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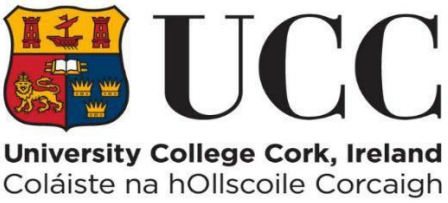
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Transformation of the State Sports Policy and System in China (1949–1989)

Thesis presented by

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for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University College Cork

Department of Asian Studies

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2019

Declaration

This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism

Date: 31-03-2019

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Abstract

Ideologies and the party-state system are key to understanding the transformation of sports policies and systems in Communist China, as they impact significantly on the manner and role of government in developing sport and sports policies. This thesis seeks to analyse the extent to which dominant ideology impacted upon sports policies and systems in China. It also explores the changes in sports policies under dominant ideologies between the Mao and post-Mao era from 1949 to 1989.

Gramsci's contextualised theory of cultural hegemony and Weber's revised classification provide a critical perspective for analysing the relationship between dominant ideology and sports, enabling us to decipher the relationship between State-Party and sports throughout the shift of political legitimacy from 1949 to post-Mao China (1977–1989). This research has adopted an interpretive perspective to elucidate social construction and changes in political ideology that impacted upon the development of sports policies and systems in Communist China between 1949 and 1989. The transformation of China's state sports policy is treated as a synthesis of historical narrative, blended with interpretation and reflection of policy documents and interviews, in which key themes are fully explored. Data was collected from a number of sources, including official government documents, news media, and a series of 13 interviews with Chinese officials, scholars and people who experienced this transformation.

The analysis reveals that Maoism in practice had a greater influence on sports policies than Communism in China. A contribution made by this thesis is its analysis of the relationship between the components of Mao Zedong Thought or Maoism, including the mass line, and sports policies after the founding of the People's Republic of China

(PRC), especially in relation to the early years of the PRC. Secondly, compared with the Maoist era, sports policies in the 1980s were less affected by ideological requirements, as political ideology in the Party and government policy began to transition into economic pragmatism. This transition fostered the growth of pragmatic and performance-based features in sports policies, which constitutes another contribution of this thesis to the existing research. Thirdly, the party-state system that was formed and developed in the Maoist era remained fundamentally the same during the next era, from 1977 to 1989. However, the launch of market-oriented reform affected more and more aspects of Chinese society, including the sports system. This led to the following contradictions: political and ideological requirements under the party-state system shaped the development of sports policy and system, while post-Maoist market-oriented reform played a profound, irrefutable role in the shaping of sports policy and system by promoting the modernisation of Chinese sports.

Key words: sports policy and system; China; ideology; party-state system; hegemony; legitimacy; Maoism

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List of Abbreviations

ACFRWU	All-China Federation of Railway Workers' Union
ACFTU	All China Federation of Trade Unions
ACFTU	All-China Federation of Trade Unions
ACSF	All-China Sports Federation
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCSPC	Central Committee of Sport and Physical Culture
CNDYL	Chinese New Democracy Youth League
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSR	Chinese Soviet Republic
CWVT	Chinese Women's Volleyball Team
CYLC	Communist Youth League of China
FE	Further Education
GAS	General Administration of Sport
GLF	Great Leap Forward
KMT	Kuomintang of China /Chinese Nationalist Party
LDS	Ready for Labour and Defence System'
MoR	Ministry of Railways
SECPRC	State Education Commission of the People's Republic of China
SPCSC	State Physical Culture and Sport Commission
SSC	Socialist Spiritual Civilisation
SSC	Socialist Spiritual Civilization

Chapter 1 Introduction

Physical fitness has a long cultural history in China, dating back to ancient times, although it was not until the late 19th century that Chinese vocabulary introduced the Mandarin word of *tiyu*, which represents the concept of sport and can be broadly translated as 'body cultivation', 'physical education', or 'physical culture'.[1] In ancient China, sport and physical education was a highly valued aspect of society and cultivated by three types of sports. The first encompassed health-related sports, such as *daoyin* (Qigong), strolling, walking and sightseeing. The second embodied military sports, including various martial arts, while the third consisted of entertainment activities and folk programmes, such as *Jirang* (a throwing game),[2] *Baixi* (acrobatics), boat racing, swimming and water-play activities. Physical education was regarded as an important part of the Confucian education system during the Zhou dynasty (1046 BC to 256 BC). Conducting oneself with a chivalrous spirit and being highly trained in martial arts was highly prized in ancient Chinese society. This emphasis on intellectual and physical accomplishments continued from the Qin dynasty (221 BC to 207 BC) through the Han (202 BC to 220 AD) and Tang dynasties (618 AD to 907 AD).

Nevertheless, sport as physical exercise has not always been an important aspect of life in China.[3] For centuries, Confucian principles influenced societal obligations to serve and academic pursuits, government and civil examinations were highly valued. Confucian ideas favoured intellectual ability over military expertise during the Song dynasty (960 AD to 1279 AD), an era that tended to value physical education less highly than academic prowess, as opposed to the previous 1,000 years of Chinese

[1] For ancient Chinese people, sports were not seen as a whole until the late 19th century, when the terms of Chinese physical culture (*tiyu* and *ticao*, 'calisthenics and gymnastics') were imported from Japan.
[2] The Jirang is an ancient throwing game, which was popular in the era of Emperor Yao (2356–2255 BC).
[3] Xu Guoqi. *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports, 1895-2008* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 14.

rule.[4]

Under the influence of Confucianism, traditional Chinese sports emphasised unity of mind and body, respecting morality and art, so sports such as archery lost their competitive aspects and eventually were practised primarily for performance and exhibition.[5] Patriarchal power and filial piety prevailed for centuries in China throughout all social strata, family, community and politics.[6] Competition was despised, in complete contrast to the inherently competitive nature of Western sport.

The first Opium War (1839–1842) marks the beginning of China's modern history and challenges to traditional culture and nationalism. In reaction to military confrontation with Western powers during the Opium Wars, the ruling elite in the Qing imperial court launched the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861–1895), then the Constitutional Reform in 1898, in an attempt to learn from the advanced technologies, culture and institutions of the West and thus resist the influence of the Western powers. At that time, these ideas and actions were strongly opposed by conservative ruling elite, as they contravened the Confucian code of ethics. Resentful of the influence of Western culture, many self-proclaimed guardians of Chinese traditional culture emerged and there was much conflict and confrontation between conservatives and radicals in Chinese society at this time. Following the 1911 Revolution, the Chinese political elite called for the creation of a new Chinese culture based on global and Western standards. The process of modernisation of Chinese society provided a catalyst for the growth and development of modern sports, which gradually replaced traditional sports and became a major part of modern Chinese culture. A new physical culture embracing both the traditional and the contemporary was born.[7]

[4] This is illustrated by this saying from the Song Dynasty: 'Those who use their minds and brains rule, and those who use their physical strength are ruled', see 'Duke of Teng wen'(《孟子 滕文公上》)in *Mencius* by Menciu (Harbin: North Literature and Art Publishing House, 2014), 15.

[5] Fan Hong and Tan Hua. 'Sport in China: Conflict between Tradition and Modernity, 1840s to 1930s', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 19, no. 2–3 (2002): 189–212.

[6] Chu Chai, Winberg Chai. *Confucianism* (New York: Barron's Educational Series, 1973), 2.

[7] Fan Hong and Tan Hua. 'Sport in China: Conflict between Tradition and Modernity, 1840s to 1930s', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 19, no. 2-3 (2002): 189–212.

Following the establishment of the first Chinese Republic, 1912 to 1927 was a tumultuous time for China. After the death of China's first president Yuan Shih-kai in 1916, the warlords carved the country up into autonomous districts containing their own armies and tax systems. This weakened time enabled Japanese and Western imperialism to infiltrate China on a grand scale.[8] Educationalists and politicians used physical education to strengthen the nation, fuelling a new anti-imperialistic nationalism and national unity. Sport became a central part of this nationalistic trend.[9] From 1912 to 1917, the government endorsed military citizenship education as the guiding philosophy of the educational system, officially promoting militaristic and social Darwinist forms of sport and physical education.[10] In 1927, the Kuomintang of China (KMT) came to power, guided by the dominant ideology of anti-imperialism and self-strengthening. Under the KMT, government policy regarding sport and physical education served to consolidate national unity, cultivate patriotism, and build the physical and moral strength of the people.

The formation of Chinese Communist sports policies can be traced back to the 1920s and 1940s during the Chinese Soviet Republic (CSR) in Jiangxi and to China's political power in Yan'an through the Red Sports Movement (1929–34) to the New Sports Movement (1936–48).[11] Between 1929 and 1934 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its Red Army established the Chinese Soviet Republic in Ruijin, Jiangxi province, and launched the Red Sports Movement, a formal physical exercise system for workers and peasants. This system was viewed as the basis of physical, cultural and military training under Communism.

[8] Russia invaded Mongolia and Britain invaded Tibet, while Japan occupied Shandong province, with a view to dominating China.

[9] Lu Zhouxiang. 'Sport, Nationalism and the Building of the Modern Chinese Nation State (1912–49)', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no.7 (2011): 1030–54.

[10] Tony Hwang and Grant Jarvie. 'Sport, Nationalism and the Early Chinese Republic 1912-1927', *Sports Historian* 21, 2 (2001): 1–19.

[11] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang. 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no.14–15(2010): 2380–402.

The ending of the Jiangxi in October 1934 was followed by the birth of the Yan'an era in late 1936, under which physical education was systematically promoted in the army, schools, counties and villages. A Physical Education and Sports Committee was founded under the leadership of the Chinese New Democracy Youth League (CNDYL).[12] This Committee supervised clubs and groups, established regulations for games and sports events, and promoted a New Sports Movement with the slogan 'everybody is to do exercise'. Thus, the policy and structure of post-1949 physical exercise and sport was pioneered in Jiangxi and Yan'an.[13]

Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, sport became an important concern for policy makers. State control of Chinese sports policies since 1949 has shaped sport to meet political and ideological requirements. The Soviet model had a profound impact on China's sports policy and system, giving contemporary China a powerful, centralised and hierarchical government organisation during the Mao era and beyond. The events of the Great Leap Forward (GLF, 1958–1960) and the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) were major political upheavals that have also resulted in important legacies for Chinese sport in the post-Mao era. Dramatic transformation of China's economy in the 1980s enabled market forces to begin to play a major role in the economy. From the 1980s onward, commercialisation and globalisation of sport gradually became a focus of Chinese sports policy reformation. It is important to understand the fundamental driving forces underlying the change and transformation of China's sports policies and systems. In the process of the evolution of sports policies and systems, it is necessary to discuss the structural relationship involving the political party system, ideology and sport. This paper

[12] Founded in May 1922, it was originally named as the Socialist Youth League of China (SYLC). Following the official establishment of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in July 1921, the SYLC was organised at the same time that the Party was set up throughout the country. In January 1925, at the Third National Congress of the League, the SYLC was renamed as the Communist Youth League of China. After the end of the War of Resistance Against Japan, in response to the new situation and required tasks, the Central Committee of the CCP passed a resolution to establish the Chinese New Democracy Youth League (CNYL), which was officially launched in April 1949. It was not renamed as the Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) until 1957.

[13] Jinming Zheng, Shushu Chen, Tien-Chin Tan and Patrick Wing Chung Lau. 'Sport policy in China (Mainland)', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics* 10, no.3 (2018): 469–91.

focuses on the relationship between sport, ideology and political legitimacy to explain the change and evolution of sports policies and systems in the PRC.

1.1 Sport, Ideology and Legitimacy in Communist China

Ideology is key to understanding the transformation of sports policies and systems in Communist China. For any political party, organisation and ideology are indispensable. In modern terms, organisations represent hard power, while ideology represents soft power. As Zheng has observed, the survival and development of the CCP depends not only on its organisational construction, but also on its ideological construction.[14] As the CCP represents the only ruling party in China since 1949, the significance of ideology largely transcends its significance as an organisation. The one-party state system and the CCP's ideology penetrates every aspect of political, social and economic life throughout China, including culture, arts and education. Thus, the Party has overwhelmingly dominated the entire country since 1949. Sport is no exception. The party-state system and its ideology impact significantly on the manner and role of government in developing sport and sports policies. Any analysis of the transformation of sports policies and systems in China should also examine ideology and organisation, namely the political party system.

The concept of legitimacy is closely related to politics and ideology. A widespread belief amongst Western scholars is that economic reforms launched in China from 1978 onwards have rendered ideology obsolete. However, the Party still claims its legitimacy on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and Maoism. Arguably, performance legitimacy[15] has become far more important than ideology in justifying the government's continued rule.[16] In the decades since 1978, China has witnessed not

[14] Zheng Yongnian. *Reshaping Ideology* (Beijing: Oriental Press, 2016), 3.

[15] Performance legitimacy means that a state's right to rule is justified by its economic and/or moral performance, and by the state's capacity of territorial defense. For more explanation on performance legitimacy, See Dingxin Zhao, 'The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China'*American Behavioral Scientist* 53, no.3 (2009), pp.416-433.

[16] Joseph Fewsmith. *China since Tiananmen: From Deng Xiaoping to Hu Jintao* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 5.

only phenomenal economic growth, with profound social, ideological and cultural changes, but also spectacular political crises and unrest (culminating in the Tiananmen events of 1989).

It is certain that since 1978, China's political, cultural and social life, including arts and sports, has entered a post-revolutionary phase, even if only in a narrow, chronological sense. [17] Has revolutionary ideology and its discourses, which legitimated the rule of the CCP in Mao's era, lost its influence on sport and its sports polices in Deng Xiaoping's era and beyond? What kind of ideology supports the rise of China's Olympic policy since 1980, Xi Jinping's football dream and the prosperity of China's campus football policy today? What ideology will influence the formulation and development of China's sports policy in the future?

Since 1978, China has vigorously embraced market-oriented economic reform, with the huge acceleration in privatization of business becoming even more profound after 1992. Arguably, the Tian'anmen event in 1989 greatly disrupted China's economic development[18], while the conservatives, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, strengthened ideological control over Chinese society, and suspended the call for a radical political reform.[19] It was not until 1992, when China restarted its upgraded market economy reform, that Chinese society, economy and sports experienced rapid growth again. Thus, under Deng Xiaoping's leadership, reform between 1978 and 1989 was a period of innovation, breaking away from ideological shackles and

[17] Liu, Kang. *Globalization and Cultural Trends in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 1.

[18] The negative impact on the economy can be seen more clearly in the following year. In 1990, profits of in-budget state firms fell 57 percent. At the same time, inventory stocks shot up, enterprises losses jumped 89 percent over the same period the previous year, and retail sales of commodities fell 1.9 percent. To address the difficulties in state-owned sector, Government was forced to pump an additional 270 billion *yuan* of loan into that sector in 1990 on top of the 126 billion *yuan* of loans issued in the fourth quarter of 1989. See Wu Jinglian. *Planned economy or market economy*(Beijing: China Economic Publishing House, 1993), 12-13.

[19] Deng dismissed his successor, Zhao Ziyang, because Zhao acquiesced and even spearheaded student political movement. In Deng's mind, these movement, supported and incited by western forces, aimed to overthrow the CCP regime and demolish the socialist system. Putting hegemony in a multi-scalar framework, Su Xiaobo asserts that he find that crackdown in Tiananmen square trauma revealed the CCP's force in maintaining hegemony (What Gramsci refers to as coercion) within China, one the one hand, and its arduous struggle against Western hegemony beyond China, on the other. See Su Xiaobo, Revolution and Reform: the role of ideology and Hegemony in Chinese politics. *Journal of Contemporary China*. 69, no.20 (2011), 307-326.

effecting a transformation in the Party's foundation of legitimacy.

Although it may be difficult to make predictions about the future of China's sports, we can at least examine a particular period of history, not only to analyze the policies that were enacted under Mao's revolutionary ideology, but also to better understand the state of Chinese sport, ideology and political system following Deng's regime (after 1989).

1.2 Research Aim and Objectives

In contemporary society, most governments have paid significant attention to sports, as means of meeting a variety of goals; to elevate national image, display supremacy, or out of concern for public welfare, education, or health. Lv Shuting (1990) has noted that government intervention in sport has manifested in two critical ways: as a means to channel propaganda or as a political tool in its own right; and as an agenda or intention to influence international sports events by establishing or improving international relationships, strengthening nationality and encouraging a sense of national spirit. [20] A good example of this type of intervention is the 1936 Berlin Olympics, widely referred to as the Nazi Games, consisting of a two-week interlude in Germany's escalating campaign against its Jewish population and the country's march towards war. Sport was deeply linked with German nationalism and political ideology. Sport has also been used by government as a means of resolving or improving social, urban developmental or environmental problems. For instance, the *London Plan* 2004 identified the staging of the 2012 Games as a 'major catalyst for change and regeneration in east London, especially the Lower Lea Valley, levering resources, spurring timely completion of already programmed infrastructure investment and leaving a legacy to be valued by future generations'.[21]

[20] Lv Shuting. 'Analyzing Relationship between Sports, Politics and Economy from the perspective of Rise and Fall of Competitive Sports in China and Japan', *Sports Science* 10, no.3 (1990): 41.

[21] Mayor of London. *Spatial Development Strategy for London: the London Plan* (London: Greater London Authority, 2004).

In China, sport has attracted long-term government attention. Researchers have addressed the impact of formalisation and the profound influence Chinese state investment has had upon sport policy and systems since 1949 (Fan et, 2010, Cui Lequan, 1998, Hu Xiaoming, 2002, Men Lan, 2005, Xia Chengqian and Tian Yupu, 2010; Tan, T.C. 2015; Zheng, J. 2018). However, little systematic research has been undertaken. Various texts that have traced the evolution of the state policies and systems in China have demonstrated the interwoven ties between sports and the transformation of Chinese society (Shen Liang and Fan Hong, 2012; Fan Wei, 2010; Cui Lequan 1998; Hu Xiaoming 2002; Men Lan 2005; Xia Chengqian and Tian Yupu 2010), although scant analysis has focused on the transformation of state sports policies and systems by adopting specific theoretical perspectives at the meso or macro levels. This thesis undertakes to rectify this by applying Gramscian notions of hegemony and a revision of Weber's classification on legitimacy to provide an in-depth analysis of the evolution and transformation of Chinese sports policies and systems between 1949 and 1989.

A thorough understanding as to how sports policies have evolved within transformations in the socio-political setting is crucial for a complete understanding of the sporting world in which we live. According to Krüger, transformation in a wide sense implies general social and cultural change or processes of reorganisation.[22] The transformation of Chinese sports policy during 1949–1989 needs to be critically examined in context in order to fully appreciate how this policy arrived at its modern form as we know it. We also need to understand what sports meant as a concept before this transformation. Only by appreciating this pivotal change in policy can we fully appreciate the transformation of sports policies and systems in contemporary China.

[22] Michael Krüger. 'Transformationen des Wir-Gefühls in Turnen und Sport–eine Einführung in das Tagungsthema' in idem ed., *Transformationen des deutschen Sports seit 1939* (St. Augustin: Academia, 2001).

In sum, the main purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between dominant ideology and the transformation of sports policy and system in China during the period between 1949 and 1989. The thesis focuses on macro-level analysis of the change of Chinese state sports policy and system in the sociohistorical and ideological context. In consideration of the close relationship between sport, ideology, party system and legitimacy, the objectives of this study are as follows:

- To document changes in sports policies and systems in Communist China from 1949 to 1989.
- To investigate the effects of dominant ideologies on sports policies and systems throughout different historical stages between 1949 and 1989.
- To explain the role played by the party system that influenced changes in sports policies and systems between 1949 and 1989.
- To evaluate how the change in dominant ideology impacted on sports policies between the Mao and post-Mao eras, specifically the era of Deng Xiaoping, between 1949 and 1989.

The following research questions will be addressed:

- To what extent did dominant ideology affect changes in sports policies and systems? (after accounting for the influence of dominant ideology)
- Have any changes occurred in the dominant ideology? (in the process of changes in sport and sports policies)
- What were the changes in sports policies between the Mao and post-Mao eras from 1949 to 1989? (from the impact of dominant ideology).

1.3 Historical timeline of the PRC and this research

Views differ as to how best to divide the historical sports eras of the PRC. According to criteria from the sixth Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the CCP, held on 27 June 1981 (a ‘Resolution on Several Historical Issues since the

Foundation of PRC'), 4 periods have occurred over the 32 years since 1949. Most scholars, including Rong Gaotang (1984)[23] and Gu Shiquan (1989)[24] favour this division of sports history, as follows:

1. The first 7 years of the PRC from 1949 to 1956 represent the completion of the socialist transformation phase;
2. The 10 years from 1957 to 1966 represent the so-called "comprehensive construction of socialism";
3. The Cultural Revolution (1966–1976);
4. 1977, one year before the launching of the Open Door policy in 1978.[25]

An alternative viewpoint argues for the simultaneous development of sport in parallel with society. Just as politics, economy and law in contemporary Chinese society greatly impacted the development of sport, it also developed within a framework of its own law.[26] Based on this, Wu has suggested four divisions:

1. An initial development of sport in the PRC (1949–1966);
2. The Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), when sport in China was significantly destabilised;
3. The period of Reform and Opening Up (1976–1993);
4. The fourth period commences from 1994, with the launch of substantial reform of sports in contemporary China.[27]

Wu groups the first and second period by Rong (and other scholars) together, with an additional period after the Cultural Revolution. Other scholars have proposed further definitions, such as Wu Shaozu, who has defined the following seven periods (1999):

1. October 1949 to November 1952;
2. December 1952 to May 1957;

[23] Rong Gaotang. *Contemporary History of Sport* (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1984), 5–10.
[24] Gu Shiquan, *Chinese Sports History* (Beijing: Beijing Sport University Press, 1997), 221–39.
[25] The CCP Central Committee. *Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of the Party Since the Founding of the Country (June, 27th-29th, 1981)* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1981).
[26] Wu Zaitian. 'On How China's Contemporary Sports History is Staged', *Sports Culture and History'* 16, no. 6 (1998): 49–50.
[27] Ibid.

3. June1957 to May 1966;
4. June 1966 to October 1976;
5. October 1976 to 1985;
6. 1985–1992;
7. 1993–1998.

Tan Hua has proposed five stages:[25]

1. 1949–1956, the initial establishment of sport in the PRC, a period of tortuous development;
2. 1956–1965, the Cultural Revolution phase;
3. 1966–1976, a transitional period;
4. 1977–1980, an initial reform of sports;
5. 1981–1985, a phase of comprehensive reform.[28]

In contrast, Dai and Lin Ping[29] argue that the historical periods of sports should not be based solely on the defined periods of Party history. They outline 7 stages in the evolution of the sports administration system, which played a key role in shaping sport in the PRC:[30]

1. The establishment of the PRC on 1 October 1949 (accepted as a starting point for the sports history of the PRC);

2. Nevertheless, Dai and Ling maintain that a substantial sports governing body was not established the PRC until 26/27 October, at the Preparation Meeting for the Committee of the All-China Sport Federation (ACSF) on 26 & 27 October 1949. Dai and Ling therefore accept this date as the starting point in the history of sports development in the PRC;

3. The establishment of the State Physical Culture and Sport Commission (SPCSC), the first administrative sports institute of the central government, on 15 November 1952;

[28] Tan Hua. *Sports History* (Beijing: High Education Press, 2005), 390–438.
[29] Dai Jingdong and Ling Ping. 'On New China's Sports History Stage – Concurrent Discussion with Mr. Wu Zaitian', *Journal of Physical Education* 16, no.2 (2009): 6–11.
[30] Ibid.

4. Dai and Ling chose the year of 1956 as a division point, not because of its official recognition as a starting point of socialist society in China,[31] but because sport in rural areas was included in the main agenda of the 1956 National Sport Meeting and led to an enthusiastic nationwide embrace of sport. Prior to 1956, mass sport was largely confined to urban areas and elite sport was not officially encouraged. After 1956, elite sports and sports in other areas such as urban environments, particularly factories and institutes, also underwent significant development;

5. In December 1966, the entire sports administrative system collapsed and did not recover until the end of the Cultural Revolution in October 1976;

6. After the Third Session of the 11th Central Committee of the CCP in 1979, a variety of reform policies were launched in rural areas;

7. Reforms were not fully launched in urban areas until the Third Session of the 12th Central Committee of the CCP in October 1984.

According to Dai and Ling, rural area reform undermined rural communes and militia organisations, which had previously played a critical role in promoting sports in rural areas. The Third Session of the 12th Central Committee of the CCP in October 1984 marked the end of reform in rural areas, leading to a collapse of the organisation's base. Thus, Dai and Ling consider October 1984 to be another dividing point.

In general, these 7 divisions of sport history of PRC seem plausible. However, some of them are questionable. For example, the preparation meeting held in October 1949 for the ACSF is selected as a dividing point, although the establishment of the Preparation Committee for the ACSF marks the establishment of the national sport governing bodies in the PRC. The ACSF was only a nominal sports organisation, with most functions and responsibility assumed by the CNDYL. Furthermore, Dai and Ling select the Third Session of the 12th Central Committee of the CCP in December

[31] According to the 'Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China', the transition period of the RPC refers to the period of time from October 1949 to 1956. For more detailed information, see the Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China in *Important literature selection since the third plenary session.* (Beijing: People's Publishing House,1982), 789.

1984 as a dividing point, as it marks a thorough reform of urban areas and an end of reform in rural areas. In fact, however, the basic organisation of mass sports in rural areas became very disorganised shortly after the rural reform commenced at the end of the 1980s, rather than in the mid-1980s. Although mass sport was officially launched after 1984, it did not involve aspects of public ownership until 1992, with the re-launching of economic reforms.

Although uncertainties surround the appropriate selection of representative periods, it is undeniable that the dramatic development of Chinese sport from formerly semi-colonial and semi-feudal eras leading up to the 1980s was largely politically motivated. Events related to sports systems and policies will be considered for various divisions (e.g. mass sports, elite sports) in each chapter.

In general, this thesis will be organised around the following four divisions:

- The establishment of the PRC on 1 October 1949;
- The establishment of the State Physical Culture and Sport Commission, marking the centralised state-run sport system in November 1952;
- The launch of the Cultural Revolution on 8 August 1966;
- The Eleventh National Congress of the CCP will be chosen, as it marks the official end of the Cultural Revolution in October 1977.

1.4 Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of eight chapters in total, with Chapter One being the introduction, which explains the significance of the subject proposed, arguments and structure of this study.

Chapter Two presents a critical literature review of previous, related research and outlines two theories adopted in this research. Firstly, Gramsci's cultural hegemony provides a critical perspective, helping us to understand why Chinese Communists have always stressed the importance of ideological homogeneity as a means of control.

