading global power” by 2050 the CCP—and the party will make the dream into reality by all means necessary.²¹⁷

2. Chinese Soft Power

The CCP’s soft-power strategy was termed a “charm offensive” by Kurlantzick in 2007, in which Chinese leadership seeks to employ a strategy of “woo [ing] the world” by “use [ing] soft power to push countries to choose between closer ties to Washington or closer ties to Beijing.”²¹⁸ Indeed, while Chinese economic and military developments are

²¹⁶ Lindsay Maizland, “China’s Repression of Uighurs in Xinjiang,” Council on Foreign Relations, November 25, 2019, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-repression-uighurs-xinjiang>; Jayshree Bajoria, “The Question of Tibet,” Council on Foreign Relations, December 5, 2008, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/question-tibet>.

²¹⁷ “Xi to Transform China into Global Power by 2050,” The ASEAN Post, October 18, 2017, <https://theaseanpost.com/article/xi-transform-china-global-power-2050>.

²¹⁸ Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive : How China’s Soft Power Is Transforming the World* (Yale University Press, 2007).

at the forefront of the global media, their quiet employment of soft-power initiatives are becoming more apparent with the vast reach of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).²¹⁹

China analysts often evaluate the BRI as appearing outwardly as an economic project, but they highlight China is additionally using the project to exert Chinese influence along the BRI path as “a way of friendly cooperation signaling the project as ‘Road for Peace’ through soft-power presence.”²²⁰ More thereof, Jessica Padoemthontaweekij supports that the CCP’s BRI geopolitical strategy is designed to “reshape the LIO [liberal international world order] more in line with Beijing’s interests” and recognizing that soft power is central to effectively appealing to international and domestic communities.²²¹

The current PRC objective is commonly known as Xi Jinping’s “China Dream,” which “pursue [s] Beijing’s decade-long goal of returning to great-power status,” and incorporates the BRI by combining economic and soft power to maximize the CCP’s influence abroad.²²² Economically, China’s increasingly dominant role in financial institutions, such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) New Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the Silk Road Fund, is being re-evaluated by economists who argue that China is attempting to balance against the U.S. Bretton Woods model of finance.²²³ Furthermore, Michael Pillsbury asserts that China’s economic rise is the meticulous execution of a 100-year plan to realize China’s

²¹⁹ Bates Gill and Yanzhong Huang, “Sources and Limits of Chinese ‘Soft Power,’” *Survival* 48, no. 2 (June 1, 2006): 17–36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330600765377>.

²²⁰ Buddhi Prasad Sharma and Raunab Singh Khatri, “The Politics of Soft Power: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as Charm Influence in South Asia,” *China and the World* 02, no. 01 (March 2019): 71, <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2591729319500020>; Michael Clarke, “The Belt and Road Initiative: China’s New Grand Strategy?,” *Asia Policy* 24, no. 1 (August 9, 2017): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1353/asp.2017.0023>.

²²¹ Jessica S Padoemthontaweekij, “The Dragon’s Journey to the West: Chinese-Led Economic Institutions and the Reformation of the Liberal International Order” (Monterey, CA, Naval Postgraduate School, 2019), 25, <https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/64040>.

²²² Peter Ferdinand, “Westward Ho—the China Dream and ‘One Belt, One Road’: Chinese Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping,” *International Affairs* 92, no. 4 (July 1, 2016): 941, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12660>.

²²³ Hongying Wang, “The New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: China’s Ambiguous Approach to Global Financial Governance,” *Development and Change* 50, no. 1 (2019): 221, <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12473>.

rightful world hegemony.²²⁴ Through such examples as China gaining access to the World Trade Organization via false claims that China would transition to market-oriented economic policies, Pillsbury attests the Chinese have successfully deceived America by feeding into the American hope that China would eventually play by Western rules—a deception strategy that the CCP still uses in international relations today.²²⁵

