

**Communicating Sport Mega-Events and
the Soft Power Dimensions of Public Diplomacy**

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Abstract

Increased international competitiveness to host sport mega-events indicates their perceived value in stimulating regional and national economic, social and cultural development. In the context of broader governmental public opinion management strategies, sport mega-events hold the potential to mobilize soft power resources of the host country, expressed in values, culture and policies, and engage with and influence the publics of other countries. This thesis investigates the significance of sport mega-events for the host country's public diplomacy strategies and practice by exploring the concepts of public diplomacy, sport mega-events, soft power and national image within a multi-disciplinary conceptual framework. The analysis of scholarly literature, official and media reports reveals how aspects of reputation, credibility, and legitimacy guide both foreign public opinion and the practice of public diplomacy in conjunction with sport mega-events. Moreover, international reputation of the host nation, including status, prestige and image, appeared to benefit the most as a result of strategic application of sport mega-events to public diplomacy. This can be achieved by proving functional reputation through demonstration of financial and organizational success. Alternatively, social reputation of the host is at risk of sustaining considerable damage as a result of resistance from social activists groups, thus requiring extensive damage control efforts of the host country's image. The conclusions drawn from this study raise significant questions about the potential of sport mega-events being effectively used for public diplomacy and the experience of the host governments, revealing functional competence as having the greatest potential to influence public diplomacy strategy built around hosting sport mega-events.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Public diplomacy takes place in a world where networks and fluid relationships among multiple actors abound. Consequently, a multidisciplinary approach to its study is ideal. In contrast to classical diplomacy, which is built on high-level talks and conferences, public diplomacy focuses primarily on direct interaction, for example through social media and cultural events. The best practitioners of public diplomacy recognize the changing nature of social, economic and political relationships, which stress the importance of the individual, skills and knowledge, and identity in building and maintaining effective relationships between states. Communication thus becomes the bonding agent of the evolving social system. A country's awareness of its positive and attractive policies and qualities and their spread is the key to consolidating its soft power resources in the pursuit of diplomatic objectives. In the case of public diplomacy, this means the power to achieve certain policy outcomes.

Moreover, the persuasion aspect of public diplomacy stimulates the use of concepts developed for commercial marketing and branding. Thus, concepts of power and brand management complement the concepts of national image and prestige management traditionally used in public diplomacy. In addition, public diplomacy's objective of pushing norms and values and influencing the beliefs and identities of foreign audiences bring forward the concepts of legitimacy, reputation and credibility. While these concepts are recognized within public diplomacy literature as significant (Nye 2004, Gass and Seiter 2009, Szondi 2009, Potter 2009, Ham 2010), these studies lack in-depth analysis of their relevance to public diplomacy, measurement, and applicability to sports mega-events. Addressing this dearth of sustained

critical examination of the complex relationship between public diplomacy and sport mega-events is a primary objective of this thesis.

International sport mega-events present virtually unparalleled targets of opportunity for public diplomacy efforts. Television audiences alone for events such as the World Cup and Olympic Games number in the hundreds of millions, and there is the blanket coverage by print and other broadcasting media as well as hundreds of thousands of spectators from all corners of the globe. It is precisely because such mega-events hold the attention of large numbers of people in multiple countries and convey to them simple and highly symbolic messages that these spectacles are inextricably linked with international political affairs in all its guises. With their visible nationalistic elements (flags, uniforms and the like) and the opportunities they provide propagandists and commentators alike to interpret individual or team accomplishments as tests of national character, will, and achievement, sport mega-events provide a virtually unparalleled showcase for political leaders and advocates of causes who compete for world attention.

The appeal of harnessing sport mega-events for the practice of public diplomacy inheres in their ability to capture global attention and elevate popular interest in the host nation throughout, and potentially beyond, the run up to the event. In view of the level of global spectatorship and media interest which invariably surrounds these events, the perceived potential has a certain logic, since global audiences for the FIFA World Cup Finals and opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games reportedly exceed 1 billion (IOC 2001, IOC 2002, IOC 2008, KantarSport 2010). Moreover, budgets of such events several times exceed yearly expenditures on all public diplomacy and marketing initiatives of respective host nations (Canada 2005, PWC 2011). Clearly sport mega-events provide the host nation with a platform from which to raise its profile and project messages to the international community. They have a reach that few public

relations initiatives could match. The positive perception and emotive appeal of sports, particularly those that involve the national team, enable sport mega-events to provide time markers around which the nation can celebrate national pride and patriotism. As a result, sport mega-events can also mobilize attractive cultural attributes and provide a supportive context through which other social and political credentials can be projected. Sport mega-events also require a high level of state engagement, from pre-event support concerning lessons learnt given by former hosts or interstate co-operation on issues of security, to event time hosting of political elites. Accordingly, they further offer opportunities for states to develop mutually supportive relations in an informal setting.

The Olympic Games and FIFA Soccer World Cup are but two ideal-types of contemporary sport mega-events, and an increasing number of cities are entering in competitive bidding to host them. The astronomical sums of public and private funds spent on these bids is a strong indicator that political and business power elites and other civic leaders perceive the securing of such an event as an opportunity to stimulate economic, social and cultural development on both regional and national scales (Black and Westhuizen 2004, Allison and Monnington 2002, Cull 2008). At the same time, the scale and global reach of sport mega-events have economic, cultural and political impacts spreading far beyond national borders (Horne 2007, L'Etang 2006, Nauright 2004). These impacts include improved or strained diplomatic relationships, recognition of a nation's legitimacy, improved or marred country reputation, and an enhanced business investment environment.

Against this background this thesis examines the complex relationship between public diplomacy and sport mega-events in the context of broader governmental public opinion formation and management strategies. Sport mega-events have the potential to create a lasting

legacy that provides the host country with new levels of global recognition and economic, political and social development. Delivering an international spectacular sport mega-event on tight deadlines requiring years of planning combined with attendant world media attention encourages a host country's government to cooperate with private sector and non-government organizations to ensure the successful staging of the event. The successful delivery of a sport mega-event gives governments a chance to convey their capabilities and aspirations to the world, and to project their national image (Potter 2009); consequently these events play a significant role in the functioning of international relations.

Research Questions and Conceptual Foundations

The overall objective of this is to assess why public diplomacy should pay attention to sport mega-events, and what importance do they have for the public diplomacy of the host nation. This thesis has been guided in both its design and method by the main research question:

- *What are the consequences of staging sport mega-events in terms of a host country's reputation, credibility and legitimacy as an actor of international affairs?*

From this main research question emerge two sub-questions, which provide a specific organizing framework for the overall conclusions presented in Chapter 5. These sub-questions are as follows:

- *What aspects of hosting sport mega-events are significant for the practice of a nation's public diplomacy?*
- *What impact does hosting sport mega-events have on public diplomacy management?*

At the core of this thesis are the concepts of public diplomacy and soft power. Public diplomacy is primarily preoccupied with a nation's public image as embodied in its reputation, credibility and legitimacy. In effect, each of these three elements serves as desired outcome of public diplomacy activities. Though developed more fully in the next chapter it is instructive to briefly review them here for the purpose of setting context.

(i) Reputation judgments play a central role in influencing trust in the social sphere (Eisenegger, 2009: 12). These reputational judgments are passed on through direct or indirect communication, forming opinions about an actor in the social sphere, and ultimately directing actions in relation to an actor. Yang et al. (2008) suggest that soft power of a country can be developed and enhanced by effective country reputation management. The concept of country reputation is anchored in long-term impressions of the country built around numerous corporate images and actions (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990). Country reputation develops from nation's uniqueness and identity-shaping practices—maintained over time—that lead stakeholders to perceive a country as credible, reliable, trustworthy and responsible to various degrees (Fombrun, 1996: 28). These perceptions can in effect guide the actions of the stakeholders towards a country. Bromley (1993) accentuates the communality (publicly shared) and cumulateness (built over time) of cognitive representation about an organization—in this example a country—that form reputation. Thus, following Fombrun's line of thought, country

reputation can be defined as the aggregate of perceptions shared by domestic and international publics of a country over time.

(ii) Credibility of a country is closely linked to country reputation, since it is seen as a set of perceptions that communication receivers hold toward a source (Newell & Goldsmith, 2001), and is characterized by the general willingness of the public to listen to and accept information based on the perceptions of the source as trustworthy and reliable (Rudderham, 2008: 5). Ohanian (1990) and Newell & Goldsmith (2001) emphasize two dimensions of credibility, expertise and trustworthiness, as the most applicable to perceptions of country credibility. Expertise and trustworthiness influence the believability of messages (Goldberg and Hartwick, 1990: 173) and, in turn, the response to the messages (LaBarbera, 1982: 223). Nye (2004) sees country credibility as a crucial resource and important source of soft power, capable of translating cultural resources engaged through public diplomacy instruments into the soft power of attraction. Following Sweeney and Swait (2008), credibility is accumulated over time, and active management of credibility's dimensions of expertise and trustworthiness plays a decisive role in building long-term relationships with organizations. Thus, Tuch (1990) observes that the currency of public diplomacy as an essentially communication activity is credibility, since credibility corresponds to maintaining long-term positive relationship between stakeholders in a communication process.

(iii) Legitimacy is a discreet feature of political life, something that political actors want, that they are eager to seek, and that the rest (subjects, citizens, peers) will recognize and respond to. This notion of legitimacy draws on the concepts of moral and epistemic right, legality, custom, tradition and popular approval (Mulligan 2005: 351), but most often it is presented as a question of whether some practice or institution accords with a particular set of criteria according

to which it, or its legitimacy, will be judged (Hurd 1999, Buchanan 2011, Mulligan 2005). In political contexts, legitimacy usually implies agent justification: a legitimate institution is one that is justified in wielding political power. In addition, legitimacy conveys an idea of authoritativeness: the rules of a legitimate institution are regarded as content-independent reasons for acting. Moreover, legitimacy assessments can have implication for the practical stances to be taken toward the institution, not only for those to whom the institution addresses rules, but for others as well—bearing institutional respect (Buchanan 2011). Due to its multifaceted nature, legitimacy is studied as a resource to be held or traded (Litfin 1997) and as a perception to be described (Hurd 1999) among others. One of the essential components of legitimacy is management of “generalized perceptions or assumptions that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate” (Suchman 1995: 574); therefore it falls into the purview of public diplomacy.

Taken together, reputation, credibility, and legitimacy serve as desired outcomes of public diplomacy activities, and oftentimes are referred as necessary conditions to successful public diplomacy. This is explained by the semantic/epistemic connections of these concepts to soft power, and it can be argued that reputation, credibility and legitimacy are components of soft power. What more, in contrast to the amorphous nature of soft power, the established academic nature of the concepts of reputation, credibility and legitimacy may provide necessary tools for measurement and management of public diplomacy. This brings to the forefront the argument, that active management of reputation, credibility and legitimacy constitutes public diplomacy, because these concepts exhibit qualities linked to the facets of public opinion management, persuasion and influence. Due to the massive media attraction to sport mega-events, and active government involvement in their staging, I argue in this thesis that sport mega-

events are significant resource for public diplomacy because they provide ways to manage country reputation, credibility and legitimacy in the pursuit of foreign policy goals.

Rationale for the study

There is a dearth of sustained critical scholarship on the significance of sport mega-events for a host country's public diplomacy strategies and efforts. This is significant, given the prominent role that sport mega-events play in contemporary geopolitical affairs and international communication. The scholarly literature on public diplomacy makes only passing references to the utility of sport mega-events in international relations; it also neglects to adequately conceptualize their role within public diplomacy as a communication activity. This oversight can be attributed to the "one-off" character of sport mega-events—they are typically “once-in-a-lifetime” occurrences for the host nations, and every one of them has a unique story to tell, which makes generalization of the findings problematic (Roche 2000). Nevertheless, research on the political use of international sports (Balbier 2009, Taylor 1988, Riordan 1988), the role of sport mega-events as constitutive features of modern culture (Roche 2000, Roche 2003), and the ideological use of the Olympic games (Guttman 1988, Manheim 1990)—all attribute considerable significance to sport mega-events and international sport bodies in international relations. Therefore, it is the position taken in this thesis that international sport mega-events are a popular cultural phenomenon, and as a soft power resource have the potential to influence the conduct of diplomacy and consequently the relations between states.

The argument that sport mega-events have meaning to a nation as a whole is a presupposition to the intervention of a state, which means that sport at the international level can

be coupled with more general foreign policy objectives and strategies, and their achievement through communication. This does not mean that states always and deliberately use sport in their foreign policy strategies or that sport cannot be practiced without governmental involvement. This does not either predetermine the politicization of sport despite its enduring relationship with international politics. Unprecedented attention of the media to international sports events has led to their strategic use for political purposes.

Sport mega-events—as both popular cultural phenomena and as a soft power resource—have the potential to influence the conduct of diplomacy, interstate communication and the relations between states in general. Within the body of public diplomacy literature, Dimeo and Kay (2004) explore the impact of hosting the Olympic Games on the host's international reputation; Black and Bezanson (2004) study the Olympic host's international credibility and how hosting the Games influences trust between nations; and Alegi and Bolsmann (2010) and Cornelissen (2010) investigate the relationship between legitimacy of states and their pursuit of FIFA World Cup events.

The problem with this body of literature, however, is a distinct neglect as to any sustained critical analysis of the significant role sport mega-events for public diplomacy. This *lacunae* is problematic as it raises doubt as to what aspects of sport mega-events are relevant to the practice of public diplomacy. In addition, clarification is required as to what activities and actors ought to be included in, or excluded from, the analysis of the relationship between public diplomacy and sport mega-events. The importance of sport mega-events as a social phenomenon is clearly established in the literature; however much is still to be said about them as a soft power resource and a tool of public diplomacy.

Method

It is essential to clarify at the outset that it is not the intention of this thesis to conduct a formal case study in the strict sense understood in the social sciences, with the primary objective of empirically testing hypotheses brought forward in the literature review. Rather, the approach utilized here is an exploratory one, in which the experiences of many countries that have hosted both Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup soccer tournaments provide cases from which to draw examples to illustrate the significant role sport mega-events play in the practice of public diplomacy. As detailed in the next chapter, an exploratory research design was used for this thesis while the empirical component utilized documentary analysis. Briefly, social science exploration as a "broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life" (Stebbins 2001: 3).

For the empirical component of this thesis, a convenience sample was drawn from two well-defined populations: (1) all 48 Olympic Games (Summer and Winter combined, including the 2012 Summer Games), and (2) all 19 FIFA World Cup soccer events. Specifically, the following cases were selected for examination: for the Olympic Games, Sydney 2000, Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010; and for the FIFA World Cup, South Africa 2010. It may be argued, however, that historic distance of less recent events may provide a sought after time-lapse in determining real effects of sport mega-events on the hosts' public diplomacy efforts. However, due to the relative novelty of the public diplomacy concept, any such findings may constitute speculation, since none of the less recent events can claim a direct link to public diplomacy strategies. Therefore, only those sport mega-events that exhibit overt public diplomacy strategies were included in the present examination.

This focus on the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup was motivated primarily by the mass popular attraction these events exude world wide, extensive media coverage and therefore broad audience penetration, and comprehensive government support both in the bidding and hosting phases of such events. Particularly, it is the extensive government involvement and inclusion of national public support that separates these kinds of events from the rest, and gives governments unprecedented opportunities to harness the events for public diplomacy goals. Moreover, the strict economic and social conditions of host selection places these events outside the reach of many countries, bestowing a level of prestige and honour on the host, which also leads to the perception of the events as momentous not only locally or regionally, but nationally and internationally, thus significant for public diplomacy.

Following the canons of exploratory social science research, the examples chosen to produce evidence with which to illustrate the concepts and theoretical points to be developed in this research are necessarily chosen in an unstructured fashion. Consequently, these examples are used as points of departure for discussion and analysis rather than constituting a formal case study. Trends and patterns identified in the data were given close scrutiny and key concepts identified in the review of literature are elaborated against the data. Of course, this approach is not to be confused with mere data collection. Rather, this comparative case study approach is guided by the argument that data must push to build theory and avoid contentment with simply telling a good but often limited story. Such theorizing involves integrating many observations into a comprehensive system of propositions and using that system to define and explore problematic issues (Stebbins 2001; Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter reviews social and political scholarship on public diplomacy, soft power, country reputation, state credibility, state legitimacy and sport mega-events. In doing so, an approach of incorporating sport mega-events into the study of public diplomacy is developed, as well as the potential of hosting sport mega-events in altering opinions and attitudes of foreign publics within public diplomacy context is gauged. Country reputation, credibility and legitimacy are identified as significant aspects of the public diplomacy practice. With the recognition of strong cultural and political force of sport, the effects of hosting sport mega-events on public diplomacy are presented.

Chapter 3 - Research Design and Method

This chapter outlines the case-oriented research method employed in the thesis and justifies the exploratory research design of the empirical component of the thesis based on the character and emphasis of the research. It also outlines the range of documentary sources surveyed, sampling procedure, and the method of data analysis.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

This chapter examines the role of hosting sport mega-events in public diplomacy in empirical terms. Specifically, the role of sport mega-events in mobilizing soft power resources within public diplomacy context is illustrated by the 2000 Sydney and 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. 2000 Sydney, 2008 Beijing and 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games provide evidence of the impact of hosting sport mega-events on country credibility. 2008 Beijing Olympic Games

provide empirical evidence of the impact sport mega-events have on the country reputation and public diplomacy efforts. 2010 South Africa World Cup serves as a focus for discussion on state legitimacy within public diplomacy context.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Future Research

This chapter presents specific conclusions drawn from the evidence reviewed in Chapter 4. These conclusions are organized according to the two research sub-questions. First, functional, normative and social aspects of hosting sport mega-events in the context of public diplomacy are summarized. And second, the areas of national image, credibility, international reputation and international legitimacy in the context of hosting sport mega-events are reviewed *vis-à-vis* public diplomacy strategies. The chapter concludes by identifying replication, generalization and theory development limitations of the exploratory research design and non-probability method of sampling empirical evidence, and by recommending future research directions.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The study of public diplomacy ideally adopts an interdisciplinary approach, given that it falls within and between various academic fields. Yet the largest body of public diplomacy research is situated within communication studies. In part this is explained by the nature of public diplomacy practice, which focuses primarily on communication between governments and foreign publics. Building on this body of communication research, this chapter incorporates selected social and political sciences academic works on the subjects of public diplomacy, soft power, country reputation, state credibility, state legitimacy and sport mega-events. Through a critical review of the literature, the aim of this chapter is to identify what aspects of sport mega-events are relevant to the study of public diplomacy, what approaches can be taken to the study of sport mega-events within public diplomacy context, and how host's public diplomacy is impacted by sport mega-events.