Both Mao and Gramsci believe that superstructure is not always determined by economic foundation, but by ideology. Gramsci's theory of hegemony is used to apply a critical thinking approach to understand the relationship of sport, as a part of superstructure, and ideological hegemony during Mao's China and thereafter (1949–1989). Secondly, Weber's concept of 'legitimacy' is introduced and expected to assist Gramsci's theory of hegemony in not only explaining the impact of the Mao's revolutionary ideological hegemony upon sports and sports policies before 1978, but also in deciphering the change of sports polices and the paradoxes of communist revolutionary ideology and pragmatic economic development in the 1980s. Weber's classification neglects the dynamic aspect of authoritative relations and isolates emotional and rational bases of authoritative relations. Therefore, an adapted version of Weber's classification is expected to explain not only why the Communist Party of China has adopted modernisation and economic performance to consolidate its legitimacy, but also clarify the role played by sport in the Party's efforts to legitimise itself.

Chapter Three sets out the methodology for the research. The first section of the chapter reviews three major ontological and epistemological paradigms and then specifies critical realism as the philosophical position for the study. The second section of the chapter discusses theories underpinning the research, which explains the choice of method adopted. The third section of the chapter outlines the methods adopted for the study, study design, semi-structured interviews and documents the analysis.

In chapters Four through Seven, changes in state sports policies and systems are examined in chronological order from 1949 through 1989. They follow a similar structure, in which each chapter concludes by analysing the function, value and the implications of state sports policies and systems during defined periods.

Chapter Four documents and explores the emergence and development of state sports

policies and systems during the early period of the PRC, from 1949 to 1952. The first section of the chapter provides a brief historical overview of the development of state sports policies pre-1949, followed by the political, social and cultural contexts of Chinese society in the early period of the PRC, during which time sports policies and systems emerged. The third section of the chapter examines the establishment of the 'Semi-Government' state sports governing body, the ACSF, and its significance. The fourth section of the chapter explores the state sports policies and key features during this period.

Chapter Five examines the changes in state sports policies and systems during the period of transition to socialism and the period of socialist construction from 1953 to 1965. The first section of the chapter explores the effect of the Soviet model on Chinese sports from 1953 to 1960 in the areas of sports policies, administrative structure, training system, sports schools, athletic ranking system and mass sports. This section examines the impact of the Soviet model on the establishment of the Chinese State Sports System, and the Sovietisation of state sports policies and practices during the GLF. The second section examines the changes in state sports policies and systems from 1961 to 1965, after the failure of the GLF.

Chapter Six explores the changes in state sports policies and systems during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). In this chapter, 1971 was chosen as a dividing point because it was then that the SCSPE was re-established. This chapter includes two sections: the state sports policies and systems from 1966 to 1970 and the state sports policies and systems from 1971 to 1976.

Chapter Seven, based on empirical findings, draws attention to the changes in state policies and systems from 1977 to 1989. The first part of the section examines changing priorities in sports policies from 1977 to 1980, providing a detailed explanation for the emergence of elite sports as a key policy concern during this period. The second section of the chapter examines the development of the elite sport

policy and system in the 1980s, in which the rise of the elite sports policy and the emergence of the 'Olympic first' strategy is examined through an analysis of the advent of sporting nationalism and in the context of the overall systematic reform of Chinese society. The third section explores the development of state policy for mass sports in the 1980s in rural and urban areas.

Finally, Chapter Eight forms the conclusion. The first section of the chapter discusses how this thesis contributes to existing knowledge and theory, then explains how the research findings relate to the questions raised in Chapter One. The final section discusses several inherent limitations in this research and considers the key methodological reflections in this thesis, ending with suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two main parts. Part One provides a critical review of the literature related to the research questions. The literature review serves two main purposes. Firstly, it is to determine what has already been established in the empirical literature about a particular topic of interest. Secondly, it aims to identify the gaps where further research is necessary. Thus, the literature review summarises five areas and aspects of information and knowledge with regard to Chinese state policy and system. Part One concludes with a critical discussion and analysis of the reviewed literature.

Part Two introduces the notion of a theoretical framework within which existing theories can be examined, as well as new arguments and theories. The aim is to evaluate the concepts and theories adopted for explaining the relationship between sports, ideology and policy evolution. This process of assessment is essential in order to help form a framework for the research analysis of the state sports policies and systems. As this study explores the transformation of state sports policies within a particular system, it is crucial to examine the existing theories in order to provide a theoretical and conceptual context for this thesis.

Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony was selected in order to establish reference points for measuring the research findings and enable a critical perspective on policies set out by the ruling party in China. This theory will be evaluated in relationship to the Chinese context, as a means of understanding the changes that have occurred in China in state sports policies and systems since the 1980s. This Chapter ends with an assessment of the usefulness of the analysis for studying state-mandated changes in

sports policies and the ideological system in China.

2.2 Review of Research on the Chinese State Sport Policy and System

2.2.1 Research on the Development of Strategic Focus or Guidelines of Chinese Sport Policy

A strategic focus or guidelines for Chinese state sports policies have been an important issue since the mid-1980s; the focus has been on the relationship between mass sport and elite or competitive sports. First of all, it is necessary to review the formation of Chinese state sports policies. As Kolatch noted in 1972, the origin of many sports policies in Mainland China can be traced to pre-1949 Communist ideas.[1] Wei *et al*. (2010) observed that the formation of the PRC's sports policies can be traced back to the 1920s, during the Communist years in Jiangxi.[2] In Jiangxi, the CCP formulated a policy and established a formal system of physical exercise for workers and peasants called the Red Sports Movement.[3] At that time, the Red Army considered recreation and sport activities as important work that combined military exercise and sports.

Fan (1998) argued that sport during the Jiangxi era was one of the best ways of uniting the masses into a disciplined, patriotic and successful martial force.[4] 'Sports and physical education… on the one hand aim to train physique, on the other hand they can also implement revolutionary political education on them.'[5] Thus, under the

[1] Jonathan Kolatch, *Sport Politics and Ideology in China* (Middle Village, N.Y.: Jonathan David Publishers, 1972), 5.

[2] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 14-15 (2010): 2380-2402.

[3] The term 'Red Sports Movement' originated in 1929 after the Party's Gutian Conference and was adopted officially in 1932. In the Resolution of the Gutian Conference, the Party decided to establish in each company of the Red Army a physical training programme and a club system. See details in Mao Zedong, The Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Fourth Division Red Army, October 1929, in Mao Zedong's Selected Works (Chang chun: Dongbei Press, 1948), 3-7.

[4] Fan Hong, *Footbinding, Feminism and Freedom: The Liberation of Women's Bodies in Modern China* (London: Routledge, 1997), 155.

[5] Zhen Peng, 'The Task and Work of Youth in the Soviet Region Currently', *Lenin's youth*, vol.2, no.11 (1930).

guideline 'All Soviet work obeys the requirements of revolutionary war', despite difficulties of conditions in CCP ruling areas, sport and physical activities were widely organised to serve the revolutionary war and political struggle (Cui 1998; Yu 1991; Zhang, 1991).[6] According to China's official sports history, the aims of the Red Sports Movement, in essence, were 'to cultivate worker-peasant class team spirit and to make strong bodies to suit the needs of the class struggle' and 'to train the worker-peasant class to be an iron force in order to defeat all its enemies'.[7] On the whole, sports policies in the Jiangxi era focused on military training.

After the Jiangxi era ended in October 1934, the CCP launched a New Sports Movement and the Yan'an era began in late 1936 with the establishment of a new Communist regime, with Yan'an as its capital. The aim of the New Sports Movement was to promote sport for the masses by introducing the latest theories of physical education and publishing physical education textbooks. Ultimately, the emphasis on military training typical of the Red Sports Movement in the Yan'an era gave way to a new focus. Under the slogan 'Everybody is to do exercise', physical exercise and education were systematically promoted in the army, schools, counties and villages controlled by the Communists. Fan (1997) notes that Chinese communist sport policy during the Yan'an era focused on mass sport due to ideological and military factors.[8] In contrast to mass sport, competitive sport led to narrow specialisation and diverted attention away from the basic aim of providing healthy exercise for the masses. Despite slight differences in the focus of sports policies from the Jiangxi era (1931–1934) through the Yan'an era (1936–1948), the CCP established a series of sport and physical education organisations and carried out a wide range of sports and

[6] Cui Lequan, *The History of Modern Chinese Sport and Story* (Beijing: China Publishing House, 1989),156; Yu Jianyong, 'On the Internal Relationship between Red Sports and New China Sports', *Sports Literature and History* 9, no. 2 (1991): 36-38; Zhang Ming, 'The Development and Characteristics of Competitive Sports Policy in New China', *Sports Literature and History*, 9, no. 2 (1991): 2-5.

[7] State Committee of the History of Sport and Physical Culture (SCHSPC), eds., *Modern Chinese Sports History*, (Beijing: Beijing Physical Education Press, 1989), 367.

[8] See Fan Hong, *Footbinding, Feminism and Freedom: The Liberation of Women's Bodies in Modern China*, (London: Routledge,1997), 207.

physical activities in Communist-controlled areas up to 1949.[9]

Policies and systems in post-1949 Chinese state sport were pioneered in the Red Sports and New Sports Movements (Yu 1991; Cui, 1999; Fan, et al., 2012). Yu (1991) refers to sport during the communist years in the Jiangxi and the Ya'an eras (1929 to 1948) collectively as Red Sports.[10] Yu has argued that Red Sports provided a reference model, cultivated sport officers and workers, created socialist sports, initiated school-sponsored sport, and during the Mao era turned away from the traditional revolutionary spirit of struggle as espoused by CCP sports policies.[11]

Cui (1998) examined the strategic focus of Chinese state sport policy from the 1950s through the 1980s. Cui points out that participation in sport in the early years of the PRC required further improvement in the face of the relatively weak base of China's economy, culture and sport.[12] Feng (2008) notes that after the founding of the PRC, economic and national defence construction became the most important issues for the new regime.[13] As a result, mass sport became the focus of sports policies in the 1950s.

Cui (1998) observes that the guideline 'developing mass sport and elite sport simultaneously', also known as the 'leg strategy', was put forward for the first time in 1959, when emphasised by Zhou Enlai, Premier of the State Council, in his Government Work Report. Cui argues that this guideline was formed in the practice of

[9] For example, in the Soviet Area of Ruijin, Jiangxi province (1931–1935), physical education classes and sport activities were widely set up in the Lenin primary school, the Marx Communist University, the Red Army University, the Soviet University, drama schools, health schools and normal schools. During the anti-Japanese War (1937–1945), the Shaanxi Gansu Ningxia Border Area Sports and Transportation Committee was established in Yanan, and mass sport programs were carried out. The Yanan Sports Association was the earliest mass sports organisation and was established on 4 May 1940. For more detail, see the State Committee of the History of Sport and Physical Culture (SCHSPC), *Modern Chinese Sports History* (Beijing: Beijing Physical Education Press, 1989), 368-404.

[10] Yu Jianyong, 'On the Internal Relationship between Red Sports and New China Sports', op. cit.

[11] See Yu Jianyong, 'On the Internal Relationship between Red Sports and New China Sports', op. cit; Zhang Ming, 'The Development and Characteristics of Competitive Sports Policy in New China', *Sports Literature and History*, op. cit.

[12] Cui Lequan, 'The Evolution and Development of The Basic Guiding Principles of Contemporary Chinese Sports', *Sports Literature and History*,16, no.2 (1998): 6-7.

[13] Feng Huohong, 'China's Mass Sports Policy at The Beginning of the Founding of New China', *Journal of Beijing Sport University* ,31, no. 7 (2008): 904-907.

Red Sports and the New Sports Movements, as well as in the context of political, economic and cultural development in the early days of the PRC.[14] After this time, official government documents and National Conference of Sport texts supported the 'two-legs strategy' as an ideological basis for the development of sport in China up to the mid-1980s.

Xiao Linpeng *et al*. (2002) has argued, however, that the 'two-legs strategy' may be traced back to 1952. According to Xiao, when China was preparing for the 15th Olympic Games, the Central Committee of the CCP and the Chinese New Democracy Youth League (CNYL) stated that performance needed to be improved in competitive sport alongside the development of mass sports. For the first time, the guideline 'developing mass sport and elite sport simultaneously' was espoused by Chinese state sport policy.[15] Xiao's point of view is echoed by Fan Hong (2008), who explicitly attributes the selection of the strategy to develop competitive sport in 1952 to political factors.[16] Fan asserts that China's experience at the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952 stimulated the Chinese government's determination to use sport as a valuable weapon to help restore the nation's position in international politics.[17] In other research co-authored with Shen Liang (2012), Fan have observed that the development of sports in the early PRC was deeply embedded within political and ideological circumstances. They assert that since Chairman Mao Zedong adopted the policy of 'Lean to one side towards the socialist-communist camp', Chinese state sport policy in the 1950s was substantially viewed as Sovietisation.[18] Jarvie, Hwang and Brennan note that China adopted much of the Soviet sports system in the early years of the PRC (2008).[19] The Party's political and ideological choices contributed greatly to the

[14] Cui Lequan, 'The Evolution and Development of The Basic Guiding Principles of Contemporary Chinese Sports', op. cit.
[15] Xiao Linpeng, Li Zonghao, Pei Lixin, Review on Development Strategy of Chinese Competitive Sport and Mass Sport, *Journal of Physical Education*, 9, no. 3 (2002): 12-14.
[16] Fan Hong, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System' in *Comparative Elite Sport Development: systems, structures and public policy*, edited by Barrie Houlihan and Mick Green (Oxford Butterworth-Heinemann, 2007), 28.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Shen Liang and Fan Hong, Historical Review of State Policy for Physical Education in the People's Republic of China, *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.4 (2012): 583-600.
[19] Jarvie, Grant, Dong-Jhy Hwang and Mel Brennan, *Sport, Revolution and Beijing Olympics* (London: Berg

formation of Chinese state sports policies in the Mao era. Substantial Soviet influence on China's sport did not decline until the early 1960s.

Liu Yu (2012) notes that the Chinese government's strategic approach to sports changed in the years prior to the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976): mass sport was prioritised up to the 1960s, whereas competitive sport was emphasised after the 1960s.[20] Liu Yu asserts that the formation of guidelines and strategy of Chinese government sports policies was not a natural process of evolution, but was driven by an impetus aimed at resolving social and economic problems, and reducing the gap between China and more advanced countries.[21]

Cui Lequan (1998) declared that, under the strategy of 'developing mass sport and elite sport simultaneously' from the late 1950s to the first half of the 1960s, the Chinese government widely promoted mass sport, while it simultaneously helped to rapidly develop competitive sport. However, Fan Wei *et al.* (2010) argue that after the failure of The GLF (1958–1960), China implemented a new national policy in 1961 in order to concentrate all resources on only a few elite athletes, to produce high performance in the international sports arena. Fan Wei *et al.* (2010) assert that this policy marks a turning point in Chinese sport, whereby the sports ideology and system changed from 'two legs' to 'one leg' – the elite.[22]

Differing views exist amongst sports historians as to state sports policies during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). One view is that the politicisation of sport during the Cultural Revolution developed to the extreme, leading to disastrous results for the development of China's sports (Cui 1998;[23] Xiao 2009;[24] Xia and Tian, 2010[25]). Xiao

Publishers, 2008), 69.

[20] Liu Yu, 'The evolution and transformation of sports development in the 60 years of new China', *The Journal of Xi'an Physical Education University* 29, no. 1 (2012): 25-31.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', op. cit.

[23] Cui Lequan.'The Evolution and Development of The Basic Guiding Principles of Contemporary Chinese Sports', op. cit.

[24] Xiao Mouwen, 'The Historical Evolution of Mass Sports Policy in New China', *China Sport Science,* 29, no. 4

Mouwen (2009) claims that no explicit sports policy existed during the Cultural Revolution, as the entire system of sports was completely destroyed; Party slogans and instructions from leaders were the only available views on sports at this time.[26] Another view holds that although the early period of the Cultural Revolution was disastrous for the development of China's sports system, particularly elite sport, both mass sport and competitive sport flourished in the middle and later periods of the Cultural Revolution (Fan Hong 1999; Sun Baoli 1999;[27] Fu Yannong 2002[28]), which arguably had a destructive effect on arts, education, industry and agriculture.[29] Despite the different points of view in relation to sport during the Cultural Revolution, there is as yet no systematic analysis of the evolution of sports policies and systems during this period.

State sports policies were relaunched after the Cultural Revolution. Xiong Xiaozheng *et al.* (1997) notes that after China renewed its International Olympic Committee (IOC) membership in 1979 in preparation for the 1980 Olympic Games, the government adopted a strategic focus to prioritise competitive sport. This strategy assisted with the development of state sports policies throughout the 1980s and extended into the 1990s. This strategy was aimed at using the country's limited resources to develop elite sport, to ensure that China would become a leading sporting power by the end of the 20th century.[30] Cui Lequan (1998) has observed that the guideline of 'developing mass sport and competitive sport simultaneously' or 'two leg strategy' was not implemented until 1995, when the 'Sport Law' was issued, a fundamental guideline for emphasising and promoting the development of sports in

(2009): 89-96.

25 Xia Cheng Qian, Tian Yu Pu, 'Changes in the Development Strategy of the New China Sports for 60 years', *Journal of Wuhan Sport University*, 44, no.1 (2010): 17-22.

26 Xiao Mouwen, 'The Historical Evolution of Mass Sports Policy in New China', op. cit, 89-96.

27 Sun Baoli, Yang Wenxue, Pan Jianlin. 'Mass Sports in The Period of The Great Cultural Revolution'. *Journal of Wuhan Sports University* 33, no. 6 (1999): 6-8.

28 Fu Yannong, 'Several Key Issues in the Study of Sports History during the Cultural Revolution', *Sports Culture Guide*, no. 5(2002): 29-30.

29 Fan Hong, 'Not all Bad! Communism, Society and Sport in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: a Revisionist Perspective', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 16, no. 3 (1999): 47-71.

30 Xiong Xiaozheng, Cao Shouhe and Lin Dengyuan, 'From the Combination of Popularization and Improvement to the Coordinated Development of All Kinds of Sports', *Sports Literature and History* 15, no. 5 (1997): 16-20.

China. However, Fan Wei *et al*. (2010) argue that the fundamental change in Chinese state sports policies occurred in 1993, when the Chinese Sports Ministry held a conference entitled 'The Urgent Promotion and Development of Sports Business'. At this conference, the Chinese Sports Ministry publicly advocated the commercialisation of sport for the first time and they declared this to be a milestone in the evolution of Chinese sports.[31]

Furthermore, Fan Wei *et al*. (2010) note that 'in order to set the framework of the development of sport in an increasingly marketised economy, the Chinese government set three targets: the Olympic Strategy in 1995; the Development of Sports Industry and Commerce Strategy; and the National Fitness for All Programme'.[32] In 2001, China won the bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games. Jin Shibing (2013) has stated that in the period between 2001 and 2008, Chinese state sports policy centred around the Beijing Olympic Games.[33] The views expressed by Fan Hong (2007) coincide with those of Jin, asserting that China's bids in 1993 and 2001 to host the Olympic Games ensured that elite sport remained the priority; the right to host the 2008 Olympic Games stimulated a new set of Olympic-related objectives.[34] During this period, both the content and priorities of sports policies focused on the Beijing Olympics, as a priority not only for Beijing but for all of China.

With regard to state sports policies and the strategic focus following the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Fan Wei *et al*. (2010) note that there has been little change.[35] It is likely that, on the one hand, the government will continue its economic reformation of sport in the areas of mass sport and sport industry and will speed up the commercialisation of sport, while elite sport will continue to develop in the traditional form of 'whole country support for the elite sport system', a product of the planned economy, and will

[31] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', op. cit.
[32] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', op. cit.
[33] Jin Shibin. 'The Evolution and Value Evolution of China's Sports Policy since the Reform and Opening up', *Sport and Science*, 34, no. 1 (2013): 36-41.
[34] Fan, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System', op. cit.
[35] Ibid.

receive major support from the government.[36]

2.2.2 Research on the Change of Function of Sport and Government Intervention in Sports in China

As Blanchard (1995) notes, no Chinese vocabulary existed for terms such as sport and physical education in pre-modern China. Physical culture and activity was often associated with labour, military training and scholarly thought.[37] The Opium Wars, also known as the Anglo-Chinese Wars,[38] destroyed the closed state of Chinese society and enabled the introduction of Western sports. According to Hu Xiaoming (2002), the development of modern sports in China since 1840 was perceived as a tool to strengthen the country and the Chinese people.[39] As Lu Zhouxiang and Fan Hong (2010) note, the history of the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic clearly demonstrate a close relationship between sports, nationalism and politics.[40]

As Liu Qing *et al*. (2004) note, after the founding of the PRC in 1949, the government played a very important role in promoting the development of Chinese sports.[41] Bi Shiming (2007) echoes Liu, arguing that in the first 30 years since the founding of the PRC, in the light of serious domestic and international political realities and circumstances, Party and government policy emphasised that 'sport serves politics'. Indeed, the political function of sports was emphasised in China up until the 1980s. Men Lan (2005) has observed that during the early years of the PRC, there were relatively few sport policies, most of which were operated by the Party and government leaders.[42] Liu Qing (2003) has noted in his essay entitled '*the Role of*

[36] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', op. cit.
[37] Blanchard, Kendal, *The Anthropology of Sport: An Introduction* (Westport, CT: Greenwood. 1995), 25.
[38] The Opium Wars were the First Opium War (1839–1842) and the Second Opium War (1856–1860), also known as the Arrow War.
[39] Hu Xiaoming. 'From Tools to Toys -- Conversion of Competitive Sports Cultural Attributes', *Sports Culture Guide*, 22, no. 4 (2002): 15-18.
[40] Lu Zhouxiang and Fan Hong. 'From Celestial Empire to Nation State: Sport and the Origins of Chinese Nationalism (1840–1927)', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 27, no. 3 (2010): 479-504.
[41] Qing Liu, et al, 'Analysis on the Definition of Function and Responsibility of Sports Government in New Period', *Journal of Chengdu Sport University,* 30, no. 6 (2004): 7-11.
[42] Men Lan, 'The Development of China's Sports Policy after 1949', *China Science and Technology Information,*

Government in Sports Development in the New Period' that the Chinese sports administrative system was formed in 1952, with the establishment of the State Committee of Sport and Physical Education (SCSPE), characterised by a cooperative model that combines the government and governing body of sport in the industry sectors.[43] According to Liu Qing (2003), this model did not change until the early 1960s, when most sports associations of industry sectors were cancelled. The previous model formed in the 1950s was replaced by one that was run completely by the government from 1960 to the 1970s. During the Cultural Revolution, Chinese sport entered a non-rational or radical period. All sports participation and organisations were completely under the control of the Party and government. Sport became a political tool. As Yan Hua (2010) asserts, a 'no law' period of state sports policy existed during the Cultural Revolution.[44]

Hao Qin (2004) has argued that the 'no law' policy was in essence a result of excessive government intervention in sports in China, which alienated the function of sports from its nature, namely, entertainment and recreation.[45] According to Hao Qin, the development of modern sports in both the West and East is inseparable from government intervention.[46] He notes that strong government support and intervention was necessary for the development of modern sport for developing countries such as Germany, Japan and China. From the perspective of the evolution of modern sport, government involvement in sport was not only a historical necessity, but the driving force behind the formation and development of modern sport.[47]

Hu (2002) asserts that the reduction of political demands in China after the 1980s

17, no. 13 (2005): 218.

[43] Liu Qing, 'The Role of the Government in the Development of Sports in the New Period', *Journal of Chengdu Sport University* 29, no.1 (2003): 12-15.

[44] Yan Hua, 'Research on the Development and Change of China's Sports Policy before and after Holding the Olympic Games', *Liaoning Sport Science and Technology*, 32, no. 2 (April 2010): 1-2.

[45] Hao Qin, 'The Position and Role of the Government in Sports Development', *Journal of Physical Education*, 11, no. 2 (2004): 5-8.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

contributed to a transformation of function of sports from being an 'instrument' or tool to a 'toy'; the 'function of sports [in China] should transform from political needs to people's development, from utilitarian and mandatory demands to an individual's healthy and happy life.'[48] Hao Qin (2004) asserts that the Chinese government has adopted a series of measures to promote socialisation and marketisation of sports since the 1980s. According to Hao, government intervention in sports in China will not fundamentally change in the short-term.[49] The Party and Chinese government will continue to attach great importance to politics and ideology, so the political function of sports in China will not suddenly disappear.[50]

2.2.3 Research on the Development of Chinese Mass Sports Policies and Systems

As Dennis Whitby (1999) notes, sport in pre-1949 China existed for the wealthy. The general poor health and weak physique of the Chinese people resulted in the country being described as 'the sick man of Asia'.[51] China searched for ways to make 'the sick man of Asia' healthy and strong again in the late 19th century and early 20th century.[52] For the Chinese political elite, sports were considered to be a possible solution. Training strong bodies for the nation, therefore, became a widespread slogan and even a guiding sports ideology.[53]

Mao extended the ideal 'the training of the body for the strength of the nation' into the practice of China's revolution (Susan Brownell 1995; Fan Hong 1997; Xu Guoqi 2008), which prioritised mass sport in Chinese Communist sports policies. However, opinions differ as to the development of mass sports policies since 1949. Ma Xuanjian

[48] Hu Xiaoming, 'From Tools to Toys -- Conversion of Competitive Sports Cultural Attributes', *Sports Culture Guide* 19, no. 4 (2002): 15-18.

[49] Hao Qin, 'The Position and Role of the Government in Sports Development', op. cit., 5-8.

[50] Bi Shiming. 'Unscientific and Irrational Academic Propositions - from Production to Life, from Community to Individual, from Tools to Toys', *Journal of Tianjin Sport University* 27, no. 3 (2007): 196-119.

[51] Dennis Whiby, "Elite Sport" in Robin Jones, James (Jim) Riordan, *Sport and Physical Education in China: The Impact of Fascism and Communism on Sport* (London: Routledge,1999), 120.

[52] Guoqi Xu, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports, 1895-2008* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2008), 61.

[53] Ibid., 61.