China facilitated the establishment of the 17 + 1, formerly the 16 + 1, initiative which the Cooperation Between China and Central and Eastern European Countries (China-CEEC) website officially cites is “aimed at intensifying and expanding cooperation with 11 EU Member States and [five] Balkan countries”²²⁶ Malgorzata Jakimow determines that “the China-deployed desecuritized narratives of the BRI constitute an important soft-power strategy of China in its engagement in Europe.”²²⁷ He clarifies that the Chinese influence through China-CEEC is successful because soft power bring a “normative influence” that “render [s] China a non-security” threat.²²⁸ William Callahan adds that the “China Dream,” in conjunction with the BRI, demonstrates how China seeks “to weave neighboring countries into a Sino-centric network of economic, political, cultural, and security relations.”²²⁹ These aspects of Chinese soft-power are aligned with many interpretations of the terminology used to frame the Chinese strategy—such as “politics of harmony”—as a strategic selection to impress on the world that China’s rise is not threatening, but rather that a rise in Chinese power will be

²²⁴ Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China’s Secret Strategy to Replace America as a Global Superpower* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2015).

²²⁵ Pillsbury.

²²⁶ Ministry of foreign affairs of the Republic of Latvia, “‘16+1’ Summit Has Concluded,” Cooperation Between China and Central and Eastern European Countries, November 10, 2016, http://www.china-ceec.org/eng/ldrh_1/2016lj/hdxw4/t1414327.htm.

²²⁷ Małgorzata Jakimów, “Desecuritisation as a Soft Power Strategy: The Belt and Road Initiative, European Fragmentation and China’s Normative Influence in Central-Eastern Europe,” *Asia Europe Journal* 17, no. 4 (December 1, 2019): 369, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10308-019-00561-3>.

²²⁸ Jakimów, 371.

²²⁹ William A. Callahan, “China’s ‘Asia Dream’: The Belt Road Initiative and the New Regional Order,” *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 1, no. 3 (May 2016): 226, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891116647806>.

“harmonious” and “preserve a peaceful external environment.”²³⁰ China’s use of soft-power is greatly seen as the underlying strategy for its “smooth transition to a status quo power.”²³¹

Soft power, through the international appeal provided by sport mega-events, has become central in China’s national strategy. China’s General Administration of Sport of China (国家体育总局) appears to be a robust section of the PRC party and is headed by Gou Zhongwen, who also chairs the Chinese Olympic Committee.²³² The 2008 Beijing Olympics, China’s sport mega-event debut, was accompanied by massive international pressure to conform to Olympic and liberal values. Protests plagued the games amid accusations of China’s human rights abuses, which were accompanied by the opportunistic demand for China to alter its policies or risk having the “Olympic spotlight” “leveraged” to “embarrass Beijing” into conforming and altering its policies.²³³ Victor Cha concludes that “the 2008 Beijing Olympics was arguably the most important event for China since the 1949 revolution in terms of its identity, diplomacy, and development.”²³⁴ The 2008 Olympics can thus be regarded as an example of traditional sports diplomacy because the government determined that its

²³⁰ Linus Hagström and Astrid H. M. Nordin, “China’s ‘Politics of Harmony’ and the Quest for Soft Power in International Politics,” *International Studies Review*, accessed September 17, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viz023>; Clarke, “The Belt and Road Initiative,” 77.

²³¹ Sheng Ding, “Analyzing Rising Power from the Perspective of Soft Power: A New Look at China’s Rise to the Status Quo Power,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 19, no. 64 (March 1, 2010): 255, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560903444207>.

²³² Communist People’s Party, “State General Sports Administration of China,” The State Council: The People’s Republic of China, September 4, 2014, http://english.www.gov.cn/state_council/2014/09/09/content_281474986284050.htm.