Public Diplomacy and Soft Power

Public diplomacy seeks to enhance and project national image and engage with foreign publics in pursuit of a variety of foreign policies, which oftentimes include an economic development component. As a practice, public diplomacy is generally regarded by scholars as being based on a complex interaction among three spheres: government, mass media, and public opinion (Soroka 2003, Gilboa 2006, 2008, Potter 2002, 2009, Gregory 2008). These spheres are

indispensable for considerations of public diplomacy, because expressed public opinion forms a climate of opinion, which can limit or broaden policy choices and actions in a democratic process. Mass media, in turn, play an intermediary role as a propagator of public opinion, and as a receptor of public opinion management strategies employed by the governments. As a result, the perceptions and opinions held by foreign publics regarding a given nation become critically important to decisions made by nation-states. Managing the information flow in such contexts has been the realm of public diplomacy (L'Etang 2009). Public diplomacy is concerned with influencing public opinion on foreign policy issues primarily of foreign publics, which in turn can influence policies implemented by the foreign government. Therefore, public diplomacy interactions between governments, mass media and public opinion do not follow a linear path (logic), but are in fact complex.

The concept of public diplomacy is inherently tied to that of soft power (Nye 2004, Mellisen 2005, Potter 2009, Gilboa 2009). In the context of international relations, soft power refers to the ability to alter the behavior and shape the preferences of others to do what they otherwise would not through attraction, rather than threats of coercion, inducements or payments of hard power. That is to say, the relationship between soft power and public diplomacy rests on “the distinction between power measured in behavioral outcomes and power measured in terms of resources” Nye (2008: 95). In this sense public diplomacy draws attention to the soft power resources of a nation expressed in values, culture and policies through international broadcasting, organizing visitor exchanges, subsidizing cultural exports, and hosting international events for specific diplomatic purposes. More to the point, the concept of soft power—getting others to want the outcomes you want—causes people to act through cooperation rather than coercion. The strength of this approach is significant in situations in which hard power capacity is absent,

limited, inappropriate or ineffective (Ham 2010). In such situations, this attractive power provides the ability to gain acceptance of a favoured agenda and could help establish the parameters of the associated debate, thereby adding critical mass to an otherwise limited formal capacity. Soft power may be a significant asset in influencing others, not by using force but rather by the ability to attract, which goes beyond influence and persuasion. The core component of soft power is the perception of the legitimacy of a country's foreign policy, whereby legitimacy serves as a liberating tool for a country to pursue its goals.

The soft power of a nation arises from the attractiveness of its values, culture, and policies (Nye 2004), and encompasses everything other than military and economic power (Cooper 2004). Further, Ham (2010) posits that soft power is agent-centered and is based on resources, which can be used, applied and wielded. Abstention from the use of coercion and force gives soft power a certain ethical appeal making it appear morally superior to hard power. However, some scholars (Sperandei 2006) argue that any implicit potential use of force disqualify any type of compliance and deterrence as results of the application of soft power. For this reason the interplay between hard and soft power remains intricate. Given the difficulty in drawing the line between coercive and voluntary, it is possible to define non-coercive simply as the absence of military force and threats to use military force. Soft power therefore deals with norm-setting without using military force, or threatening its use. In international relations, the resources that produce soft power comprise the values an organization or country expresses in its culture, the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies, and the way it handles its relations with others. Nye (2004) and others (Batora 2006, Melissen 2005, Potter 2009) have suggested that public diplomacy means yielding soft power, therefore public diplomacy as a tool

of soft power expansion is important because it enables a country to be aware of its soft power resources and to mobilize them to communicate with and attract the publics of other countries.

Soft power capacity is undermined by state activities that are perceived as illegitimate or contravening values or promoted attributes (Ham 2010). This means that efforts to expand soft power should be approached strategically. As with any other foreign policy initiative, it should be underlined that soft power capacity is vulnerable to external factors and unsustainable in the absence of a supportive environment.

Nye (2011) argues that soft power is gaining prominence in international relations due to the limited hard power resources of some nations, as well as the limits of hard power in producing long-term attitudinal changes. Under the conditions of information age the capacity of an actor to pursue policy objectives rests on the ability to distinguish valuable information from the clutter and give cues to where to focus the attention. This ability to convert attractive soft power into behavioral outcomes derives from an actor's credibility (Nye 2011: 84-85) in reference to universal moral norms. Thus, soft power that public diplomacy engages must derive from universally acceptable values, fair policies, and attractive culture.

In contrast to classical diplomacy, which is built on high-level talks and conferences, public diplomacy is about direct interaction, for example through social media and cultural events (Potter 2009). Public diplomacy recognizes the changing nature of social, economic and political relationships, which accentuate the importance of the individual, skills and knowledge, and identity. Communication thus becomes the bonding agent of the evolving social system. Knowledge of one's positive and attractive policies and qualities and their spread is the key to consolidate one's soft power, and in the case of public diplomacy—to achieve certain policy outcomes. Moreover, the persuasion aspect of public diplomacy stimulates the use of concepts

developed for commercial marketing and branding. Thus, concepts of power and brand management complement the concepts of national image and prestige management traditionally used in public diplomacy. In addition, public diplomacy's objective of pushing norms and values and influencing the beliefs and identities of foreign audiences bring forward the concepts of legitimacy, reputation and credibility. While these concepts are recognized within public diplomacy literature as significant (Nye 2004, Gass and Seiter 2009, Szondi 2009, Potter 2009, Ham 2010), these studies lack in-depth analysis of their relevance to public diplomacy, measurement and applicability to sports mega-events. Addressing this dearth of sustained critical examination of the public diplomacy and sport mega-event relationship is the focus of the analysis presented in this chapter.

Reputation

L'Etang (1996) draws parallels between several characteristics of public relations and diplomacy. The prime assertion in this work is that both are responsible for official institutional communication with other organizations and relations with wider groups or publics, and are responsive to public opinion and media coverage. Both public relations and diplomacy are concerned with trust and use strategies of negotiation and impression management while guarding the reputation of their clients. Thus diplomacy and public relations are "comparable occupations and have certain similarities in their development as disciplines" (L'Etang 1996: 27).

Both public relations and diplomacy have interpretive and presentational roles, and both attempt to manage communication about issues. Furthermore, the relationship with the media holds the same value for both, as both diplomats and public relations practitioners conduct much

of their business via the media and are media-trained to provide appropriate “sound-bites” on the issues of the day. Signitzer and Wamser (2006: 383) observe that public relations and public diplomacy are both strategic communication processes that manage communication, relationships, and consequences among organizations and their publics. Further, both perform research, advocacy, dialog, and counseling functions. However, audiences differ for public relations and public diplomacy. Notionally, public relations managers focus on communication among corporate leaders and organizational publics, while public diplomacy managers focus on communication among national leaders and foreign publics (Signitzer and Wamser 2006: 382, 387). At a functional level, it can be argued that public diplomacy is part of the practice of diplomacy responsible for international communication and media relations as well as cultural diplomacy, which aims to enhance personal relationships between representatives of the host and target countries.

Signitzer and Coombs (1992) argue that public diplomacy and public relations are very similar undertakings and consequently they call for conceptual convergence of the two and for utilization of public relations theories in empirical research on public diplomacy. In the same vein, Grunig (1993) argues for the extension of his classic public relations models to public diplomacy. These models are classified according to two basic interrelated principles: *direction*—one-way communication versus two-way communication; and *purpose*—symmetrical versus asymmetrical. Grunig’s four models included press agency, public information, two-way symmetrical, and two-way asymmetrical. Press agency describes public relations programs designed to achieve favorable coverage in the media, often in a misleading way. Public information refers to information written by in-house writers acting as if they were journalists and disseminated through controlled media such as newsletters, brochures, and direct mail. The

two-way asymmetrical model is based on strategic communication—the scientific measurement of attitudes and formulation of messages capable of persuading the public in the target state to behave according to the interests of the state using public relations. The two-way symmetrical model is also based on research but allows for changes in the policy and behavior of both the state using public relations and the target state.

Application of the four models to foreign countries have shown that they overlap and may be inconsistent (Gilboa 2008). Grunig (1997) reconstructed the models into a four-dimensional normative framework, including direction and purpose, which appeared in the original framework, along with two new dimensions: channel and ethics. Channel refers to the ways information is delivered: that is, interpersonal versus mediated. Ethical public relations is determined by teleology—approaching actions in relations to their ends or utility, disclosure of interests, and social responsibility—encompassing all members of society, not just the public directly involved. The revised approach developed into a normative theory, the "Excellence Study," which suggested a program for empirical research on public relations practices measured against the best ways governments and organizations should practice public relations.

Grunig's four models and four reconstructed dimensions applied to public diplomacy have been used in studies by Bu (1999), Maack (2001), and Leonard and Alakeson (2000) of various public diplomacy activities. Yun (2006) surveyed foreign public diplomats in Washington DC about public diplomacy management and behavior. In examining the fit of two measurement models identified in the public relations' literature, Yun concluded that public relations frameworks are transferable for conceptualizing and measuring behavior and excellence in public diplomacy. According to Yun (2006: 307), such studies demonstrate the potential for theory-building in public diplomacy, as well as the ability to get beyond the study of

communication effects and to examine how and why nations practice and manage public diplomacy as they do.

L'Etang (2009) introduces a point of analysis that is especially instructive for connecting public diplomacy, public relations and sport mega-events. He argues that public relations is the occupation held responsible for the management or improvement of organizational relationships and reputation. In L'Etang's (2009: 615) conception, reputation management is not restricted to companies and organizations, but includes nations as well. Expressed public opinion forms a climate of opinion, which can limit or broaden policy choices and actions. As a result, the perceptions and opinions held by foreign publics regarding a given nation become critically important to decisions made by nation-states. Managing the information flow in such contexts has been the realm of public diplomacy.

Reputation judgements play a central role in influencing trust in the social sphere (Eisenegger 2009). These reputational judgements are passed on through direct or indirect communication, forming opinions about an actor in the social sphere, and ultimately directing actions in relation to the actor. In this regard Eisenegger (2009: 13) argues that irrespective of the agent under consideration, reputation always consists of three reputational dimensions: the *functional*, the *social*, and the *expressive*.

First, agents must prove their competence and demonstrate the required success. This functional reputation is proven in relation to the performance goals of various functional systems (e.g. political, economic, etc). For countries, this means demonstrating political power and economic success; when these spheres are neglected, it can damage the country's reputation, as in the example of the worldwide critique of the US capitalism in the wake of financial crisis in the USA in a direct proportion to liberal economic policies. The functional reputation dimension

follows a strictly fact-based logic: functional success or failure is measured by figures that can be objectively verified.

Second, reputation bearers must prove themselves in the social world of the good, reflecting the extent to which actors are good citizens: that is, whether they simply trample on others in pursuit of success, or whether they act responsibly, in line with social norms and values (Eisenegger 2009: 13). For example, the scandals of Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo discredited the United States as an incarnation of Western values such as liberty, democracy and human rights, and led to a loss of reputation compared to other moments in the US history (Goldsmith & Horiuchi 2009). Having an intact social reputation requires following codified and non-codified social norms. Further, losses of reputation in the social world weigh more heavily than losses of reputation in the objective world (Eisenegger 2009: 17). Doubts about functional reputation can be dispelled by demonstrating fresh success. Perceived moral deficiencies, on the other hand, have a longer-lasting effect on reputation, and can usually only be remedied with radical measures—such as publicly admitting fault.

Third, agents also possess an expressive reputation (Eisenegger 2009: 13). Whereas judgements are fact-based for the functional reputation dimension and ethically based for the social reputation dimension, it is judgements of taste that dominate in the world of the beautiful. Reputation bearers are judged according to the emotional attractiveness of their individual character and according to how unique they appear. A country's expressive dimension of reputation is based on those parts of its identity that set it apart from other countries: here the countryside, the climatic conditions play as much role as the arts, traditions, cuisine, architecture and way of life of the country's people.

Studying the reputation of seven global players in international media between 1965 and 2005, Eisenegger (2009) identified two trends that characterize the nature of the modern reputation. **First**, social responsibility issues have come to the forefront of reputation judgments, as indicated by news reporting. This observation is explained by the central place ethical considerations are assumed in the international media, as the questions about “good” and “bad” became core ratings generators in journalism (Goldsmith & Horiuchi 2009). The **second** trend identified by Eisenegger (2009) is that managing social reputation bears greater risks than managing functional reputation, due to the greater pressure of expectations and critical monitoring of actions of global actors. Those international actors who are bold in presenting themselves as perfect in external communications risk attracting significant criticism, and, once the faults are uncovered, damaging their reputation.

Managing national reputation is a key requirement of public diplomacy (Wang 2009). National reputation is a strong indicator of a nation’s power, and constitutes a dimension of soft power. Such reputation reflects and affects a country’s standing in the global arena, and can enable or disable coalition building and achievement of international political objectives. Wang (2009: 94) further argues that managing national reputation is not about projecting a certain national image, since images are generally understood as simplified and typified conceptions, which are mainly affective and emotional in nature. Reputation, rather, consists of complex judgments that always have a normative component.

In sum, the literature is clear on the point that country reputation management is not simply about generating ideal and to some extent random images. It is about demonstrating how the country manages to first fulfill and then shape the expectations of key audiences with respect to competence, integrity and attractiveness. Country reputation management is based on

comprehensible and verifiable facts, thus depending on the actions of the state and the different actors within it. Negotiating understanding with foreign publics is achievable through building trusting relationships by demonstrating competence and integrity.

Credibility

One of the central components of public diplomacy is credibility. It is essential to the persuasiveness of messages (Renn and Levine 1991, Peters et al. 1997), and plays an important role in creating positive public image (Tedeschi and Norman 1985, Benoit 1997, Zhang & Benoit 2004, Wang 2009). Credibility is also a major social influence resource that may determine which group or fraction will shape policies and enhance its social and political power. It is most easily observed in an arena characterized by a new evolving power structure and embedded in a substantial value change situation. For example, David and Roussel (1998) argue that in an international system characterized by the growth of multilateralism and international institutions since 1990 and the changing distribution of power, middle powers such as Canada have greater opportunities to communicate and assert their views on the issues of human rights, environmental protection, human security and conflict resolution. The ability to grasp problems at many levels (local, national, regional, global) and to negotiate with very heterogeneous players, who are not necessarily operating within a state framework, has given Canada, for example, an advantage in international influence by promoting 1997 Ottawa Treaty or the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Batora 2005, Rudderham 2008, Potter 2009). Canada's credibility, therefore, as a proactive and competent negotiator and communicator on the issue of human security, may give it an enhanced international influence.

O'Keefe (1990) defines credibility as judgments made by a perceiver (e.g. message recipient) concerning the believability of a communicator, which highlights the fact that credibility is receiver-based. That is to say, credibility does not reside in a source. It is bestowed on a source by an audience. However, these impressions of the audience are affected by the statements and actions of a source, thus the source has a degree of influence over perceptions of its credibility. Since credibility of sources is a major medium of power control and social influence, it provides a useful avenue for exploring the relationship between public diplomacy's foreign public opinion management strategies and their relation to sport mega-events.

Credibility is a multi-dimensional construct. More specifically, Pornpitakpan (2004) and Cronkhite and Liska (1976) have identified three major dimensions of credibility that are relevant in the context of this research on public diplomacy and sport mega-events. **First**, expertise, which is also referred to in the literature as competence or qualification, signifies the degree of technical knowledge about the issue at hand, competence in dealing with the issues, and capability of making the best decision on that issue. Perceived competence and honesty of the entrusted entity liberates it from the constant process of assessment of the outcomes of actions and the control of the decision making process (Renn and Levine 1991). By shortcutting normal control mechanisms, trust, and later on confidence (based on positive experience with granting trust to a specific social actor), can be a powerful agent for efficient and economical performance of social tasks.

In their study of the decline of confidence in American institutions Lipset and Schneider (1983) found a low correlation between the perception of institutional competence and the desirability of the tasks and goals that the institutions were performing. The institution people like most received low ratings on competence and vice versa. Although sympathy helps to attain

credibility, perceived competence alone may be sufficient for gaining trust. But the lack of sympathy makes people more critical towards the actual performance of the institution. Mistakes are more likely to be forgiven if the communicator can count on a sympathetic audience.

Following this last point, Matejko (1988) and Midden (1988) found that erosion of organizational credibility was often linked to incompetence, poor performance, incomplete or dishonest information, withholding of information, obscure and hidden decision-making process, denial of obvious problems, and denial of vested interests. However, credibility can be enforced by: good performance, fast responses to public requests, consonance with highly esteemed social values, availability for communication with outsiders, and demonstration of public control over performance and money allocation (Lipset and Schneider 1983).

The **second** key dimension of credibility is trustworthiness, which refers to the degree to which an audience perceives the assertions made by a communicator to be ones that the speaker considers valid (Pornpitakpan 2004). Trustworthiness is distinct from trust and can be described as a characteristic of an entity. The key element in this conceptualization is the motivation of the communicator, i.e. whose interests the communicator has at heart, or the sincerity and reliability of the communicator.