(2005) divides the development of Chinese mass sports policies after 1949 into three main stages: initial development (1949–1965); severely disrupted and destroyed (1966–1976); and recovery and rapid development (1977–2005).[54] Other sports historians and writers make further divisions for the development of mass sport prior to 1978. Xiao Mouwen (2009), for instance, divides the development of Chinese mass sport policy into four main stages: emergence and formation (1949–1957); a stage of tortuous development (1958–1976); exploration and innovation (1977–1994); and democratisation and legalisation (from 1995 to the present day).[55]

As Susan Brownell (1995) notes, Mao placed a great deal of importance on the health of people's bodies as a basis for the health of the nation.[56] Xiao (2009) indicates that 'popularisation' served as the guideline for state sports policies between 1949 and 1957. Mass sport was prioritised through different channels. This can be seen from the features of mass sport in the early years of the PRC:

1) Comprehensiveness: Mass sport in this period included near-total sport, including physical education and sport in school; 2) Fairness and uniformity: Mass sport in the early years of the PRC emphasised fairness in sport participation, justice among different regions and people from different walks of life; 3) Militarisation: Mass sport in this period was coloured with a strong militarisation, in which 'sport for defence services' and 'sports defend the socialist motherland' were identified as the main purpose for developing mass sports in China.[57]

With regard to the system of mass sports in the early PRC, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the ACSF became responsible for management of sports for all of China, in cooperation with other governmental

[54] Ma Xuanjian, 'On China's Mass Sports Policy', *Journal of Chengdu Sport University*, 31, no. 6 (2005): 1-7.
[55] Xiao Mouwen, 'The Historical Evolution of Mass Sports Policy in New China', op. cit, 89-96.
[56] Susan Brownell, Training the Body for China: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic, University of Chicago Press, 1995, 57.
[57] Xiao Mouwen, 'The Historical Evolution of Mass Sports Policy in New China', op. cit, 89-96.

agencies, such as the Ministry of Education and the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU).[58] After the establishment of the SCSPE in 1952, sports commissions were successively established nationwide, above the county level. Fu Zhengming (2011) asserts that the Chinese mass sports system was initially composed of three major parts, including state, department and work units (*danwei*), collectively ensuring the development of mass sport.[59]

Between 1958 and 1976, mass sport underwent a tortuous development along with political campaigns, including the 'Anti-Rightist Movement' (*fan you yun dong*), 'The Great Leap Forward' and 'the Cultural Revolution'. Xiao asserts that mass sport during this period involves several main characteristics: idealisation, strong politicisation and instability. Mass sports during this period was strongly militarised, whereby 'sport for defence services' and 'sport defends the socialist motherland' were identified as the main reasons for developing mass sports in China.[60]

Most sports historians agree with Chinese official conclusions that the Cultural Revolution resulted in 10 years of unprecedented disaster for sports. Wu Shaozu, the former Director of the SPCSC, has even claimed that the Cultural Revolution destroyed the development of sports and that the entire sports system was at or nearly at a standstill.[61] Traditional sports were boycotted. Xiong and Zhong assert that during the early stages of the Cultural Revolution, mass sport activities all but disappeared in cities, except for politicisation of mass rallies and activities, notably 'loyalty dancing' (solo or group dancing to express loyalty to Chairman Mao) as a fixture of the Cultural Revolution.[62] In Chinese martial arts (*wushu*), experts were condemned as vestiges of feudalism, monsters and academic reactionaries; martial arts activities were accused of 'spreading feudal superstition' among the masses,

[58] Wu Shaozu, *The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China*, op. cit, 13.
[59] Fu Zhengming, 'The Analysis of Development Process of Mass Sports with Chinese Characteristics', *Journal of Southwest Normal University* (Natural Science Edition), 36, no.3 (2011): 101-104.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Wu Shaozu, *The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China*, op. cit, 171-200.
[62] Xiong Xiaozheng, Zhong Bingshu, *The 60-year History of Sport in New China*, (Beijing: Beijing Sport University Press, 2010), 129.

setting Chinese martial arts back by 10 or more years.[63]

The development of mass sports during the Cultural Revolution was not straightforward. During the early part of the Cultural Revolution, the intense violence of the Red Guard movement led China to the brink of internal war between 1966 and 1969. After the Ninth Party Congress in 1969, the country's political environment began to stabilise. In 1969, Premier Zhou Enlai set about restoring scientific and educational standards, which encouraged a positive all-around attitude toward sports.[64] National rural sport development meetings and national work sports meetings were held in 1972 after Premier Zhou's recognition of sports achievements between 1949 and 1966 at the first National Physical Culture and Sport Conference held in July 1971. Thus, mass sport development became an important policy of the Chinese government in 1972. However, the process of building up all-around sport development and physical culture was again affected when Zhou's restoration was attacked in subsequent political campaigns initiated by the *Gang of Four* (Jiang Qing, Wang Hongwen, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan) led by Jiangqing, Mao's wife. Between 1974 and 1976, this political campaign disrupted the development of mass sport.

Although most Chinese resources condemn the Cultural Revolution for disrupting Chinese physical culture and sport and its system,[65] including mass sport, some scholars, mainly in the West, contend that the Cultural Revolution was not all bad for sport. As Fan Hong argues, 'the Cultural Revolution, in fact, pushed the roots of sports deep into Chinese society… Sport in the Cultural Revolution developed under very complex and unique social, cultural and political circumstances. It is curious that, unlike arts, education, industry and agriculture, on which the revolution had a

[63] Ibid.

[64] Grant Jarvie and Dong-Jhy Hwang, and Mel Brennan, *Sport, Revolution and the Beijing Olympics,* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), 87.

[65] For more detail on the effect of the Cultural Revolution on mass sport, please see Xiong and Zhong, *The 60-year History of Sport in New China*, op. cit. 129-134; Gu Shiquan, *History of Chinese Sport*, (Beijing: Beijing Sport University Press, 2002), 85-87; Hao Qin, *The History of Sport*, Beijing: People Sport Press, (2006): 406-407.

destructive effect, sport survived and even developed'.[66] After reviewing the development of sport during the Cultural Revolution, Grant Jarvie concluded that the Cultural Revolution was not as complete a disaster as is suggested by many of the official accounts.[67]

Sport in China has developed, opened up and reformed since the 1980s (Grant Javie, 2008: 95). Nevertheless, mass sports and competitive sports did not experience the synchronous development in the 1980s that they had during the first 30 years after 1949. The strategic focus of Chinese state sport policy was to 'prioritise competitive sport' in 1979 and 1980, while social forces were required to develop mass sport.[68]

From 1995 to the present day, mass sport has been re-emphasised. Xiao (2009) attributes this to two main reasons: national physical fitness, particularly among young people, experienced a dramatic decline since the 1980s; insufficient investment in sports was rectified with China's rapid economic growth and enhanced overall national strength. These events made it possible for the Chinese government to substantially and financially strengthen mass sport. Xiao (2009) asserts that emphasising mass sport was symbolised by the issue of the 'National Fitness Programme' and the 'Sport Law' in 1995.[69] A report issued by Xu Hongfeng *et al.* (1999) discusses the developing tendency of social sport and Chinese mass sports policies. Xu Hongfeng *et al.* (1999) considered the 'National Fitness Programme' in 1995 as a milestone of development of sport in China. She asserts that the 'Sport Law' ensured sport participation for the majority of people and the effective implementation of legal protection for the 'National Fitness Programme'.[70]

Compared with the mass sports policy, relatively few studies have examined the mass

[66] Fan Hong, 'Two Roads to China: The Inadequate and the Adequate (Review Essay)', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 18, no. 2 (2001): 148-167.
[67] Jarvie and Hwang. op. cit., 90.
[68] Wu Shaozu, *The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China*, op. cit, 267-272.
[69] Xiao, 'The Historical Evolution of Mass Sports Policy in New China', op. cit.
[70] Xu Hongfeng, *et al.*, 'A Developing Tendency of Chinese Social Sports after 2010', *China Sport Science and Technology*, 35, no.5 (1999): 2-13.

sports systems. With regard to the mass sports systems in the early years of the PRC, Fu Zhengming (2011) notes that after the establishment of the SCSPE in 1952, sports commissions were successively set up at above county level. Subsequently, sports organisations and associations were set up in industry sectors. According to Fu, Chinese mass sports organisations and management systems initially consisted of three parts; an administrative institution, industry sector and work units (*danwei*).[71]

Zhou Jianjun (2004) conducted an analysis of change of the mass sports systems from the perspective of the evolution of *Danwei* (work units) sports. He claims that in the traditional planned economy era, *Danwei* served as the political, economic and social foundation of Chinese society[72] Under the highly centralised management system, *Danwei* has become an organisational means of allocating national resources and social management. The state has the right to mobilise and allocate human and material resources in *Danwei*. Zhou asserts that *Danwei* sport has, in reality, served as a basic form of mass sports organisations in China. According to Zhou, in post-Maoist China, the mass sports system experienced transformation, but *Danwei* sport continued to play an important part as a basic unit of mass sport system within urban areas.[73]

2.2.4 Research on the Development of Chinese Elite Sports Policies and Systems

There is little doubt that elite sport has been the most prominent sport policy area in China[74], especially in the last 20 years. However, elite sport did not attract the attention of the Party, who even suppressed its development in the early days of the founding of the PRC. According to Xiong and Zheng (2007), the development of elite

[71] Fu Zhengming, 'The Analysis of Development Process of Mass Sports with Chinese Characteristics', op. cit.
[72] Zhou Jianjun, 'The Past and Future of *Danwei* (unit) Sport in China', *Journal of Physical Education* 11, no. 5 (2004): 13-17.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Zheng Jinming, Chen Shushu, Tan Tien-Chin & Patrick Wing Chung Lau, Sport policy in China, 'Sport policy in China (Mainland), *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics* 10, no. 3 (2018): 469-491.

sport was not included in the Party and government agendas until 1952, when China participated in the 15th Olympic Games. China's poor performance in the Games stimulated the national pride of the Chinese government to accelerate improvements in competitive sport.[75]

In English academic literature, scholars Fan Hong and her colleagues were the first to describe the history of China's sports policy and system, most notably elite sport and mass sports in China during different periods after 1949. As Fan Hong (2008) notes, the establishment of China's elite sport system began in the 1950s, developed in the 1960s and 1970s and matured with its own characteristics in the 1980s.[76] According to Fan Hong (2008), the triumph of Chinese sport is deeply rooted in China's elite sport system, which in Chinese is termed 'Juguo tizhi' and translates as 'whole country support for the elite sport system'.

Other scholars have also contributed to the literature relating to the development of Chinese elite sports policies and systems. For instance, Chen Yu (2009) has examined the transformation of the Chinese sports system since 1949 and divides the development of the elite sports system into six stages: initial establishment (1949–1957); tortuous development (1958–1965); 10 years of turmoil (1966–1976); socialist construction exploration (1980–1984); a gradual expansion of reform (1985–1997); and a stage of deepening reform (1998 to the present day).[77]

Based on the Soviet system, the Chinese State Physical Education and Sport Commission (SPESC) was formally established in November 1952. Fan, Wu and Xiong (2005) note that throughout the 1950s, sport was closely linked to the PRC's domestic and foreign policies.[78] The Sovietisation of Chinese sport introduced a

[75] Xiong Xiaozheng, Zheng Guohua, 'The Formation, Evolution and Reconstruction of Competitive Sport Development in China', *China Sport Science* 27, no. 10 (2007): 2-17.
[76] Fan Hong. 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System' in *Comparative Elite Sport Development: systems, structures and public policy*, Barrie Houlihan and Mick Green (eds.) (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008), 27.
[77] Chen Yu, 'The Historical Evolution of Sports System Reform' (Master's Thesis, Southwestern University, 1999), 10-14.
[78] Fan Hong, Ping Wu and Huan Xiong, 'Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sports System and

well-structured elite sports system to meet China's political and diplomatic demands.[79]

The time between 1958 and 1966 was characterised by Cao and Brownell (1996) as a period of 'political upheavals' (the anti-rightist movement and 'the Great Leap Forward', GLF[80]) and 'economic difficulties' (the Three Hard Years, as a consequence of both the deterioration in the Sino-Soviet relations and natural calamities from 1959 to 1961).[81] Both Xiong (2007) and Fan (2012) select 1960 as the tipping point in the history of the development of Chinese elite sports and systems, as this is when the Party discourses development into the following slogan: to 'Readjustment, consolidation, filling out and raising standards'.[82] Subsequently, in 1961, the SPESC changed its policy to produce elite sports stars.[83]

According to Johnson (1973), 'the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s smashed across China like a violent sandstorm'. The elite sports system came under attack during the Cultural Revolution. Fan Hong relates the decline of the elite sports system to a breakdown of elitism, as sport helped to implement Mao's ideology during the Cultural Revolution.[84] Although Fan (1999)[85], Jarvie (2008) and Xu (2008) all discussed the impact of ideology on sports, they did not expound the relationship of ideology and sport from the perspective of the Party's or Mao's ideological control on the whole of Chinese society.

its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 22, no. 4 (2005): 510-529.

79 For more detail, see Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Representing the New China and the Sovietisation of Chinese sport (1949–1962)', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29, no. 1 (2012): 1-29; Shen Liang & Fan Hong, 'Historical Review of State Policy for Physical Education in the People's Republic of China', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29, no.4 (2012): 583-600; Grant Jarvie, Dong-Jhy Hwang and Mel Brennan. *Sport, Revolution and the Beijing Olympics*, Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008.

80 For a more detailed explanation, see Chapter 5 of this thesis.

81 Cao Xiaojun. And Suan E.Brownell, S., The People's Republic of China. In: Laurence Chalip, Arthur Johnson, and Lisa Stachura, eds., National Sports Policies: an International Handbook (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press,1996), 67-88.

82 Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Sport in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976)', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.1 (2012): 53-73.

83 Ibid.

84 Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Sport in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976)', op. cit.

85 Fan Hong, 'Not all Bad! Communism, Society and Sport in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: Revisionist Perspective', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 16, no. 3 (1999): 47-71.

The situation changed in the early 1970s, due to the urgent need to establish better Sino-American relations. 'Ping-Pong diplomacy' not only changed the status of the nation but also the direction of competitive sports in China in 1971.[86] China initiated a profound economic reformation and made great efforts to integrate with the world economy from the end of the 1970s. China's return to the Olympics and high standard of performance became a symbolic means of catching up with and even overcoming Western powers that ultimately led to the 'Olympic strategy', which has been followed since the 1980s.[87]

Sports historians and writers (Wu, 1999; Fan, 2008; Xu, 2008; Tan, 2008; Cha, 2010; Zheng, 2018) have highlighted the 'Olympic strategy' as an important part of Chinese elite sports policy since the 1990s. Most of them agree with Hao Qin's view (2004) that the 'Olympic strategy' and China's remarkable achievements in the Olympics have benefited from the 'whole country support for the elite sport system' or 'Juguo tizhi'. Hao Qin (2004) explains that 'Juguo tizhi' channelled all resources for sport in the country into elite sport and effectively produced hundreds of thousands of young elite athletes in a short time, all in pursuit of ideological superiority and national status; the characteristics of 'Juguo tizhi' are supported by centralised management and administration and guaranteed financial and human resources from the entire country to ensure maximum support.[88]

Tan and Green (2008) assert that well-developed 'whole country support for the elite sport system' matches China's Olympic medal ambitions.[89] This support has channelled sports resources throughout the country into elite sports and effectively

[86] Xu Guoqi, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports, 1895–2008* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 115.
[87] Wu Shaozu, et al., eds. Sports History of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1999. Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 1999, 267-272.
[88] Hao Qin, 'The Definition, Characteristics and Functions of the Chinese Elite Sports System'. Journal of Chendu University of Sport, no. 3 (2004): 15–19.
[89] Tien-Chin Tan and Mick Green, 'Analysing China's Drive for Olympic Success in 2008', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25, no. 3, (2008): 314-338.

produced hundreds of thousands of young elite athletes within a short time, in pursuit of ideological superiority and national status.[90]

Since the twenty-first century, elite sport success has gained more diplomatic legitimacy, providing the government with an ideal platform to showcase its soft power and ideological superiority.[91] Furthermore, China's right to host the 2008 Olympic Games stimulated a set of Olympic-related objectives and policies issued by the Chinese government. In July 2002, the government issued the policy document Further Strengthening and Progressing Sport in the New Era, which stressed the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games as the paramount priority for the whole country. The Party's decision soon became the government's policy. The General Administration of Sport (GAS) issued two documents: The Outline of the Strategic Olympic Glory Plan: 2001–2010 and The 2008 Olympic Glory Action Plan, both of which emphasised Olympic medal success. The 2004 Athens Olympic Games was the first rehearsal for China's Olympic-oriented elite policy in the new century. In Athens, Team China 'stole the limelight': 407 Chinese competed in 203 events and won 32 gold, 17 silver and 14 bronze medals.[92] Four years later, 'Juguo tizhi' once again proved to the world that China had become a sports superpower, dominating in the gold medal table at the Beijing 2008 Games.

Some people predicted that the Chinese elite sport system would fade away after the 2008 Beijing Games.[93] Dong Xinguang, who participated in the design of 'the Outline of the National Fitness Program,' asserts that China's success in elite sports

[90] Fan Hong, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System', op. cit, 27.
[91] Grant Jarvie and Dong-Jhy Hwang, and Mel Brennan. *Sport, revolution and the Beijing Olympics*. (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), 117-119.
[92] Fan Hong, Ping Wu and Huan Xiong, Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sports System and its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games, *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no. 4 (2005): 510-529.
[93] Before and after the Beijing Olympic Games, some of the speeches made by the leaders of relevant government departments and commentary articles in the media declared: 'Even if China won the first number of gold medals in the Beijing Olympic Games, China is still not a "world sports power" or "world sports leader"'. Lu Chunyan, Looking calmly at the 'Great Leap Forward' of gold medals, China Sports Power Dream is still unfulfilled, *China News Network*, no.25, (2008): 1-4.

has, to some degree, been built at the expense of the country's national fitness.[94] However, the 'Juguo Tizhi' remained and was improved after 2008.[95] At the National Sports Congress in 2009, the continuity of the elite sport system 'Juguo Tizhi' was confirmed by Chairman Hu Jintao, who for the first time, mentioned the idea of 'changing from a major sports country to a world sports power' at this Congress.[96]

Since then, some scholars (Dong, 2009; Hao, 2011; Chen, 2014; Xu, 2014)[97] mainly from China, have extensively examined the origin and evolution of the concept 'major sports country 'and 'world sports power', as well as the construction of China's competitive sports system against the background of the transition from 'from a major sports country to a world sports power'. Notably, the imbalance in sports development appears to have changed after an official speech by the President of the PRC. According to Dong Xinguang (2009), 'China has become a major elite sports country, which is a consensus both at home and abroad. China has achieved the goal of a major elite sports country, while mass sports is quite backward, which has become a "prominent weak link" in the construction of a world sports power. Therefore, it is an inevitable choice for our country (China) to choose the policy of emphasising the development of mass sports on the basis of maintaining the characteristics and advantages of competitive sports'.[98] Xu Benli (2014) asserts that 'changing from a major sports country to a world sports power' is a developmental process from quantitative change to qualitative change of China's sports cause.[99]

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[94] Dong Xinguang, 'Strategic choices for the development of mass sports in China in the next decade', *Journal of Physical Education* 16, no. 6 (2009): 1-6.

[95] Hu Xiaoqian and Ian Henry, 'The development of the Olympic narrative in Chinese elite sport discourse from its first successful Olympic bid to the post-Beijing Games era'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport,* 33, no.12 (2016): 1427-1448.

[96] China News Network, 'Hu Jintao emphasised promoting China from a big sports country to a strong sports country', http://www.chinanews.com/gn/news/2009/10-17/1915718.shtml (Accessed 25 March 2015).

[97] For more study on the origin and evolution of the concept 'major sports country ' and 'world sports power', see Dong Jinxia, 'Strategic choices for the development of mass sports in China in the next decade, op.cit; Hao Qiang, 'Study on Constructing the Objective System of Competitive Sports for China when developing from a major sports country to a world sports power' (Unpublished PhD diss., Beijing University of Sports, 2011); Xu Benli, 'An interpretation and thinking on "sports power" and "sports power Dream" of China', *Shandong Sports Science and Technology*, 36, no. 5 (2014): 1-9.

[98] Dong Xinguang, 'Strategic choices for the development of mass sports in China in the next decade', op. cit.

[99] Xu Benli, 'An interpretation and thinking on "sports power" and "sports power Dream" of China', op. cit.

However, 'to build a world sports power, China will not weaken competitive sports, but rather vigorously develop them'.[100] The Director General of the State Administration of Sports (GAS) claimed that: 'While adhering to China's competitive sports "Juguo Tizhi", China will maintain the characteristics and advantages of China's competitive sports. We (China) should actively tap the potential, optimize the structure and improve efficiency to promote the balanced development of various categories within competitive sports.'[101] China's competitive sports 'Juguo Tizhi' continued to show its strong vitality. China defended and consolidated the achievements gained at Sydney 2000,[102] coming second in the gold medal table at London 2012, third in the gold medal table and second in the overall medal tally at Rio 2016, without the home advantage.

Although much research has explored the evolution of China's competitive sports policy and system, Tien-Chin Tan and Mick Green (2008) have claimed that very little in-depth analysis explores the experiences of the Chinese government in their attempts to construct systems for supporting elite (Olympic) athlete development, whereas there is a growing literature about the efforts of Western nations in this regard.[103] Fan Hong (2008) has attempted to analyse the strategies and policies of the Chinese government for winning Olympic medals in 2008 in terms of selection of Olympic sports, training of Olympic athletes, increasing Olympic resources and preparation for Olympic competition.[104] By drawing on a framework of 10 elements considered crucial for Olympic success in the West, Tan and Green (2008) explored China's construction of an elite development system as it strove for Olympic glory in Beijing. Their analysis reveals a remarkable degree of similarity between the mechanisms in place in China with those in Western nations, including Australia,

[100] Xu Liqun, 'Striding forward a Sports Power Country: An Interview with Liu Peng, Director of GAS' (online), http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64093/64102/10143924.html?ol4f (Accessed 25 March 2015).
[101] Ibid.
[102] China won 28 gold medals, 16 silver medals and 15 bronze medals at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, ranking third in both the gold medal and medal lists. For the first time, China entered the top three gold medals in the Olympic Games, making a historic breakthrough.
[103] Tien-Chin Tan and Mick Green, 'Analysing China's Drive for Olympic Success in 2008', *International Journal of the History of Sport* 25, no. 3, (2008): 314-338.
[104] Fan Hong, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System', op. cit., 46-49.

Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

With regard to the research on China's sports policy and system, in particular elite sports, Chinese scholars focus more on the historical narrative and the structural evolution of the system itself, while Western or Chinese scholars engaged in academic research in the West focus more on the critical analysis of the impact of society, politics and economy on the evolution of the policy and system, as well as the political significance of policy change(s). For example, Tan and Green (2008) have paid special attention to the overarching and strategic role of the Chinese government (one-party system), which was set as the point of departure for the analysis of China's elite sport system for winning Olympic success in 2008. They observed that subtle 'domestic' (national) variations are apparent in the implementation of these mechanisms, reflecting different national political and cultural histories, as well as traditions.[105] Fan and her colleagues (2010) assert that China's new nationalism focuses on the restoration of 'the great Chinese civilisation' and supports the consolidation of the elite sport system.[106] Elite sports policy documents, political statements on sport and Olympic phenomena, and commentaries of leading Chinese sport academics have been examined by Hu and Henry (2016) in their analysis of the discursive construction process involving key stakeholders regarding the Olympics in the Chinese elite sports system. Hu and Henry assert that 'the Chinese Olympic discourse has thus been associated with nationalist and patriotic rhetoric, such as the restoration of the Chinese nation from its century of humiliation; and with socialism and other related ideologies, such as collective interests and values.'[107] The political connotation of, and political influence on, Chinese Olympic discourse (reflecting the political 'power over' discourse) has been maintained in the years since 2008.

[105] Tien-Chin Tan and Mick Green, 'Analysing China's Drive for Olympic Success in 2008', op. cit.
[106] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', op. cit.
[107] Tien-Chin Tan and Mick Green, 'Analysing China's Drive for Olympic Success in 2008', op. cit.

2.2.5 Research on the Development of Chinese State Policy for Sports Industry and Commerce

Chinese state policies for sports industry or commercialisation of sports dates back to the end of the 1970s. Bao (1997) divided the development of Chinese state policy for the sports industry and commerce into two stages: the initial phase from 1979 to 1992, followed by the adjustment and reformation period from 1993 to the present.[108] According to Bao, in the initial period, under the guideline of developing a 'planned commodity economy', the SCSPE identified 'socialisation' as one of the principles for state sports policy, requiring sport commissions at all levels to broaden investment channels for sports and transfer the system from one in which sport totally depended on government investment to one relying on a combination of government and social forces. After the 14th Party Congress in 1992, when the market-oriented economy reform was established, the economy began to transform from a planned system to a market economy with socialist characteristics. Bao (1997) argues that with the gradual decline of the plan-based economic system that the sports system had previously relied upon, the backing of the government for market-oriented reform of the sports system encouraged the development of state policies in sports industry and commerce.[109]

In a review by Yi (2009) of the development of Chinese policy of the sport industry and commerce, up until the 1980s the National Games had largely been working for political and diplomatic purposes. Following that time, political and diplomatic energies no longer completely dominated sport policy and practice.[110] China began to break away from the traditional model of running the National Games under the funding of government grants, towards one of commercialisation, industrialisation and marketisation of sports.

[108] Bao Mingxiao, 'Overview of China's Sports System Reform', *Journal of Beijing Sports Normal University* 9, no. 2 (1997): 42-45.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Yi Jiandong, 'The Road of the National Games to Commercialization, Industrialization and Marketization', *Global Sport Market* 2, no.2 (2009): 30-32.

Fan et al. (2010) note that after 15 years of development from 1994 to 2009, the sports industry no longer had to rely on government support.[111] The period from the 1990s to the 2000s experienced the commercialisation of professional sports. According to Fan, prior to the 1990s, competitive sports in China were not market-oriented. In 1994, led by the professional football league 'Jia A', China's sports associations began to embrace the market economy.[112] Fan (2010) asserts that, according to the 'Outline of Development of Sports Industry and Commerce (1995–2010)' in 1995, commercialisation became a fundamental policy for the future development of the sports industry. The Chinese government issued three targets, including the Olympic Strategy, the Development of Sports Industry and Commerce Strategy, and the National Fitness for All Programme, to set the framework of the development of sport in an increasingly marketised economy.[113] However, few of them provided in-depth, detailed analysis of the development of change of state policy for sports industry and commerce against the background of macro level social and economic change.

2.2.6 Significance of the Proposed Research to Existing Work

Based upon the review of research in relation to Chinese state sports policies and systems, the basic messages arising from the current research are as follows:

1) Post-1949 state sports policy and systems in China were pioneered in the Red Sports and the New Sports Movements during the Communist years in Jiangxi and Yan'an from the 1920s to the 1940s.
2) The development of state sports policies in China has always been state-controlled and shaped by political and ideological requirements.

[111] Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008', op. cit.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Robin Jones, 'Sport in China', in *Sport and Physical Education in China*, edited by James Riordan and Robin Jones (New York: E & FN Spon, 1999): 6.