Note: Under his leadership, China drastically increased hosting sport mega-event. (This can be a note, but not sure how notes work yet): Since the 2008 Beijing Olympics, China has hosted: 2008 Summer Paralympics Games, 2008 World Mind Games, 2010 World Combat Games, 2010 Asian Games, 2014 Summer Youth Games, 2017 BRICS Games, 2019 Military world games, 2019 FIBA World Cup, 2019 World Police, and Fire Games. Additionally, China is appointed to host the 2022 Gay Games, 2022 Asian Games and Asian Para Games, and the 2022 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

²³³ Victor D. Cha, *Beyond the Final Score: The Politics of Sport in Asia* (Columbia University Press, 2008), 129.

²³⁴ Cha, 120.

investment in sports through international appeal would pay off in long-term soft-power capabilities.

The follow-on bids to host more games following the grand Beijing Olympics is proof that the PRC found domestic and international success with the event. Cha makes clear that the PRC sought to use the Beijing Olympics “to enhance internal credibility and control, showcase its economic growth, delegitimize Taiwan, improve its international stature, extinguish memories of the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989, and establish the PRC as a global player.”²³⁵ With the last decade in hindsight, Cha’s argument and assessment are in line with the continuation of the Chinese national sports strategy.

Considering a transition into a multi-power world, China certainly saw hosting the MWG as an extraordinary opportunity to impress the participating international military service members and spectators. With Chinese militarism growing more offensively capable and the perception of the Chinese military muscle central to China’s global power projection, hosting the MWG was expected to reinforce an image of, or showcase, military strength to the participants and spectators.

C. ANALYSIS OF MILITARY SPORT AMONG GREAT POWERS

With the appreciation that diplomacy and soft power appear to embody both positive and negative interactions at the same time, the same could be said about military sports diplomacy. In the cases of Russian Army Games, the Kremlin successfully created a platform to achieve a number of domestic and international objectives. Although these objectives are not desired by NATO members, the Games did no harm to any Western nation in the short term; they only increased Russian cooperation with its already allied nations.

In the case of the 7th Military World Games in China, the CCP demonstrated the importance of the international appeal of sport in its path towards the “China Dream;” not only sports, but military sports which was accompanied by a military audience and a PLA military spectacle for the record, plus international acknowledgment.

²³⁵ Cha, 120.

In sum, both the Russian and the Chinese events make clear how military sports can be used as an international spectacle to further power ambitions and power projections for nations by illiberal forces. Nations within the community of liberal democracies, for example, the United States and European nations, are expected to support the liberal world order against the rise of these illiberal forces through a reliable and consistent adherence to the norms within military sport events—norms that are harder to discern in events staged by less-democratic nations, e.g., China and Russia. Therefore, military sporting events must be safeguarded and the event organizers on guard to ensure events adhere to fair-play and promote healthy internationalism.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis filled an academic gap by defining military sports diplomacy and the definition asserts that military sports can accomplish meaningful diplomatic engagements in support of international military cooperation: military sports diplomacy. But, as with most sport-political overlap, there remains an opportunity for neglect and system abuse. Therefore, this section follows with recommendations for the U.S. and other militaries to use military sports diplomacy responsibly.

A. MILITARY SPORTS DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

This thesis identified national sports strategies, some of which used military sports, in Chapter III, i.e., the annual Russian International Army Games and the 7th CISM Military World Games in China in 2019. Both are examples of organized military sports: the Russian Games exemplified most aspects of the definition, however, China failed to uphold the most important qualities of MSD during the Military World Games (MWG)—one that seeks to improve military-to-military relations.

The Russian International Army Games are aligned with MSD because the games, for the most part, appear to meet the values of MSD. These Russian Army Games bring international military units together and enhanced international military relations, the competitions are centered around unit skill and thereby unit cohesion, and the participants are all military service members.

The Chinese hosted CISM MWG, however, do not categorize as MSD. Through an analysis of the Chinese strategic view on sports and mega-events, it becomes clear that the purpose of these games was not to enhance relations. The majority of the athletes were not military members first and athletes second, they were professional athletes training full-time for the Olympics—although the Chinese athletes are the crux of this section on the Chinese national sports strategy, it must be addressed that the majority of other countries also used CISM's MWG as a platform to showcase their professional athletes instead of their military athletes.