Trust in communication refers to the generalized expectancy that a message received is true and reliable and that the communicator demonstrates competence and honesty by conveying accurate, objective, and complete information (Sweeney and Swait 2008). Renn and Levine (1991) argue that trust relies on the following five components: perceived competence (degree of technical expertise assigned to a message or a source); objectivity (lack of biases in information as perceived by others); fairness (acknowledgement and adequate representation of all relevant points of view); consistency (predictability of arguments and behavior based on past experience

and previous communication efforts); and faith (perception of “good will” in composing information). Renn and Levine (1991) argue that the lack of compliance in one attribute can be compensated by a surplus of goal attainment in another attribute. If objectivity or disinterestedness is impossible to accomplish, fairness of the message and faith in the good intention of the source may serve as substitutes. Competence may also be compensated by faith and vice versa. Consistency is not always essential in gaining trust, but persistent inconsistencies destroy the common expectations and role models for behavioral responses. Thus, trust cannot evolve if social actors experience inconsistent responses from others in similar or even identical situations.

The **third** dimension of credibility is goodwill, or perceived caring. To be perceived as credible, a source must convey respect for others and a genuine interest in their well-being. In a study of attitude and attitude change McGuire (1985) found that sympathy or empathy of the receiver with the source enhances the persuasiveness of a communication in that it gives the receiver a possibility to identify with the source or its motivations. In addition, Eagly et al. (1998) posit that when receivers do not detect any hidden agendas or motives behind the communication effort it leads to the suspicion of honest motives and results in an enhanced persuasiveness of communication. The perception that the goals and motives of the source serve a common interest or refer to highly esteemed social values, such as protection of the environment or public health, enhances public confidence in the communicator, but reinforces distrust if the task performance of the communicator is perceived as weak. People invest more trust in the communicator in the beginning, but tend to be more disappointed if the outcome did not match their expectations (Tetlock 1986).

Understanding public diplomacy as a way of engagement between political entities and foreign publics assumes that every aspect and activity of public diplomacy necessarily includes a communication element. This communication dimension of public diplomacy may take an overt form of international broadcasting and a subdued form of communicating through actions. The goal of public diplomacy in shaping public opinion assumes a persuasive factor, and as argued earlier, credibility is the key element in the persuasiveness of communication. In the context of shaping public perceptions and attitudes, as well as building and maintain national image, the issue of credibility becomes very important, since it allows connecting with the world in a cooperative manner and acting in trust. Gass and Seiter (2009) argue that projecting credibility is the vital task of public diplomacy in the context of restoring tarnished national image. Indeed, credibility is one of the key goals of public diplomacy. However, what Gass and Seiter envision as credibility projection does not reflect theoretical research to date that states that credibility is bestowed upon the source by the audience and is accumulated over time. Credibility cannot be conceptualized in the same way as promotional messages and images, or a campaign.

Kasperson (2001) and Renn and Levine (1991) have found a correlation between institutional credibility and demonstration of cost-effectiveness in achieving institutional goals. This is clearly illustrated by swinging political orientation of democratic governments as an indication of perceived public loss of credibility of governmental budget policies and achievements. Institutional credibility is linked to the perception of being open to public demands as well. These two goals of cost-effectiveness and public openness are often in conflict with each other (Kasperson 2001), but they have to be treated as complementary, and not as goals that can be substituted. Fairness and flexibility are major elements of openness. In addition to assuring sufficient external control and supervision, public participation may be implemented

as a means to demonstrate compliance with the political mandate and to avoid the impression of hidden agendas.

Legitimacy

Public diplomacy scholars are turning to the examination of legitimacy in international affairs due to the growing importance of soft power. The question of legitimacy has been raised in regards to numerous regimes and state practices, acts of humanitarian intervention and other violence, and various international institutions (Goddard 2006, Tucker & Hendrickson 2004, Franck 2006). Despite this increased attention, legitimacy appears to lack a coherent academic meaning and interpretation. Legitimacy seems to signify some crucial and reasonably discreet feature of political life, something that political actors want, that they ought to be and are eager to seek, and that the rest of us (subjects, citizens, peers) will recognize and respond to (Mulligan 2005). The meaning of legitimacy draws in varying degrees on the concepts of moral and epistemic right, legality, custom, tradition and popular approval. It is common, thus, to present legitimacy as a question of whether some practice or institution accords with a particular set of (moral, legal and social theory) criteria according to which it, or its legitimacy, is judged (Mulligan 2005, Gilley 2006-1, Bitektine 2011). For this reason, various facets of the meaning of the term legitimacy have been used, referring to the resource to be held or traded (Litfin 1997), a perception to be described (Hurd 1999), or an authoritative judgment (Bernstein 2011).

Legitimacy is often used in the academic literature to refer to some specific quality in political life (Coicaud 2011). Association of legitimacy with the law or rule places it central to any rule-guided social setting, with the struggle over the right to make law, or “whose right” will

be transmitted into law at the forefront (Mulligan 2005). Thus, legitimacy is both the object and the tool of battle in political sphere, and is often discussed within power-relations paradigm.

Two bodies of literature contribute to the study of legitimacy and public diplomacy. First, the concept of legitimacy is central to *political science*, because it pertains to how power may be used in ways that citizens consciously accept (Gilley 2006-1). In this sense it is at the core of political organization of the society and the basis of creation of political community (Coicaud 2011). Gilley (2006-1: 500) conceptualized state legitimacy as a right of the state to hold and exercise power as perceived by its citizens. Central to this understanding is the idea of “right”, which refers to shared standards of moral or legal behavior, justice, etc., or more generally—common interests. Therefore, once standards that transcend individual and partial interests are established, the state’s performance on normative and moral levels is evaluated to establish its rightfulness.

Beetham (1991) proposed three constitutive elements of state legitimacy. First, *views of legality*, which refer to the idea that the state has acquired and exercises political power in a way that accords with citizen views of customs, laws and rules. The importance of this element lies in generality and predictability of rules, which lead to predictability in social life even when such rules entrench injustices. Second, *views of justification*, refer to the moral evaluation of the state along the lines of conformity to shared principles, ideas and values, or as a citizen response to the moral reasons given by the state for the way it holds and exercises power. The justification is based on the shared framework of belief or moral congruence between the state and its citizens. Third, *acts of consent*, refer to positive actions that express citizen’s recognition of the state’s right to hold political authority and an acceptance to be bound by the decisions that result.

Consent is thus directed to the political authority itself, and the compulsion that it implies, rather than at its specific consequences (Gilley 2006-1: 503).

Gilley (2006-1) operationalized state legitimacy evaluation into 34 causal variables, covering political, economic and social hypothesis. The cross-national study (Gilley 2006-2) revealed a strong correlation between legitimacy and 3 determinants: general governance (a composite of the rule of law, control of corruption and government effectiveness), democratic rights (which include gender equality and other human rights) and welfare gains (a dynamic variable reflecting the economic performance of the state over time)—as universal, distinct and politically manipulatable factors of state legitimacy. Politics and politically mediated social and economic outcomes expressed in state's effectiveness and material advance, and followed by the promotion of democratic rights seem to matter most to legitimacy (Gilley 2006-2: 58), thus bringing the performance of the state to the forefront of international evaluation of state legitimacy and informing public diplomacy efforts.

However, as utilized in political science, state legitimacy focuses on citizens of the state and internal legitimation of authority, which poses a challenge for developing legitimacy theory in public diplomacy context. International relations literature considers legitimacy as applied to the international system and transnational actors such as United Nations or World Trade Organization (Mulligan 2005). Yet, public diplomacy is concerned with the relationships between political entities and foreign publics, hence it needs to turn to social sciences and international relations to inform how it can incorporate legitimacy into research and practice.

The second body of literature guiding the study of legitimacy and public diplomacy presents legitimacy as a discreet *socio-behavioral* quality that can be observed and manipulated. It is central to the studies of organizations and authority types (Deephouse and Suchman 2008) in

the context of the claim on scarce resources (Ruef & Scott 1998), because it contributes to compliance by providing an internal reason for an actor to follow a rule, a sense of moral obligation, the perception of the control as approved or right (Hurd 1999: 387). In this sense, legitimacy is a behavioral construct, which represents a common act referred to as approval or acceptance or promotion, conducted with an attitude of favor, preference, devotion or faith (Mulligan 2005: 368), and results in conformity to social standards, or compliance with a rule. Within this context, Suchman (1995: 573) defines legitimacy as a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions. This definition is important because it underlines the contextual, cultural origin of the standards of appropriateness; for this reason for legitimacy to exist there needs to be a community, and the fact that legitimacy makes sense within it is clear evidence that such a community actually exists (Clark 2003).

Legitimacy has a distinctly subjective quality in that it is relational between actor and institution, and is defined by the actor's perception of the institution (Suchman 1995, Hurd 1999, Elsbach 2000). The operative process in legitimation is the internalization by the actor of an external standard present in the community. A rule becomes legitimate to a specific individual, and therefore behaviorally significant, when the individual internalizes its content and re-conceives his or her interests according to the rule. Compliance then becomes habitual (Walker et al. 1985, Hurd 1999). The power of legitimacy is shown when an actor complies with a legitimate rule that goes against its interests, at least as perceived by an outside observer, since the rule has affected the actor's own definition of its interests, not just the value of payoffs of the different option (Elsbach 2000). This exactly reflects the goal of public diplomacy, which seeks to engage with foreign audiences and influence their attitudes and beliefs toward certain issues.

Once changed, these attitudes can legitimize the initiator country's actions and policies, and create consent.

Legitimacy may serve as a device of social control because social order depends on the existence of a set of overarching rules that are to some degree internalized, or considered to be legitimate, by most actors (Walker et al. 1985). Not only do these rules set goals, or preferences, for each member of society, but they also specify the appropriate means by which these goals can be pursued (Zelditch 2001: 49). This is an important consideration for public diplomacy in the context of soft power, because the sets of overarching rules that govern social order in different societies vary. As a result, achieving public diplomacy goals require legitimate policies oriented to target audience, as well as strategies and action plans congruent to perceptions of appropriateness of the means by which these policies are pursued.

While legitimacy is often defined as a belief held by individuals, Walker et al. (1985) posit that legitimacy is a product of collective action. It is the collective aspect of legitimacy that is most helpful in the context of public diplomacy, because public diplomacy seeks to influence attitudes and behavior of groups and communities. It is at the same time problematic, because legitimacy-seeking agent is not necessarily a part of the community. International focus of public diplomacy activities requires an understanding/examination of communities, which do not necessarily follow the structure and operation of communities on national levels: relationships are more fluid and fragmented; large distances and large number of community members make communication problematic and prone to interference; and such communities lack devices of social control. Nevertheless, Zaharna's (2010) assertion that public diplomacy should aim at engaging with publics and operate through networks reflects the need for public diplomacy to

achieve legitimacy goals concerning particular policies, politics or acts by creating a sense of community around issues.

Deephouse and Suchman (2008) address the community deficiency in international affairs by underlining the role of media as a cultural bridge between societies and as a rich indicator of society-wide legitimacy. Media reports not only reflect but also influence the opinion of general public. Therefore media rightfully play an important role in legitimacy efforts of public diplomacy both as an indicator of legitimation by society-at-large and as a way to incorporate the legitimacy-seeking agent and target community. For example, participation in global sport movement, and to a greater extent—hosting sport mega-events—ensures that a nation participates in a socially constructed and internationally approved system of sporting norms, values and rules. Sport mega-events give nations access to foreign media, improve its visibility, and create a sense of participation in a global community, which in effect may bestow a level of legitimacy on the nation and its policies.

While social science distinguishes three objects of legitimation—persons, positions and acts (Walker et al. 1985, Elsbach 2000)—public diplomacy focuses on the legitimation of political entities (institutions), policies and acts. Hurd (1999: 388) observes that the “inherently contestable political power will seek justification to secure consent, at least from the most important among subordinates”. The need of the powerful to legitimate their power may be explained by the efficiency of legitimacy when compared to costs of enforcement implied by coercion. In the context of soft power, legitimacy acts as a form of social influence and control through endorsement and normativity (Walker et al. 1985, Suchman 1995, Hurd 1999, Elsbach 2000, Deephouse and Suchman 2008). Endorsement (person-specific legitimacy) indicates attitudes of group members toward the exercise of influence by a given actor, specifically

group's satisfaction with the use of power by the power holder over collective decisions, group's support for policies and leadership, and group's willingness to maintain the power holder's position of influence within the group. As such, endorsement applies to a specific person, or actor. Endorsement accrues on the basis of performance, specifically competence—ability to deliver group-valued outcomes—and equitableness—concern for the welfare of the group members. Michener and Burt (1974) show that higher levels of perceived leaders' competence correspond to higher levels of endorsement accorded to them. Concurrently, higher levels of perceived leadership fairness produce higher levels of endorsement. At the international level, Buchanan (2011) demonstrates that high level of incompetence correlates to loss of legitimacy of a state. Therefore, public diplomacy activities which aim at projecting competence and equitableness may lead to increased influence of the nation in attaining its foreign policy goals through the vehicle of endorsement (group support).

Normativity (position-specific legitimacy), as a source of legitimacy, refers to influence exercised through the invocation of organizational rules (Deephouse and Suchman 2008). It designates the prerogatives inherent in an organizational role and denotes influence based on understandings regarding the demands an authority can impose on other members (Walker et al. 1985). Normativity arises from organizational rules, which designate the reciprocal prerogatives and obligations or social positions in an organization; they stipulate procedures for making decisions, solving problems, and settling disputes (Michener & Burt 1975). The presence of sanctions in the rules provides the basis for influence and compliance. One group member may invoke certain rules as a means of achieving desired behaviors from another member, because members value the social approval and continued group membership contingent upon compliance. Thus, normativity refers to legitimate prerogatives residing in a position or

institution. Michener and Burt (1971) show that normativity serve as a base of influence, since compliance is not likely when directives fall outside normative boundaries; but when the directives of power holder's are covered by normative arrangements, compliance increases.

In the context of public diplomacy, normative legitimacy translates into importance of collective consensus on the set of rules. This is illustrated by Ham's (2010) assertion that legitimacy relates to a shared and mutual sense of trust and sense of community. It is best illustrated by the existence of such international regulatory bodies as United Nations, World Trade Organization and the Olympic Committee, which were constituted and are guided in their activities by sets of collectively agreed rules. What is more, these rules not only apply to the actions and policies of members of such organizations but also are viewed as generally acceptable and endorsed norms. For example, the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights serves as a judgment tool on how these rights are preserved, promoted, neglected and violated by the states.

Another way to illustrate normative legitimacy is to look into democratic society, where delegated decision-making perceived by the community as successful leads to social trust and a degree of community identity predicated by the belief that those on behalf of whom the decision was made have a stake in it and that this decision is binding (Franck 2006, Franck 1988). The degree to which legitimacy is available and achievable depends on the perception of decisions being made on behalf of the community. Normative legitimacy derives from formal democratic credentials, the mechanisms of accountability and representativeness, or the possibility to translate public displeasure into power change (Hurd 1999). However, the normative basis that should sustain both the process of decision-making and its outcomes is lacking at the international level (Buchanan 2011, Clark 2003). For example, there are no direct democratic

electoral mechanisms to replace leaders of international organizations or international policy networks. Yet, Hurd (1999) suggests alternative processes to achieve normative legitimacy internationally.

First, employment of expertise-based decision-making process within a clear legal structure may lead to legitimacy. Ongoing demonstration of the capacity to deliver good outcomes builds perceived competence and may lead to the ability to influence (Coicaud 2011). The claim for legitimacy of many international organizations is based on the organizational competence and validation by external independent experts (Hurd 1999).

Second, legitimacy may derive from policy-development processes based on robust dialogue and transparency (Gilley 2006-1). It is derived from a structured and inclusive dialogue, a thorough debate, which takes into account different perspectives, and achieves a sense of collective ownership of the final policy outcome. The collective perception of the quality of the decision-making process determines the willingness of actors to accept the decision, and thus its legitimacy. The main consequence if legitimacy is that compliant behavior is not longer based on rational calculations, but on the internalized conviction that conformity is right and necessary. In this sense Hurd (1999: 385) asserts that legitimacy is the result of social interaction between states.

As a public diplomacy concern, identifying legitimate institutions in international society can contribute to the state's definition of its national interests. To the extent that a state accepts some international rule or body as legitimate, that rule or body becomes an "authority", with the power to influence both state's goals and the means to achieve those goals (Hurd 1999, Clark 2003). The same holds true not only on the transnational level, but on the level of interactions between states—a country that is capable to establish its policy as legitimate at the international

level can obtain a certain measure of the freedom of action and exert influence (Coicaud 2011). However, it is important to recognize that legitimacy may confer power, but should not be equated with it. Ham (2010) asserts that legitimacy is a powerful method to justify foreign policy actions and to gather support for them. For this reason, continual contest for legitimacy, at both transnational and international levels, characterizes modern international system (Hurd 1999).

Both social and political science provide useful perspective to incorporate legitimacy into public diplomacy research and practice. The following common elements emerge: first, normative legitimacy (following rules) and second, pragmatic legitimacy (delivering results). Public diplomacy initiatives that seek to enhance the perception of the state as normatively and pragmatically legitimate may turn towards hosting sport mega-events, because it provides opportunities for the state to demonstrate its adherence to international norms and rules (Olympic and other – like human rights) and showcase competence and fairness. Therefore, in the following section sport mega-events will be examined.

Sport Mega-Events

The concept of sport "mega-events" refers to specially constructed and staged international large-scale cultural and sport events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance (Roche 2000). The Olympic Games is a prime example. Such events are publicly perceived as having an “extra-ordinary” status, among other things, by virtue of their very large scale, the time cycles in which they occur and their impacts. Contemporary mega-events have two central features: first, they are considered to have

significant consequences for the host city, region and nation in which they occur, and, second, they attract extensive media coverage (Horne & Manzenreiter 2006).

Close (2010) characterizes mega-events as consisting of three principal dimensions: the economic, the political and the cultural. As such, mega-events have global economic, political and cultural presence. Close (2010: 2977) argues that only events satisfying these dimensional criteria can be called “mega”. Alternatively, Roche (2000; see also Lowes, 2002, 2004) posits that defining mega-events requires a view from two perspectives: internal characteristics — duration and scale (i.e. number of participants and spectators, number of individual sessions, levels of organizational complexity), and external characteristics — media and tourism attractiveness, and impact on the host city. For Roberts (2004: 108) what defines certain events as “mega” is that they are “discontinuous”, out of the ordinary, international, and simply big in composition. What Roberts refers to as “mega” have the ability to transmit promotional messages to billions of people via television and other developments in telecommunications. “Megs” have attracted an increasingly more international and diversified viewership. An estimated television audience of 3.8 billion people, for example, watched parts of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games, which were broadcast in over 220 countries and territories (IOC 2010).