3) The strategic focus of state sports policies changed from one that focused on mass sports in the early years of the PRC to the 'two-legs strategy', represented by simultaneous development of mass sport and elite sport in the 1950s and 1960s, which was interrupted by the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). This was followed by the 'one-leg' strategy – development of elitism in the 1980s, after which time the government has followed three targets – the 'Olympic strategy, sports industry and commerce strategy, and National Fitness Programme' – since the 1990s.
4) Since 1949, sports functions in China changed from an overemphasis on political contestation to one that gradually paid attention to the individual needs of recreation and fitness. Government involvement in sport has served as the driving force in the formation and development of sports.
5) From 1958 to 1976, mass sports in China experienced large fluctuations, due to political and ideological campaigns; from 1978, mass sports were not substantially emphasised until 1995, when the 'National Fitness Programme' and the 'Sports Law' were issued. Although the Chinese government launched market-oriented sport reform, *Danwei* sport has been an integral part of mass sport organisation and basic forms of mass sport systems in China.
6) In contrast, elite sport was not emphasised at the state level until 1952. China has gradually developed its elite sport system since the 1950s; the triumph of Chinese sport since the 1980s is rooted deeply in China's elite sports system, termed 'whole country support for the elite sport system', or 'Juguo tizhi'. The Chinese policy for sport industry or commercialisation of sports originated in the 1980s and has experienced rapid development since the 1990s.

Current research is limited by three key drawbacks. Firstly, despite a growing literature exploring the evolution of Chinese sports policies and systems, there are scant detailed and in-depth analyses on the transformation of sport policy and systems after 1949 comparing sports policies between the Mao regime and the post-Mao era.

Secondly, although political and ideological requirements arguably play a critical role in shaping Chinese state sports policies and systems, few scholars have attempted to examine the relationship between the dominant ideology and the change in sports policy through the use of theoretical perspectives.

Thirdly, although the concept of the party-state system is thought to be fundamental to understanding the role of the state and the government in developing sports, as well as the changes in sport policy in China since 1949, no research has as yet thoroughly explored the role played by the Party system driving the change in sports policies and systems.

2.3 Key Theories and Concepts in This Research

To address the above limitations, this research has examined in detail the relationship between sports and the dominant ideology in sports policies and systems through the lens of theoretical frameworks, including Gramsci's theory of hegemony and Max Weber's political legitimacy.

2.3.1 Gramsci's Concepts of Cultural Hegemony

The Marxist theory of class struggle mainly bases its argument on the differences in people's economic status and ownership of production. Marx recognised that economic exploitation was not the only driver behind class struggle and that the capitalist system was reinforced by a dominance of ruling class ideas and values, leading to Engels' famous concern that 'false consciousness' would keep the proletariat from recognising the fact of its own exploitation and rejecting their oppression.[114]

[114] Ibid., 85.

The Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, imprisoned for much of his life by Mussolini, developed this viewpoint with his widely influential theory of 'hegemony'. In his *Prison Notebook*, Gramsci analysed why the proletarian revolution failed to occur in Italy, where objective conditions were encouraging in many respects, and he noticed a flaw of traditional Marxism: the inability to explain the obedience of the ruled class by the ruling class.[115] Gramsci confirmed that Lenin's leadership thoughts influenced his view of cultural leadership. While stressing political leadership, Lenin also affirmed the power of revolutionary ideology, will and other cultural factors as revolutionary weapons and pointed out that: 'Without revolutionary theory, there would be no revolutionary action. . . Only the party with advanced theory can realise the function of advanced demonstration'. [116] In '*Selections from the Prison Notebooks*', Gramsci pointed out that 'it was Lenin himself who re-evaluated the role of the Cultural struggle front in opposing various economic "tendencies"'.[117] Lenin endorsed the theory of Leadership (ruling thought and moral leadership) as the supplement of the country force theory (the dictatorship of the proletariat), as a form of contemporary Marxist theory. The meaning is clear: rule (coercion) is a way of exercising power, which is necessary in a certain historical period, whereas leadership is a method of stability for regimes based on broad agreement.[118] It follows that, in Gramsci's view, the leadership of the proletariat does not reject a revolution of political violence; what is more important is that the leadership of the ideological field should be acquired before violent revolution.

Gramsci coined the word 'hegemony', which means that the ruling class can create a 'social consensus' through the culture and media, so that the ruled are willing to accept and obey the rule, even when this rule may run counter to the interests of the ruled. For Gramsci, hegemony came to mean 'cultural, moral, and ideological

[115] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 78-80.
[116] Lenin Vladimir Ilyich. *Selected Works Lenin Selected Works*, volume 1 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995), 312.
[117] Antonio Gramsci, *op.cit*, 78-80.
[118] Giuseppe Fiori, Wu Gao (trans.), in Biography of Gramsci (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1983), 262.

leadership over allied and subordinate groups'.[119] According to Gramsci, the ruling ideas or ideological factors were not powerful enough to eliminate class struggle, but they were capable of muting this struggle sufficiently for all class societies to function.

Three important concepts were introduced or redefined in Gramsci's theory of hegemony. One is 'consent', that is, through spiritual and moral leadership to obtain voluntary acceptance and consent of the people. In the view of Gramsci, 'consent' and 'force' nearly always coexist. The traditional imperial regime, such as the Tsarist regime, ruled primarily through domination by monopolising the instruments of coercion. The parliamentary regime, by contrast, rules through hegemony, while the threat of officially sanctioned force remains implicit. Ruling classes or groups do not always maintain their hegemony merely through the creation and perpetuation of legitimate symbols, but they must also seek to win the consent of subordinate groups to the existing social order.[120]

How can the ruling class acquire the consent of the subordinated classes or groups? According to Gramsci, 'The foundation of a ruling class is equivalent to the creation of a Weltanschauung (worldview)'.[121] In this case, cultural hegemony essentially creates the worldview, ideas and morality through gaining acceptance and endorsement of the ruled and subordinate groups, rather than through oppression.[122]

From the perspective of Gramsci, there is a difference between 'domination' based on force and cultural hegemony based on consensus. The formation of cultural hegemony is based on free consent, through which ordinary people actively accept the political, economic and cultural policies set out by the dominant ruling group. This is to say, the

[119] Antonio Gramsci and David Forgacs, *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935*, (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 85.
[120] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 12.
[121] See Antonio Gramsci, II Materialismo storico e la lilosolia di Benedetto Croce (Turin, 1949), 75.
[122] Robert Bocock, *Hegemony* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1986), 56.

political platform of ruling class or party must actively combine with the moral values upheld by the ruled, otherwise the subordinated or ordinary people will feel they are placed under control or are being dominated, forced to accept policies enforced by the ruling group. They will then revolt, eventually causing the use of violence and coercion by the state or ruling party. Thus, to achieve cultural hegemony, the ruling party or politicians should not merely rely on conspiracy to manipulate the masses. Instead, they should actively seek the 'free' consent of the ruled and implement the policy on behalf of the people rather than for those with narrow interests.

Another key concept in the concept of 'hegemony' is civil society. In his effort to reappraise the Marxist concept of 'superstructure', Gramsci redefined the term 'civil society'. For Gramsci, superstructure could no longer be construed as a pale reflection of economic foundation. He argued that the state, or whole society, broadly comprises two main spheres: 'political society' and 'civil society'. Political society is formed by coercive agencies, including prisons, courts and military, to exercise mandatory function, by which the dominant class retains its legal monopoly of repression and of violence. Civil society is composed of those organisations responsible for the elaboration and/or spreading of ideologies, including schools, churches, clubs, political parties, unions and material organisations of culture (magazines, newspapers, mass media), and so on. According to Bobbio's analysis, differences exist in the concepts of civil society as held by Gramsci and Marx: Marx viewed civil society as material relations of production, which constituted the economic infrastructure of society, whereas Gramsci held that civil society does not belong to the economic infrastructure, but rather to the superstructure and refers to the entire intellectual and spiritual life.[123] Together, they form 'the State', yet they differ in function: within civil society, social classes intend to exert hegemony, i.e. they try to win allies for their positions by means of political leadership and consensus; whereas in political

[123] Carlos Nelson Coutinho (eds.), Gramsci's Political Thought (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012), 77-78.

society, classes always exert a dictatorship, or dominate through coercion.[124] Thus, political society or coercive state is the common of the state-phenomenon primarily discussed by Marx and Lenin, whereas the novelty contributed by Gramsci lies in what he redefined as 'civil society', in which he introduced the term hegemony linked to free consent (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. The difference between 'civil society' and 'political society', according to Gramsci's hegemony

Hegemony	Domination/Dictatorship
Consent	Coercion
Civil Society	Political Society
Ideologies and cultural systems, such as schools, churches, clubs, political parties, unions and material organisations of culture	Political-military bureaucracies, such as prisons, courts and the military

Source: Carlos Nelson Coutinho, ed. *Gramsci's Political Thought* (Boston, MA: Brill.Coutinho, Carlos Nelson 2012), 77-78.

The third concept in the theory of hegemony is 'intellectual'. Gramsci distinguishes two major types of intellectuals: traditional and organic, defined in terms of the functions attributed to them by the social group. They originated first in the sector of economic activity and then in that of ideology, politics and culture. Traditional intellectuals present themselves as an 'uninterrupted historical continuity', much as ecclesiastical hierarchies legitimate their status by tracing their origin to the Apostles and Christ.[125] For Gramsci, 'traditional' intellectuals are thought to be disinterested in sectarian or topical interests, rising above them in the name of reason and truth. In comparison, organic intellectuals refer to those whose origin coincides with that of the group they represent. They are a function of class interest and also an instrument of

[124] Ibid., 82.
[125] James Martin and Antonio Gramsci, *Intellectuals, culture, and the party* (Routledge, Political science, 2002), 71.

class transformation.[126] Gramsci believed that every newly emerging class will create, incubate and breed organic intellectuals belonging to their own class and thus maintain the stability of that class. For Gramsci, in capitalist society, if traditional intellectuals are thought to be 'interested' on behalf of a bourgeois class to maintain hegemonic order, then in order to effect revolution, the working class should create organic intellectuals of their own to win consent to counter-hegemonic ideas and ambitions. That is, intellectuals tend to bear historical tasks: they provide the public with a particular ideology and belief system to ensure the realisation of the ruling class's leadership.

To conclude, Gramsci's theory of Cultural Hegemony emphasises the importance of the ideology of the ruling class in realising the domination of society. It describes the domination of a culturally diverse society by the ruling class through manipulating the ideology of civil society, including the worldview, beliefs, perceptions, values and societal mores, so that the ruling class worldview becomes the worldview of the whole society and is accepted as the cultural norm. Through the universally valid dominant ideology, the ruling class or group justifies the social, political, and economic status quo as natural, perpetual and beneficial for everyone in the society, rather than one that only benefits the ruling class.

Gramsci's theory of hegemony can help to explain the impact of the dominant political ideology upon sport, leading to the changes in sports policies and systems. This theory can be used to apply a critical thinking approach to understand the changes in sport and dominant ideology during Mao's China and thereafter (1949–1989).

[126] Ibid., 71.

2.3.2 Legitimacy and Max Weber's Classification

It is impossible for a regime to maintain a durable, stable order that relies solely on violence. The maintenance of a rule or the perpetuation of a system depends upon the authority of the rule or the system, as well as the public's acceptance of the rule or system. As Rousseau said, 'power does not constitute rights, but people are only amenable to lawful authority'.[127] Thus, political rule must be based on political legitimacy or legitimacy.

Scholars have generally studied the legitimacy of the government from two different aspects. The first has analysed the legitimacy of political power from the people's point of view. Lipset defines legitimacy as 'the capacity of the political system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society'.[128] Linz regards legitimacy as 'the belief that in spite of shortcomings and failures, the political institutions are better than others that might be established and therefore can demand obedience'.[129]

Friedrich held that legitimacy is 'a special form of consensus, which involves the right to rule or the name of rule'.[130] Studies on political legitimacy from this angle display the ability of a country to build a consensus belief. Another angle comes from the perspective of critical scholars, who study the legitimacy of the regime from two aspects: the existence of problems in a political system and a vision of a better future.[131]

In their eyes, these beliefs are considered to be mere products of false consciousness.

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[127] Rousseau, He Zhaowu (trans.), *The Social Contract and Discourses* (Beijing: The Commercial Press 2003), 78.
[128] Lipset, Seymour Martin, Political man (expanded edition), (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 84.
[129] Juan J. Linz, 'Legitimacy of democracy and socioeconomic systems', in *Comparing Pluralist Democracies: Strains on Legitimacy*, Mattei Dogan Boulder, eds. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 65.
[130] Carl Joachim Friedrich, *Man and His Government: An Empirical Theory of Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), 233.
[131] J ürgen Habermas, Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), 79; J ürgen Habermas, Thomas McCarthy (trans.), *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Volume 2, Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 98.

While incisive, the analysis of critical theorists of the regime's legitimacy is often clouded by elitism and arrogance; moreover, the conclusions are often difficult to confirm and even beset by mistakes. Max Weber has explicitly put forward the concept of legitimacy and systematically studied it. His study of the legitimacy of governance is the acknowledged cornerstone of this field. Indeed, Weber's concept of legitimacy has become the key term in modern political analysis.[132] Weber believed that to determine whether a regime is legitimate does not require moral judgment from a philosophical or ethical point of view, but is legitimate as long as people believe that the regime is legal. Legitimacy comes from, and even equates to, belief in legitimacy. Weber analysed the legitimacy of political power from the people's point of view. As Robert Crafstein said, 'in the eyes of Weber, legitimacy no longer means evaluation of the regime; in fact it no longer directly relates to the regime itself'.[133]

Weber believes that habit, affection and rational calculation are the three bases of human compliance. Accordingly, he proposes three ideal, typical aspects of state legitimacy: A. a state enjoys traditional legitimacy when its power is seen by the people as being inherited or always existent; B. a state has charismatic legitimacy when the head of the state is perceived by the people as having exceptional quality by virtue of some kinds of mystical experiences and personal qualities; and C. a state possesses legal legitimacy when its power is derived from a set of judicial and administrative principles that bind all members of a society.[134]

More severe criticism comes from Beecham, who believes that the influence of Weber on legitimacy is almost a disaster, because Weber transformed a question of value related to legitimacy into an empirical problem of people's faith in the system

[132] John H. Schaar, *Legitimacy in the Modern State* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1981); William Connolly(ed.), *Legitimacy and the State* (New York: New York University Press, 1984); Samuel P. Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

[133] Robert Grafstein, 'The Failure of Weber's Concept of Legitimacy: Its Causes and Implications', *Journal of Politics* 43, no. 2 (1981): 456-472.

[134] Max Weber, 'The nature of social action', in W. G. Runciman and E. Mathews, eds, Max Weber: Selections in Translation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 28.

of power.[135] However, Weber's classification of ideal legitimacy has met with many objections. Parkin pointed out that the three legitimacy requirements put forward by Weber are actually legalisation efforts endorsed by the ruling group, who naturally want to be rulers to accept this request, whereas 'on the other hand, legitimacy refers to that in which the above requirements are accepted by the conditional recognition of the oppressed group. That is to say, the basis for obedience has been accepted as 'just' by those who are expected to obey.'[136]

These criticisms of Weber show that we must value the legitimacy of the rule. Obviously, Parkin's standard is that to 'rule by consent' is the ultimate source of all governance legitimacy. Parkin believed that in some cases, the legitimacy of charismatic rule is the only legitimate rule, because leaders with charisma do not control more than belief, unlike their followers and believers, who are willing to grant such leaders legitimacy. According to Parkin, the touchstone of true legitimacy is exemplified by the willingness of a master's subordinates to obey his (or her) orders even when the master lacks sufficient power to punish them.[137]

Rousseau represents another important school of the legitimacy argument. In the first volume of the '*Social Contract Theory*', Rousseau stated: 'I want to explore whether there is a certain legitimate and definite regime rules in the social order, from the point of view of the human actual situation and the possibility of the law.'[138] However, when we apply Weber's classification to understand state power, it leads to two problems.[139] Firstly, according to Yang and Zhao, Weber's classification is static, as any authority relationships in real life are interactive and dynamic. Second, while

[135] David Beetham, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press,1985), 8-9.
[136] Ibid., 112-113.
[137] Frank Parkin, *Max Weber* (Chendu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1987), 124-125.
[138] Jean-Jacques Rousseau and He Zhaowu (trans.). *Social Contract Theory* (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1980), 7.
[139] Zhao Dingxin, 'The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China', *American Behavioral Scientist* 53, no. 3 (2009): 416-443; Hongxing Yang and Dingxin Zhao, Performance Legitimacy, State Autonomy and China's Economic Miracle, *Journal of Contemporary China*, 24, no. 91 (2015): 64-82.

Weber's ideal type separates the emotional and rational aspects of human perception, in real life, how people perceive state legitimacy is always a mixture of the two.[140]

Max Weber's Ideal Type of Legitimacy and This Research

Since Weber's classification ignores the dynamic aspect of authoritative relations and their emotional and rational bases, it is hard to apply this classification in empirical analysis. Weber proposed three ideal types of legitimacy, noting at the same time that this is simply a 'pure' classification; it is impossible for any society to completely satisfy these three ideals.

This study will therefore not only describe the changes in the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist regime, but will also strive to explore the reasons for these changes. Secondly, although this research follows the ideas and methods of Weber, it does not specifically borrow from the legitimacy of his classification. By referring to Weber's revised classification of legitimacy in research conducted by Yang and Zhao in '*Performance Legitimacy, State Autonomy and China's Economic Miracle*' and '*The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China*',[141] this research makes some modifications to Weber's empirical analysis. Firstly, according to Yang and Zhao, I plan to use ideological legitimacy to replace traditional legitimacy to cover the legitimacy of any values-based evaluation and rationality of a regime. Secondly, I attempt to omit charismatic legitimacy from the ideal type of legitimacy. Although charismatic legitimacy is very important, it is only an extreme form of ideological legitimacy. Finally, and most importantly, I position performance legitimacy as one of the main aspects of the legitimacy of government.

[140] Ibid, 64-82.

[141] For a more detailed discussion, see Dingxin Zhao, The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China, *American Behavioral Scientist* 53 (2009): 416-443; Hongxing Yang and Dingxin Zhao, Performance Legitimacy, State Autonomy and China's Economic Miracle, *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 91 (2015): 64-82.

Accordingly, this research identifies legal electoral, ideological and performance as the three bases of state legitimacy.[142] Specifically, when a legal regime is based on all social groups, including the binding principle of the national elite and senior leaders elected through regular elections, the regime is built on the basis of the legitimacy of electoral law.

Ideological legitimacy refers to the legitimacy of a regime derived from a value system, such as tradition, religion, and political ideas. Performance legitimacy refers to the legitimacy of a regime built upon economic performance, the promotion of soft power (including sports, educational and cultural), health, national or moral merit and defence ability. However, Weber did not include the performance of the regime in his original theory of political legitimacy. Lipset highlighted the importance of political achievements for the stability of a regime.[143] However, he also believed that performance should not be viewed from the perspective of legitimacy, because 'effectiveness is primarily instrumental and legitimacy is evaluative'.[144]

Nevertheless, evaluation is an essential part of the legitimacy of performance. Just as people naturally evaluate their performance in different ways, people evaluate the legitimacy of government based on other standards. The only difference is that the basis for such an evaluation is different. In short, the legitimacy of a regime's election in accordance with the rule of law can become an evaluation process related to theoretical instrumental rationality. The legitimacy of ideology will lead people's attention to evaluation and reason based on values. Finally, the legitimacy of a regime's legitimacy promotes practical reason. Therefore, the legitimacy of performance is an indispensable part of the three aspects of the legitimacy of government.

[142] Ibid, 64-82.
[143] Seymour Martin Lipset, 'Social Conflict, Legitimacy, and Democracy', in *Legitimacy and the State*, edited by William Connolly (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 88-103.
[144] Ibid., 88-103.

These are not pure classifications, but rather, purely theoretical constructs. No regime can guarantee its survival with a single legitimacy; within any given period of time, a country often has a dominant legitimacy to determine the nature of the regime.

In Weber's revised classification, ideology legitimacy and performance legitimacy are compelling. Firstly, from the point of view of international background, after the 'October Revolution' in Russia, the rise of the regime characterised by the 'Supremacy of the Party' and ideological legitimacy has become a common choice in a socialist country, so 'the victory of the revolution is the victory of the party government'.[145] The CCP's model is in line with the trend of the 20th century. There has never been any disagreement between the CCP and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) as to the ultimate goal of the Party, and their demands for the legitimacy of Communist ideology have never been relinquished. Throughout its revisions of the '*Party Constitution*', the realisation of Communism in China has been the Party's highest goal.[146] As far as ideology is concerned, it is a key concept in understanding the change of sports policies and systems in modern China.

In the era when ideology constitutes the basis of the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party, what characterises the relationship between sports, sports policy, ideology and the legitimacy of political parties? One of the key questions or aims in this research is to explain what kind of role the party-state system has played behind the change of sports policies and systems, and the connection between sports and the Party. In reference to the concept of political legitimacy and revised classification, it may help to clarify the relationship between the party-state system and sport throughout the Mao era.

In post-1978 China, reform has often been portrayed in dualistic terms, stating that

[145] Samuel Huntington and Wang Guanhua (eds.). 'Political Order in a Changing Society' (Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 1989), 288.

[146] For a more detailed discussion, see Zhang Jian, 'Legitimacy and Chinese Politics', *Strategy and Management* 8, no. 5 (2000): 1-15.

either politics or economics were 'in command'.[147] This rivalry has been explained by the fact that the Communist regime generally lacked procedural legitimation, compared with the authority and political legitimacy in Mao's era, and thus relied heavily on economic performance for legitimacy.[148] This concept has already been proposed by some political scientists. How did the sports policy and system reflect and act in the course of the shift or mix of political legitimacy of the post-1978 Communist regime?

2.4 Conclusion

The first part of this Chapter explores the literature that has been created in relation to the development of the Chinese state sports policy and system. Six different areas are reviewed. The first of these relates to current research that has been carried out on the evolution of the strategic focus of Chinese state sport policy. The basic message from the research is that the post-1949 state sports policy and system in China were pioneered in the Red Sports and the New Sports Movements during the Communist years in Jiangxi and Yan'an from the 1920s to the 1940s; state sports policies experienced a change from a focus on mass sport in the early PRC to a two-legs strategy 'developing mass sport and elite sport simultaneously' in the 1950s and 1960s, which was interrupted by the Cultural Revolution, followed by the 'one leg' elite strategy in the 1980s, then the setting of three targets since the 1990s: the 'Olympic strategy, sports industry and commerce strategy, and National Fitness Programme'. The second literature review examines the change of function of sport in China and government intervention in sports. It determines that the development of state sports policy in China has always been state-controlled and shaped by political and ideological requirements. Government involvement in sport has acted as the driving force in the formation and development of sports in China. The third review deals with the development of Chinese mass sports policies and systems. Mass sports

[147] Andr é Lieber, 'The Chinese Ideology: Reconciling the Politics with the Economics of Contemporary Reform', *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 18, no. 4 (2013): 335-353.
[148] Stephen White, 'Economic performance and communist legitimacy', *World Politics* 38, no. 3 (1986): 462-482.

policies experienced large fluctuations between 1958 and 1976 due to political and ideological campaigns in the country; mass sports policies from 1978 were not substantially emphasised until 1995, when the 'National Fitness Programme' and the 'Sports Law' were issued. After 1995, the development of mass sports policies in general witnessed a process of gradual legalisation; however, despite some obvious transformation, *danwei* sport remains an integral part of mass sports organisation and basic forms of mass sports systems in China.

The fourth review examines research into the development of Chinese elite sport policies and systems. It determines that attending the Olympics and other international competitions and performing well became a symbolic means of catching up with and even overcoming Western powers. China has gradually developed its elite sports system since 1949; the triumph of Chinese sport is rooted deeply in China's elite sports system 'Juguo tizhi', with guaranteed financial and human resources from the entire country to ensure maximum support. The final review then examines Chinese State Policy in the sports industry and commerce, which originated in the 1980s when China launched market-oriented reforms. To set the framework for the development of sport in an increasingly marketised economy, the Chinese government has enacted a sports industry and commerce strategy since the mid-1990s.

Furthermore, the fourth part also provides a critical review for current research related to the research questions: firstly, despite a growing literature that explores Chinese state sport policy and systems, the current research is limited by the fact that very few scholars have conducted a detailed, in-depth analysis of this topic since 1949. Secondly, political and ideological requirements arguably play a critical role in shaping Chinese state sports policies and systems, but very few researchers have used particular theoretical frameworks of perspectives to analyse the relationship between ideological requirements and state sports policies. Thirdly, current research has not yet explored the role played by the party system in changing sport policies and systems,

despite the fact that the concept of the party-state system is thought to be fundamental to understanding the role of the Chinese Government in developing sports policies and systems.

In the second part of Chapter 2, based on a review of Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony and Weber's ideal type of political legitimacy, the analysis revised these theories to improve their explanatory power and applicability in empirical analysis. Gramsci's contextualized theory of cultural hegemony in China provides a critical perspective for analysing the relationship between dominant ideology and sports, which is one of the key aims of this thesis. In comparison, Weber's revised classification is expected to decipher the relationship between party and sports in China throughout the shift of political legitimacy from 1949 to post-Mao China.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Methodology involves more than just research methods, which are understood to be the 'techniques or procedures used to collate and analyse data'.[1] This chapter outlines the methodology for the investigation, epistemological and ontological positions adopted for the research methods and examines the methods used for gathering the empirical materials. The structure of this chapter includes three sections: firstly, a review of the research paradigm and research questions provides the basis for the selection of the interpretative philosophical assumptions in this research. Secondly, the chapter discusses the theories that underpin the research and inform the choice of methodology. Section three discusses the research design and covers the research process, the specific methods, critical discourse analysis (CDA) and semi-structured interviews employed in this study, as well as the approaches to the data analysis. Furthermore, this chapter covers the contribution made by the research design to answering the questions posed by this research.