Military sports diplomacy is best exemplified in impromptu sporting events, such as the RIMPAC, Rim of the Pacific Exercise, out of Pearl Harbor, HI, and its annual pre-exercise sporting events, or standard Navy port-call sports tournaments.²³⁶ These types of sports engagements date back many decades, but they are not well documented, for example: My father-in-law, a machinist mate in the Coast Guard 1978–1998, remembers playing basketball against the local military units for public relations purposes during port-calls in Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia, while deployed on a Wind-class icebreaker; More recently, a prior-enlisted Naval Academy graduate, remembers participating on the USS LINCOLN (CVN-72) soccer team during her 2005–2006 deployment during port-calls in Hawaii, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Australia, and South Korea.

B. INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With a thorough understanding and appreciation of the power of sports—peaceful and violent—this section offers considerations and makes recommendations on methods to implement military sports diplomacy and to maximize military sports for international military relations and domestic unit cohesion.

1. European Militarism

As demonstrated in Chapter III, European national sports in the 19th century and 20th century were closely connected to military prestige and contributed to the increased acceptance of national militarism. Although European conflict was not a direct result of military sports, sports certainly justified the necessity of the military, and even made it an appealing part of society, thus heightening nationalism.

Currently, however, while many nations around the world consider the international political climate to be framed and informed by a great power competition, the western and central European nations appear to prefer to stay out of the

²³⁶ “MWR to Host Rimpac Sports, Recreational Activities at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam,” Ho’okele, July 1, 2016, <http://www.hookelenews.com/mwr-to-host-rimpac-sports-recreational-activities-at-joint-base-pearl-harbor-hickam/>.

competition—arguably to the detriment of peace, liberal democracy, and international cooperation.

Europe has mostly separated any overtly military aspects from sports; although nations still use military funding for some national sports. Instead, such civilian sports institutions as the Union of European Football Association (UEFA) and its coveted European Championship, the Euros, hold the attention and pride of European nations under the governing international administrative body, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). FIFA provides the sport-fan's an international platform to showcase their national teams through the follow-on FIFA World Cup. While the FIFA World Cup posts the highest viewers of any other sports or event—an estimated 3.5 billion people watched the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia—there is no military affiliation to most national teams or FIFA.²³⁷ The separation of military and sports demonstrates the current generation's lack of military palette, and preference to keep international matches as far from the “imitation of war” as possible.²³⁸

As the European Union attempts to unite Europe and provide a sense of security through political and economic cooperation, the collective European military appetite will remain low. When Europe determines that increased nationalism and military capabilities are needed to ensure the defense of the continent, the countries might resume an interest in military sports.

2. Avoiding the misuse of MSD

Misuse in diplomacy efforts is apparent when plagued with one-way dialogues and unwanted propaganda. It is evident throughout the history of sports that sports have the power to be used for violent or disruptive purposes; to avoid politicization or other abuse of MSD, the actors—a unit commander or country representative—must be upfront with the purpose of the competition.

²³⁷ Fédération Internationale de Football Association, “2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ Global Broadcast and Audience Summary,” 2018, <https://resources.fifa.com/image/upload/2018-fifa-world-cup-russia-global-broadcast-and-audience-executive-summary.pdf?cloudid=njqsntvrvqv8ho1dag5>.

²³⁸ Fischer, “Competitive Sport's Imitation of War,” 16.

Impromptu events are indeed an ultimate platform for positive engagements through MSD, for example, a basketball game between participating nations at a RIMPAC naval exercise. However, there is a risk of conflict in every engagement which can be reduced by ensuring that the military-athlete is aware of growing emotional investment in the game. Also, it should be a common practice to shake hands and congratulate the winning team at the end of the game; a genuine “good game” can go a long way.

Organized events historically encompass strategic use, which is unavoidable and acceptable, until it takes away from the intent behind enhancing international relations. It is on both hosting and visiting countries to focus their athletes on playing, rather than winning—easier said than done. To ensure the event remains within the confines of positive relation building, the team captains, or unit commanders, can avoid incentivizing a win, remind the players that the purpose of any international military game is to get to know the other team, or by playing with mixed teams, e.g., instead of the traditional country vs. country match-up, shuffle the teams.