Whitson (2004) and Horne (2004) identify three main reasons, which account for the expansion of the sport mega-event industry on a global scale. **First**, developments in the technologies of mass communication have created unprecedented global audiences, which in turn have boosted revenues for the organizing committees of sport mega-events from the sale of broadcast rights. Indeed, where the television rights for the 1976 Montreal Games sold less than

US\$30 million, and Los Angeles 1984 Olympics for US\$240 million, by the 2000 Sydney Games this figure had risen to over US \$1billion (Roche 2000).

The **second** reason, which accounts for the expansion of the global sport mega-event industry, is the formation of a sport-media-business alliance that transformed professional sport into a product promotion vehicle (Horne & Manzenreiter 2006: 5). Through the idea of packaging sponsorship rights, exclusive broadcasting and merchandizing, sponsors of both the Olympics and the football World Cup events have been attracted by the association with the sports and the vast global audience exposure that the events achieve. Additionally, sponsorship agreements by Olympic host cities create even further opportunities for making money. Hence the 2008 Olympic in Beijing, organizers have created three additional tiers of support at the national level: Beijing 2008 Partner, Sponsor and (exclusive) Supplier (Horne & Manzenreiter 2006: 8).

The **third** reason, which accounts for the expansion of the sport mega-event industry, is that hosting mega-events is perceived as being valuable promotional opportunities for cities and regions, which are linked to various strategies pursued by states in their attempts to increase their visibility and prestige (Tranter and Lowes 2009; Horne 2007; Horne & Manzenreiter 2006; Whitson 2004; Allison & Monnington 2004, Hall 2001). As with the case of 1976 Olympics, the strategy of Montreal to demonstrate to the world its emergence as economically booming and cultural vibrant city was clearly articulated by local and national political elites. The aspiration to make Montreal a global destination for tourists and investors saw the Expo '67 and the Olympics as a promising way to accomplish this by stimulating investments in international hotels and shopping in Montreal, coupled with the state-of-the-art public infrastructure (Whitson 2004: 1219). The strategy was based on status and prestige of a world class city conferred as a result of

extensive media coverage of the events and the urban charm of Montreal, coupled with personal experiences of the visitors.

In one form or another sport mega-events have established a significant popularity and memorability in modern society independent of the periodic shifts and transformations in societal environments (that is, sets of economic, technological, political-legal and socio-cultural variables which determine the functioning environment of a particular society) and the political controversies that can surround them (Roche 2003). The popularity of cultural mega-events, especially in the field of sports, commands the understanding of factors underpinning this phenomenon. The enduring and growing mass attractiveness and media appeal of sport mega-events raises the question of their significance for a country's public diplomacy as well.

From a survey of the extant scholarship on the role of sport mega-events in the practice of contemporary public diplomacy, three dominant perspectives emerge. The **first** perspective implicitly excludes sport mega-events from the sphere of public diplomacy on the grounds that they are not explicitly government activities, frequently do not have policy objectives themselves, and don't focus the attention on the host country beyond opening ceremonies (Redeker 2008, Dimeo and Kay 2004). A **second** perspective conceptualizes sport mega-events as popular international occurrences that have substantial cultural value and possess the potential to draw attention to the host country, thus making them a significant consideration within public diplomacy (Black and Westhuizen 2004, Potter 2009, Hogan 2003). This perspective, however, only regards sport mega-events as a catalyst for other public diplomacy activities, recognizing the lack of control any government has over such an event, except its organization. Finally, a **third** perspective places sport mega-events in the center of public diplomacy strategy, recognizing the influence such events can have on the international publics in light of

globalization and consumerism (Petropoulos 2011, Finlay and Xin 2010, Dowse 2011). This perspective acknowledges sport mega-events as a tool of public diplomacy in itself, therefore they have a potential to be strategically used to influence public opinion abroad and to attract publics to the values, culture and policies of the host nation. Public diplomacy recognizes such important elements of sport mega-events as opening and closing ceremonies, association with international sporting organizations, and reputation accrued as a result of successful organization of sporting events.

Additionally, while some researchers and government commissions have looked into the relationship between Olympic Games host nation's reputation and public diplomacy (The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade 2007, House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee 2011), limited research efforts have been made to establish further significance of hosting sport mega-events for country's public diplomacy. However, Preuss and Alfs (2011) endeavored to establish correlation between hosting sport mega-events and the perception and image of the host; and Lee (2010) assessed the role of the Beijing Olympics in changing public perception of China abroad. Matheson and Baade (2004) and Rein and Shields (2006) explored the potential of sports mega-events in improving international image and perception of developing nations on the examples of FIFA World Cup and Cricket World Cup. Dowse (2011) explored the political and social motivations of enhancing the role and influence in international affairs of both developed and developing nations in staging sport mega-events. Bolsmann and Brewster (2009) identified developmental rhetoric, regional leadership aspirations and legacy as primary motives for hosting sport mega-events in developing nations, such as Mexico and South Africa. Szondi (2008), L'Etang (2006, 2009), Rockower (2008, 2011) and Magdalinski (2000) studied sport mega-events as one of the tools of managing national

reputation and national image within larger public relations frameworks. Allison and Monnington (2002) explored the role of sport as a means of gaining prestige in international relations. While reconciling these different views of public diplomacy and sport mega-events is beyond the scope of this work, they are important to recognize as they lead to varied interpretations of the literature and, ultimately, the conclusions, which can be drawn.

Economic dimension

The “legacies” — whether social, cultural, environmental, political, economic or sporting — are the greatest attraction but also form part of the “known unknowns” of sports mega events (Horne, 2007). They create the “allure of global games” — perhaps especially for developing economies (Black and Westhuizen, 2004). At the same time it seems evident that forecasts of the benefits are nearly always wrong. Notwithstanding Preuss’s (2004) economic “commonsense”, since the 1976 Montreal Olympics especially, a major public and academic concern in considerations of sport mega-events has been the gap between the forecast and actual impacts on economy, society and culture. Whilst the general academic consensus regarding the impacts of mega-events is that there are both positive and negative outcomes, a review of the literature on the socio-economic, socio-cultural, physical and political impacts of Olympic Games concludes that “economic benefits are the prime motive” for interest involved in hosting them (Malfas et al., 2004: 218).

Benefits of sport mega-events include positive impacts on employment (or rather unemployment), additional spending in the community hosting an event, visiting tourist/spectator numbers, the “showcase effect” (Hiller, 1989: 119) of media coverage of an event locality, and

some (usually unspecified) impacts on the social condition of the host community (Lowes, 2004, 1999). Crompton (1995: 16) defines economic impact of an event as the net economic change in the host community that results from spending attributed to the event. In this sense, the direct income of sport mega-events does not necessarily contribute to the economic development of the host community, but rather covers the organization expenses. The economic contribution of sport mega-events lies primarily in possibilities they provide for increasing the awareness of the city or region as a tourism destination and the knowledge concerning the potential for investment and commercial activity in the region. Thus, Malfas et al. (2004) posit that sport mega-events can attract more investments and visitors, and consequently create new jobs and contribute to the economic growth of the city or region.

Flyvberg et al. (2003) suggest that promoters of multi-billion dollar megaprojects, including sport stadia and other infrastructure, may often consistently, systematically and self-servingly mislead governments and the public in order to get projects approved (see also Lowes, 2002 and Tranter and Lowes 2009). The tendency to overstate the potential economic, as well as social, benefits of stadium development and hosting sports events has been detailed by several academic researchers from the UK and the USA (Gratton et al. 2006, Black 2007, Bolsmann 2010). With respect to megaprojects there is a similar fantasy world of underestimated costs, overestimated revenues, underestimated environmental impacts and over-valued economic development effects. More often than not power play, instead of commitment to public discussion, is often what characterizes megaproject developments (Andranovich et al. 2001).

Research concerned with the evaluation of socio-economic benefits associated with a particular sporting event has looked into the effects of the event-related job creation on the unemployment rates of the host region (Migueluez and Carrasquer, 1995), the effects of the

visiting spectators and the media-related advertisement on the tourism industry of the host city or region (Pyo et al. 1988, Kang and Perdue 1994, Tudge 2003), as well as the effects of the event on the social standards of the host community (Eitzen 1996, Lenskyj 2000). These impacts are important consideration for public diplomacy, since they affect the image of the host abroad, and the perception of the competence of national government in dealing with the event-related issues. For example, the way international media reported on the social issues of migrant workers and massive displacement of residents associated with 2008 Beijing Olympics projected an image of China abroad as authoritarian and indifferent to social issues (Tuke 2008). These negative reports overshadowed positive stories on Chinese economic growth, exemplifying that public diplomacy must take into account the full complexity of sport mega-events impacts when developing communication strategies.

The issue of job creation has generated a number of studies due to the fact that sport mega-events can generate large numbers of jobs. This employment is directly associated with the organization of the event itself, as well as in the tourism and retail industry as a result of the increased volumes of spectators and tourists. The construction associated with the major infrastructural development required by the staging of such sport mega-events as the Olympic Games contributes to the increase of jobs as well. Matheson (2008) claims about 3,500 new jobs were created in association with 1996 Atlanta Olympics infrastructure improvement. Official figures of new jobs and unemployment rates in Atlanta and Barcelona in the period running up to their respective Olympic games show considerable general improvement in these areas (Malfas et al. 2004). However, Shimmel (1995) points out that sporting events create service-related jobs that are often part-time or low-paying (see also Lowes, 2002, chapter 2). Concurrently, Hiller (2000) and Miguelez and Carrasquer (1995) prove that the majority of jobs generated in the

periods leading up to the event are low-paying and short-lived, and only a limited number of new permanent jobs are created.

The aspects of the broader economic development of the host city, region and occasionally even country, invariably include tourism industry which experiences significant increase stimulated by the staging of sport mega-events. Dobson et al. (1997) report significant spending increase in the period of the event on hotels, travel and food, while Knopp and Standeven (1999) show a correlation between hosting a sport mega-event and growth of destination tourism. However, Kang and Perdue (1994) and Pyo et al. (1988) reviewed the tourism impact of hosting the Seoul Olympic Games over long-term period and have found out that their overall effect was neutral or negative. Morphet (1996) argues that media plays a vital role in creating an awareness of the host city or region, which may translate into increased tourism. Ritchie and Smith (1991) have found out that the hosting of 1988 Winter Olympic Games had a dramatic impact on the levels of awareness and knowledge of the city of Calgary in Europe and the United States when compared to other Canadian cities. However, media coverage of the sporting event cannot guarantee the host an improved tourism image (Lowes, 2004; Mossberg 1997), since destination image is an individual's mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings and overall perception of a particular destination. However, sport mega-events-related tourism development strategies dominate governmental discourse and initiatives (Leveraging Canada's Games 2008, House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee 2011, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade 2007).

Malfas et al. (2004: 213) suggest that the economic contribution of sport mega-events may be in the single impulse of increased demand during the period of the event, and consequently it might lose its effect in a short period of time. For example, they show that

Australian's National Industry Outputs in construction, communication, accommodation and recreational services peaked in the year of 2000 Sydney Olympics and returned to the pre-bid levels the year following the Games. Moreover, the effects of the economic growth generated from such events can lead to negative changes on the lives of economically disadvantaged residents, as illustrated by Hall and Hodges' (1998) study on the effect of sport mega-events on the house market and land values. The research shows that compulsory purchase of land for clearance and building of event-related infrastructure leads to a rise in rents and house prices and negatively impacts people living on low incomes in these areas (Malfas et al. 2004, Cornelissen et al. 2011).

Other negative socio-economic impacts include the eviction of residents from public housing projects and consequent demolition, conversion of homeless shelters into backpacker accommodations, and dislocation of homeless from city center prior to and during the event (Beaty 1999). As a result, sport mega-events, such as the Olympics, could serve to exacerbate social problems and deepen existing divides among residents (Ruthheizer 2000).

Cultural dimension

Roche (2000) studied mega-events trying to understand the causes for their popularity and came to a conclusion that they provide important cultural resources for the organization of time and identity at both personal and a societal level. He argues that, on a personal level, mega-events serve as temporal or cultural markers (like fashion decades or wars), thus serving as time-structuring and history-making institutions; that is to say, people link periods in their lives in relation to readily identifiable and highly memorable spectacular major events.

Mega-events and spectacular sport culture generally provide people with enduring motivations and special opportunities to participate in collective projects which have the characteristics of, among other things, structuring social space and time, displaying the dramatic and symbolic possibilities of organized and effective social action, and reaffirming the embodied agency of people as individual actors, even if the latter is only displayed in the activity of spectatorship (Manzenreiter 2006, Katz and Liebes 2007, Roche 2006, Horne and Manzenreiter 2006). However, they occur outside of the annual cycle and outside of the cultural spheres, traditions and rituals of nation-states, rarely appearing more than once a generation (“once in a lifetime”) for the citizens of any given host nation. For this reason they have the potential to exert a popular appeal (Roche 2000). On a national historical level, the staging of an international mega-event was and remains important in the “story of a country”, a people, a nation. They represent key occasions in which nations could construct and present images of themselves for recognition and relation to other nations and “in the eyes of the world”; in which national “tradition” and “community”, including a national past, present and future (national “progress”, potential and “destiny”) could be invented and imagined not just by and for leaders and citizens of the host nation, but also by and for the publics of other nations (Rivenburgh & Giffani 2000, Horne and Manzenreiter 2006).

Sport mega-events are complex cultural constructs, and have a potential to deliver cultural benefits for the host region. It has been claimed that sporting events of the Olympics size can increase local interest and participation in sporting activities (Ritchie 1984), strengthen regional traditions and values, and increase local pride and community spirit (Essex and Chalkley 1998). Increased sports participation can make a significant contribution to the quality of life on individual and community levels. According to Hooper (2001), sport participation

provides a sense of well-being through fun and enjoyment, leading to self-fulfillment and achievement, and encourages social interaction and cohesion for those who may feel socially excluded. In Barcelona, in the years following the hosting of the Olympic Games the participation in active sports by various social groups substantially increased. Truno's (1995) explanation of residents' enthusiasm is rooted in the increased civic pride and community spirit triggered by the 1992 Olympics.

Morphet (1996) suggests that hosting sport mega-events can create a sense of national purpose, national unity and national pride. This improved social cohesion on a national level may contribute to a stronger national identity. National identities are complex—analysts have spoken of the production of imaginary coherences (Poulantzas 1973), imagined communities (Anderson 1983) and of the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Concurrently, media coverage of sport mega-events plays a significant part in the construction of national identities, which clearly and visibly have considerable prominence in the process of cultural mapping and representation (Dayan and Katz, 1992). Media representation of sport reflects and affirms national identities as well as characteristic stereotypical images of other nations (Horne et al. 1999). Therefore, hosting sport mega-events has the potential to project a powerful image of a nation both domestically and abroad.

While recognizing sport mega-events as a tool of national social cohesion and public diplomacy, it is important to highlight the competitive nature of such events, which celebrate the basic values of competition and winning (Horne and Manzenreiter 2006). People watch and follow sport mega-events to see if “we” (the nation) win or loose. Successful performances of athletes are celebrated, while defeats are regarded as national embarrassment, due to the fact that athletes are seen as representatives of the country (Houlihan 2000). The competition aspect of

such events is further reflected in media's close attention to medal count tables, and nationalistic narratives of the country's performance as an indicator of its sporting prowess and even international standing. Higher medal scores are almost invariably interpreted in terms of country's international importance and power in comparison to others; such interpretations are a staple feature of media coverage of such events (Lowes, 1999, 1997). Thus, it can be argued that the competition between nations intrinsic to sport mega-events invariably separates people on the international level along the "us-others" axis (Tomlinson and Young 2006).

Additionally, sport mega-events stimulate transformation of the architectural landscape of host cities through extensive infrastructure improvements, construction of new sporting facilities, building of new roads and development of public transport networks. These developments provide residents with improved open air spaces, quality leisure facilities, accommodation and changes to the look of the city (Matheson & Baade 2004). However, Lenskyj (2000) points out that the set deadlines for the construction of venues and the completion of infrastructure support are often used by local politician as an excuse for major constructions to bypass the usual stages in urban development applications, including social and environmental assessment, public hearings, and so on (Chalip 2006, Whitson & Horne 2006, Benit-Gbaffou 2009). This oversight may cause environmental damage, undermine natural resources, or destroy socially important urban spaces. The speed with which facilities are required to be built may cause other public works projects to be delayed or displaced, due to the redirection of state funding (Cashman 2002, Westhuizen & Swart 2011). Since local governments primarily cover the cost of construction of the event-related infrastructure, it stresses the role of governments and politics in hosting sport mega-events.

Political dimension

The staging of sport mega-events is a costly endeavor, and oftentimes the costs of the supportive infrastructure and operating expenditures cannot not be covered by revenue from the ticket sales, sponsorship or television rights. For this reason, significant economic contributions from government are required to ensure the development of necessary infrastructure and sometimes for economic bailouts to the organizers to cover their operating costs. Significant economic reliance on public funds makes the local, regional and even national government a core constituent of the event's organizing committee. Moreover, the decision to bid for hosting a sport mega-event is frequently initiated and backed by governments, with the motivation of gaining economic, physical or other benefits (Nauright 2004).

The political process of decision-making to bid for the right to host a sport mega-event involves not only the interests of political leaders but also those of private, profit-oriented interests (Whitson & Horne 2006, Tomlinson 2010). These spectacular events are often credited with mobilizing corporate elites and local politicians in profitable alliances that not only can boost local construction and retail and tourism industries, but can also generate substantial infrastructure funding from higher levels of government (Matheson & Baade 2004, Horne 2007). As a result, these alliances require justification for the tax money expenditures, so they engage citizens in persuasion campaigns to support bids for the right to host a sport mega-event. However, a large number of scholarly studies have shown that taxpayers disproportionately bear the burden when they give consent for the use of tax money for the staging of sport mega-events (Eitzen 1996, Matheson & Baade 2004, McHugh 2006, Whitson & Horne 2006, Gratton et al. 2006, Westhuizen and Swart 2011).