3.2 Philosophical Approaches

Ontology is the starting point of all research, after which one's epistemological and methodological positions logically follow.[2] If a simple definition of ontology is that it concerns what exists in the world, then epistemology concerns what we know about what exists. Marsh and Furlong (2002) assert that epistemological assumptions incorporate two questions, asking whether we can identify 'real' or 'objective' relations between social phenomena and if so, how?[3] Three main epistemological

[1] Blaikie Norman, *Designing Social Research* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 8.
[2] Jonathan Grix, Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research, *Politics* 22, no 3, 2002: 175-186.
[3] Davie Marsh & Paul Furlong, A skin not a sweater: ontology and epistemology in political science. In: Marsh, D., Stoker, G.(eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 17-41.

assumptions exist: positivism, interpretivism and realism, all of which relate to specific traditions in the philosophy of social sciences.[4]

Positivists generally assume that 'reality is objectively given and can be described by measurable properties, which are independent of the observer (research) and his or her instruments'.[5] Positivist methodologies are therefore concerned with objectively precision in measuring outcomes, while positivism advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond.[6] Interpretivists argue that reality is mind-dependent and that the social world is 'essentially only something dependent upon and still within the operating intentionality of ego-consciousness'.[7] Thus, interpretivism requires a strategy that respects the difference between people and the objects of natural science, so requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action.[8] Realism is another epistemological position that purports to provide an account of the nature of scientific practice. Realism shares two features with positivism: a belief that the natural and the social sciences can and should apply the same kinds of approach to the collection of data and to explanation, and a commitment to the view that there is an external reality to which scientists direct their attention.[9] However, unlike positivism, realism holds that there are some deep-seated structural factors in human society, which can not be directly concluded through observation; these structural factors are not incognizable, they can be grasped through observation-based abstract thinking.[10]

[4] Ibid., p.17-31.
[5] Partington et al., 'Studying Routines For Team working and Knowledge Management: A Grounded Theory Approach to Multi-Context Research in Team-Based Oganisation', in 3rd International Workshop on Team working, University of London, 1999.4, cited from Xiong, Huan, Urbanisation and the Transformation of Chinese Women's sport in Post-Mao Era, A Doctoral Thesis of DE Monfrot University, 2006.
[6] Bryman A. *Social Research Methods* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 27.
[7] Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, The Structures of the Life-Wold, volume 1, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 44.
[8] Bryman A, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 13.
[9] Bryman A, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 29.
[10] Nicholoas Rescher, Realism and Pragmatic Epistemology, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 14.

This research does not merely aim to trace the development of state sport policy and system, but it also intends to identify underlying influences and other relevant factors informing the Chinese government's belief system. Given that the positivist epistemological position does not endorse non-measurable properties, such as consciousness and shared meanings, in the analysis and discussion of transformation of sport policy and system, this research adopts an interpretive approach, which allows a comprehension of the social construction of phenomena and the issues affecting the development of sports policy and system. In accordance with the interpretive position, the development and characteristics of state sport policy and system will be analyzed through an 'interpretive understanding' of policy documents and expert interviews. In short, this research adopts an interpretive perspective to elucidate the social construction and the change of political ideology affecting the development of sport policy and system in Communist China.

3.3 Methodology Consideration

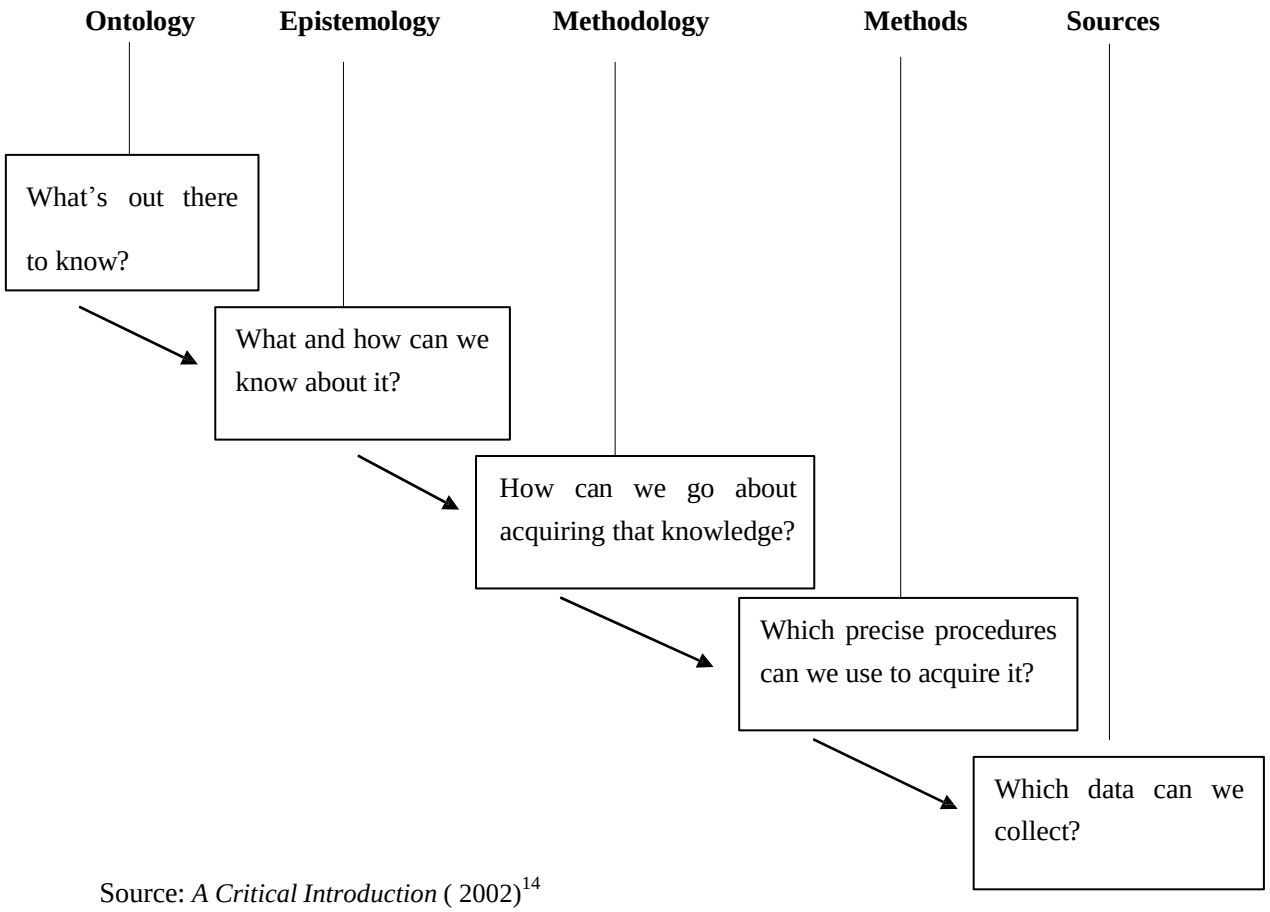
Methodology explores the philosophy, application and usage of methods.[11] To outline the relationship between ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods and sources, Hay (2002) draws on interrelationships between the underpinnings of social research, as shown in Figure 2.1.

Although this figure does not show the impact and influence of the questions one is asking, nor the type of project one is undertaking – for example, either researching individuals' attitudes or institutional change – in relation to the methods chosen, Grix (2002) argues that Hay's figure shows the directional and logical relationship between the key components of research. According to Grix (2002), the research should not begin at any of the stages in the figure above; it is possible for a researcher to select a favourite or familiar method and then work back through their methodology,

[11] Greener I., *Designing Social Research: A Guide for the Bewildered* (London: Sage Publication Ltd, 2011), 5.

epistemology and ontology.[12] In addition, it is ontological and epistemological positions that shape the very questions researchers ask in the first place, how they pose them and how they set about answering them. In other words, the choice of research methods follows from an allegiance to a distinctive position in relation to how social reality ought to be studied,[13] and how the data arising from the research ought to be collected and interpreted.

Figure 3.1. The Interrelationships between the Building Blocks of Research



Source: *A Critical Introduction* (2002)[14]

[12] Jonathan Grix, Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research. *Politics* 22, no.3 (2002): 175–186.
[13] Alan Bryman., *Quantity and Quality in Social Research* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 118.
[14] Hay Colin, *Political Analysis. A Critical Introduction.* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 64.

3.4 Research Design

3.4.1 Consideration of Qualitative Research

As Bryman (2004) has stated, 'quantitative research can be construed as a research strategy that emphasizes quantification in the collection and analysis of data'.[15] In contrast, 'qualitative research can be construed as a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data'.[16] From the epistemological perspective, quantitative methodology is consistent with the positivist paradigm and believes that social observations should be treated as entities, just as physical scientists treat physical phenomena. Qualitative researchers hold the interpretivist or constructivist paradigm, emphasising the significance of social context for understanding the social world.

Despite the significant differences between quantitative and qualitative research outlined above, neither type of research outweighs the other as to superiority. The choice between quantitative and qualitative research concerns their suitability in answering particular research objectives and questions.[17] Gratton and Jones (2004) explain that research focusing on the measurement of a particular phenomenon must collect quantitative data.[18] Qualitative data are more appropriate for investigators exploring the feelings or experiences of people.

When an investigation requires an understanding of process, events and relationships in the context of the social and cultural situation, qualitative research aims to answer questions about the 'what', 'how', or 'why' of a phenomenon. In contrast, quantitative methods explore the 'how many', or 'how much'. As far as this research is concerned, it not only attempts to describe the formation and development of state sport policy

[15] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods, 2rd edition* (Oxford University Press.2004), 11.
[16] Bryman Alan & Emma Bell, *Business research methods*. Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 45.
[17] Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S., *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), 3.
[18] Gratton C & Jones I., *Research Methods For Sport Studies.* (London: Routledge, 2004), 19-20.

throughout different periods, but interprets and elaborates how the state sport policy and system took shape throughout different periods of the PRC. Furthermore, it will rethink and argue how Chinese sports policy is embedded in the practice of politics, economy and culture of Chinese society.

To answer the questions in this research, an interpretative approach is adopted in order to understand the views of the policymakers and scholars, as well as participants' attitudes towards state sport policy. Quantitative research is unsuitable for this study, because the small amount of numeric data is unlikely to provide detailed or in-depth explanations of the topic. Instead, qualitative methodology, using methods such as discourse analysis and thematic analysis, can lead to a 'deeper' understanding of the formation and transformation of state policy.

3.4.2 Research Methods

Common methods of qualitative research include individual interviews and focus groups, discourse analysis, field notes and thematic analysis. O'Leary (2004) claims that 'collecting credible data is a tough task, and it is worth remembering that one method of data collection is not inherently better than another.'[19] In other words, which data collection method to use would depend upon the research goals and the advantages and disadvantages of each method. Considering that this study is a combination of history and social sciences, a mixed-methods approach is adopted, including critical discourse analysis (CDA) and semi-structured interviews, among which thematic analysis is used with the interview data. This section aims to explain the applicability and use of the above-mentioned research methods in this dissertation.

[19] Zina O'Leary, The Essential Guide to Doing Research (London: SAGE Publications, 2004), 150.

3.4.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough identifies discourse as a manifestation and regulation of social identity, social practice, and social construction.[20] Wodak and Meyer further this point and believe that discourse is as an element of the social process, stating that discourse analysts should focuses on 'a dialect relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it'.[21]

There are many different versions of discourse analysis, drawing on a wide range of theoretical traditions in social theory.[22] Among those approaches to discourse analysis, Fairclough distinguishes them on the basis of whether or not they pay close attention to linguistic features of texts. The approaches that usually pay scant close attention to the linguistic features of texts generally focus on the historical and social context of texts.

Using CDA in critical policy analysis

As Van Dijk has indicated, CDA 'focuses on social problems, and especially on the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power abuse or domination'.[23] Within the CDA perspective, the term 'critical' is not understood in the common sense of the word, i.e., of being negative, criticising. Wodak and Meyer emphasise that 'critical' within CDA means 'not taking things for granted, opening up complexity, challenging reductionism, dogmatism and dichotomies, being self-reflexive in one's research, and through these processes, making opaque structures of power relations and ideologies manifest'.[24] Therefore, the purpose of the CDA is to explore the relationships between discursive practices and events; uncover

[20] Norman Fairclough, 'A Dialectical-Relational Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis in Social Research', in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (eds), Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis (London: Sage, 2009), 162-186.
[21] Ruth Wodak and Micheal Meyer, 'Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory and Methodology', in Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (eds), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: Sage, 2009), 5–6.
[22] Van Dijk, T.A, (ed.). *Discourse as social interaction* (London: Sage, 1997), 87; Stefan Titscher , Ruth Wodak, Michael Meyer , Eva Vetter. (2000) *Methods of text and discourse analysis* (London: Sage, 2000), 11.
[23] Van Dijk, T., A. Multidisciplinary Critical Discourse Analysis: A plea for diversity. In Ruth Wodak &Michael Meyer (eds.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, (London: Sage. 2001), 95-120.
[24] Ruth Wodak and Micheal Meyer, *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. (London: Sage, 2001), 23

power relationships and demonstrate inequalities embedded in society; and reveal the 'ideological' and 'political investments'. When doing CDA, one needs to make a description of linguistic properties so as to disclose or unravel the ideologies embedded in the discourse under study.

Compared with Van Dick's sociolinguistic model, Fairclough pays more attention to the position and role of discourse in social and cultural practice. He believes that discourse practice is embedded in social and cultural practice, which is shaped by its social and cultural practice, and that different social actors (media, government, hospitals, etc.) constantly produce various words within a certain framework of knowledge, power, social relations and identity. On the other hand, discourse practice constitutes a part of social and cultural practice in a broad sense. Then, knowledge, power, social relations and identity is reproduced in discourse practice. Therefore, the production and reproduction of discourse is not only a static linguistic structure, but also a linguistic text, and will reappear and consolidate the unequal social power structure and ideology through production and consumption of linguistic text.[25]

From this perspective, policy making is seen as an arena of struggle over meaning, or as 'the politics of discourse',[26] and policies are seen as the outcomes of struggles 'between contenders of competing objectives, where language – or more specifically discourse – is used tactically'.[27] CDA is therefore appropriate for policy analysis, because it allows for a detailed investigation of the relationship between language and other social processes, and of how language works within power relations.

According to Fairclough, there are three discourse-analytical categories corresponding to these: genre, discourse, and style, which are three textual elements that 'reflect

[25] Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, (London: Edward Arnold 1995), 53-66.
[26] Anna Yeatman, *Bureaucrats, Technocrats and Femocrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990), 15.
[27] Gillian Fulcher, Disabling policies? A comparative approach to education policy and disability (London, Falmer Press,1989), 7.

structural feature in a certain society.'[28] It is worth noting that these three concepts

are dialectically related to each other: 'discourses are enacted in genres, discourses are inculcated in styles, actions and identities are represented in discourses'.[29]

Table 3.1. Protocol of Critical Discourse Analysis

Chronology	*Between 1949 and 1989*
Genre	The ways of (inter)acting or relating, interactions (relationship with, and attitudes towards, others; action over others)
Discourse	The ways of representing, representations, topics (knowledge about event & structure; control over things)
Style	The ways of being, identities (knowledge about, relations with self, e.g. Zhuanye system and reformists)

In this research, as shown in Table 2, the data analysis follows Fairclough's concept of the order of three textual elements. From the perspective of Fairclough's CDA, genre can be expressed at different levels: an abstracted level, i.e. abstraction, argument, discussion and statement; a more concrete level, i.e. interview, advertisement and report; and a micro level, which constructs relationships in communication through conveying different concrete active meanings via terms such as 'to promote' or 'to implement'.[30] This research focuses on investigation of the genre at the micro level, which aims to explore purposes of the relationship with, the communication, and attitude towards others constructed in the discursive actions over others. Discourses include not only the perspective of representation and interpretation (e.g. the diverse ways in which the modern sport in China are framed). They also reflect the structural elements, facilitating or constraining the actors' knowledge of events (elite sport priority policy, especially Chinese Olympic development strategy in the 1980s) and of social structure. The objects that fall into the column of style symbolise the discursive facet of identity, namely, how actors view and construct their own and another's social identity. For example, a party

[28] Ibid.
[29] Norman Fairclough, *Analysing discourse and text: textual analysis for social research* (London, Routledge, 2003), 45
[30] Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2003), 37.

leader or sport official requires not only certain managing behaviour, but also certain discursive 'manners', such as speaking like other administrators do.[31] In this research, through investigating the style constructed with Chinese sport discourse, I explore the role of ideology within the development of Chinese sport between 1949 and 1989.

Document sources involved in discourse analysis

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), documents are not only often rich sources of information, 'contextually relevant and grounded in the contexts they represent', but they are also 'almost always available, on a low-cost (mostly investigator time) or free basis' and they can provide an insight into the programme and decisions that have been made. Since the documents have not been created specifically for the purposes of research, the possibility of a reactive effect can be largely discounted as a limitation for data validity. In a discussion of the different kinds of documents used in social research, Scott (1990) suggests that four distinct criteria can be used to assess the quality of documents: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning.[32] According to Scott, document authenticity asks whether the evidence or document is genuine and of unquestionable origin; credibility asks whether the evidence is free from error and distortion; representativeness refers to whether the evidence is typical of its kind, and if not, is the extent of its untypicality known; while the question of meaning asks whether the document is legible and comprehensible.[33] This section therefore discusses issues associated with document analysis and considers the following key questions:

- What type of documents should be collected in this research?
- What are their various strengths and weaknesses?
- How might they be identified and analysed?

[31] Richard Xiaoqian Hu & Ian Henry, The Development of the Olympic Narrative in Chinese Elite Sport Discourse from Its First Successful Olympic Bid to the Post-Beijing Games Era, The International Journal of the History of Sport 33, no.12 (2016), 1427-1448.
[32] Scott JA., *Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 6.
[33] Ibid., 6.

Undoubtedly, government documents are one of the major categories of documents involved in this research. Official documents are generally housed in national archives or spaces specially created and maintained to store, protect and provide access in secure conditions.[34] It is suggested that the most straightforward demonstration of the operations of state power is contained in its folders and bundles, ledgers, lists and indictments, and in what is missing.[35] According to Scott (1990), official documents shaped by structure and activities of the state are often the by-products of policy and administration and, as the creations of public bodies, they reflect the organisation and interest of state agencies.[36] From this point of view, official documents deriving from the state largely reflect official intention and effects of official actions. However, the use and analysis of official documents, and statistics in particular, for the purposes of academic research is surrounded by controversy. According to Bryman (2004), official statistics concerned with an area of social life such as crime can be very misleading, because they record only those individuals who are processed by the agencies responsible for compiling the statistics.[37] Researchers must not only understand the official documents and statistics, but also be aware of the possibility of distortions.

For this research, official documents have been sourced from the State Committee of Sport and Physical Education (SCSPE) and the State General Administration of Sports (SGAS), the sole authoritative governing body for sports in China under the leadership of the State Council of Chinese Central Government. The decisions, resolutions and policies issued by the SCSPE and SGAS directly impact upon sports policies and systems at the national level. Thus, this research is largely drawn from documents, meeting minutes and important lectures originating from the SCSPE and

[34] McCulloch G., *Document Research in Education, History, and the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2004), 56.
[35] Hilary Steedman, 'Measuring the Quality of Educational Outputs: Some Unresolved Problems', cited in Alexander R, Broadfoot P, Phillips D, (eds.). *Learning from Comparing: New Directions in Comparative Education Research* (New York: Triangle Books, 1999), 67.
[36] John Scott, A *Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research (*Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 59.
[37] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*. Second Edition (Oxford University Press, 2004), 210.

the SGAS. In China, the party and government are organised as a vast hierarchy with power flowing down from the top. As the higher authority in the administrative system, central government plays a critical role in making state policy. The official documents analysed in this research therefore include policies, lectures and memos issued or delivered by the central government. Many of the official documents are public records in printed texts, much of which is available online. Thus, the collection of official documents relating to sports policy involved a combination of printed texts and internet sources. The all-pervasive surveillance and censorship system over official recordkeeping in China prevented collection of all of the original documents relating to this study. We had to therefore draw on other document sources of state policy as an alternative approach.

In general, newspapers, magazines, television programmes and films are potential sources for qualitative research. According to Esterberg (2001), media accounts are useful for understanding how groups of people are represented in public discourse or what norms and ideals for behaviour exist in a particular time and place.[38] Qualitative social researchers have long used media accounts to investigate social life. Likewise, media resources may help us to better understand and analyse public policy as political behaviour. Harrison (2001) argues that media resources can provide a valuable understanding of the context of political behaviours, particularly when we might not have direct access to the event that we wish to analyse.[39]

This research follows the advice of Mannheim and Rich (1995) when dealing with a broad range of media data, who advise on the necessity of employing different sources of documents, depending on the particular political question that are being examined. Newspapers are an important source of current and historical information, as they include the texts of important speeches, commentaries on political issues and

[38] Kristin G. Esterberg, *Qualitative Methods in Social Research* (McGraw-Hill Humanities Social, 2001), 124.
[39] Harrison, Lisa, *Political Research: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2001), 108.

public opinion poll data (Mannheim and Rich, 1995).[40] In addition to newspapers, this research also draws upon documentary films or interviews related to sports or sports policies, as it would be difficult or even impossible for us to interview all policy-makers. Such media accounts can to a large extent be used as alternative methods to help collect information for this research. Other valid reasons for using these media are that they are easy and cheap to access, or even free to consult.

Notably, media are not completely free of government control. According to Bardes et al. (1995), the United States has one of the most democratic media in the world, although regulation does exist, particularly of the electronic media.[41] When state control has ownership of the media, bias and distortion are inevitable. Negrine (1989) has argued that biases and distortions resulting from patterns of ownership and control of the media tend to be politically partisan and are likely to present 'new value' rather than 'plain facts'.[42] With regard to mass media in China, the government has long tried to keep a tight rein on traditional and new forms of media, to prevent any challenges to its political authority. Media in mainland China, in particular state-run media, such as the Xinhua agency and the People's Day, have had to echo with state policy.[43] According to data triangulation, findings can be corroborated and any weaknesses in the data can be compensated for by the strengths of other data. In order to provide balance and triangulate the data from Chinese media, this research consulted data from Western newspapers and agencies to reach a more accurate, objective conclusion.

To sum up, by employing Fairclough's discourse analysis framework, all Chinese official sport policy documents and speeches delivered by top sport officials and political leaders between 1949 and 1989 were reviewed. In addition, supporting

[40] Manheim JB & Rich RC, Empirical Political Analysis: Research Methods in Political Science (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc, 1995), 53.
[41] Bardes BA, Shelley MC, II, Schmidt SW, *American Government and Politics Toda*y: The Essentials (Boston: Wadsworth Publishing), 324.
[42] Ralph Negrine, *Politics and Mass Media in Britain* (London: Routledge, 1989), 4.
[43] *Xinhua* agency is a ministry-level institution directly under the State Council of PRC. The People's Daily is also a ministry-level institution, and the official newspaper of the central committee of the CCP.

references include other documents concerning concrete practices, e.g., major sport events, ideological education of Chinese elite athletes, and academic and media material from institutions which both affiliated to and controlled by governmental sport organs.

3.4.2.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Interviewing is probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research, as a means of collecting data and gaining knowledge from individuals.[44] It emphasises human interactions as a construction site for knowledge. As Kvale (1996) observes, 'interviewing is literally an *interview*, an inter-change of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest'.[45] The interview method is based on the conversations of daily life and is a professional conversation. It attempts to acquire descriptions from the various qualitative aspects of the interviewee's lived world, and works with words rather than numbers. In brief, the interviewees are able to discuss their perceptions and interpretations of a given situation; they describe their impressions.

The structure-based interview generally considers three major categories: the unstructured interview, the semi-structured interview and the structured interview. A structured interview is designed to answer a set of clearly specified research questions.[46] The structured interview is usually classified as a quantitative method. The major types of qualitative interviewing are unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Unstructured interviews tend to be very similar in character to a conversation.[47] In the process of interviewing, there may be just a single question that the interviewer asks and the interviewee is allowed to respond freely.

[44] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods (*Oxford University Press, 2008), 319.
[45] Kvale S. Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing (London: SAGE Publication, 1996), 14.
[46] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*. Fourth Edition (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012), 470.
[47] Burgess RG. *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984), 102.

Semi-structured interviewing, in contrast, requires the researcher to list questions or an interview guide, but leaves much leeway for the interviewee to reply.[48] As Beardsworth and Keil (1992) explain, as the interview progresses, interviewees raise additional or complementary issues, which form an integral part of the study's findings.[49] By adopting the semi-structured interview, the interviewer can record qualitative information about the topic and can seek both clarification and elaboration on the answers as they are supplied. In the words of May (1993), the semi-structured interview gives the interviewer latitude to probe beyond the answers.[50]

As far as this research is concerned, the interview process has been adopted mainly either because the type of information we wished to glean does not exist in official published documents or contemporary media accounts, e.g. television interviews or newspaper reports, or because we required more detailed elaboration and explanation. Although policymakers play a critical role in the process of policymaking, their beliefs, opinions and attitudes associated with policymaking are not normally indicated in official documents. As Lane (1962) has claimed: 'Extended conversational interviews of this character provide an opportunity for contextual analysis. An opinion, belief, or attitude is best understood in the context of other opinions, beliefs and attitudes, as they illuminate its meaning, mark its boundaries, modify and qualify its force.'[51]

To truly understand the formation and change of policy making, we needed to conduct interviews. As noted above, the semi-structured interview not only allows interviewees to answer more than is permitted by the standardised interview, but provides a structure for comparison with the focused interview.[52] The semi-structured interview was adopted in this study as the most appropriate means of obtaining information from our research subjects.

[48] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*. op. cit., 321.
[49] Ibid.,321.
[50] Tim May, *Social Research: Issues, Method and Process* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), 93.
[51] Cited from Lisa Harrison, *Political Research: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2001), 104.
[52] Tim May, *Social Research: Issues, Method and Process* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), 93.

Undoubtedly, with the tightly centralised system in China, the highest-ranking officials play a critical role in policymaking. The policy in this research mainly involved elite sports, mass sports and the sports industry. In China, the SCSPE and SGAS are responsible for both elite and mass sports, as well as relevant policymaking throughout different periods, so those officials serving in government agencies at different periods are involved. My preferred interviewees were as senior as possible and involved in strategic decision-making rather than operational matters. However, the reality of researching in China is that it is extremely difficult for ordinary researchers to directly communicate with those high-ranking officials, even for academic research. This research therefore adopted a relatively pragmatic approach. Instead of interviewing those highest ranking officials, such as government ministers, we turned to officials at more junior levels; heads or deputy heads of departments within the SCSPE or SGAS (e.g. department of policy and regulation, SGAS) specifically responsible for policymaking. In addition, the research involves ordinary officials who have been serving in relevant departments for a reasonable length of time and know the operational characteristics of Chinese sports policy.

Furthermore, this researcher conducted interviews with staff in other organisations besides academic scholars, to examine and supplement information that would have been obtained from the officials in the departments directly responsible for decision-making. Although people in these organisations do not participate in decision or policymaking, they are implementers or operators of policy and they have experienced changes of sport policy and systems; their opinions may reflect how the policy works in practice. I also interviewed scholars who have conducted research related to these research objectives and questions, so that I could glean a non-official but critical point of view.