MSD, as defined in Chapter III, certainly has an inherent capability to instill confidence in the country’s armed forces, thereby increase national pride and patriotism. Nevertheless, the focus must be “to enhance international military relations.”²³⁹ Countries should use MSD as a tool to enhance already positive relations or open the door to relations that may be strained. Military sports diplomacy must be used as a peacekeeper and international community builder; if it is not treated that way, it has the potential to revert to a war provocateur. As with many types of diplomacy, the outcome depends on the situation and other actor’s action; therefore, the recommendations are centered around CISM, as the primary organized military sports institution, and a warning for potential misuse of MSD.

²³⁹ Military sports diplomacy in Chapter III.

3. Putting the M Back in CISM

CISM is the premier—and only—military sports institution; therefore, it should embrace and uphold all facets of MSD. However, its emphasis on military participation is declining in importance, from what I have experienced and in my opinion. MWG and other CISM competitions have not appeared focused on the combat or military sports competitions; instead, the focus centers around such Olympic sports as swimming individual sports and like basketball among the team events, which are used to test and showcase country's Olympic hopefuls—an issue made clear in Chapter III.

I advocate for a combined military-civilian event during CISM MWG, to include a combined medal count, but where military events are separate from civilian events. A combined event would enable CISM to: 1. Remain a platform for organized military sports that can bring positive contributions to military relations. 2. Provide a platform for both military-athletes and athletes who are affiliated with the military, but do not necessarily serve, to participate in preparation for other sports competitions. For example, Chinese Olympic swimmers who participated at the MWG in China, listed in Appendix II, could still compete, but would not have to falsify their military status. A combined event would ensure CISM MWG remains a platform for military sports, instead of becoming an exclusive Olympic-preparation platform for top civilian athletes.

The growing number of civilian athletes, and thus the event domination by certain countries who send their professional athletes, is distracting from the military-to-military relations of CISM games, which is evident in my field research at the 2019 MWG.²⁴⁰ I questioned 30+ athletes about their military experience and the rough percentage of full-time active duty athletes within their delegation: In summary, out of the 25 countries questioned, only two countries brought 100-percent active-duty members; some brought a mixed of full-time and part-time active-duty athletes, and other countries traveled with all or mostly professional athletes. In the most extreme case, Qatar paid athletes from other nations to participate in their teams. See Appendix B for the country list.²⁴¹ It is

²⁴⁰ Appendix A.

²⁴¹ Appendix B.

understandable that money is essential to facilitate any sporting event, and especially tight when considering national defense budgets around the world. Therefore, it is logical that CISM found additional Olympic sports are necessary to keep CISM financially healthy.

One way to put the M, or Militaire, back in CISM, and embrace MSD, CISM should seek a balance between full-time military athletes and semi-military athletes who use the games for professional national team testing purposes. CISM could overhaul the list of sports and include more military sports; these additional military sports could be weighted in the medal count. By officially labeling MWG a civilian-military combined event, CISM could capitalize on the increased publicity, the military athletes could enjoy a restored fair playing field, and professional athletes could legally use the MWG as a pre-Olympic platform. CISM could integrate with the IOC to make the MWG the official pre-Olympics, with both Olympic and CISM events and both civilian and military athletes. CISM already works closely with the IOC. As noted, CISM MWG is conducted the year before the summer Olympics, which makes it an optimal test run for Olympic teams.