For example, Toronto's bid for the 2008 Olympics and the policy of the bid committee regarding sporting facilities was primarily focused on the needs of professional sport, with little regard to improve local larger sport policy (Toronto 2008 Bid Operating Budget; Hiller 2000: 440). Moreover, the Olympic bid proposal presented to the Toronto City Council did not have an estimate of the cost of bidding for the Games; a list of the names of the backers of the Bidding Committee; a reliable estimate of the cost of staging the Games; a plan for the public participation process; the environmental review process; the social impact assessment process; or a detailed financial strategy for the Games (Hall 2003). Yet the unquestioning belief in the competitive economic and political benefits of hosting such large-scale events motivated 54 out of 56 city councilors to vote for the project (Moloney and DeMara 2000).

The inclusion of elected representatives in the organizing committees of sport mega-events puts conflicting pressures on these individuals to represent taxpayers' interest on the one hand, and profit-oriented interests on the other (Whitson & Horne 2006). Politicians can help bypass extensive bureaucracy to keep projects on target and on budget, at the same time, the same members as government representatives cannot criticize or intervene in the government decisions bearing directly on the event. For example, Michael Knight's dual role as the Member of Australian Parliament and Cabinet Minister for the Olympics and the Chair of the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games prevented him from criticizing the Government's handling of the Sydney water supply contamination resulted from the Olympic construction works, and its serious implication for Olympic tourism (AP 1998, August 27; Malfas et al. 2004).

While economic and developmental benefits of staging sport mega-events come to the forefront of political discourse, such events serve national governments as tools of expression of

political ideologies both nationally and internationally (Hill 1992). Historically, this has been particularly so for authoritarian regimes, as with the Nazi's use of the 1936 Berlin Olympics as a justification for its racist and anti-Semitic policies, and 1980 Moscow Olympics as a promotion or showcase of communism. Guttman (1988) argues that from Helsinki in 1952 to Montreal in 1976, there was a widely held perception that the Games were a continuation of politics by other means. Allison (1986) suggests the following reasons why sport is intimately linked with politics and power: sport creates politically useful resources (agency of political socialization: building character, successful competition), sport can promote nation-building (establish identities, claim nationhood, establish nation-state boundaries), and sport can assist in international image-making.

Sport is ideologically symbolic – the way sport is perceived is guided by a certain view of the world (Lowes, 2004, 2002, 1999, chapter 6). For example, both USSR and USA had neo-imperialist hegemonic aspirations. Coupled with political, cultural and military influences these powers have for decades harnessed sport mega-events for distinctly propaganda purposes, showcasing the perceived superiority of the respective social and political systems, reflected in the sizes of sport teams and medal counts (Redeker 2008). The same can be said about modern sport mega-events, where political ideological expression is present, but in a less evident way. Today, the competition for hosting events is driven by the desire of states to prove their ideological alignment with the larger part of the Western world, and thus accruing the legitimacy of a world player (Franck 2006, Sharp 1999). Connected to the political expression of ideologies is the political and cultural conflict within and among nations (Allison and Monnington 2002). Sport mega-events were utilized as processes and arenas for such conflicts, as illustrated by the exclusion of Jewish athletes from German team during the Berlin 1936 Olympic Games on the

grounds of racist Nazi ideology (Cottrell and Nelson 2010: 10); and the use of sport and sporting success in international competitions by the USSR to showcase the superiority of the communist way of life both domestically and internationally.

Even though political elites created these events and used them to try to communicate ideological messages to the masses in the form of “popular education”, nonetheless in doing so they also created a new form of public arena for exercising knowledge interests, personal freedoms and civil society (Close, 2010). Allison and Monnington (2002) posit that sport mega-events play a significant role in facilitating and guiding actions, ideas, communication, and codes of conduct in the public sphere (distinct from the individual and the state). For example, the exclusion of South Africa from international sporting contacts was grounded in internationally condemned racial segregation policy of apartheid between 1948 and 1994. The international boycott of apartheid sport proved to be a powerful means for sensitizing world opinion against apartheid and in mobilizing millions of people against the regime. These boycotts in some cases helped change official policies, and eventually led to IOC’s declaration against apartheid in sport on June 21, 1988 (Houlihan 2000, Booth 2003).

In the international political sphere sport mega-events continue to play a significant role in facilitating interactions and communication between states. These events have been and remain important elements in the orientation of national societies to international or global society (Mulligan 2005) and to the legitimation of states. For example, Roche (2003) asserts that mega-events played an important role in the development of national and international politics and culture in the West from the late 19th century. In his view, international cultural events helped to create a fragile space, in which “official” versions of collective identities, particularly but not exclusively national identities, were asserted and recognized in an international “world of

nations”. A vivid example of this is the struggle of German Democratic Republic (GDR) to be admitted to the IOC between 1948 and 1965 as a separate legitimate National Olympic Committee from the Federal Republic of Germany (Balbier 2009). During this period, numerous attempts at creating a unified German team were made, but the harder West Germany tried to display a national sporting unity, the harder the GDR battled to include its own national symbols, such as flags and hymns, asserting its sovereignty as a state (Strenk 1980, Houlihan 2000, Redeker 2008). This represents the patterns of national self-understanding and interpretations of national representation in both German states, and how the desired versions of separate or unified German collective identities were asserted and recognized by the IOC and the Olympic Movement internationally.

Continuing in this historical vein, mega-events have served nation-building and national culture, identity and citizenship construction functions for both elites and publics in early modernity (mid-late 19th century to First World War), and these functions survive down through to the contemporary “late modernity” period (Roche 2000). For instance, it remains the case that the ability of a nation to send representative teams to compete against the other nations of the world on the stage of an Olympic Games, and to do so recurrently in the Olympic Movement’s mega-event calendar, is a much sought-after symbol of nationhood and of recognition (MacAloon, 1984). This is even more the case in terms of the ability of a nation to act as a host for an Olympic Games. The continuing significance of strong association with the Olympic mega-event for national history highlighted by actually staging the event is evident in the tense intercity and international competitiveness that is associated with the bidding processes to win the right to stage Games events (Roche 1994, Nauright 2004).

The development of the Olympic Games in the early twentieth century was connected to the rise of various versions of nationalism and nation-state-building movements (Tomlinson & Young 2006, Toohey & Veal, 2007, Houlihan 1991, 1994). Historically, national governments were always significantly involved in the organization of mega-events. They were also always involved in the financing of these events, which often made considerable losses. In spite of the fact, national governments continue to encourage and sponsor these official forms of grand public spectacle and theatre (Roche, 2000, Black & Westhuizen 2004, Matheson 2004, Malfas et al. 2004, Whitson 2004), because political leaders regard mega-events as an efficient platform for the international projection of positive images of hosting nations.

However, the involvement of national governments and national prestige in these events—coupled with their immense conceptual ambition—makes them always at least vulnerable and even risky political and ideological projects. Their long planning lead times and their inflexible timetables expose sport mega-events to short-term political conflicts and crises both on domestic front but also on the international front. Finally, their basic two-dimensional structure—as both national and international events—simultaneously presenting a national face to the outside world and to the domestic public, makes it difficult to predetermine their ideological contents, impacts, and the use to which people put them. This may help explain why sport mega-events are prone to political signaling actions such as boycotts, and to actions of political dissent such as protests and even terrorism (Houlihan 2000, Katz and Liebes 2007).

Summary

This chapter surveyed selected current social and political sciences academic works, which can assist in the study of public diplomacy and sport mega-events. Public diplomacy scholars have identified country reputation, credibility and legitimacy as significant aspects of the practice, yet their assessment and measurement tools are still being developed. Moreover, public diplomacy scholars recognize strong cultural and political force of sport, yet there is little focus in the literature on sport mega-events in the context of public diplomacy. Therefore, borrowing and adapting relevant research from the fields of public relations, international relations and sociology was not only justified, but also necessary.

In the following chapter, I turn to the empirical examination of the role hosting sport mega-events play in public diplomacy. I aim to illustrate the effect sport mega-events have on influencing public diplomacy efforts of hosting nations, the impact of hosting sport mega-events on country reputation, credibility and legitimacy.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Method

The research design and method for this thesis are located within the paradigm of qualitative research and the logic of inductive analysis. More specifically, I employ a “case-oriented approach” (Eid & Lagacé, 2007, p. 184), which relies on the collection of data that “are separated and categorized based on emerging patterns observed by the researcher” (Stewart, 2002, p. 143). A qualitative approach has been selected to guide the imperatives of this thesis. The legitimacy and rationale for this approach is grounded in Creswell’s (1994) assertion that a qualitative approach is favourable when a research problem is characterized by one or more of the following three criteria: i) when a concept is immature due to a conspicuous lack of theory and previous research; ii) when a need exists to explore and describe the phenomena and develop a theory; and/or iii) when the nature of the phenomena may not be suited to quantitative measures. It must be noted that while the subject of this thesis remains a relatively undeveloped topic within the current literature — and is therefore exploratory in nature — the deductive logic of a quantitative approach concerned with the measurement of variables and testing of hypotheses is unsuited to fulfilling the objectives set out for this thesis.

Working within the qualitative paradigm, an **exploratory research design** was employed for the empirical component of this thesis. In general terms, exploration is a distinctive way of conducting social science. It is characterized by "an open character and an emphasis on flexibility, pragmatism, and the particular, biographically specific interests of an investigator"

(Van Maanen 2001: vi). More specifically, Stebbins (2001: 3) defines social science exploration as a "broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life."

For the empirical component of this thesis, a **convenience sample** was drawn from two well-defined **populations**: (1) all 48 Olympic Games (Summer and Winter combined, including the 2012 Summer Games), and (2) all 19 FIFA World Cup soccer events. A convenience sample is not a non-probability sample; that is to say, no attempt is made in their construction to sample randomly from a well-defined population, such as we have in this study. It is a widely accepted principle in the social sciences that the possibility of gaining scientific knowledge from data contributed by a convenience sample is limited but not precluded by its non-randomness. Thus, convenience sampling is ideally suited to social science exploration.

For this thesis, the following cases were selected for examination: for the Olympic Games, Sydney 2000, Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010; and for the FIFA World Cup, South Africa 2010. With respect to the latter, the South Africa 2010 World Cup was selected specifically because 1) South Africa has long history of interplay between international affairs and sport; 2) South African bid for the 2010 World cup was prominently set within public diplomacy, and specifically—legitimacy—, discourse, which was recorded in the press and academic literature; 3) South African 2010 World Cup was one of the most recent events of its kind hosted within national borders, and provided ample empirical material on its public diplomacy efforts reflected in the press reports and academic literature. Yet, it would have been possible to examine 2000 Sydney and 2008 Beijing Olympic Games against the argument of international legitimacy of the host nation, if not for two issues. First, while primarily positive, Australian experience is difficult

to support by the evidence given a wide time gap between the event and data collection, and general lack of availability of the official documents in electronic format. And second, Chinese experience supports negative relationship between hosting a sport mega-event and improving international legitimacy, thus limiting the exploration of this particular relationship within public diplomacy context.

The purpose of inclusion of FIFA World Cup events was not to compare or juxtapose experiences of various sport mega-events hosts. The goal of drawing examples from various types of sport mega-events was to explore general and common impacts between hosting sport mega-events and public diplomacy. For this reason, I take an approach in this thesis that does not discriminate between Olympic Games and FIFA Soccer World Cups, but rather views them as similar and comparable types of sport mega-events.

In terms of **method**, after careful consideration of the wide range of social science methods of data collection typically utilized in qualitative research, **documentary analysis** was identified as the method most appropriate for data collection and analysis. In general, documentary research constitutes the analysis of “any written material that contains information about the phenomenon we wish to study” (Bailey 1994, p. 294). One of the primary goals of conducting exploratory research is to generate thick, rich, detailed explanations of the phenomenon that is being investigated; this approach to research is largely a descriptive one. Consequently, for the present study primary and secondary public domain sources were collected and analysed for each of the specific cases identified in the sampling process.

A wide range of documentary sources was surveyed. Sources were selected on the basis of their probable utility, though not through any rigorous selection criteria (consistent with the

tenets of exploratory research). Specifically, data were “harvested” primarily but not exclusively from the following documentary sources:

- government publications, newspapers, news agencies reports, independent research publications by non-governmental organizations, non-fiction books and magazine articles, and other written sources in paper, electronic or other formats;
- reports by the IOC and FIFA;
- pre- and post-event reports produced by Olympic and World Cup organizing committees;
- Olympic and World Cup Bid Books;
- reports by host cities’ organizing committees (e.g. VANOC), press coverage, reports produced by Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT), Canadian Tourism Commission, Canadian Heritage Department, Canada’s Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Australia’s Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, UK’s House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee;
- transcripts of speeches by political leaders;
- reports produced by municipal governments of Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup host cities;
- BBC World Service public opinion polls, Simon Anholt’s Nation Brands Index;
- scholarly publications.

With respect to **data analysis**, it must be noted that there was no formal structured approach to document analysis, as one would utilize with, for example, content analysis and

focus group techniques. Rather, themes were identified and developed with a view to compiling and assessing evidence from each particular case. These were then considered in light of the theoretical points developed in the review of literature.

A consequence of this exploratory research design and method is that this thesis necessarily lacks empirical results and statistical analysis that can be otherwise replicated or adapted to a larger sample for purposes of generalization. Nonetheless, despite this limitation, the resulting exploratory analysis serves to provide a solid foundation for guiding future research on this relatively undeveloped aspect of the broader critical study of public diplomacy. Future research directions into this topic of public diplomacy and sport mega-events, grounded in the findings presented in this thesis, are outlined in the final chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

This chapter assesses the validity of theoretical points developed in the course of literature review on public diplomacy and sport mega-events on the basis of empirical evidence. Specifically, I examine how the hosting of an Olympic Games and a FIFA World Cup contributes to the mobilization of soft power resources and the projection of national image by host countries. I also explore the empirical evidence of the correlation between hosting sport mega-events and impact on state reputation, credibility and legitimacy as perceived by foreign publics. These considerations will focus on the deliberate actions of states within public diplomacy mandates and the public representation of perceptions of these actions by foreign publics as reflected in media reports.

Mobilizing Soft Power

A major point of consensus in the academic literature on sport mega-events reviewed in Chapter 2 is that hosting such events as the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup provide governments with an effective way to mobilize soft power resources in their practice of public diplomacy. In empirical terms, the historical records of politically charged events include 1936 Berlin Games, which aimed at showcasing the superiority of the Aryan race and projecting an image of rising Germany; and Moscow 1980 Games, which endeavoured to prove the systematic

advantage of Communism in both organization and athletic performance (Kessler 2011, Toohey & Veal 2007). Moreover, nations have traditionally seen opportunities of hosting sport mega-events as windows into their economy, culture, and ideology, and as a way of presenting certain image of the nation to the outside world. Therefore, hosting a sport mega-event is typically viewed by political leaders as a key element in contemporary practices of nation branding and as a way to remain prominent in the international arena.

However, achieving foreign policy objectives through the staging of sport mega-events has taken on a different shape since the end of the Cold War rivalry. The foreign policy objectives of countries such as Canada have shifted from mediation, conciliation and peacekeeping to multilateralism and human security (David & Roussel 1998, Nye 2004, Welsh 2006, Batora 2005, Prosper 2006). Therefore, governments consider staging sport mega-events within soft power paradigm of public diplomacy, where opinions held by foreign publics about a nation influence policy choices. Sport mega-events present an attractive public diplomacy opportunity because such spectacles are highly malleable to political influence in terms of agenda-building and frame setting strategies.

Putting this last point in empirical terms, the entertainment appeal of the Olympic Games invariably secures media attention, providing a virtually free global stage for public diplomacy's agenda building. The host has an opportunity of selecting an agenda associated with the Olympic Games, such as environmental impact, and working towards achieving the goals of the agenda throughout the hosting process. Thus, the agenda becomes the focus of communication about the host, and an Olympic host has almost total control over the messages communicated throughout the bidding and preparation stages, opening and closing ceremonies, organization of the event, and the particularities of the Olympic Broadcast. However, by announcing the agenda voluntarily

the host is inevitably publicly judged against the presented agenda, which leads to the formation of public opinion.

The Summer Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia (2000) and Beijing, China (2008) provide evidence of the respective governments' public diplomacy initiatives in mobilizing soft power resources of the nation for foreign policy goals tied to their hosting the Games. Exploiting cultural heritage, geographical features, artistic talent and national values were characteristic of both Australian and Chinese public diplomacy approaches. However, the Australian and Chinese Summer Olympic Games took place under different political (and other) circumstances and therefore rendered different public diplomacy results.

The Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games were used strategically by the Australian government to mobilize soft power resources in the practice of public diplomacy. The objective was to update and invigorate an image of Australia on the international circuits of tourism and to achieve greater influence in international politics (Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade, 2007, Dennis 2000). Between the time the Games were awarded to Sydney in 1993 and the time they took place in 2000 Australia found itself in the middle of the economic restructuring connected with the government's budget shortfall and a looming Asian economic crisis, as well as social turmoil triggered by indigenous and migrant issues that were threatening the near homogeneity of Australia's political and social landscape (Simpson 1996, Bridge 1996, Sullivan 1998, AP 1998, January 27). Hosting the Games provided a useful cultural focal point around which images of the Australian nation could be generated and projected abroad. Allison and Monnington (2002: 110-111) argue that the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games were a great success, which was evident in the atmosphere of genuine enthusiasm and hospitality and effective organization of the event. The Games were credited with enhanced tourism and

investments as well as with a tremendous lift in self-esteem to the relatively isolated continent (Brown et al., 2002), which in turn enhanced the status and opportunities for individual Australians. Securing the Olympics and staging them successfully was widely regarded as being good for Australian citizens, Australian society and the Australian nation at large (Allison and Monnington 2002, Brown et al. 2002, Magdalinski 2000).