Rationale for Selection

According to Manion, conducting interviews in relation to Chinese politics presents two challenges. The first is to find suitable Chinese official interviewees and the second is that party (CCP) and government officials are normally reluctant to interpret the cause of official policymaking, due to the political monitoring of their comments.[53]

Dealing with these challenges became a key issue for not only how to succeed in conducting interviews as one of the key qualitative research methods for this study, but also for the consideration as to whether research objectives and research aims could be achieved with accuracy. To identify relevant officials, I adopted three strategies, as per Tien-Chin Tan's research on Chinese sports policy and globalisation. The first strategy used a 'direct approach', whereby this researcher directly contacted some of the Chinese sports officials working in the SCSPE (Sports Ministry) when they were attending an academic conference in Shanghai in July 2010. The official contacted at the time was Mr. Xie Qionghuan, a former director of the department of sport policy and regulation of the Sports Ministry. Mr. Xie provided access to several sitting officials. Some were interviewed via phone or email; others were unavailable due to their busy schedule.

The second strategy was an 'indirect approach'. This researcher contacted academics in both China and Ireland, including some Chinese visiting scholars in Ireland and the researcher's teachers and colleagues in China who had 'private' friendships with Chinese sports officials, asking for introductions to their friends and support for interview requests.

The third strategy for identifying suitable interviewees was by snowball sampling. According to De Vos et al. (2002), snowball sampling is valuable in qualitative

[53] Melane Manion, 'Chinese Officials as Ordinary Respondents'. In M. Feldman, J.Bell and M. Berger (eds.), Gaining Access: A Practical and Theoretical Guide for Qualitative Researchers (Lanham: AltaMira, 2003), 62.

research, as it is directed at individuals that are difficult to identify.[54] After the researcher contacts one appropriate case from the population, that person connects the researcher with another 'like' case. Thus, snowball sampling is based on social networking that informally accesses the required population.[55] When implementing this method, at the end of each interview, this researcher asked the respondents whether they knew of someone else who might be willing to be interviewed. A limitation of this method is that the technique inevitably results in a biased sample, because the researcher is reliant on others to make appropriate contacts. Since the population is hidden, its characteristics are likely to be unknown and it will be virtually impossible for the researcher to make any judgement as to its representativeness.[56] In an attempt to avoid this methodological weakness, we sought interviewees from a wide range of organisations; from sports institutions and scholars in sports and physical education.

Interview Guide and Questions

Unlike a questionnaire or a precoded survey instrument, which provides a rigid order and specific wording for the questions that the interviews must follow, an interview guide helps the interviewer to focus the interview.[57] The interview guide involves the main topics and the wording of questions that the researcher wants to ask. According to Kristin (2001), it also usually includes suggestions about follow-up questions (or probes). However, the researcher does not strictly follow this guide when conducting the interview. Rather, the researcher adapts questions during the course of the interview, changing both the phrasing and their order. According to Kvale (1996), guides for semi-structured interviews include an outline of topics to be covered that assist with the researcher's preparation for the interview.[58] The interview guides

[54] Annemie De Vos, Herman Strydom, Christa Fouche et al. (ed.), *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Services Professions*. Second Edition. (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2002), 34.
[55] Rowland Atkinson & John Flint, Accessing hidden and hard to reach populations: Snowball research strategies, *Social Research Update* (Department of Sociology, University of Surrey), Summer 2001, 33.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Kristin G Esterberg, *Qualitative Methods in Social Research* (McGraw-Hill Humanities Social, 2001), 94.
[58] Steinar Kvale, *Interviews: An introduction to Qualitative Research interviewing*, Student literature (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications 1996), 129.

employed in this research were as follows:

- Their experience associated with sports policymaking.
- The context under which sports policy was made.
- The cause and effect of the sports policy and system during a certain period.
- The process of implementation of sports policy.
- Their opinion or values related to the sports policy and system.

According to Kvale (1996), a good interview question should not only contribute thematically to knowledge production, but also dynamically, to promote a good interview interaction.[59] In regard to the thematic dimension, the questions should relate to the topic. The dynamic dimension emphasises the interpersonal relationship in the interview, aiming to keep the flow of the conversations going and motivate the subjects to talk about their experiences and feelings. Kvale (1996) suggested that when preparing an interview, it may be useful to develop two guides; one with the project's main thematic research questions and the other with the questions to be posed during the interview, accounting for both the thematic and dynamic dimensions.[60]

[59] Ibid., 129.
[60] Ibid., 131.

Table 3.2. Research Question and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview questions
To what extent did dominant ideology affect changes in sports policies and systems? (after accounting for the influence of dominant ideology)	Do you think the state sports policy is a reflection of the Party's will and zhidao sixiang (guiding ideology) on sports? In what aspects?
	What's your opinion about the effect of politicisation on sport policy and systems? Can you provide detailed information?
Have any changes occurred in the dominant ideology? (in the process of changes in sport and sports policies)	What is your opinion about the difference in the influence of the Party on sports policy between the Mao era and the post-Mao era?
	Before and after the Reform and Opening Policy, do you think the government has made any fundamental changes in formulating sports policies?
What were the changes in sports policies between the Mao and post-Mao eras from 1949 to 1989? (from the impact of dominant ideology)	What is your opinion about the role of sport and government-oriented sports systems in contemporary Chinese society?
	Do you think the influence of the Party on Sports in the Mao era continued or retained in Post-Mao ear, specifically in the 1980s and after that? In what aspects?

Academic research questions need to be delivered in an easy-going, colloquial format, to generate spontaneous and rich descriptions.[61] In addition, the interview question should be approached from different angles, enabling the research questions to be investigated through several interview questions and allowing that one interview question to potentially provide answers to several research questions. For instance, one of the key questions in this research was: 'To what extent did dominant political ideology affect changes in sports policies and systems? (after accounting for the influence of dominant ideology)'. During the interview, specific questions were posed as follows: 'Do you think the state sports policy, to some extent, is a reflection of the Party's ideology?', 'What's your opinion about the effect of politicisation on sports policy and systems?', 'What is your opinion about the difference in the influence of political parties on sports policy between the Mao era and the post-Mao era?'.

As mentioned earlier, the second challenge we encountered in this research was how to elicit useful information from interviewees, most of whom were cautious about talking about policy, in particular the essential relationship between politics and policymaking, due to restrictions on freedom of expression in China. To tackle this problem, this researcher not only designed the interview guide, but also ensured that the questions were open-ended. According to Esterberg (2001), the goal of interviewing in this research is not only to make sure that the questions make sense to the research participants, but should open up discussion, not close it down.[62] To encourage the interviewees to talk about more detailed information and reveal their perceptions of the development of state sports policy and its practice, the questions in this research were 'open-ended' (see Table 3.2). In order to encourage the interviewee, especially sports officials or officials in the education sector, to freely express their opinions, we undertook that their names would not be used in anything we made public but would be drawn upon for analysis of this research. To properly set up the interview in advance, I calculated how long the interview would normally take by

[61] Ibid., 131.
[62] Kristin G Esterberg, *Qualitative Methods in Social Research* (New York: McGraw-Hill Humanities, 2001), 98.

testing the materials with fellow academics. The selection of interview location was important; interviews were conducted where the interviewees felt comfortable and at ease.

Interview schedule

The interviews involved a total of 15 participants, mainly from government agencies and research institutions. Four were former or current officials in government agencies (see Table 3.3); one was the former director of the department of sport policy and regulation (SCSPE) who engaged in state sports policymaking, two were officials from the Department of Sport policy and regulation, the General Administration of Sport of China (GAS), and the National Administrative Centre of Football. The fourth participant was from the Shanghai Municipal Sports Bureau.

Seven interviewees were employed as research fellows in the fields of sport history, sports policy and sports management at either Beijing Sports University, Shanghai Sports University, Tsinghua University, North China Normal University, or Ningbo University. Some were interviewed by the author on the occasion of a conference held in Shanghai in July 2010, while others accepted interviews either in person in Cork, Ireland, or via telephone call. The interviewees include a number of participants who have experienced different periods of the development of China's sports.

Table 3.3. The Interviewee's Background

No.	Date	Interviewee Background	Location
1	10/07/10	Former Director of Department of the Department of Policies, Laws and Regulations, the SCSPE	Shanghai
2	12/08/10	Researcher in Sport Policy, Beijing Sport University	Beijing
3	11/07/10	Researcher in Chinese Sports History and social Vicissitude, South China Normal University	Shanghai
4	25/08/14	Researcher in Chinese Sports History, Shanghai University of Sport	Shanghai
5	12/07/10	Researcher in Chinese Sport History, South China Normal University	Shanghai
6	20/08/12	Researcher in Sport Management, Guangzhou Sport University	Shanghai
7	24/08/11	Official from National Administrative Centre of Football, the GAS	Beijing
8	11/07/10	Official in Shanghai Municipal Sports Bureau	Shanghai
9	12/01/12	Official in Department of Department of Sport Policy and Regulation, the GAS	Telephone
10	15/01/13	Researcher in Sports History and Sports Policy, Ningbo University	Cork, Ireland
11	16/08/13	Researcher in Sports Sociology, Shanghai University	Shanghai
12	5/08/13	Retired athlete	Nanjing, Jiangsu
13	10/07/13	Director of Shanghai Jingwu Sport Study Centre	Shanghai

Thematic analysis with interview data

Thematic analysis is the process of identifying, analysing and reporting themes or patterns within data. Boyatzis (1998) characterises it not as a specific method, but as a tool to use across different methods.[63] Similarly, Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis is the first qualitative method that should be learned as '…it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other kinds of analysis'.[64]

The goal of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e. patterns in the data that are important or interesting, which are then used to address the research or say something about an issue. Through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data, e.g. interview data. Thematic analysis is therefore widely used by researchers and scholars in literature, sociology, cultural anthropology, history, art, political science, and many other fields.[65] In this study, thematic analysis will be used to help analyse the data obtained by interviewing, to generate the themes related to this study, and to help better answer research questions in this study.

Braun and Clark (2006) distinguish between theoretical thematic analysis and inductive analysis.[66] The former is driven by specific research question or issues, while the latter is driven by data itself. The data analysis in this study is driven by research questions and is more top-down or theoretical thematic. In this study, drawing on Braun and Clarke's (2006) 6-step framework,[67] I outline the analysis process undertaken by this text in the following 'stages':

[63] Boyatzis, R.E. *Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development*. Sage. 1998, 56.
[64] Virginia Braun & Victoria Clarke, Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, (2006), 77-101.
[65] Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3 (2), 77-101.
[66] Braun and Clarke, Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 77-101.
[67] Ibid.

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data.

The first step in any qualitative analysis is reading, and re-reading the transcripts. Esterber (2001) explicitly states that data analysis in qualitative research generally involves three stages: first, to physically manage or organise the data (e.g. put it into three-ring binders or files or load it into the computer); to immerse yourself in the data and become familiar with what you have gathered; and finally, to find ways to present the analysis to others.[68] At the first stage, I familiarised myself with the data by developing an overview of each interview, through repeated readings of the interview transcripts and listening to the tapes. At this stage, it is useful to make notes and jot down the general impression of the interview text.

Step 2: Generating initial codes.

The second stage mainly necessitated a focusing on those parts of the text considered to be 'significant' or directly related to research issues. In this phase I started to organise the data in a meaningful and systematic way. These parts of the data are underlined. Of course, at this early stage, the remaining data that did not initially bear 'weight' of meaning were not dismissed.

As I adopted a theoretical thematic analysis instead of an inductive one, I was concerned with addressing specific research questions and analysed the data with this in mind. Based on the research questions, three main themes were initially formed: 'Guiding ideology affects sports policies and systems in the PRC', 'The dominant ideology of Chinese society and guiding ideology of Chinese sports', and 'The changes in sports policies between the Mao and post-Mao eras between 1949 and the 1980s' (see Table 3.4). The coding of data was guided by each main theme. I specifically coded each segment of data that was relevant to or captured something interesting about the research questions, rather than line-by-line coding for every single line, which is suitable for a more inductive analysis. Accordingly, I used open

[68] Kristin G Esterberg, *Qualitative Methods in Social Research.* (New York: McGraw-Hill Humanities, 2001), 150–151.

coding. I did not have pre-set codes, but developed and modified codes as I worked through the coding process.

Step 3: Searching for themes.

There are no strict rules about what makes a theme. A theme is characterised by its significance. During this identification process, one should maintain an open mind, welcoming and accepting alternative views and sustain this during all stages of the data analysis. In this case, I examined the codes and identified subthemes that could be clearly grouped together under main themes and research questions. For example, I had several codes that related to perceptions of how dominant ideology affects changes in sports policies. I collated these into an initial theme (e.g. The domination of Maoism on sport policy). At the end of this step, initial subthemes were organised to cover all coding data and explain something about or relate to research questions.

Step 4: Reviewing themes.

This stage is about checking that the themes 'work' in relation to both the coded extracts and the full data-set. The researcher should reflect on whether the themes tell a convincing and compelling story about the data, and begin to define the nature of each individual theme, and the relationship between the themes.[69] Following above-mentioned principles, during this stage I reviewed, modified and developed the preliminary themes that I identified in Step 3, searching for the themes. It is essential to think about if the broad themes make sense. I read the data associated with each theme and considered whether the data really did support it, and considered how the theme worked both within a single interview and across all of the interviews. Aspects that had to be considered included:

- Do the themes make sense?
- Does the data support the themes?
- Am I trying to fit too much into a theme?
- If themes overlap, are they really separate themes?

[69] Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun, Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26, no.2, (2013), 120-123.

- Are there themes within themes (subthemes)?
- Are there other themes within the data?[70]

For example, following the principle 'If themes overlap, are they really separate themes?', for this phrase, the themes 'How is the influence of guiding ideology on sport policies and systems' and 'Reasons for the influence of guiding ideology on sport policies and systems' did not seem to be distinct enough to be considered as two separate themes. The two themes reflect different aspects of the impact of Maoism on sport policy. I therefore combined these into a new theme, 'The influence of guiding ideology on sport policies and systems' (see Table 3.4).

At the end of this step, as indicated in Table 3.4, the process of combing, deleting and revising initial themes led to the identification of six subthemes that covered all of the main themes and related to six research questions: 'The formation of guiding ideology of Chinese sports after 1949', 'The influence of guiding ideology on sport policies and systems', 'The guiding ideology of sport is a reflection of the Party's will and dominant ideology', 'The change of dominant ideology and its characteristics', 'Characteristics of sport policy making and sports system in the Mao Zedong era' and 'Characteristics of sports policy making and sports system in the post-Mao era' (see Table 3.4). It is worth noting that not all individual interviews covered all subthemes, as some interviewees did not or were reluctant to talk about topics relating to certain subthemes (e.g. The guiding ideology of sport is a reflection of the Party's will and dominant ideology), because of their knowledge, background and identity.

[70] Moira Maguire and Brid Delahunt, Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars, *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and learning in Higher Education* 8, no.3 (2107), 3351-3359.

Table 3.4. Thematic Clusters (identified at the end of step 4)

Main themes	Guiding ideology affects sports policies and systems in the PRC		The dominant ideology of Chinese society and guiding ideology of Chinese sports		The changes in sports policies between the Mao and post-Mao eras between 1949 and the 1980s	
Subthemes	The formation of guiding ideology of Chinese sports after 1949	The influence of guiding ideology on sport policies and systems	The guiding ideology of sport is a reflection of the Party's will and dominant ideology	The change of dominant ideology and its characteristics	Characteristic of sport policy making and sports system in the Mao era	Characteristics of sports policy making and the sports system in the post-Mao era
Interview No. 1	√	√			√	√
Interview No. 2	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No. 3	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No. 4	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No. 5	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No. 6	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No. 7	√	√			√	√
Interview No. 8	√	√		√	√	√
Interview No. 9	√	√		√	√	√
Interview No.10	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No.11	√	√	√	√	√	√
Interview No. 12					√	√
Interview No.13					√	√

Step 5: Defining and naming themes.

As Braun & Clarke (2006) indicate, this phrase is the final refinement of the themes and the aim is to 'identify the 'essence' of what each theme is about.'[71] It aims to figure out how the themes interact and are related to one another. As far as the phrase in this study is concerned, it is about how one individual theme (e.g. The formation of guiding ideology of Chinese sports after 1949) is rooted in the other themes (e.g. 'The

[71] Braun and Clarke, Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 77-101.

influence of guiding ideology on sport policies and systems' and 'The change of dominant ideology and its characteristics').

Step 6: Producing the report.

Writing is an integral part of thematic analysis. This section includes how to weave the various parts of narrative analysis and data extracts together, so as to tell the reader a coherent and convincing story, contextualising it in relation to existing literature.

3.4.3 Validity and Reliability

Patton (2001) stated that validity and reliability are two factors that any qualitative researcher should be concerned about when designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of that study.[72] Maxwell (1996) offered us three types of validity threats that we must be careful to watch out for: description; interpretation; and theory.[73] Valid description involves how we ensure that the description of what we saw and heard is accurate and complete. Audio and video recordings are used to ensure validity, as these can be played back when transcribing. However, since this research is conducted in China, translation skills are crucially important to guarantee validity. In general, there are two methods of translation: literal translation, where sentences are translated word by word, and translating for meaning. Use of different language systems by Chinese and English mean that they differ in terms of construction and ways of expression. Word-by-word translation makes the research difficult to deliver valid and accurate information, or meaning as articulated in the interviews and documents. In contrast, translating the general meaning of data can guarantee methodological validity. The interviews employed in this research are aimed at illuminating the transformation of Chinese sports policies in an interpretive manner, and should not be conducted literally. In this way, we hope that we can ensure validity as much as possible.

[72] Patton, M.Q., *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc, 2001.

[73] Maxwell JA., *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 89-90.

With regard to the threat of valid interpretation, Maxwell (1996) explains that this consists of 'imposing one's framework of meaning, rather than understanding the perspective of the people studied and the meaning they attach to their words and actions'.[74] To tackle this threat, I attempted to understand the data generated by the participants in this research, which involved a wide range of political, economic and cultural contexts. According to Miles & Huberman (1984), triangulation is typically perceived to be a strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings.[75] Mathison (1988) elaborates on this by saying: 'Triangulation has risen to an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches to evaluation [in order to] control bias and establish valid propositions because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology'.[76] Thus, I did not assume that the participants' views were valid before their triangulation via crosschecking with other interviewees and relevant documents.

Theoretical validity poses the third threat. According to Maxwell (1996), this concerns the failure to collect or pay attention to contradictory data, or to consider alternative explanations or understandings of the phenomena studied.[77] For the authors of this research, the main bias comes from the existing research with regard to Chinese sport policy and systems, some of which even agree on certain arguments. In order to draw more definitive conclusions, I should avoid this bias as well as the impact imposed by existing views. To this end, the triangulating method and data was implemented throughout this research. First of all, as described in the methods section, in addition to the documentary method, this research employed the interview method in order to comprehensively inquire about the Chinese sport policy and systems. Furthermore, the interviewees comprise three groups: officials, scholars and ordinary participants, in order to obtain various data from different angles, attempting to ensure

[74] Ibid.
[75] Miles MB & Huberman AM. *Qualitative Data Analysis* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1984), 235.
[76] Sandra Mathison, 'Why triangulate?, *Educational Researcher* 17, no.2 (1988): 13–17.
[77] Maxwell JA. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (London: Sage, 1996), 90.

validity at both the levels of theory and interpretation.

Reliability is another concern. Along the lines of the definition offered by Joppe (2000), reliability embodies consistency of results over time and accurately represents the study population; if it is possible to reproduce the results of a study using similar methodology, the research instrument is deemed reliable.[78] Whereas reliability in quantitative research depends on the standardisation of research instruments and repeated checking of the data generated by such instruments, reliability in qualitative research can barely be achieved by crosschecking the same case, because the researchers and environment cannot be completely remade, controlled, or remain unchanged. In terms of this research, it would be impossible to interview the same person multiple times, in particular the officials who participated in this research.

To achieve reliability in this research, we designed two strategies intended to minimise potential errors and biases during interviewing and document analysis. Firstly, to gain more accurate and reliable opinions from interviewees, we made a commitment to them to not use their names in any publication, despite drawing upon their interviews to shape this research and analysis. Secondly, multiple sources of evidence, including interviews and document analysis, will be used to triangulate data collected. Thus, we attempted to validate information derived from interviews by examining accounts, documents and other visual evidence providing the basis for evaluating interviewees' claims.

3.4.4 Ethical Considerations

All of the content that we have discussed above is concerned with 'technique' and research questions that formed the main bulk of the methodology. Beyond these, there is another important aspect of research evaluation – namely, ethics. Research ethics has become an area of much greater concern in recent years, with many universities

[78] Joppe M. *The Research Process.* 2000. available from http://www.ryerson.ca/~mjoppe/rp.htm (accessed November 15, 2011).

and research funders requiring that research receives ethical approval before it is carried out.[79] In general, according to Diener and Crandall, ethical principles include four aspects: whether there is harm to participants; whether there is a lack of informed consent; whether there is an invasion of privacy; whether deception is involved.[80]

To ensure research ethics, first of all, this research was based on informed consent and characterised by the honesty and openness of the researcher, participants and institutions. Prior to the interview being carried out, the intention of the research was declared to each participant. They were presented with the interviewer's identity as a PhD researcher at a university in Ireland with the student ID card and an introductory letter on university letterhead. In addition, the fact that the researcher used to work as a lecturer at a university in China and still holds a position there, was openly stated to make the interviewees feel at ease.

Secondly, as noted earlier, all interviewees were guaranteed that their name only appeared in this study to avoid an invasion of privacy. To guarantee interview confidentiality, all information supplied by the interviewees was used in the research only. Moreover, if the interviewees felt uncomfortable being recorded electronically, then I took notes on paper instead.

Maxwell (1996) reminds us that it is impossible to deal with problems by eliminating the researcher's theories, preconceptions, or values, but we can try to understand how a particular researcher's values influence the conduct and conclusions of a study.[81] Prior to 2009, when I started to pursue my PhD in Ireland as a citizen of the PRC, I had been receiving education and living in China, which was under the influence of the Party-State. Obtaining information from the rest of the world has become easier in China due to internet access and increasingly pervasive new forms of media, as well

[79] Sapsford R & Jupp V., *Data Collection and Analysis*. Second Edition (London: Sage, 2006), 293.
[80] Diener E & Crandall R., *Ethics in Social and Behavioral Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 509.
[81] Maxwell JA., *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 91.

as a liberalisation of access to information on many topics that were formerly restricted in China. However, it is inevitable that I may have developed some bias based on my prior experiences and knowledge while growing up in China. In particular, the political operations and ruling power in China seemed normal and natural to me, which could potentially mean that I failed to explore any underlying reasons. To overcome this potential bias, while performing data collecting and analysis, from time to time I had to remind myself to detach my thinking from the Chinese structure and do whatever I could to take a reflective approach and avoid ethnic bias.

3.5 Conclusion

The mixed research design selected for this research allows for an in-depth understanding of the change and function of sport policy and systems, as well as the will of the party-state and the government. Considering that this study straddles both history and the social sciences, critical discourse analysis and semi-structured interviews together constitute an ideal mix of methods to achieve a successful rendering of the research questions. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis framework is employed in the research to investigate official sport documents, speeches by top sport official that strategically focus on the overall development of Chinese sport and other supporting material.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with supporting documentary and visual data. Thematic analysis was adopted as an approach to interview analysis as it allows for the identification of emergent topics through efficient coding, which proved essential for this study. Drawing on Braun and Clarke's framework (2006), this research adopted a six-step approach for the analysis of interview data. Finally, in order to assist with a smooth research process, a research design was implemented and accompanied by explicit introductions for each of the procedures and steps in the process.

Chapter 4 State Sports Policy and System from 1949 to 1952

4.1 Introduction

As Alan Bairner has pointed out, 'sport is frequently a vehicle for the expression of nationalist sentiment to the extent that politicians are all willing to harness it for such disparate, even antithetical, purpose as nation building, promoting the nation-state, or giving cultural power to separatist movements.'[1] Sport, perhaps more than other cultural forms, may provide a useful perspective on how ideologies, including nationalism, communist and socialism, play a role in the process of a nation or state building.

After the CCP won the Civil War, the establishment of the PRC in October 1949 symbolised the end of the dominance of semi-feudalism and colonial influences. Nevertheless, the CCP government did not immediately build a socialist state in China.[2] Instead, Chairman Mao Zedong and his followers designed a 'new democratic society', marking the start of a period of 'transition to socialism'. What was the social situation in 1949 at the time of the founding of the PRC? What kinds of sports policies and systems did the Communists establish in the early days of this new country? From the change in sports policies, is it possible to decipher any associations between PRC-mandated sports policies, official ideology and state-building? This chapter seeks to answer these questions by examining events in China during the first three years of the existence of the PRC.

[1] Bairner Alan, *Sport, Nationalism and Globalization. European and North American Perspectives* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001),xi.

[2] See 'The 'Resolution to some Historical Issues of the CCP since the Founding of the PRC', *People's Daily*, 1 July, 1981.

4.2 Chinese Revolution, New Democracy and Communist State-Building

Immanuel C.Y. Hsü has explained the features of the Chinese revolution. He asserts that the classical Marxist pattern of societal development from feudalism to capitalism and then to socialism did not happen in China, as the stage of capitalism did not properly exist there.[3] The Communists divided the development of Chinese revolution into two successive stages from the end of Qing Dynasty in 1911; namely, the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. In its place, the Chinese Communists substituted a semi-feudal, semi-colonial period, from which China moved into an intermediary stage called 'the New Democracy' before advancing to the stage of socialism.[4]

Mao Zedong in his article 'The Position of the Communist Party of China in the National War' clearly stated: 'The Communists of China must combine patriotism with internationalism. We are internationalists, and we are patriots.'[5] From Mao's point of view, nationalism is the concrete 'implementation' of internationalism in the struggle for national liberation[6]. Therefore, in the early stage of the Communist Revolution, especially in the stage of the Democratic Revolution, the Communists declared themselves to be patriots first and foremost, that is, nationalists. Relying on the combination of nationalism and Communist ideology, the CCP eventually gained the support of the Chinese people, especially that of the peasants. The establishment of a sovereign and independent nation-state marked the demise of semi-colonial and semi-feudal society.

Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Kuomintang of China (Chinese Nationalist Party, KMT), pointed out in 1926 that 'Chinese people only have family and clan groups,

[3] Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, sixth edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 651.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Mao Zedong, 'The Position of the Communist Party of China in the National War', Selected Works of Mao Zedong, volume 4 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 1471.
[6] Ibid.

have no national spirit, so although there are 400 million people united into a China, it is a piece of loose sand. Up to this day, it is the world's poorest country, the lowest position in the world. If we want to save China in peril, we should advocate nationalism and save the country with national spirit.'[7] Another modern Chinese historian, Jiang Tingfu, posed a profound question in his book '*Modern History of China*' (completed in 1938). He argued: 'In the past hundred years, the Chinese nation has only one problem at all: Can the Chinese people abolish our family and home concept and organize a modern nation-state? If we can, the future of our nation is bright; if we can't, our nation has no future.'[8]

The CCP is the only political party to accomplish this historical mission, with its legitimacy stemming not only from ideology, but also from its practical policy of land reform. Johnson's viewpoint on the development of the Communist Party of China is persuasive. He claimed that 'the Communist Revolution gains its appeal from nationalism, not from the plan of social and economic reform, and strives for its main strength; the legitimacy of nationalism that the Party gained during the war is essential for the final victory, attracting popular support and neutrality of opposition forces.'[9] Townsend also argued that the CCP's commitment to social and economic change, especially their promised land reform, has been a source of popular support and impetus for joining the revolution for many periods in CCP's history.[10]

It is not easy to build a new state from remnants of the old. The CCP and the Chinese government inherited a very poor economy in 1949. After decades of civil war and Japanese occupation, the country was in terrible shape: roads, railways, farms and factories were in a shocking state of disrepair; war and colonial domination in the

[7] Sun Yat-sen, *Selected Works of Sun Yat-sen* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1981), 621.
[8] Jiang Tingfu, *Modern History of China, (*Nanjing: Jiang Su People's Publishing Hourse, 2017), 2.
[9] Chalmers Johnson, Farmer Nationalism and Communist Party Regime: The Beginning of the Chinese Revolution (1937-1945). (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), 56.
[10] James .R, Townsend and Womack, Brantly. *Politics in China,* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Press, 1986), 15.

previous century had left behind a ruined and almost paralyzed economic system;[11] a few modern power stations supplied electricity to the large cities, while electricity in the countryside was virtually unknown; the transport system was inadequate; most manufactured goods in everyday use were made by traditional methods; the financial system was in chaos; and the banking system was almost bankrupt after the entire gold reserve had been taken to Taiwan by the KMT.[12]

During the early period of the PRC, the Communists faced a complicated and stern international reaction. Although the PRC was recognised by the Soviet Union and Communist states in Eastern Europe, it was not recognised by most Western countries, a position led by the USA and Western Europe.[13] The USA maintained its hostile attitude towards the newly constituted Communist state throughout the 1950s.[14] China received limited assistance from the Soviet Union, which was fearful of being surpassed by the young Communist country and losing its leadership role in the

[11] When the New China took over from the KMT government, it inherited a total collapse of the economy. In 1949, compared with 1936, industrial output had fallen by 50% and agricultural output was down by about 25%. According to statistics (see detail in Baotang Y. *The National Government and the Economy of the Republic of China*. Shanghai: East China Normal University, 1998), during the 12 years from 1937 to 1949, when the KMT collapsed, inflation increased 140 billion times and prices rose 3,680.7 times. In 1949, the cities contained 4 million unemployed people, while in rural areas relief was required for ~40 million survivors of natural disasters. Furthermore, because a large number of personnel formerly employed by the KMT government were accepted in the newly liberated areas together with civil servants in the old liberated areas, administrative expenses had increased. See also: Editorial board of Contemporary China Series, *Contemporary Chinese Economy (*Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1987), 63.

[12] During the last 6 months of KMT rule, the cost of living rose by an average 25% every week. For example, in the year before the Communist Party took over Beijing, flour prices in Beijing increased 4,500 times. The national currency was so depreciated that it effectively had no worth. See also: Dunn J. *Modern Revolution.* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 17. In the 13 days from 28 May, when Shanghai was liberated, to 9 June, prices in Shanghai increased 2.7 times, including gold, the price of which rose 2.1 times. In Beijing, when prices soared, venture capitalists took advantage of the state-run food company's regulation by which, for each bag of flour they sold, they were entitled to buy 66 jin (33 kilos) of wheat, and they undertook large-scale arbitrage in food. One private owner, called a 'food tiger', on 11 November alone sold 678 bags of flour, but most of the flour was bought back. In this way, the nation's large quantities of wheat suffered arbitrage. See also: Jian S. *The Economic History of the People's Republic of China, 1949–early 1990s.*(Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1992), 38.

[13] The People's Republic of China (PRC) was recognised by Bulgaria and Romania on 3 October 1949, by Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia on 4 October 1949, by East Germany on 27 October 1949, by Albania on 23 November 1949 and by India on 30 December 1949. It was recognised by the UK on 6 January 1950, but the UK did not establish diplomatic relations with the PRC until March 1972. By 1968, 51 countries had recognised the People's Republic of China, while 65 others chose to recognise the Republic of China (in Taiwan) as the legitimate government of all of China. See HsüICY. *The Rise of Modern China*, 645.

[14] The Truman administration pursued a hostile China policy of not acknowledging Communist China, instituting an embargo and blockade on China and placing restrictions on the Chinese Communist Party. On 3 December 1950, the USA declared a comprehensive embargo on the PRC, and soon banned all ships registered in the USA from entering mainland ports. This US policy was the result of domestic pressures from Asia – the first anticommunists to ensure congressional support for crucial European recovery programmes. See Morgenthau HJ. *In Defense of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Knopf, 1952), 205–206, 324–335. Also see Snyder J. Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition.(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 258–262.

socialist camp.[15]

Clearly, the immediate strategic objective was to revive the national economy and strengthen national unity.[16] At the Third Plenary Session of the Seventh National Congress, Mao delivered a report entitled 'Struggle for Fundamental Improvement of the National Financial Condition'. He pointed out that the key task for the following three years was to strive for fundamental improvement, and the three basic conditions for the recovery of the Chinese economy included the completion of agrarian reform, a reasonable adjustment of industry and commerce, and a considerable reduction in the expense of national institutions.[17]

The CCP set out to recover the economy. By the end of 1952, the agrarian reform had been completed, with about 700 million *mus* (approximately 116.7 million acres) of land redistributed to 300 million peasants. It was largely poor peasants who benefited from the redistribution; a completely egalitarian land reform would have alienated the middle peasants and disrupted production.[18] The Chinese government's efforts in rebuilding the economy also involved curbing inflation and stabilising market prices in order to achieve a stable regime.[19] The Party succeeded in suppressing inflation

[15] The Soviet Union agreed to provide $300 million in low-interest loans to China, with one condition. During the 14 years from 1950 to 1963, China had to sell all excess industrial raw materials to the Soviet Union, excluding any other country. That was an obvious inequality and amounted to a business monopoly. Furthermore, the Soviet Union insisted that the presence of influence and force of a third country would not be allowed in northeast China or Xinjiang. The capital and personnel of a third country were not allowed in any way to be involved in institutions and business activities in northeast China or Xinjiang. In Mao's view, Stalin wanted to substantially influence China in these ways. See: Yang Kuisong. *Past Kindness and Grudges between Mao Zedong and Moscow* (Nanchang: Jiangxi People's Press, 1999), 311.

[16] See Mao Zedong. 'On the People's Democratic Dictatorship', in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.* Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967, for a graphic account of Mao's opinion on the difficulties experienced in the early years of the PRC. Mao asserted that 'the creation of a strong centralised state and economic system were the immediate tasks' (ibid., 442).

[17] Guo Dajun, *Modern Chinese History: 1949–1993* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 1995), 23–24.

[18] Wheelwright EL & McFarlane B. *The Chinese Road to Socialism: Economics of the Cultural Revolution* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 33.

[19] Due to inflation and rising prices, venture capitalists and unscrupulous businessmen took the opportunity to conduct speculation and to hoard goods, leading to disruption of the economy nationwide. In order to curb inflation and stabilize market prices, the CCP cracked down on speculation. By March 1950, the state's revenue and expenditure were close to being balanced; inflation had come to end and prices had stabilised. Take the wholesale price index for example: it fell from 100 in October 1948 to 85.4 in December 1950. Revenue and expenditure tended to be balanced. The financial deficit accounted for 43% of the total expenditure in the first quarter of 1950; this fell to 40% in the second quarter of the year, and fell still further to 9.8% in the third quarter. Ultimately, it accounted for just 6.4% of the total annual expenditure. See Guo Dajun. *Modern Chinese History*, 15–16.

and balancing income and expenditure, as well as stabilising market prices from April 1950 onwards.[20] By the end of 1951, efforts to achieve economic stability and improvement had made considerable progress.[21] However, although control had been secured over economic sectors such as banking and trade, as well as over the railways, steel and other key industries, large-scale nationalisation was not adopted. Mao did not take extreme measures to completely exterminate capitalism in China, with the exception of industrial assets belonging to supporters of the KMT, who were deemed allied to foreign interests and characterised as 'bureaucrat capitalists'. Instead, he turned to support from national capital to help restore the national economy.[22]

After launching a series of policies aimed at consolidating a democratic regime in late 1949,[23] the central government appointed governors to the majority of districts and provinces to establish its authority at all levels.[24] A new, centralised nation state emerged in Communist-controlled China (see Figure 4.1). To meet the needs of regime

[20] Compared to 1949, the total output value of state industry in 1951 increased by 148.8%, while the total output value of private industry increased by 48.2%. Compared to 1950, turnover from retail sales in 1951 increased by 133.2%. By July 1951, the number of unemployed shrank from 1.66 million to 0.45 million. See Guo Dajun. *Modern Chinese History*, 28.

[21] On 26 October, the General Committee for Resisting America and Assisting Korea – the committee in charge of defending world peace and opposing the US invasion of China – was established. On 4 November, China's democratic parties issued a joint declaration, swearing to fight against the USA, assist Korea and defend the motherland with all their strength. Representatives of all walks of life then expressed in succession their intention to support the joint declaration of the democratic parties and their resolute determination to do their utmost to defend the homeland. In the name of resisting the USA and defending the country, the PRC's involvement in the Korean War roused national spirit and promoted domestic production and national construction.

[22] At the Seventh Congress of the CCP Central Committee held on 13 April 1950, Mao reiterated the economic policy of the 'Common Program' and he pointed out that: 'the key to our struggle is not to overthrow the capitalists. Rather, we should cooperate with them'; 'we should support and develop the privately owned economy, which is beneficial to the improvement of the national economy and the people's livelihoods'. See Zhou Enlai. *Biographical Chronicle: Part I, 1949–1976.* Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1997, 33–35.

[23] On 2 December 1949, the 'Guideline on the Provincial People's Congress', 'Guideline on the City People's Congress' and 'General Principles on the County People's Congress' were approved at the Fourth Plenary Session of the Central Government Committee.

[24] By the summer of 1952, the national economy had recovered remarkably and the Korean War had stablised, so China's communist leaders began to consider the problem of strengthening centralised power in the coming period of economic construction. On 27 April 1954, at the outreach session of the political bureau, the CPCCC decided to dissolve the regional party and government organs. On 19 June, Liu Shaoqi gave a speech at the 32nd session of the Central People's Government Committee, stating that a centralised, unified leadership was a necessary condition for the planned large-scale economic construction and that a lot of construction work required a centralised national power, which could by no means be accomplished by a region, province or single city. With the dissolution of the regional party and government organs, the leadership of provinces and municipalities would have to be strengthened; the central government would have to directly contact and lead the various provinces and municipalities. One hundred and fifty thousand personnel and hundreds of thousands of cadres from the abolished regional organs would be allocated to reinforce the central, provincial and municipal governments. See the Party Literature Research Centre of the CPCCC, *Biographical Chronicle of Liu Shaoqi: 1896–1966*, volume 2 (Beijing: CPC Central Committee's Literature Research Press, 1996), 324.

construction, from 1949 to 1954 – when the first session of the National People's Congress was held – China promulgated and implemented a wide range of laws and policies, including an interim constitution, the 'Chinese People's Political Common Programme', the Trade Union Law, the Marriage Law, and the Land Reform Act.

After experiencing three years of economic recovery and construction after 1949, large-scale land reform was largely completed throughout the country and the recovery of national economy construction had made considerable achievements, with improvements in people's living standards. 'In 1952, the total output value of agriculture and industry was 81 billion *yuan*, an increase of 77.5% over 1949',[25] and 'compared with 1949, the number of employees in the whole country increased from eight million to sixteen million in 1952, and the average wage of workers in the whole country increased by 70%'.[26] The average annual consumption per capita and the income of farmers was greatly improved. After three years of economic recovery and construction, China basically possessed the conditions to carry out industrialisation construction.

In addition to the efforts to stabilise domestic politics and the economy, Mao made a remarkable decision to become involved in the Korean War (1950–1953). In response to Mao's decision, a campaign called the 'War to Resist America and Aid Korea' was launched throughout the country in October 1950, which stirred up defensive and nationalistic feelings among the populace.[27]

All in all, the CCP and its government, during the first three years of the PRC, made great efforts to realise an economic recovery and establish a stable political system. Furthermore, due to the success in preventing aggression from the USA, national

[25] Hu Sheng, The Seventy years of the Communist Party of China (Beijing, Chinese Communist Party History Publishing House, 1991), 317–319.
[26] Ibid.
[27] According to General Xu Yan, a professor of National Defence at the University of China, a total of 180,000 Chinese soldiers died in the Korean War. Xu Yan, a major-general, also claimed that the war to resist US aggression and aid Korea suffered losses but the gains were larger [online]. Available from http://military.people.com.cn/GB/8221/84385/195548/11982241.html (accessed 8 June 2015).

cohesion and prestige was greatly improved.

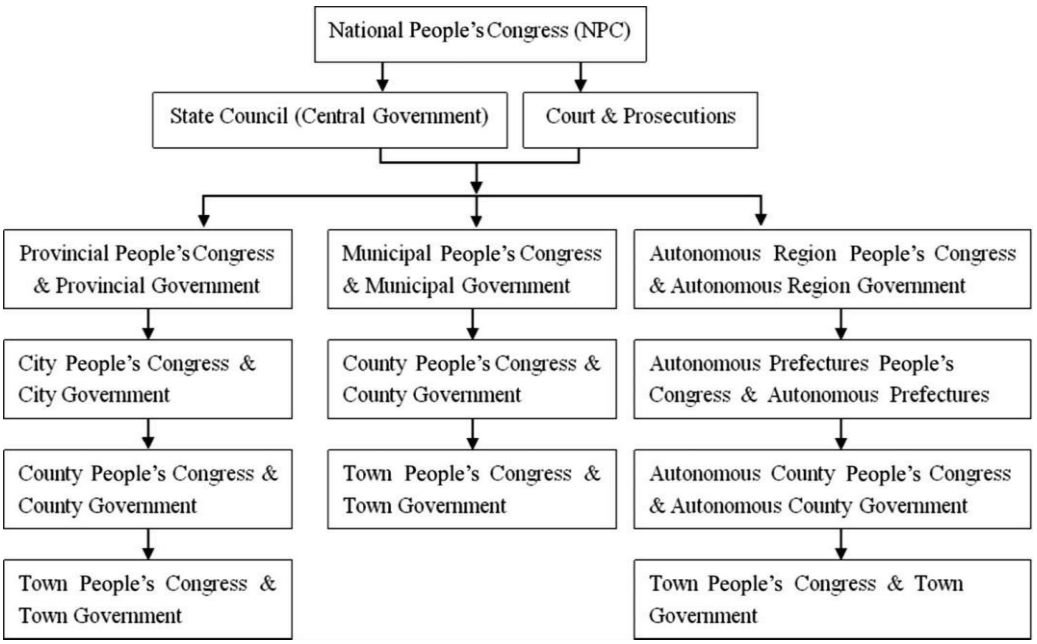


Figure 4.1. Constitutional Structure of the People's Republic of China

Source: 1954 Constitution of the People's Republic of China, 20 September 1954.[28]

In summary, by combining nationalism and Communist ideology as a source of legitimacy for its rule, the CCP gained the support of the Chinese people, eventual success in the Chinese Revolution, and the establishment of a 'New Democratic' country. The early days of the PRC were fraught with many problems for the new regime. The Communists not only had to restore the national economy and establish a political system, but also safeguard the territorial integrity and sovereignty and independence of the country. In this context, the establishment of sports policies and systems helped to support the new nation-state.

[28] Bai Shouyi, *An Outline History of China* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2002), 467.

4.3 Establishment of a 'Semi-Official' Sports Governing Body: The All-China Sports Federation (ACSF)

The Party and government set about establishing a sports governing body shortly after the establishment of the PRC. On 26 and 27 October 1949, the central government authorised the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) to establish the All-China Sports Federation (ACSF), along the same lines as the China National Amateur Athletic Federation.[29] Although the ACSF was initially designed not to be dominated by government, it was characterised by state involvement. First of all, the position of head of the ACSF was held by party and government officials. Fen Wenbin, then the General Secretary of Central Committee of the CCYL, was appointed as Director of the Preparatory Committee of the ACSF on 27 October 1949. Subsequently, Ma Xulun, then Education Minister, took over this position in June 1952 when the ACSF was formally established.

Second, although the Committee's members came from different sectors, including government agencies and colleges and the military, the Party and the Chinese government played a decisive role in setting out its rules and regulations and did not negotiate to any great extent with other players. According to Ian Henry, in terms of European political systems, a 'bureaucratic configuration' is characterised by the very active role that the public authorities take in regulating the system.[30] According to Henry, it is a system characterised by rules from a public authority which, with its political/democratic legitimacy, does not necessarily negotiate to any great extent with other players.[31] The Chinese sports policies and systems during this period, in this regard, were consistent with Henry's definition of a bureaucratic configuration.

[29] The National Association for the Advancement of Sports (NAAS) was founded in 1924 and released as 'The NAAS Scope of Sports Work at Home and Abroad'. However, as a national-level legal authority for sports, the NAAS was not recognised by the International Olympic Committee until as late as early 1926. In the middle of June 1927, the 9th Olympic Games Organizing Committee in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, sent a letter to NAAS to 'formally invite the Chinese sports delegation to join in'. See also: 'The World Games Invited Our Country to Join in', *ShenBao*, 25 June 1927: 11.

[30] Henry Ian and Ling-Mei Ko, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Sport Policy* (London: Routledge, 2014), 117.

[31] Ibid.

Third, the mission of the ACSF was deeply influenced by nationalism and self-strengthening objectives. The ASCF programme specified objectives for the development of sports in China: the objective of the ACSF, under the leadership of the Central Government of the PRC and the Central Committee of the CCP, is to assist government in organising, leading and promoting the nation's sports with the purpose of enhancing people's health, national defence and production.[32]

The ACSF committee was the head of the Federation. The Overall management was overseen by the committee, consisting of an organisation department, a propaganda department, an international liaison department, a secretariat, and the National Defence and Specialised Committee sports club (see Figure 4.2).[33] It played an active role in promoting national construction, national defence and improving people's health. In general, the ACSF was characterised by state involvement. In an interview conducted as part of this research, a Chinese scholar in the field of sports management explained that:

> From the perspective of the legal status, at that time it was a social sports organisation, but the ACSF could exercise part of the executive power of the government. […] All the expenses and utilities it needs was financed by the state budget, so it was actually the semi-official sports organisation.[34]

[32] Anon, 'The Articles of China's National Sports Federation', *New Sport*. no.21, 1952:81.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Interviewer No. 6 (Tan Jianxiang, Professor in Sport Management System, South China Normal University), in discussion with the author, 20 August 2012.

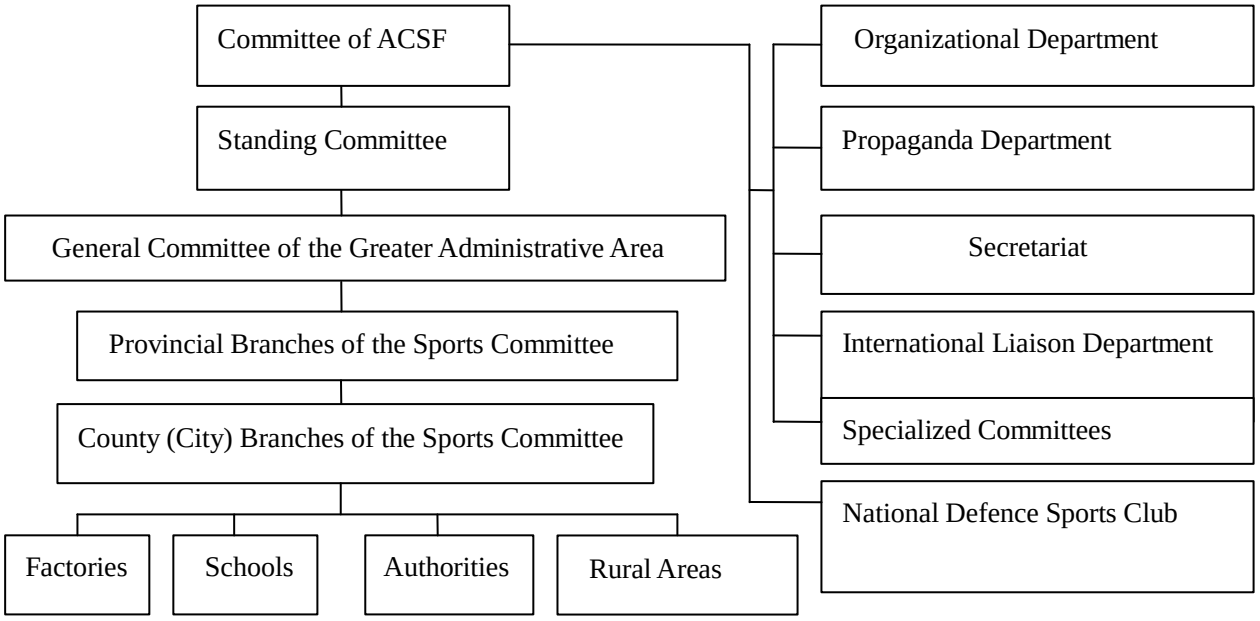


Figure 4.2. The Organisational Structure of the ACSF in 1952

Source: The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China[35]

In addition to representing state involvement, the main aim of the ACSF was to promote mass sports and to serve the newly-created Communist state. At the inaugural meeting of the ACSF, Zhu De, Vice-Chairman of the central government, presented an inscription as a token of congratulation to the general assembly: 'Popularising sports among the people and enhancing people's physiques to serve national production and national defence'.[36] Mao also contributed an inscription: 'Developing sport and promoting people's health'. The reference to the importance of a healthy physique in 1952 directed sport and physical education in China and was even included as an ideology and principle for the development of sport policy throughout the entire Mao era. In short, in the early years of the PRC, the ACSF acted as a 'semi-state' sports organisation, despite not being a formal government agency.

[35] Wu Shaozu et al., eds., The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China, local volume (Beijing: China Book Press, 1999), 16.

[36] Ibid.,16.

4.4 New Democratic Culture, Sports Policy and Ideological Implications

Although Mao did not directly mention new democratic physical culture, he signalled the direction that physical culture and sports would take through an elaboration of new democratic culture. On 9 January 1940, when the First Congress of the Cultural Association in the Shanxi–Gansu–Ningxia border region was held in Yan'an, Mao delivered a speech entitled 'Politics and Culture of the New Democracy', emphasising the significance of the Cultural Revolution. He stated: 'We Communists, for many years, have not only fought for China's political and economic revolution, but struggled for China's cultural revolution; it aims to build a new society and new Chinese nation state'.[37]

The principles and policies of physical culture and sports during the New Democracy period emanated from another essay written by Mao in 1940 entitled 'On New Democracy', in which Mao detailed what was meant by new democratic culture:

> New democratic culture is national. It opposes imperialist oppression; it stands for the dignity and independence of the Chinese nation. It belongs to our own nation and bears our own national characteristics. […] New democratic culture is scientific. […] New democratic culture belongs to the broad masses and is therefore democratic. […] A national, scientific and mass culture – such is the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal culture of the people, the culture of New Democracy, the new culture of the Chinese nation. The so-called new-democratic culture, in a word, is the proletarian leadership of the broad masses of the people […].[38]

[37] Mao Zedong, 'Theory of New Democracy', in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 2, 1991, 662–709.
[38] Ibid.

Physical Culture and Sports Serve National Construction and National Defence

In line with Mao's view on New Democratic culture, physical culture and sports were closely linked with politics and the fate of the Chinese state. Feng Wenbing delineated the task of physical culture at the 1949 meeting of the All-China Sport and Physical Education Federation. He stated that the motto of New Democratic physical culture was 'to develop sports for the people's health and [for] national defence and construction'.[39] In a speech at the National Conference of Representatives of Sport Staff in July 1950, Feng elaborated further:

> In order to promote production, protect the homeland, strengthen national defence, we must make sure our people have healthy and strong physiques, which requires us to develop sports, enhance labour ability, cultivate people's acute wisdom, favour creativity, [and a] brave and tough will. Only if our country possesses those people with strong bodies, energetic physical strength and fearless spirits can national security and construction of the country be guaranteed.[40]

In Feng's description, the New Democratic physical culture was one of the core themes of Mao's New Democracy. One of these principles focuses on the assertion that 'physical culture and sports serves national construction and defence'. After the eight-year Sino–Japanese War and the three-year civil war between the CCP and the KMT, Chinese society, including its politics, economy and culture, had been almost destroyed. To build a new state and stabilise the new regime, the Communists had to re-establish the political structure, economy and legislature, as well as the cultural system.

Politically, to attract more support for the new regime, the Communists developed a new state under the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes. The system of

[39] Feng Wenbin, 'The National Sports of the New Democracy', *New Sport* 1 (July 1950): 8–9.
[40] Editorial, 'Vice Chairman Zhu De's Speech at the Preparatory Meeting of the Organizing Committee of the All-China Sports Federation', *New Sport*, special volume (1950): 7.

the People's Congress as an organisational form for state power was adopted by the Party as the fundamental political system in China. Economically, Mao and the CCP acknowledged Sun Yat-sen's viewpoint that the 'state will be in charge of livelihood-related industries, such as the banking industry, the railroad industry and the aircraft industry', in consideration of the interests of the majority of people. In particular, as mentioned earlier, the Communists implemented a land reform that redistributed about 700 million *mu* of land to 300 million peasants, mainly poor peasants. In so doing, the CCP gained much support from the peasants, who were effectively the majority of the population.[41] Central government also stabilised market prices, curbed inflation and tackled the economic crisis, easing the concerns of the masses. The Communists did not ignore the development of the culture of 'New China'. The CCP's aim in the cultural sphere was to build a new Chinese national culture. As Mao Zedong explained, the new democratic culture was 'to [be] shared by the common people', a 'national, scientific and mass culture', and should never serve 'a few people for private interests'.

To match their political and economic aspirations, the Communists made efforts to build cultural institutions for the broad masses so as to gain support from the great mass of the people. Sport, as a part of the Chinese cultural system, followed this principle and was required to adapt to other systems of Chinese society and to promote the proper functioning of the entire 'New China' society. Consequently, the principle of physical culture and sport policy in the early years of the PRC, from 1949 to 1952, was characterised by the dictum that 'sport serves the National Construction and National Defence'.