Although the MWG enable every nation to showcase its fighting spirit, strength, and skill—and maybe reinforce negative nationalistic sentiments—through its military athletes, the opportunity to embrace and abide by CISM’s enduring slogan “friendship through sport” presents more opportunity than risk of violence. Michel Faure states that “sport is a codified test of strength the goal of which is not to destroy the adversary but to dominate him,” a point that holds true in traditional sports competitions with such civilian sports as FIFA World Cups or the Olympics, as well as for organized military sports.²⁴² The military athletes, who are trained to destroy the opposition forces, compete in events that can be considered simultaneously peaceful and aggressive; by enabling militaries to embrace international organized sport for peace, CISM can facilitate an even greater web of international military cooperation. But amid the current great power competition,

²⁴² Jean-Michel Faure and Peter Snowdon, “Forging a French Fighting Spirit: The Nation, Sport, Violence and War,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 12, no. 2 (August 1, 1995): 89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523369508713896>.

military sport events must be aware of the power of a match to act as an instigator for violence and, despite MSD considerations, aggravate already high tensions.

If CISM's Military World Games merged with the IOC to create a joint pre-Olympic event for military and civilian athletes to compete, the event would contribute to the continuation of the global sports for peace movement by reminding spectators and athletes how close sports are to conflict, but also how international sports institutions have assisted in conflict prevention and positive relationship building around the world.

Modern military sports create another venue to build positive relations. As this thesis demonstrates, sports are used to open dialogues or to provide platforms to the benefit of diplomatic relations around the world. As the—often literal—standard-bears of western liberalism and such values as fair play—the United States and Europe could perhaps benefit from such organized or impromptu military sporting events and reinvigorate the trans-Atlantic relationship through the universal language of sports.

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APPENDIX A. CHINA'S MWG PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

The opening ceremony was performed on one of the world's largest 3D stages, in what resembled the bird's nest stadium in Beijing—an incredible and unforgettable experience.²⁴³ To further highlight the importance of this event, Xi Jinping attended the ceremony in person.²⁴⁴ The ceremony was in line with tradition: the ceremony started with an athlete march-on in dress uniform, an in-field host-nation show, and the final lighting of the torch.

The opening ceremony show was centered around China's resumption of its rightful place among the global powers. The opening ceremony was titled "Torch of Peace," but the majority of scenes displayed the history of the Chinese empire and its achievements thus seemed to target the domestic audience rather than the international community present. The final scene dealt more explicitly with the message of CISM: harmony and peace through sports. But the two-hour show displayed focus on the primary message, China is on its path to great power.

Evidently, the Chinese meant to underscore their world-power status by sweeping their own games by whatever means. Even before the competition began, the Chinese orienteering team was disqualified for cheating by marking the course. This incident made headlines in the United States, but it was underplayed by the Chinese media and the CISM daily reports. Other irregularities included:

- o Unlucky numbers: In China, the equivalent unlucky number to the American 13 is four. Four in Chinese is 死, pronounced 'si,' and is also present in the two characters for death, 死亡, pronounced 'si wang.'
- During the Games, coincidentally, all U.S. athletes lived in Building 13

²⁴³ New China TV, *Opening Ceremony of 2019 Military World Games in Wuhan, China*, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCdAY-AOG-o>.

²⁴⁴ New China TV.

and the U.S. Chief of Delegation, the highest-ranking officer in charge of the team, in this case a Navy Admiral (O-7), resided on the 4th floor.

- o No bananas or changing rooms: The swim team made an official protest, which occurs when a team has reason to suspect “the rules and regulations for the conduct of the competition are not observed.”²⁴⁵ The U.S. swimmers, along with the other non-Chinese swimmers, used the bathrooms to change, then sat in the bleachers before their events. They were provided the standard box lunches of bread, butter, jelly pack, and milk. When a team captain discovered that the Chinese team was absent from the bleachers and further investigated, they learned there was a locker room for the Chinese. The foreign teams were then allowed to use the empty locker room upon request. But to get to the room, the athletes had to go outside, despite a (blocked off) staircase to the locker rooms. In addition, the Chinese had bananas for their athletes—a nutritional advantage that prompted an official protest. Thereafter, bananas also suddenly appeared in the mess hall.²⁴⁶
- o Jerseys and start times: The U.S. soccer team and basketball team both reported that the jersey color or requirement and the game start times would change unnecessarily on very short notice. It appeared that this only happened to the U.S. teams. The logistics and foresight of the Chinese organizers were excellent.
- o Game attendance: Many U.S. athletes’ families and loved ones flew to China to watch the games, but not all of those who made the trip were able to watch their service member play or compete. On multiple occasions, their tickets were deemed not valid, which caused the family member not to be admitted to the competition, forcing the athlete to get involved, and