In terms of the image projected abroad, Australia was able to achieve an image of a confident “happy country”. Anholt (FCO 2011: Ev 5) asserts that the Sydney Olympics told one very simple, very compelling story about the kind of country Australia was, and people believed the story and loved it. Australia previously had somewhat weak, but generally positive reputation, therefore an Olympics had a strong long-term effect. It raised Australia’s visibility and strengthened its positive image abroad. However, Allison and Monnington (2002: 111) caution about the danger of equating 2000 Sydney Olympics benefits of status and prestige with enhanced power of the Australian state in its important relations with Indonesia and the United States. Australia’s enhanced soft power capacity is indicative of an international system that allows states and regions to place their interests primarily in their brand image rather than in any sense of power or control over the rest of the world. Such a system places greater significance on the economic and social aspects of inter-state relationships than on aspects associated with political control or ideology, therefore stimulating nations to seek opportunities of inter-state engagement less obviously associated with political processes.

The Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games provides a contrasting example of the effect hosting sport mega-event can have on a country’s ability to mobilize soft power resources to achieve specific public diplomacy goals. The roots of Chinese public diplomacy lay in the country’s political culture, which upholds an image of virtue and morality as the foundation of a

stable state (Finlay & Xin 2010, Chen 2010). Also of central importance in Chinese public diplomacy is the concept of “face”, which blends personal honour, moral worth and social prestige (Cull 2008: 126). These cultural concerns underpin Chinese contemporary efforts to improve the nation’s international standing by projecting and maintaining a favourable image (Xu 2006: 97). China bolsters a 5,000-year-old culture, which seems to positively engage foreign publics, and has the world’s second strongest economy. Yet, China’s image is hostage to the reputation of its manufacturing exports and memories of the repression of the Tiananmen protests, the cause of Tibet, censorship and religious persecutions. With this in mind, the Chinese government approached the organizing and staging of the Beijing Olympics with a belief that the Games could be used to educate the world about modern China and foster an environment of friendly public opinion (Xu 2006: 92). The plan was built around the blend of the ancient Chinese culture with images of modern China and the ideals of the Olympic movement (Cull 2008: 135).

Simultaneously the Chinese government faced several challenges in terms of the projection of national image: the opponents to the regime emphasized the extent to which China had not changed and remained a repressive one-party state (Lee 2010: 208), Reporters Without Borders campaigned on the poor Chinese human rights record and censorship, and the Free Tibet canvassed with the image of the Olympic rings formed by bullet holes (Tuke 2008). Criticism of the China’s failure to live up to its public diplomacy rhetoric of a modern society aligned with international norms resulted negatively on its soft power capacity. In a study of the effects of hosting 2008 Beijing Olympic Games on China’s brand image in Hong Kong, Lee (2010) shows a regression of over 71% in human rights level perception from 2005 to 2009 with Hong Kong respondents concerning China’s delivery on the promise of improving human rights situation

associated with Beijing Olympics. The U.S. State Department's criticism of China's human rights record in 2009 Annual Human Rights Report also demonstrates the failure of the Chinese government in harnessing its soft power capacity to improve its international image and influence (O'Callaghan 2009).

Tuke's (2009) research on the attempts of the Chinese government to engage in active public diplomacy activities during the year leading up to 2008 Beijing Olympic Games shows that Western media frames its reports within Western ideology, and any deviation from the Western norms and values by the Chinese government is almost invariably characterized as failure. One of the facets of this incongruence of cultural values between China and the West is the fixation of the Western media with social issues in general, and the status of human rights in particular. While the West ranks improving human rights far ahead of changes to environmental policy or trade, and believes that a country's human rights situation contributes to the appeal of a country's cultural values, Chinese officials deny the existence of so-called human rights concern (Hu and Xi, AFP 2012, February 14). According to Chinese perception, the most basic right is economic, which China maintains it provides (Sweeney 2008). Moreover, China believes it made significant progress in terms of raising political awareness of the middle classes and establishing mechanisms of petitioning to central government through judicial reforms.

However, many human rights activists believe these changes occurred in spite of, not because of the Olympic Games, and that the event has actually brought more repression, as the pressure of the Games organization needs forced Chinese authorities to evict close to 1.3 million residents out of Beijing as part of the city's cleanup campaign, and displace further 1.5 million residents to make space for the Olympics (*The Economist*, 2008, July 31). Attention in the Western media was given to reports around China's poor treatment of its migrant workforce,

repressions in Tibet, and China's capital punishment record. Concessionary gestures like the release of Tiananmen protestor Yang Hianli were quickly overtaken with graphic reports of repression (*Reuters* 2008, June 2). China's attempts to avoid and suppress negative news often had the opposite effect, with protests to the human rights situation escalating (MacLeod 2009). China's sluggishness or unwillingness to link up with international standards on human rights marked its public diplomacy failure in the West. Curiously, despite negative reports and criticism in the West, China maintained its image of respect and admiration in countries with non-democratic governments; hence China's decreasing interest in Western approval and greater connection with non-Western nations (Yongnian 2008).

The decision of the Chinese government to pursue and ultimately land the 2008 Olympics in Beijing represent a risk in choosing the event platform in re-branding the nation. The Chinese were determined to use the Olympics as a window into their progress from a third-world country to a powerful free market economy. In doing so they have constructed new sports facilities, public transportation infrastructure and a terminal at the airport that cost far beyond projected \$40bn (*Business Week*, June 2008). At the same time, they are wrestling with massive pollution problem, transportation challenges, civic and civil issues of behavior, and a reputation of an authoritarian government with little tolerance for free speech (Xiangwei 2006, Batson 2005). While it may be optimistic to argue that a successful Olympic staging has helped to resolve all of these issues, China made a significant progress in a global showcase of an elaborate branding effort.

Credibility

As discussed in Chapter 2, sport mega-events provide host country's with unique opportunities to prove at the international level its ability to efficiently organize large-scale events, effectively manage public and private funds, foster cooperation between public and private sector, and secure public approval. In other words, sport mega-events can be utilized by nation-states to improve public image of a nation, and thus the persuasiveness of public diplomacy messages; in sum—sport mega-events constitute a form of country credibility management. The general focus in the scholarly literature reviewed in Chapter 2 concerning the mechanism of credibility management is on the perceived expertise, trustworthiness and goodwill of the communicator, and in the case of sport mega-events—the host nation. According to Renn and Levine (1989), the credibility of a country can be improved through the vital factor of performance, and not public relations; confidence can be gained by meeting the institutional goals and objectives, which in effect may steer public image and credibility in a positive direction, and enhance persuasiveness of public diplomacy communication.

On this point consider the Sydney 2000 Games, which are regarded as successful for several reasons. First, the predicted trouble spots of inefficient public transport system, airport congestion, city traffic, and security threats did not eventuate, and during the Games the public transport ran smoothly (Magdalinki 2007). Second, huge crowds witnessed the running of the torch adding a community dimension to this media event, effectively uniting Australians to embrace the Olympic Games. Third, the Sydney Olympics were marked by genuine enthusiasm and party atmosphere both by the Australians and visitors (Chandrasekaran 2000). Fourth, over 47,000 volunteers presented a cheerful face of the Olympics and ensured its smooth staging (Vecsey 2000). Fifth, even though the Sydney Olympic Games did not generate income, they

were not a financial burden on the New South Wales State Government. As a result, both Australians and international public saw Sydney Olympics as well-executed. Australia has evidently attained its goal of staging a successful event, and projecting an image of fun-loving nation, thus proving its credibility as an efficient, modern, and developed nation (Allison & Monnington 2002: 110).

Conversely, *not* achieving institutional goals and objectives can impact adversely on institutional credibility. For example, the controversy around the environmental degradation connected with preparing for and hosting the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics was based on the claim the organizing committee made during the bidding process stating that Vancouver could stage one of the cleanest, greenest and most sustainable Games ever held (Vancouver 2010 Bid Book: 57, 217). In direct contrast to this argument, the widening of the Sea to Sky highway destroyed the Eagleridge Bluffs, a rare and highly sensitive ecosystem which is a nesting area for bald eagles, a refuge for an endangered frog species, and home to centuries old Douglas fir trees (Winstanley 2010). In addition, the often harsh and uncooperative weather conditions during the Games has forced Olympic organizers to transport hundreds of truckloads of snow from hundreds of miles away, which worsened the carbon footprint of the Games, and put the claim of the greenest Games ever held under international public criticism. As a result, domestic and international public opinion was skeptical about Canadian claims on being able to deliver environmentally sustainable Olympics (DSF 2010). The information that was circulated in the media gave the impression of Canada as full of environmental rhetoric and empty on action, thus negatively affecting Canadian credibility as environmentally conscious nation (*Reuters* 2010, February 3).

In the literature review developed in Chapter 2, Gass and Seiter's (2009) two key characteristics of credibility were examined. Here they are examined empirically in application to the case of the modern Olympic Games. In their particular formulation the concept of credibility is both (1) dynamic and (2) situation-specific and culture-bound.

The **dynamism** of credibility is rooted in public perceptions, which reflect the understanding of the actions of the leaders of organizations and organizational expertise. The fact that credibility is conferred on the source by the audience and springs from a trusting relationship means that the audience closely monitors the actions of the organization and its leaders to gauge whether credibility should be withdrawn or maintained. This also means that an organization cannot be negligent towards credibility management, since absence of the efforts in the maintenance of public perceptions sends the signal of indifference and may lead to the drop or loss of credibility.

For example, the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics provide an illustrative point of reference in gauging Canadian credibility internationally. Amid generally positive and cheerful media reports immediately upon the award of the Games in 2003 Canada sustained an image of a developed, democratic, and financially stable nation to host 2010 Winter Olympic Games (Wilson 2003, AP 2003, February 28, AP 2003, July 2). IOC praised Canada's "fundamentally sound" and "fully guaranteed" finances, "historic" concepts for indoor opening and closing ceremonies, strong public support, "very good" experience in organizing large multinational events and "professional and ambitious" dedication to the environment (*Canadian Corporate Newswire* 2003, May 2). Vancouver clearly demonstrated its competency as an Olympic city (AP 2003, February 28), and has won the chance to host the Games on technical merits alone (Wilson 2003). Moreover, Canada had a proven record of expertly staging Winter Olympics in

1988 and cultivating Olympic champions (Hume, 2007). IOC favorably reviewed Vancouver's Olympic planning process (Christie 2004), while members of the visiting committee were impressed by Vancouver's progress on venue construction and the harmonious cooperation between First Nations representatives and politicians on local, provincial and federal levels (AP 2005, April 7). In addition, IOC president Jacques Rogge defended the Vancouver Organizing Committee's decision to ask local businesses to stop using the Olympic logos, saying that the organization's symbols need to be protected from improper use. He also saluted Canadian scientists for uncovering new steroid designed to avoid detection in standard doping tests (Hainsworth 2005). Together, these above-mentioned media reports echoed and solidified Canadian credibility of a promising and committed Olympic host.

However, in 2007 negative media reports started appearing concerning the issues of media housing, soaring construction costs and potential environmental impacts (*Vancouver Sun* 2007, July 9). The unveiling of the count-down clock in the heart of Vancouver city attracted anti-poverty protesters who were demanding the redirection of provincial and federal funds from the Games into social housing and meeting other social needs (Mickleburgh, 2007, AP 2007, March 7). The coalition of social, labour and environmental groups issued a report which criticized the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee, the City of Vancouver, the province and the federal governments for failing to adequately address housing, environmental, civil-liberties and public-expenditure issues (Hume, 2007). This discontent led to public display of dissent and protests (Diebel 2008, AFP 2010, February 8), which were admitted by the Trade Minister David Emerson to have the potential to "somewhat contaminate the impression people get" about Canada (Goar 2008).

The steady decline of Canadian credibility associated with the handling of the 2010 Winter Olympics project was catalyzed by the death of Georgian athlete Nodar Kumaritashvili the day before the official opening of the Games. This tragedy has propelled international media into closer scrutiny of Canada's commitment to deliver secure, efficient and environmentally-conscious Games. Media reports said that the safety of the sliding track, which claimed the life of the luger, was overlooked in favor of the faster speeds, and that organizers evidently did not do enough to ensure safety of the athletes (AFP 2010, February 12). Violent protests during the torch relay and after the beginning of the Games turned the attention of the international media to dissenting anti-olympics voices concerned with financial, social and environmental issues (AFP 2010, February 8, AFP 2010, February 13). What more, media reports in the UK caught the attention of Mark Adams, the director of communications for the IOC, who observed that British press has focused too heavy on inevitable mishaps during the competitions (Donegan 2010, Topping 2010), and that such attention detracts from the achievements of the Olympic host and the event itself.

Nevertheless, media scrutiny was well-anticipated due to the promises Canada gave during the bidding process (Goar 2008). In the case of Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, the actions of the organizers, and even Canadian Government, were closely monitored and evaluated against stated goals in relationship to the event. Since credibility is granted in direct proportion to achieved results, the dynamism of credibility as conferred by the audience is observable through the actions of the organization. Canada started out strong on delivering on its promises to host secure, well-organized and environmentally friendly Winter Olympics, but due to organizational mistakes accelerated by the unfortunate chain of events and weather conditions, Canadian credibility as an adequate Olympic host has suffered erosion.

The second key characteristic of credibility is its **situational/cultural** specificity. A source's credibility is subject to change depending on the context and circumstances. A leader or an organization can enjoy high credibility under one set of circumstances and experience a significant drop in credibility in a different context, with the audience remaining the same. For example, after the tragic earthquake of May 12, 2008 shook China's Sichuan province, the Chinese government temporarily freed media access, allowing the world to share in the nation's grief (CBC 2008). The image of the Chinese nation improved dramatically, as the world's reaction to the disaster represented a positive mix of sympathy for the victims and admiration for the government's response. The immediate arrival of Prime Minister Wen to the scene, deployment of thousands of troops and acceptance of aid from Japan, Taiwan and Russia considerably improved international attitudes (Tuke 2009). For several weeks international publics genuinely believed that the earthquake had changed China's concern and respect for human life (Schiller 2008).

However, not everyone was convinced of the pure motives of the Chinese government, recognizing that the earthquake provided the government with much-needed positive pre-Olympic Games publicity (Tuke 2009). Several weeks later, the relaxation in media freedom came to an end, as government started to shut down web-sites critical of its policy and place limitations on foreign journalists. The brief tide of good will from the international media turned towards human rights issues, particularly for the thousands of parents left childless when poorly built schools collapsed (*The Economist* 2008, July 31). Opinion of the government lowered to speculation that the official response was nothing more than a pre-Olympic public relations stunt (Tuke 2009). China's leaders remained unprepared to compromise their control over criticism.

As a result, the earthquake was unable to bring sustained international approval China was seeking by hosting 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Against this background it is reasonable to conclude that the credibility of the Chinese government in caring for the earthquake victims was subject to situational assessments. Three months before the opening of the Beijing Games international media was focused not only on the preparations for the event, but on the way the Chinese government was handling domestic human rights and civil liberties. Chinese government in its turn put a lot of effort into seemingly unsuccessful international public opinion management in connection with the Games. The earthquake tragedy may have provided China with an opportunity to redeem its image internationally. The immediate response of the Chinese government seemed to turn the tide of criticism around. However, had the earthquake happen at a different time, and the Chinese government responded the same way, international media may have not been so acutely skeptical about the motifs of Chinese officials, providing a boost to the credibility of the Chinese “evolution”. Nevertheless, in the light of intensive public relations activity surrounding 2008 Beijing Olympics, the actions of the Chinese government were perceived as misleading, causing a drop of credibility. In this sense, the situational aspect of the Olympic Games dictated the perception of Chinese credibility in relation to the earthquake response.

The consensus in the academic literature on organizational credibility reviewed in Chapter 2 on the significance of performance leads to the conclusion that demonstration of expertise leads to higher levels of organizational credibility. One such way to prove competence is to demonstrate cost-effectiveness of organizational activities. However, cost-effectiveness facet of credibility is problematic in application to hosting sport mega-events. The economic costs for the host city, region and even country are almost always greater than officially

forecasted, with public funds usually covering gaps in the budgets of these events. Consequently, the cost-effectiveness of such events invariably becomes an issue of often rancorous and divisive public debate (Malfas et al. 2004, Preuss 2004, AFP 2010, February 8).

For instance, Toronto's bid to host 2004 Summer Olympics went through a round of public debates, and the planned allocation of investments and public funds was highly scrutinized and criticized to the point of the bid being aborted (Whitson 2004). The credibility of the organizing committee may have been negatively impacted. However, the inclusion of the public in the discussion of the bid and the decision not to go through with it can be perceived as a credibility credit for the organizing committee in terms of openness and compliance with the mandate to have as big a positive social impact as a result of staging the Games as possible (Hall 2006; Lowes 2002).

Reputation

Governments utilize spectacular sport mega-events to promote various domestic political and economic agendas in an international arena. As discussed in Chapter 2, this is achieved both by participating in such events and by staging them. Key functions of public diplomacy related to sport mega-events are national image and reputation management, which are developed to their full potential when a country hosts a sport mega-event. At this point it is useful to restate the argument that national image and country reputation are related concepts and are used in conjunction. National image is concerned with mental representation of a country, or the sum of beliefs and impressions (opinions, attitudes and stereotypes) people hold about a certain place. Country reputation, on the other hand, is not about generating ideal and to some extent random

images about a nation. Country reputation is about demonstrating how the country manages to first fulfill and then shape the expectations of key publics with respect to competence, integrity and attractiveness.

The complexity of the sport mega-events staging and management, in addition to the considerable financial commitments and stringent requirements of international sporting organizations, often place such events outside the reach of the majority of nations. For these reasons, being given a chance to host a sport mega-event is considered a certain privilege, a recognition of political, social and economic development of a nation (Finlay & Xin 2010). The nature of sport mega-events and their global media reach provide hosting nations an international platform to demonstrate competence in staging, managing and financing complex events; an opportunity to showcase social integrity and alignment with international norms and practices; and a potential to position a country as an attractive and unique tourism and investment destination.