²⁴⁵ “Fina General Rules: Approved by the FINA Congress in Gwangju (KOR)” (Federation Internationale de Natation, July 19, 2019), https://www.fina.org/sites/default/files/_logo_fina_general_rules_19.07.2019.pdf.

²⁴⁶ Appendix B.

detrimental to the athlete's emotional state and thus athletic performance. Other times the ticket indicated all of the family member's seats in the American seating, with a single seat in the Chinese seating with an inability for the organizer to change it.

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APPENDIX B. CHINESE SWIM TEAM

Chinese Swim Team MWG 2019 - Notable Athlete List

- Wang, Jianjiahe – broke into the international swim circle in 2018. 2019 world championships = 3rd in the 1500 free; World Record holder in 400 free.
- Zhang, Yuhan – 2016 Rio Olympics – Swam qualifying by did not advanced. Finished 9th in 400 Free
- Li Guangyuan – 2016 Rio Olympic – swam 200 backstroke finals- 6th place
- ZHU Menghui - 2016 Rio Olympic – Swam 4x100 free relay – Placed 9th; Swam qualifying by did not advanced – 100 free, finished 9th.
- Zhang Yufei - 2016 Rio Olympic - Finalist finished 6th 200 fly
- He Junyi – 3rd fastest Chinese in history in the 100 free in
- Liu Yaxin - 2016 Rio Olympic - Finalist finished 7th 200 Backstroke (WR holder – 50 back)
- Yan Zibei - 2016 Rio Olympic - 100 breast. Swam qualifying by did not advanced. Finished 27th
- Wang Shun – 2012 London Olympics - Swam 200IM qualifying by did not advanced. Finished 22th; 2016 Rio Olympics Took Bronze in 200 IM; 2018 Short course world championships – Gold 200 IM
- Qin Haiyang – 2018 SC world championships – Sliver 200 breast
- Yang Junxuan – 2018 Youth summer Olympics – Gold in 400 free relay & 400 Mixed relay; Sliver 100 free; Bronze in 50 free & 200 Free

- Li Zhuhao - 2016 Rio Olympic - finished 5th in 100 fly
- Suo Ran – 2018 SC worlds – silver 200 medley relay
- Yu Jingyao - 2016 Rio Olympic - Swam 200 breast qualifying but did not advance. Finished 24th
- Chen Jie - 2016 Rio Olympic 200 back – Placed 27th

APPENDIX C. COUNTRY LIST OF MILITARY ATHLETE STATUS

Although all athletes are required to present a form of military identification, it was evident that not all athletes were active members of their respective country's armed forces. I spoke to athletes at the MWG to learn more about their team-member's military experience.

Cat I: All civilian team, no military affiliation.

Cat II: Military team is state sponsored and therefore considered a section of the nation's national defense force.

Cat III: Mixed active duty military, reserve duty military, and state sponsored professional athletes not actively serving in the military.

Cat IV: All military team

Note: This list was created based on discussions with national military team members where a language barrier or desire to protect their own national team's image are both possible reasons for incorrect data.

Country	Cat I	Cat II	Cat III	Cat IV
Bahrain		X		
Egypt		X		
Russia		X		
Pakistan		X		
Poland		X		
Germany			X	
Kenya		X		
Qatar	X			
Belgium			X	

Country	Cat I	Cat II	Cat III	Cat IV
France		X		
Ireland				X
Hungary		X		
Poland		X		
Iran				
Brazil		X		
Ukraine	X			
Denmark				X
Belarus	X			
Netherlands				X
Sweden			X	
Finland		X		
Algeria	X			
C.R.				X
USA			X	

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