Functional reputation

Environment provides an insightful perspective in judging competence. Consider the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics as a prime example. In its 2000 bid for the Games China announced environment protection and improvement as one of the three major themes of the Games. It promised to provide an environmentally healthy event for the athletes and to control the environmental impacts during the event preparation, including construction, energy consumption, waste and water management. Moreover, Beijing had plans for using

environmental management during the event as a catalyst for citywide long-term improvement of environment conditions (Bid report 2000: 49-63).

In empirical terms, this environmental theme is a peculiar one for China, which is home to the seven most polluted cities in the world with Beijing among them. Beijing has a history of struggling with air and water pollution, and environmental damage associated with the fast pace of urban development (BBC 2000, February 2). The Premier of the China State Council, Zhu Rongji, had a plan to clean Beijing's air prior to the Olympics bidding process, but those plans were mainly concerned with eliminating wood-burning stoves, coal-firing factories and outdated automobiles, as well as controlling dust from constructions and demolitions. These modest measures achieved a certain degree of success in cleaning up Beijing's air with up to 70% of the days in 2000 reaching "slight pollution" level or better (*Xinhua General News Service* 2000, November 12). However, other environmental problems, such as water pollution, waste management and green spaces were not tackled.

Beijing's 2008 Olympic bid aimed at investing over \$12.2 billion into transforming Beijing into an environmentally conscious city, with the plans to reduce atmospheric pollution by 50%, improve waste and water management, expand and improve public transit, and cover at least 50% of the city in greenery (Bid report 2000). Yu Xioaxuan, deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau, admitted that Beijing's goal is to have good environment not only during the Games but also after the Games, making the interests of ordinary citizens in the city the priority (*Xinhua General News Service* 2000, November 12).

These Olympic-driven clean up efforts were remarkable and worthy of praise. During the Olympic countdown in Beijing, millions of cars were taken off the roads, coal-fired power plants were converted to natural gas and 200 smoke-producing factories were relocated. Over the

course of the Olympiad air-quality control measures had included strict driving restrictions, a halt to construction activity and temporary shut down of factories around the city (AFP 2008, September 21). Beijing had delivered on its promise to provide healthy conditions for the athletes. During the days of the Olympiad, air quality reached its highest and main pollutants were down 50%. Beijing had the best air in decades (AFP 2008, September 1). As a result, Beijing organizers have won IOC's Award for Sport and the Environment for the initiatives in heightening awareness of environmental issues, leading to major advances in the areas of energy consumption, sustainable water consumption, transportation, waste management and air quality (*News Press* 2009, April 1). The Beijing Games set a significantly higher standard of incorporating sustainability in large-scale events.

In terms of functional reputation management, China in general, and Beijing in particular, had a simple strategy of delivering on its promises of hosting a "Green Olympics", since it is possible to translate policies into numbers and evaluate conditions before, during and after the event. The results clearly stipulate, that Beijing has succeeded in implementing energy conserving technologies in Olympic facilities, improving public transit, switching public transportation to alternative sources of energy, providing better water and waste management in the Olympic village, and achieving a drastic, however temporary, improvement in air quality during the Games (AP 2009, February 18). It is fair to consider Beijing and China as successfully improving their reputation on the basis of competence in tackling environmental issues in preparation and during the 2008 Olympics.

However, one month following the Games Beijing was already enveloped in thick haze from the resumed manufacturing and construction activities and from the exhausts of over 3.3 million automobiles on the roads (AFP 2008, September 21). In summer 2009 the air quality

index published by the US Embassy in Beijing had catalogued “unhealthy” air readings most of the time (Martin 2009). Both city dwellers and international observers agreed that the completion of new subway lines, curbing of factory pollutions and some driving restrictions, coupled with the slowing economy, had helped Beijing to maintain cleaner air; however, it was still far from internationally-acceptable standards (Tran 2009; Martin 2009). Despite the fact that Chinese authorities have achieved a lower air pollution levels during the Games, the results prove to be temporary. Moreover, Greenpeace representatives cautioned that Beijing’s experience in air pollution control did not provide cost-effective policies that could lead to long-term results and be replicated elsewhere (Martin 2009). Beijing still needs to reduce its reliance on coal for energy and expand its water conservation measures to the entire city (AP 2009, February 18). United Nations Environment Programme report (2009) recommended Chinese authorities to adopt the same environmental measures it used for the 2008 Olympics to the rest of the country. However, Olympic environmental measures are not being followed through in Beijing and greater China. This kind of backsliding, or temporary and geographically confined resolution of the environmental issues, put China into the spotlight of international criticism. Consequently the reputation capital it worked so hard to earn was in the danger of being quickly spent.

By committing themselves to addressing directly internationally salient environmental issues in their Olympic bid, Beijing 2008 organizers set themselves an exceptional task, given the Beijing situation. By alerting the world to the city’s current pollution level, they encouraged international criticism not only of the host city, but also of the host country in general. The Western media was suspicious of China’s sincerity in promoting “Green policies” focusing instead on China’s previous reputation as a “climate villain” (Harrabin 2007). The cleaning efforts were concentrated in one municipality, with the rest of China still polluting the

atmosphere, water and the land. The impressive measures adopted in Beijing unnerved observers, as the international community contemplated on the short-term appearance of these measures and the Chinese government's ability to enforce strict controls over its people (Martin 2009, UNEP 2009). Despite the environmental benefits in Beijing, China's ambitious promise to deliver Green Olympics in 2008 can be regarded as a public diplomacy failure (Tuke 2008), because environmental efforts were not extended to the rest of China, therefore ultimately unable to improve China's international environmental reputation and its global environmental image.

Social reputation

Academic literature reviewed in Chapter 2 refers to the concept of social reputation as acting responsibly in line with social norms and values. In the context of public diplomacy and sport mega-events the responsibility to act according to internationally accepted norms and values becomes even more salient for international actors. Moreover, hosting events such as the Olympic Games bears a responsibility on the host to accept and implement norms associated with the Olympic movement, such as peace and universal human rights; this also extends to the rhetoric attached to the FIFA World Cup. In this sense, the "rite of passage" into the club of developed nations which hosting the Olympics implies is tied not only to the economic and organizational ability to host the event, but also to the moral and political *rapprochement* of the host with the developed world.

One of the foundational principles of developed nations is press freedom. It is regarded as a basic democratic right and a principal condition for the existence of a democratic state. It would be naïve, however, to assume that all those countries wishing to host the Olympic Games

are democratic. Nevertheless, press freedom is constitutionally guaranteed in such countries like China, which hosted 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. In addition to being guaranteed in the Chinese constitution, press freedom was prescribed in the Beijing Olympic Bid (Bid report 2000), promising the media complete freedom to report when they come to China (Wei 2008). It was also one of the conditions set by the IOC on the Chinese organizers. In the eyes of the international community the press freedom promise was big and simultaneously risky, because, first, China has one of the world's worst records for media freedom, ranking 159th, according to Reporters Without Borders (2005), second, it drastically elevated international moral expectations of China, and third, as Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping stated, "China does not share Western ideas about human rights" (AFP 2012, February 14). Nevertheless, foreign media offered China an opportunity to prove itself as an open, modern and vibrant society domestically and to the rest of the world.

To combat its poor press freedom reputation (Wilhelm 1989, Gittings 2003) and to address concerns expressed by the IOC inspection team (*The Guardian*, 2006), China implemented reforms in 2007, which liberalized reporting and the Internet, relaxed Internet censorship and opened access to foreign Internet sites (Hughes 2007). However, since the introduction of new laws, Internet censorship did not cease, access to foreign Internet sites was incomplete, and the freedom for journalists was limited (PEN report 2008). A report by the Foreign Correspondent's Club of China referred to more than 230 cases of harassment, obstruction, and detention of foreign correspondents in 2008 (Bhattacharji & Zisis 2008).

Press freedom is a right that many Chinese journalists and writers have paid—and continue to pay. The group PEN reported that there were more writers and journalists in prison in China in 2008 (44) than there were in 2007 (*International Herald Tribune* 2008, October 20).

Jonathan Watts, president of the Foreign Correspondents Club in China, says that China's relaxed Olympic restrictions on foreign reporters cannot be interpreted as a sign that China has an open media environment. Chinese reporters are obliged to self-censor to avoid repercussions from the Communist Party propaganda department and receive instructions on what stories they are forbidden from covering (MacLeod 2009). According to Minky Worden, media director, Human Rights Watch, this disparity of the freedoms for foreign journalists and strict restrictions for domestic journalists is damaging not only to the quality of domestic press, but also to the Chinese reputation internationally (*Guardian Unlimited* 2008, November 20).

The press freedom situation had a direct negative effect on how China was perceived abroad. Numerous reports on press freedom in China acknowledged the lift of many restrictions from foreign correspondents and at the same time prominently stressed the dire situation of domestic media (*USA Today* 2007, PEN report 2008, AFP 2008, *The Guardian* 2008). Reports about obstructions, detentions, harassments and imprisonments were regularly circulated during years 2007 – 2009 (BBC, AFP, AP, *The Guardian*, *International Herald Tribune* and others). Moreover, some of the media and Internet access restrictions were instated back after the Games were over (*Decatur Daily* 2008, MacKinnon 2009), proving the hypocritical nature of Chinese motives to grant press freedoms. Thus, China has marginally delivered on its promise to provide unobstructed media access during the Olympic Games, with the domestic press freedom situation remaining virtually unchanged.

In the developed world, the Olympic Games are intrinsically associated with universal human rights, and freedom is one of them. By denying this freedom of press to its own citizens China *de facto* alienated international public opinion. As a result, in Western perception, China was not able to improve its social reputation, because it did not open up. By putting strict control

over the media, it confirmed its reputation as an authoritarian, controlling, and repressive state (*Decatur Daily* 2008, AFP 2012, *The Guardian* 2008). China's claim of moral adequacy on the issue of press freedom (and the insistence that it did even more than it promised) only provoked the international community to scrutinize every step China took. Therefore, negative reports outnumbered the reports on the "progress" China made, which first, irritated the Chinese authorities provoking their negative reaction towards foreign media's preoccupation with the negative (*International Herald Tribune* 2008), and second, sent China's social reputation plummeting, confirming the predominantly held stereotype about China as an authoritative and repressive state (*The Guardian* 2008, MacLeod 2009).

Therefore, managing social reputation bears greater risks than managing functional reputation, due to the greater pressure of expectations and critical monitoring of actions of global actors. One of China's biggest public diplomacy mistakes was to promise complete freedom of media and then irritating foreign correspondents with restrictions, encouraging journalists to further seek those willing to speak out against China.

In conclusion, it can be argued that hosting sport mega-events is used by nation-states as one of the vehicle of national reputation management. It has the potential to positively impact the reputation, and hence the standing, of a country in several ways. First, sport mega-events contribute to the increased foreign media attention and coverage of the host country, and thus to its visibility. Second, successful staging of the event contributes to the functional reputation of the host country, thus raising its profile internationally. Third, the extent to which the host country succeeds in showcasing its cultural and geographical attractiveness will enhance its expressive reputation and establish its image differential. Fourth, the social reputation of the host country will depend on the success of the strategy of damage control implemented, since

avoiding negative headlines in media and maintaining the level of social reputation is practically achievable in contrast to claiming moral superiority and proving it. The social aspect of reputation is volatile, since international actors due to their size have the potential to accumulate considerable resistance from the public that does not share the same values, meaning that achieving broad consensus is nigh impossible. The allure of the media attention generated by sport mega-events may drive opposing groups to high-jack or divert attention to their causes, inflicting damage to the image and reputation of the host country.

Legitimacy

As discussed in Chapter 2, participation in the global sport mega-event movement—especially by staging such spectacles and not simply participating in them— ensures that a nation participates in a socially constructed and internationally approved system of sporting norms, values and rules. This system constitutes a decidedly fragile space, in which “official” versions of collective identities, particularly but not exclusively national identities, are asserted, recognized and legitimized in an international “world of nations” (Roche 2003). A vivid example of this is the struggle of German Democratic Republic (GDR) to be admitted to the IOC between 1948 and 1965 as a separate National Olympic Committee from the Federal Republic of Germany (Balbier 2009). During this period, numerous attempts at creating a unified German team were made, but the harder West Germany tried to display a national sporting unity, the harder the GDR battled to include its own national symbols, such as flags and hymns, asserting its sovereignty and legitimacy as a state. This represents the patterns of national self-understanding and interpretations of national representation in both German states, and how the

desired versions of separate or unified German collective identities were asserted and recognized by the IOC and legitimized by the Olympic Movement internationally.

Additionally, sport mega-events continue to function as important elements in the (normative) alignment of national societies to international or global society, as exemplified by the exclusion of South Africa from international sporting contacts on the grounds of racial segregation policy of apartheid between 1948 and 1994. The international boycott of apartheid sport proved to be a powerful means for sensitising world opinion against racial discrimination and in mobilizing millions of people against the regime. These boycotts in some cases helped change official policies and eventually led to IOC's declaration against apartheid in sport on June 21, 1988 (Booth 2003). It is in this sense that the competition to host sport mega-events is driven by the desire of states to prove their ideological alignment with the larger part of the Western world, and to demonstrate adherence to international rules, norms and standards, and thus accrue the legitimacy of a world player.

As observed in the discussion of legitimacy and international influence in Chapter 2, the outcomes of staging sport mega-events include both nation building and the consolidation of political legitimacy. Both of these lead to the expansion of soft power by facilitating the development of the state as a productive, legitimate and functioning political entity. International legitimacy of a nation ensues along the endorsement dimension by demonstrating competence and equitableness, and the normativity dimension, which has two components: 1) the perception of the policy-making process as based on expertise within a clear legal structure with the ongoing demonstration of the capacity to deliver good outcomes; and 2) the perception of the policy development process as based on dialogue and transparency. In other words, public diplomacy's objective of pushing norms and values and influencing the beliefs and attitudes of

foreign audiences approaches sport mega-events as a tool with which to pursue foreign policy goals and accumulate soft power capacity by projecting qualities of leadership, fairness and competence, which were found to underpin the perceptions of international legitimacy of the host country.

In empirical terms, South Africa's motivation to host the 2010 World Cup was presented by the government as an event that would, at fairly modest cost, promote economic development and support social rebalancing and nation-building objectives (Cornelissen 2004). The hosting narrative was rooted in the government's challenge of transforming itself from a liberation movement to a legitimate governing body, consolidating a fragile democracy and addressing Apartheid legacies of inequality. The bidding document specifically refers to the inclusion of World Cup associated economic development "opportunities that can be accessed by South Africans in a way that will empower those who were systematically excluded from participation in the economy under apartheid" (South Africa 2010: 4). Further, the liberation movement brought social and economic benefits only to a small part of the community, whereas majority continued to live in poverty without access to basic services such as health, education and housing (Flemes 2009). Despite the country's adoption of a liberal capital market model and alignment with western-orientated values of human rights, democracy, free trade and economic development, social tensions increased as existing racial inequalities gained an economic dimension (Westhuizen & Swart 2011).

Regionally, South Africa sought to improve relations and overcome Apartheid legacies of mistrust (Dowse 2011, Jordaan 2010). Objectives at an international level were concerned with rebalancing relations between the continent and the international community to facilitate greater access to, and influence over, the channels of international capital and decision-making,

particularly for South Africa itself (Youde 2009, Flandes 2009). The African Renaissance approach and the promotions of African interests were seen by South Africa as a way to develop regional leadership projection and position itself as a legitimate voice within the emerging states of the global “South”. However, it faced difficulties in balancing support for liberal western norms, particularly those concerning democracy and human rights with pan-African interests and the need to project anti-imperialist solidarity (Nathan 2005). This is an important consideration, given the vulnerability of soft power resources of state activities perceived as illegitimate or that contravene shared values and positive attributes.

The narratives constructed around South Africa’s bid to host the 2010 Soccer World Cup clearly align with the country’s political goals and ambitions. For example, Bolsmann and Brewster (2009) in their analysis of 2006 and 2010 South Africa’s bid books highlight the pan-African narrative present not only in the imagery, but also in the discourse of development and modernity. Specifically, the 2010 bid book notes that ‘it is widely recognised that consistent growth, a stabilising local currency and developed financial, legal, communications, energy, and transportation sectors make South Africa the economic centre of the African continent’ (SAFA 2004), thus exemplifying South Africa’s foreign policy goal and aspiration of influence in the African continent and beyond. In addition to presenting the event as contributing to national economic development, South Africa claimed it as something the country was undertaking for the good of the African continent with intention to support regional and international ambitions of reconciliation and recognition (Cornelissen 2011). It was envisaged that these regional goals would be achieved mainly through a country and continental image makeover, projecting images of cosmopolitanism, modernity, efficiency and capacity to the global community.

The 2010 World Cup was widely perceived as a resounding success (Sethusha 2011, AFP 2010, July 12, Naik 2011, Imray 2011). South Africa gained international recognition in the media for delivering a complex event to a high standard and to deadline. In terms of the economic impact, both governmental and external reports point to positive gains as a direct result of public expenditures on transport infrastructure, telecommunication and stadia, and secondary effects such as gains in retail industry (Ghosh 2010, Humphreys 2010, Marx 2011). The projection of economic development was also affirmed by the UN secretary-general's, Ban Ki-moon, belief of a new confidence in sustained investment on the continent (IANS, June 12, 2010). The outpouring of flags and multi-racial composition of stadia audiences were seen as signs of racial reconciliation and the development of a South African identity both having a positive effect on nation-building (Nkuutu 2010).

However, some critics (York 2010, Matheson & Baade 2004) suggest that domestic economic development was offset by high level of household debt and poor performance of the labor market, which may have been exacerbated by the financial strain of delivering the 2010 World Cup event. For example, a report from UBS Investment Research dating February 2010 estimated that preparations for the 2010 World Cup have added between 0.5% and 2.2% to South African GDP, and may have added 2.2% to employment figures in the four years leading up to the event (Ghosh 2010). However, unemployment rate reached 25% level in 2010 compared to 24% between 2000 and 2009, and the government debt was at 30% level (Humphreys 2010, Ghosh 2010). This critique supports a wider debate of how appropriate it was for South Africa to take on the 2010 project, which questions whether associated economic goals would have been more efficiently achieved if they had been targeted directly. This is particularly so in light of the perceived failure of economic benefit to accrue beyond a select group of political and economic

elite; the government's apparent prioritization of FIFA over national interests; and the financial implications of maintaining stadia, many of which will be significantly underused (Smith 2010, Sylvester & Harju 2010, York 2010, Humphreys 2010). This debate is important, as it may affect perceptions of political legitimacy attributable to South Africa upon which soft power resources and social capital are based, as well as the sustainability of the positive effects created by the hosting of the event.

South Africa's bid for World Cup 2010 was placed in an environment shaped by economic and social challenges, associated with racial division. These challenges in turn influenced political, economic and social ambitions, such as leadership role on the African continent, improved investment environment and more inclusive social programs. South Africa sought to use the event to project a new or expanded image to the global community in support of individual domestic and foreign policy goals.

For South Africa, the 2010 World Cup was an exercise in public diplomacy with an overt expectation around regional and international ambitions. Furthermore the event was utilized as a tool with which to pursue foreign policy goals and accumulate soft power capacity by projecting qualities of leadership and competence. However, the controversies around the appropriateness of the prioritization of investment in the World Cup instead of local needs may have detrimentally affected South Africa's soft power capacity, since soft power depends on a country's perceived attractiveness of political values and a supportive environment (Nkuutu 2010, Gross 2010, Graham 2011, York 2010).

This deficiency can be easily remedied by government's consistent demonstration of commitment to addressing local needs in the near future, following Eisenegger's (2009) argument detailed in Chapter 2. What South Africa achieved, though, is the global projection of

its aspirations as a legitimate actor in international relations based on its commitments to economic and human development. Moreover, it can be argued that South Africa was successful in leveraging 2010 FIFA World Cup to attain its foreign policy goals of the continental leader (Bolsmann & Brewster 2009, Ghosh 2010), thus proving that public diplomacy strategy built around sport mega-events can be successful.

The South African experience testifies to the fact that for developing countries, the lack of international power and influence in traditional forms leads to a search of other forms of power and influence—legitimacy. Sport mega-events hold a potential in mobilizing soft power resources and developing soft power capacity, and for this reason they are very attractive for countries lacking other power resources.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This chapter presents specific conclusions drawn from the evidence reviewed in Chapter 4. These conclusions are organized according to the structure provided by the three research sub-questions detailed in Chapter 1. This chapter also considers methodological flaws in the research design of this thesis, which ultimately compromise the ability to generalize the findings reported here. Finally, future research based on the conclusions presented here is suggested.

This thesis set out to examine the concept of public diplomacy and its relationship to sport mega-events in the context of broader governmental public opinion management strategies. By exploring the complex interrelations among the concepts of public diplomacy, sport mega-events, soft power, and national image, I aimed at identifying why public diplomacy should pay attention to sport mega-events, and what importance do they have for the public diplomacy of the host nation. Further, by examining the consequences of hosting sport mega-events on the image of the country, its reputation, credibility and legitimacy as an actor of international politics, we aimed at exposing those aspects sport mega-events bearing directly on the practice of public diplomacy.

Sport mega-events have an extraordinary capacity to shape and project images of the host country, both domestically and globally, making them a highly attractive instrument for political and economic elites. Governments, corporations and other “boosters” worldwide justify the pursuit and sponsorship of major games in terms of developmental, political, and socio-cultural benefits. Indeed, in the context of globalization, countries and regions fear marginalisation and

seek ways to heighten visibility and enhance status, and sport mega-events have the potential to create a lasting legacy that provides the host country with new levels of global recognition and economic, political and social development. Moreover, sport mega-events as popular cultural phenomena and as a soft power resource have the potential to influence the conduct of diplomacy and the relations between states in general. This two-pronged character of sport mega-events as cultural phenomena with political appeal makes them an effective instrument in the conduct of public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is dependent on the soft power resources of a nation, which include culture, political values and policies. Public diplomacy seeks to mobilize and to draw attention to soft power resources through international broadcasting, visitor exchanges, cultural exports subsidies, and international events in order to understand, engage with and influence the publics of other countries. Hosting sport mega-events as an instrument of public diplomacy is becoming more prominent as a practice and also as an emerging research field. However, the relationship between public diplomacy and the hosting of sport mega-projects still lacks theoretical development and rigorous empirical analyses. One of the significant deficiencies of the analysis of public diplomacy is the omission of processes of attitude formation and social control mechanisms. While much of the public diplomacy literature points to the importance of legitimacy, reputation and credibility as constitutive elements in the success of foreign policy, it fails to identify their operational mechanisms. Consequently, without systematic understanding of the attitudes formation processes through communication, hosting sport mega-events as an instrument of public diplomacy becomes a high-stakes high-risk activity.

Accordingly, the purpose of this thesis was to examine the complex interrelations among the concepts of public diplomacy, sport mega-events, soft power, and national image in the

context of broader governmental public opinion management strategies. Further, identifying aspects of sport mega-events relevant to the practice of public diplomacy can guide the analysis of their potential impact on the image of the host country, its reputation, credibility and legitimacy as an actor of international politics.

Specific Conclusions

What aspects of hosting sport mega-events are significant for the practice of a nation's public diplomacy?

By identifying legitimacy, reputation and credibility as key objectives of public diplomacy activities, sport mega-events lent rich context to detecting the following sport mega-events aspects as quintessential to attitude formation processes.

Functional aspect associated with event management performance: higher levels of financial, human resources and communication management competence and efficiency correlated to positive perceptions of functional reputation and expertise facet of credibility of the host nation. Evidence suggests that host country performance in the area of the event organization has the greatest potential to be strategically used for public diplomacy purposes given that such communication is based on easily verifiable facts and figures. Moreover, the host has the ultimate control over demonstration of its competence in staging complex, financially demanding and internationally significant events. Thus, public diplomacy may benefit the most from demonstration of the event organization success, and qualities of leadership, competence and expertise associated with it.

Normative aspect: recognition and participation of the host nation in international sporting organizations, as well as adherence to international rules, norms and standards bears directly on host's legitimacy. Hosting a sport mega-event and participating in a socially constructed and internationally approved system of norms, values and rules may improve host's legitimacy and may facilitate host's expression of views in the international arena. Conversely, sport mega-events may contribute to the reduction of state legitimacy perception, following failure to demonstrate commitment to human development.

Social aspect: while positively influencing nation-building and social cohesion processes, sport mega-events exhibit contestable commitment to equitableness and goodwill due to politicisation processes and negative media reporting trends. As a result, sport mega-events may contribute to the erosion of social reputation of the host due to media's preoccupation with dissenting opinions. Moreover, when socially sensitive, politically contestable and culturally specific issues are involved in media discourse associated with sport mega-events, it may lead to the depletion of social credibility, or commitment to goodwill, of the host.

What impact does hosting sport mega-events have on public diplomacy management?

National image: sport mega-events provide a focal point around which images of the host can be generated and projected abroad. Due to intense media attention associated with hosting sport mega-events, they provide opportunities to increase host's visibility in foreign media and to strengthen host's image. However, while hosting such events increases country's visibility in foreign media, national image improvement does not correlate with events

themselves: media reports maintain valence, and in some cases become even more negative (contrary to Dayan and Katz's (1992) argument that media events are presented in a reverential tone and usually exclude criticism). As a consideration for public diplomacy, sport mega-events constitute an excellent opportunity to showcase the nation worldwide, however, it proves to be a risky initiative when current national image is primarily negative. Therefore, public diplomacy must take into account current valence of media reports about the host and the alignment of the host's policies and practices with international standards and norms, because sport mega-events contribute to dramatic raise of media visibility of the host, but seem to neutrally influence the valence of reporting. Thus, public diplomacy aimed at projecting national image of the nations with generally positive valence and low media visibility may benefit the most from staging sport mega-events.

Agenda building: evidence suggests that sport mega-events provide the host with an advantage over the public diplomacy messages communicated throughout the bidding and preparation stages, opening and closing ceremonies, organization of the event, and through the particularities of the event broadcast. This advantage may take the form of strategic selection of agenda during the event-bidding phase, which in turn may provide public diplomacy with communication focus throughout the event. Agenda building aspect of hosting sport mega-events is an important consideration for public diplomacy, because media oftentimes engages bidding discourse as a reference point in gauging functional progress during the event lead-up phase, as well as throughout post-event reporting. Thus, public diplomacy of nations looking to benefit from hosting sport mega-events may benefit most by focusing on the agenda proposed in the bidding discourse, and by following through with the same agenda throughout the life of the event.

Credibility: stemming from the perceptions of an actor's expertise, trustworthiness and goodwill, credibility was found to constitute one of the facets of attitude formation. Within sport mega-events context, functional performance was found to directly correlate to the perceptions of host's credibility. As a public diplomacy consideration, a host is required to establish and maintain a transparent and open process of event management, and to employ an efficient and integrated approach to communicating about performance achievements. The dynamic quality of credibility implies constant evaluation of the host's performance against stated goals, thus leading to ongoing adjustment of public diplomacy communicative processes to reflect change. Cultural/situational specificity of credibility implies judgement of the host's success in attaining stated goals and the validity of these goals against accepted normative standards. While normative standards vary across cultures and under different sets of circumstances, credibility judgements only of those publics that have the highest level of significance for the host's public diplomacy objectives should be evaluated and monitored in application to sport mega-events.

Sport mega-events contribute to host's credibility and therefore public diplomacy goals through active demonstration of expertise, trustworthiness and goodwill. Evidence supports the credibility argument mainly in the area of performance, which is associated with the effective organization of sport mega-events and efficient handling of problems in the course of the event preparation. However, social aspects of credibility—mainly goodwill—are subject to cultural and situational judgments. This means that public diplomacy efforts in the context of sport mega-events may trigger different credibility assessments in different cultural settings and under different sets of circumstances. Therefore, evidence leads to believe that sport mega-events may improve host's credibility when the host exhibits competence based on performance, and may

tarnish host's credibility when socially sensitive, politically contestable and culturally specific issues, such as welfare, are involved.

International reputation of the host nation—including status, prestige and image—appeared to benefit the most as a result of strategic application of sport mega-events to public diplomacy. Despite the fact that reputation accrues over time, requires constant sustaining efforts, and does not drastically change in positive direction, sport mega-events provide the host nation an unprecedented opportunity to prove its functional reputation by demonstrating financial and organizational success. Moreover, by projecting powerful, attractive image based on the soft power resources, and natural attributes of the country, public diplomacy may enhance the host country's expressive reputation. However, social reputation in relation to hosting sport mega-events can sustain considerable damage as a result of resistance from social activists groups, thus requiring extensive impression management efforts to mitigate negative effects.

Successful staging of the event within a transparent management framework improves host's functional reputation on the basis of efficiency and competence. However, findings suggest that announcing particular goals for sport mega-events during bidding phase puts a certain amount of pressure on the organizers to deliver on the promises. Evidence suggests that international media is interested in the level of competence of the organizers, and one of the easiest ways to gauge it is by closely following the progress of the host *vis-à-vis* declared goals. Another important consideration regarding reputation of the host is reputation's social aspect: both theoretical and empirical evidence point to the volatility and long-term character of social reputation. Therefore, public diplomacy efforts in the context of sport mega-events may not be able to improve social reputation due to the heightened interest of foreign media in the social domain, especially in the sphere of human rights, and relatively short time-frame of the event.

The complexity of the event and profound social and political repercussions, coupled with the event's global media reach attracts strong dissenting opinions and critical enquiry into state's social and political affairs. Finding its way into media reports, this criticism impacts negatively country's social reputation. Thus, public diplomacy's consideration in relation to sport mega-events may be maintenance of the current level of social reputation through impression management, rather than social reputation improvement.

International legitimacy: public diplomacy's objective of pushing norms and values and influencing the beliefs and attitudes of foreign audiences approaches sport mega-events as a tool with which to pursue foreign policy goals and accumulate soft power capacity by projecting qualities of leadership, competence, and equitableness, which were found to underpin the perceptions of international legitimacy of the host. Empirical support for the legitimacy proposition in the context of public diplomacy and sport mega-events is most evident in the normative dimension, where the host of the event follows the rules and norms established by international sport governing bodies. Moreover, hosting sport mega-events is often associated with participation in and alignment to socially constructed and internationally endorsed system of norms thus leading to host's perceived legitimacy.

While sport mega-events facilitate the development of the state as productive, legitimate and functioning political entity, such events not only import internationally acceptable normative system, they serve as a gauging mechanism of world opinion about legitimacy of the host. Evidence suggests that for developing nations sport mega-events may be an effective demonstration of state's commitment to economic and human development, leadership, and openness, thus capitalizing on functional legitimacy. Whereas hosting sport mega-events may not provide sources of normative or cognitive legitimacy per se. However, normative and

cognitive legitimation processes, such as legislative reforms and press freedom, may be associated with sport mega-events if not directly attributed to them.

Limitations of the Research Design and Method

The primary objective of this thesis was to identify relevant aspects of sport mega-events for the study and practice of public diplomacy, with the intent to reveal actors and activities that ought to be included or excluded from the analysis of sport mega-events and public diplomacy, highlighting the role sport mega-events play in influencing the host's national image, reputation, credibility and legitimacy. As such, the conclusions drawn from this study inform the justification for future empirical research into the significance and presumed benefits of sport mega-events and their role in the practice of public diplomacy. Consequently, the resulting analysis generated from this study is not intended to be used as a blueprint for developing public diplomacy strategies with the focus on sport mega-events until additional testing of the emerged theoretical relationships is executed.

Specifically, an exploratory research design was chosen in order to establish a relationship between sport mega-events and national image, reputation, credibility and legitimacy of the host in the context of public diplomacy. Thus, such an approach to research design aimed at providing points of departure in the discussion within the topic of the research. Therefore, the limits of research design employed in this thesis extend to the ability to establish theoretical guideposts for future research between public diplomacy and sport mega-events. The inherent descriptive nature of this qualitative exploratory research design contains certain

limitations with respect to the ability to replicate the study, develop and test theoretical models, and ultimately to generalize its findings.

Public diplomacy and its relationship with sport mega-events remain relatively underdeveloped in academic literature. This fact lead to the exploration of a wide variety of academic works situated within various academic fields, thus making this thesis prone to conflation of theoretical terms and inaccuracy in the analysis of theoretical points. While employing deductive logic in theoretical analysis, extrapolation of theoretical points from one field of study and projection of these points onto a different field of study was done without testing the applicability of theoretical constructs. Therefore, theoretical constructs developed in this thesis require methodical applicability testing.

The empirical component of the thesis was drawn from a convenience sample from two well-defined, but not exhaustive populations. As a non-probability method, such sampling contributed to gaining scientific knowledge, however its limits are rooted in non-randomness and inherent subjectivity of conclusions. The selection of cases for examination was guided by the richness of empirical material available at the point of saturation. The limits of such approach stem from the “case-oriented design”, where patterns observed in the empirical material informed the development of theory, and theoretical constructs, found in the academic literature, guided the analysis of empirical material. Thus, cases selected exhibit general descriptive qualities of points developed in literature review and serve as evidence of patterns uncovered. However, a different sample may lead to dissimilar conclusions.

A consequence of this exploratory research design and method is that this thesis necessarily lacks empirical results and statistical analysis that can be otherwise replicated or adapted to a larger sample for purposes of generalization. Nonetheless, despite this limitation, the

resulting exploratory analysis serves to provide a solid foundation for guiding future research on this relatively undeveloped aspect of the broader critical study of public diplomacy.

Future Research

Building on the findings presented in this thesis, there are several directions future research into this topic of public diplomacy and sport mega-events could take. For example, as an extension of this current study, a separate empirical investigation of the host country reputation, credibility and legitimacy could be initiated supplemented by recommendations or identified limitations of this study. Further, the current study could also be supplemented by extending theoretical groundwork by including recently devised perspectives on international relations such as constructivism. In addition, future research could investigate specific topics of study, such as the impact of political system or economic development on public diplomacy's use of sport mega-events in international opinion management.

Specifically, such research could include case studies to explore the contexts in which sport mega-events are employed as instruments of public diplomacy, and to further identify aspects that have the most impact on foreign policy objectives. This direction of study could be further refined by limiting research to a specific set of attributes, actors or instances, or by conducting a comparative study either between different nations hosting same type of event, or between experiences of one nation hosting one type of event at different times, or between experiences of one nation hosting different types of events. Ultimately, a closer examination into the nature of attitude formation processes, as well as their portability across cultural borders,

could help focus the understanding of public diplomacy and provide a platform for research of the impact and usefulness of sport mega-events as a vehicle of attitude formation and as a social control mechanism for foreign policy purposes.

Concluding Remarks

The pursuit of sport mega-events has become an increasingly popular political and developmental strategy for a wide range of urban, regional, and national governments. This trend is linked to the exigencies and incentives of globalisation (Black 2007), forcing nations to mitigate their sense of political-economic and identity-based vulnerability, and compete for global profile. Some countries see sport mega-events as a critical opportunity to address these vulnerabilities and needs by providing a political neutral, but at the same time emotionally engaging platform of communication and interaction. Moreover, sport mega-events are used as tools of domestic and foreign policy, and in some instances are viewed by countries as effective resources to enhance their international role and influence. Sport mega-events demonstrate a clear potential for developing soft power capacity, however, the ability to achieve national and foreign policy goals hinges on the resources available to leverage such outcomes, careful strategic planning and clear understanding of what such events can deliver.

The neglect of sport mega-events by the field of public diplomacy points to the disconnect between the fervent pursuit of such events by the governments and theoretical explanation of the phenomenon. International relations, communication, public relations and branding fields of study provide insightful contributions to understanding and, ultimately, successful integration of sport mega-events into the sum of public diplomacy strategies. While

the thrust of this study has employed the concept of soft power to bridge public diplomacy and sport mega-events, it also provides an extended analysis of attitude formation processes and social control mechanism that can serve in achieving public diplomacy goals through hosting sport mega-events. Yet, perhaps of even greater significance, the multi-disciplinary approach to the analysis might assist in developing public diplomacy models, which integrate sport mega-events, and lead to development of measurement tools of legitimacy, reputation and credibility within the discipline of public diplomacy.

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