To serve national construction, mass sports activities were widely carried out in the industrial sectors, as in the railway sector, for example, in which the Ministry of Railways and the All-China Federation of Railway Workers' Union (ACFRWU) jointly issued a document in 1952 entitled 'Resolution on Carrying out Sport

[41] Hsü Immanuel C.Y, *The Rise of Modern China* (Oxford University Press ,2000), 653.

Activities in the Railway Sector'.[42] In addition, the Second Machine Building Ministry and the ACFRWU jointly issued the 'Resolution on Further Carrying out Employee Sports'.[43] As a result, the number of employees in the railway sector taking part in sports activities increased from about 100,000 in 1950 to over 520,000 in 1953.[44]

State sports policies during this period targeted the extensive development of mass sport. In a document issued by the Central Committee of the CYLC in 1951, CYLC branches at all levels were required to widely carry out a variety of no- or low-cost familiar sports activities for the general public (e.g. morning gymnastics, basketball, cross-country running, martial arts and mountain climbing).[45] The establishment of grassroots mass sport was emphasised. A document issued by the Central Committee of CYLC stated: 'Youth League Organisations at all levels must pay more attention to mass sport, and endeavour to cultivate experienced military sport instructors with the purpose of promoting military sports'.[46]

In addition to establishing grassroots sports organisations and cultivating full-time sports staff, the Party and government promoted mass sports nationwide through several major sports, among which was broadcast gymnastics. On 24 December 1951, nine departments, including the ACSF, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the General Political Department of the Central People's Revolutionary Military Commission and the CNDYL, jointly released an announcement regarding the nationwide promotion of broadcast gymnastics.[47]

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[42] 'A Joint Decision on Carrying out Sports in the Railway System Was Issued'. *New Sport*. no.16 (1952):6.
[43] The Second Ministry of the Machinery Industry and the National Committee of the Second Ministry of the Machinery Industry Union issued 'Joint Instructions on Further Carrying out Sports among Staff and Workers', in *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)*, 40.
[44] He Long, 'Under the General Line, Strive to Develop Mass Sports' (excerpts). *New Sport*. no.4, 1954:18.
[45] The Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, 'Instructions on the Youth League Participating the 1951 Winter Sports Activities (1951), in *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949–1981).* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 34.
[46] Editorial Board, 'Widely Establishing Mass Sports Organizations'. *New Sport.* no.16 (1952):3.
[47] 'Announcement that Sports Branches at All Levels Should Hold All Kinds of Worker Sports Learning and Amateur Training Courses during the Summer Holidays' was issued in July 1951.

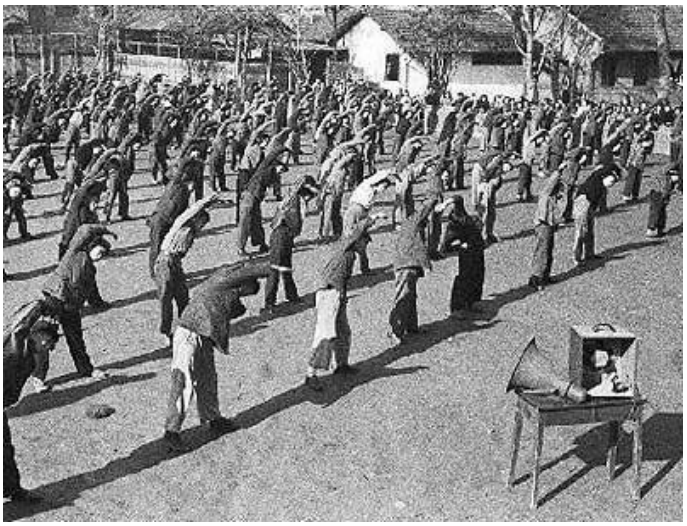


Figure 4. 3. Students at Shanghai Nan Yang Model High School practising radio broadcast calisthenics on 1 December 1951
Source: http://gx.people.com.cn/GB/179470/12392405.html

Sports policy was charged with defending the country during this period. After the PRC became involved in the Korean War, the Preparatory Committee of the ACSF released an announcement on 11 April 1951 entitled 'Widely Popularising the Resist America and Aid Korea Movement'. In June 1951, the General Committee called upon the Chinese people to donate cash and valuables to help buy fighter planes and cannons.[48] On 13 June 1951, the Preparatory Committee released another announcement, 'Donating an Aircraft Named "Sport"', which was intended to support the Resist America and Aid Korea Movement.[49] The Preparatory Committee of the ACSF at all levels responded by organising charity donation events to support the campaign. The Shanghai Branch of the Preparatory Committee organised a donation party in September 1951. One interviewee, then a primary school student in the Zhabei district, Shanghai, and now director of the Shanghai Jingwu Sports Training Centre, recalls:

In the early 1950s, in response to the call to 'Resist America and Aid

[48] On 1 June 1951, the General Committee for Resisting America and Assisting Korea issued a notice calling on people from all walks of life to donate towards the purchase of aircraft and artillery.
[49] On 11 April 1951, the Preparatory Committee of China's National Sports Federation issued a notice regarding the expansion of the campaign to resist US aggression and aid Korea.

> Korea', Shanghai wushu [Chinese martial arts] circles organised a wushu charity performance at the Shanghai Stadium [later Jiangwan Sports Centre] aiming to collect donations to support the 'Resist America and Aid Korea' movement. Some Grand Kung Fu masters attended this function, including Dong Zhongyi, Li Longbiao, Tian Zhaolin and Shengshou,[50] and were invited to demonstrate Kung Fu, which was widely covered by newspapers, such as *Shanghai News*, *Da Gongbao*, *Wen Hui News* and *Yibao*. In particular, the Taichi pushing hands demonstrated by Master Tian Zhaolin and his disciples was brilliant and awesome, and caused a great reaction. I was deeply impressed by their performances.[51]

Theoretically, when a nation is in danger, all obligations due to citizens are set aside and the population is mobilised to defend the nation. Gellner regards this as nationalism, which is primarily a political principle contending that political and national units should be congruent.[52] As Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang have observed, sport and physical education in the early PRC played an important role in the restoration of China and contributed significantly to the building of a strong nation-state by physically strengthening its people.[53] Hence, the principle that 'sport serves national defence' in reality functioned to spread nationalist sentiment in order to resist external threats to the Chinese nation-state.[54]

Some scholars have argued that the policy 'sport serve state construction or national defence' at the time was only a means of expressing the combination of sports and nationalist sentiment or nationalism. In an interview conducted as part of this research,

[50] In September 1951, Shen Shou and other martial arts masters were invited to participate in a grand charity performance in Shanghai that aimed to raise funds in order to donate a plane named 'Sports' for use in the Korean War. See: Guo Dajun. *Sport History of Modern China* (Beijing: Beijing University of Sports Press, 1989), 296.

[51] Changsheng F. (Director of the Shanghai Jingwu Sports Training Centre) in discussion with the author, 10 July 2013.

[52] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Second Edition.(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 15.

[53] Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang. 'Representing the New China and the Sovietisation of Chinese Sport (1949–1962)', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.1 (2012):11–29.

[54] For a detailed explanation about sport and nationalism in the early PRC, see Lu Zhouxiang and Fan Hong, *Sport and Nationalism in China*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

a Chinese scholar of sports history explained to this researcher that 'this kind of sports nationalism was not a state-led nationalism, different from the slogan "(the Chinese athletes) to rush out of Asia toward the world" in the 1980s [in China].'[55] He added that:

> China is a unified multi-ethnic country, and adopted a single party system, which was different from that of a single nation, like Korea or Ireland. Therefore, Chinese officials rarely propose nationalism, and their words related to nationalism were always obscure. During the early years of the PRC, sport indeed played the role of supporting national construction, but personally speaking, nationalism was not an official ideology of the Party (CCP).[56]

Physical Culture and Sports Serve the Broad Masses

Sports policy and practice during this period also attached great importance to the idea that 'physical culture and sports serve the broad masses'.[57] As discussed previously, sports and physical education during the early communist years, from the Jiangxi era (1931–1934) through the Yan'an era (1936–1948), aimed to train people's physiques and implement revolutionary political education for soldiers and the people in the 'Red regime'. Consistent with this general philosophical approach, the Communists viewed physical culture as having a class nature and historically as having been a tool of the ruling people.[58] According to this view, physical culture and sports in ancient China were used by the feudal nobility to train soldiers and oppress serfs. Under capitalism and imperialism, the monopoly by the privileged class of the wealth and leisure needed for sports participation had prevented the masses from engaging in any type of physical culture activity.

[55] Interviewer No. 4 (Professor in Sport History, Shanghai Sport University) in discussion with the author, 25 August 2014.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Feng Wenbin, 'The National Sports of the New Democracy', *New Sport* 1 (July 1950): 8–9.
[58] Jonathan Kolatch, *Sports, Politics and Ideology in China*, 87.

At the first meeting of the All-China Sport and Physical Education Federation in October 1949, Zhu De, Vice-Chairman of the central government, pointed out that physical culture and sports in China should serve the broad masses. He stated that:

> In the past, sport was alienated from the masses. At present, our sport must serve the people, serve national defence and serve people's health. [. . .] In order to undertake the hard work of constructing our new country, sport should promote people's physical and mental health. Students, workers, peasants, citizens, militants and civil servants all have to become involved in sport.[59]

Zhu's view was echoed by Rong Gaotang, then the head of the ASCF. He stated that: 'the "physical culture and sports serve the broad mass" principle is to make sport popular among the masses and become a part of people's daily lives.'[60] In an interview conducted as part of this research, a Chinese scholar of sports history explained that:

> At the beginning of the PRC, since the Chinese had just been liberated, mass sport was highlighted in the sports business. Sport was required to serve the masses. The ASCF even modified and adjusted the general rules of sport competitions and matches so that they would better enable a wider range of people to participate in sport activities. For instance, in track and field competitions, some interesting elements were added, like recognising characters: after running for a while, competitors were required to write down several characters on a board, and then resume the race. Then stop and write down words and continue the race. When doing cycling races, those competing were those who could cycle the slowest. During this

[59] Zhu De, 'Speech at the Meeting of Representatives Conference of Sport Staff of the PRC', in Wu Shaozu, *The Sport History*, 49–51.
[60] Anonymous, 'Fighting Determinedly against Bourgeois Ideology in Sports Work'. *New Sport*. no.17 (1951):3.

> period, those who advocated elite sport and emphasised improvement of sports skills were criticised as 'serving the minority'.[61]

What is the logic underlying the sports policy and practice serving the masses? As Franz Schurmann has asserted, 'Communist China is like a vast building made of different kinds of brick and stone. However it was put together, it stands. What holds it together is ideology and organisation'.[62] Schurmann's view is echoed by Zheng Yongnian, an expert in international politics and Chinese issues, who has stated that:

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> For any party, organisation and ideology are two indispensable pillars. In modern terms, organisation represents hard power, while ideology represents soft power. For the CCP, its survival and development depend not only on its organisational construction, but also on the ideological construction.[63]

The rise of the CCP and its victory in the Chinese Civil War can be regarded as an exception. Up until then, there was no such entity as the Communist Party of China, which was highly organised and strongly motivated to fight. As Zheng Yongnian observed, the CCP was the only actor in charge of nation-state building and socioeconomic transformation in the history of the PRC.[64] That is to say, the Party overwhelmingly dominated the PRC and its political system, although this type of domination was based on 'nominal' negotiation with other parties and the public, particularly during the early days of the PRC. The party-state system successfully effected economic recovery, established a stable political system and issued the New Democracy Culture guideline. All of this activity demonstrates the powerful organisational capabilities of the CCP.

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[61] Interviewer No. 6 (Professor of Sport History, Beijing Sport University) in discussion with the author, 12 August 2010.

[62] Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*. (University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles; and Cambridge University Press: London, 1966), 1.

[63] Zheng Yongnian, *Reshaping Ideology* (Beijing: Oriental Press, 2016), 3.

[64] Zheng Yongnian, *The Chinese Communist Party as Organizational Emperor: Culture, Reproduction, and Transformation*. China Policy series (London: Routledge, 2010), 9.

In addition to its strong organisational capacity, the emphasis on ideology was undoubtedly a solid and powerful guarantee for the victory of the CCP in the Civil War and the establishment of a new political legitimacy. In the early years of the PRC, securing the stability of the regime could have been more appropriate and effective than a socialist transformation of society after the Communists seized power. The significance of ideology for the CCP is explicit. After the establishment of the PRC in 1949, Mao and the CCP enthusiastically marshalled New Democracy culture campaigns nationwide, instilling the Party's ideologies among the masses by forming a New Democracy culture – a 'national, scientific and mass culture' – which contrasted with American-style capitalist and religious culture as well as with cultural traditions of the Republic of China, conceptualising a socialist road in China.

Without ruling experience, the Communist Party at the beginning of the PRC could only rely on the ideology of communism and its revolutionary experience before 1949. Marxism–Leninism had served as a guiding ideology for the CCP since its establishment in 1921. Mao Zedong Thought, as the new ideology of the CCP, was launched in 1945, when the new party constitution was drafted. Building a 'mass culture' can be seen as a reflection of the 'mass line' method, a key part of Maoist thought. The mass line is primarily a Marxist method of revolutionary leadership of the people, or the 'masses'. Mao viewed the mass line as the basic method of leadership of the masses. Mao once argued, 'What is the truly impregnable fortress and revolutionary force the Party can rely on? It is the masses, and the millions of people who wholeheartedly support the revolution.'[65]

According to Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony, a ruling party dominates the society not only through repressive violence and political coercion, but also through ideological domination and shaping the public's view of the world. Kang Liu depicts

[65] Mao Zedong, 'Several Issues on Leadership Methods' (1 June 1943), in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 3, 900.

Mao's revolutionary hegemony during the pre-1949 period as a moment of 'gaining broad mass consent by means of a nationalist, popular language of insurgency and liberation, and coercing the diverse social groups through wartime disciplines and injunctions of national salvation'.[66] In agreement with Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Jessop contends that consent can limit conflicts within and among social groups and provide an ideological and material base from which to maintain the system of political domination at minimum cost.[67] The CCP leaders extended the principle of 'gaining broad mass consent' into the post-1949 revolution. Mao and the CCP were determined to develop a 'mass' rather than 'elite' culture.

In response to this Maoist ideology, sports in Communist China were required to serve the people (i.e. the masses). The pre-PRC Chinese Communists created a policy and a formal system of physical exercise for workers and peasants during the Red Sports Movement (1929–1934), in which exercise was viewed as the basis of physical, cultural and military training.[68] Mao extended the mass line, which helped the Communists succeed in the Civil War, into protecting the Communist regime and the construction of a new culture in the PRC. Prior to 1949, sports were only available to the wealthy and the bourgeoisie. Developing and promoting mass sport under the principle that 'sport serves the people' in the early days of the PRC embodied the Marxist ideal of 'equality' and Mao's 'mass line' in the field of culture or superstructure.[69] In contrast to mass sports, elite sports were not advocated in the early years of the PRC because they were deemed to be serving only a few people and in particular the wealthy and the bourgeoisie. Some elite sports were modified to be more suited to mass sport development. In brief, the 'sport serves the people' principle was not only a Marxist–Leninist cornerstone of the CCP's ideology, but also it reflected the implementation of Maoism in the superstructure to help the Party

[66] Kang Liu, *Globalization and Cultural Trends in China.* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 50.
[67] Jessop Bob. *State Theory: Putting Capitalist States in Their Place* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 78.
[68] Fan Wei, Fan Hong & Lu Zhouxiang, Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27 no,(14-15) (2010), 2380–2402.
[69] Zhu De, '*Speech at the Meeting of Representatives*', op.cit, 49–51.

achieve hegemony.

Learning from Soviet Sports

Political and ideological orientation overwhelmingly affected the cultural field. Both Marx and Lenin saw physical culture as an integral part of the socialist system. Despite scant direct reference to sports in his works, Marx made many insightful statements. He advised that the proletarian education system should consist of three elements:

> First, mental education; second, bodily education, such as is given in school gymnastics and by military exercises; and third, technological training, which acquaints the pupil with the basic principles of all processes of production and simultaneously gives him the habits of handling elementary instruments of all trades.[70]

According to Marx, physical education was of equal footing with intellectual education, productive labour and polytechnic education. His view was that 'productive labour must be joined with education and physical education. [For] this is not only a means of increasing production, but is the one and only means for bringing forth man's all-round development'.[71] In his *English Factory Acts*, he asserted that although education provision is trifling in the whole Factory Acts, elementary education was announced as a mandatory condition of labour, and these provisions for the first time made possible a combination of physical education and productive labour.[72] Marx considered that the intelligence, physical strength and production capacity of the working class would surpass that of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie by combining productive labour, intellectual and physical education and comprehensive technology.[73]

[70] Marx K & Engels F., *Selected Works*, vol. 2(Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), 103–105.
[71] Marx K & Engels F., *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, vol. 23, 1st edition (Beijing: People's Press, 1972), 530.
[72] Marx & Engels, *Selected Works*, vol. 2(Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), 125..
[73] Marx K & Engels F., *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*, vol. 16, 1st ed. (Beijing: People's Press, 1972), 218.

Like Marx, Lenin's educational philosophy favoured a combination of mind and body training. His position on the character-building effects of physical education and sport argued that 'healthful sport: gymnastics, swimming, excursions, physical exercise of every sort, and a variety of intellectual interests, study, analysis, and research should be combined as much as possible … [for] a healthy body houses a healthy spirit'.[74] At the Third All-Russia Congress of the Russian Communist Youth League in October 1920, Lenin stated that:

> The physical culture of the younger generation is an essential element in the overall system of communist upbringing of young people, aimed at creating harmoniously developed human beings, creative citizens of communist society.[75]

Marx and Engels viewed physical education as extremely important. They felt that combining school physical education and military training would greatly help in preparing for the impending revolutionary struggle. Lenin corresponded regularly with Marx and Engels and concurred with their viewpoint. At the Third All-Russia Congress of the Russian Communist Youth League, Lenin stated that: 'Today, physical culture also has direct practical aims: (1) preparing young people for work; and (2) preparing them for the military defence of Soviet power'.[76]

It is not surprising, then, that Communist China considered itself to be an orthodox socialist state and drew on the statements of the early Communist theorists to justify its efforts in terms of physical culture.[77] As mentioned earlier, in addition to dealing with the appalling shape of the country, the CCP had to face significant international

[74] Morton HW, *Soviet Sport.* (New York: Collier Books, 1963), 111–112, citing Babaeva EA, *Fizicheskaia Kultura I povyshenie Proizvoditelnosti Truda*. (Moscow: Goskultproveizdat, 1952), 7.
[75] Lenin VI, *Polnoye sobrainie sochinenii* [Collected Works], vols. 3 and 4. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1963, 34–35.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Jonathan Kolatch, Sport Politics and Ideology in China (Middle Village, N.Y.: Jonathan David Publishers, 1972), 87.

reaction. In June 1949, Mao stated: 'Internationally, we belong to the side of the anti-imperialist front led by the Soviet Union, and so can turn only to this side for genuine and friendly help, not to the side of the imperialist camp'.[78] Faced with the economic restrictions inflicted on the PRC by Western countries, led by the USA, coupled with the dominant status of the Soviet Union in the socialist campaign, the CCP eventually adopted a policy to 'lean to one side towards socialist–communist camp'.[79]

As early as 1945, Mao stressed that 'the new culture created by the Soviet Union should be an example for us to build a new culture of our own'.[80] Zhu De supported Mao's instruction on the development of culture, education and sport in the New China. He spoke at the ACSF preparatory meeting in October 1949 and noted that 'we should learn good sports experience from the Soviet Union'.[81] Fen Wenbin also emphasised that 'we must learn advanced sports and physical education from other countries, especially the Soviet Union'.[82] The Soviet Union sports experience began to be covered and promoted by the media. An article in the first issue of *New Sport*[83] entitled 'Sport Today of the Soviet Union' described the history of sport and the system, sports organisations, qualified sports teachers, physical education and mass sports.[84]

Drawing on this knowledge and experience, the Party and Chinese government promoted Soviet sports throughout the country. One of the promoted sports was radio broadcast calisthenics. On 28 August 1950, the Preparatory Committee of ACSF sent a delegation to the Soviet Union. The delegation was impressed by the Soviet's

[78] Mao Zedong, 'On the People's Democratic Dictatorship'. Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 4, (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991), 1480.
[79] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao* Zedong (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1964), 1476.
[80] Mao Zedong, 'On Coalition Government', *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, vol. 3, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1991, 996.
[81] Foreword to a periodical, *New Sport*, no.1(1950): 7–8.
[82] Ibid.
[83] *New Sport*, a magazine under the control of the ACSF, launched its first issue in July 1950.
[84] Mu Zuoyun, 'The Sports in Today's Soviet Union', *New Sport*. no.1(1950):17–18.

Labour and Defence System (LDS),[85] which aimed to expand the scope of sports participation. One of the key parts of the Soviet LDS was a set of broadcast calisthenics.[86] Soon after returning to Beijing, and in light of the policies of 'learn experience from the Soviet Union' and 'shrinking the scale of sports competitions and games'(reducing the size or quantity of sports competitions and games) the preparatory committee of the ACSF authorised a group of professional gymnastics teachers to design a set of calisthenics suitable for Chinese. On 24 December 1951, the first set of radio broadcast calisthenics was pr oduced.

Broadcast gymnastics received positive responses from the media and local governments. The gymnastics were broadcast by about 40 radio stations scattered across the different provinces, including the Central Broadcasting Station in Beijing and Tianjin and Shanghai broadcast stations. It used 52 wave bands per day, for a total of 1,205 minutes. The broadcast equipment factories had to work overtime to supply devices and equipment to those areas where broadcasting apparatus was in short supply.[87] According to a survey conducted in 13 key cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing, the number of participants in radio broadcast gymnastic practice reached 1,048 million in 1952.[88]

The principle 'learn from Soviet sports' was adopted in the battle against American-style 'bourgeois' sports (professional and commercial sport). Initially, the

[85] The 'system of labour and defence' is short for 'system of being ready to work and defend the motherland'. As early as 14 March 1931, in line with a proposal by the Communist Youth League, the sports committee of the Soviet Union issued the first 'system of labour and defence' (LDS) to promote engagement by the country's youth in a variety of sports to enhance their physical strength, endurance, speed and flexibility, etc., by rating the level of sport according to age group. In addition, it was the duty of every person under 30 to engage in the LDS. For an extensive account of the LDS, see Riordan, *Sport under Communism*, 25.

[86] At that time, routine gymnastic practice in the Soviet Union was gaining popularity and consisted of 3 categories: gymnastics for health, auxiliary gymnastics and gymnastics on apparatus. Gymnastics for health was usually practised in the morning, so it was also called 'morning gymnastics'. It consisted of 8 to 12 sections, lasted about 10 to 15 minutes and comprised two styles, one for women and one for the elderly. The gymnastics of the LDS were quite similar to health gymnastics and did not require special fields, equipment or apparatus, and no practical or theoretical knowledge or training background were required. The gymnastics promoted in the LDS were therefore suitable for people of all ages, males and females, of all health conditions, and were welcomed as a suitable regime for the masses of the Soviet Union. See also: Tang Honggui. 'Russia: The Historical Development of the System of Labour and Defence and the Challenges', *China School Sports*, 2002, 4–66.

[87] 'How Was the First Set of Broadcast Gymnastics in New China Born?', *Beijing Daily*, 16 August 2009.

[88] Ibid.

PRC's physical education principle was defined at the first National Education Working Meeting in December 1949. It advocated that the development of physical education in China should be based on the experience and practice of the pre-1949 Red Sports Movement, the Republic of China (ROC) and the Soviet Union.[89] The CCP's diplomatic orientation and Chinese involvement in the Korean War triggered such strong anti-American sentiment that the American education system[90] was almost entirely rejected. The pre-1949 physical education system was viewed as a backward 'capitalist product', since it had been influenced by the educational philosophy and practice of the United States. This was reflected in comments published in *New Sports*, the CCP organ in the field of sport and physical education. It stated: 'We should fully recognise American imperialism, eliminate the erroneous ideas of blind worship of American physical education, and clean up the remnant influences of reactionary and degrading American physical education from our physical education.'[91] An article explained that:

> In America, although physical education was seen as a way of education, it does not aim to educate the majority of people on how to exercise their bodies, but to educate athletes and sports businessmen on how to earn money and run businesses. The capitalists utilise sport to narcotise people, to attempt to make people break away from the political struggle against oppression and exploit them and to make them serve as their slaves forever.[92]

In contrast, the Soviet sports system was held in high esteem. Following the policy that advised 'learn good sports experience from the Soviet Union', China's policy on

[89] The Ministry of Education of the PRC. *Collection of Educational Literature: 1949–1952* (Beijing: General Office of the Ministry of Education, 1958), 6.

[90] In 1922, the Ministry of Education of the Chinese (Beiyang) Government promulgated the School System Reform Bill, also known as the Renxu School System. The Renxu School System was formulated in general with reference to the American educational system. This reform marked the start of American education and was called the Americanization of Chinese bourgeois education. see Cai Keyong, *A Brief History of Higher Education*. (Wuhan: Central China Institute of Technology Press, 1982), 28.

[91] Anonymous, 'Strengthen Current Physical Education'. *New Sport*, no.6 (1950):3.

[92] Ma Qiwei, 'My Understanding of American Sports'. *New Sport*, no.6 (1950):10.

physical education and sport emphasised a combination of training of the mind and the body, as well as the combination of productive labour, intellectual and physical education. This is illustrated by an article entitled 'Our Experience of Physical Education in the Soviet Union', published in *New Sports* in 1952, which stated: 'The teaching material of physical education in the Soviet Union is based on the principle of the all-round development of children and students. It not only ensures the normal physical development of students but also the sound development of their moral character'.[93]

The Chinese government adopted the Soviet sports and physical education system, with the aim of strengthening students' physiques and cultivating communist ethics and ideology, in order to serve national construction and national defence.[94] School students were asked to participate in sports activities to build up their bodies to serve national construction and defence. Soon after Mao Zedong issued the famous edict 'Develop Sport and Strengthen People's Physiques' in June 1952, the Ministry of Education and the ACSF jointly issued the 'Temporary Regulations for School Physical Education'. This stated that: 'To promote students' physical and mental health and to enhance their physical fitness, it is required that communist moral education should be applied to ensure that they perform academic study well and engage in the cause of national construction and the military defence of our homeland'.[95]

According to Jarvie, Hwang and Brennan, at least five facets of Maoist thinking on physical culture and sport are consistent with Soviet socialist ideologies relating to sports (these were not in effect in the early days of the New China).[96] These ways of

[93] Jiang Yiqiang, 'My Experience of Learning from the Soviet Union's Physical Education Curriculum for Elementary Schools'. *New Sport*, no, 37 (1952):13.
[94] Gu Yahui, 'Research on the Evolution and Development of Physical Education Thought in Modern China' (Master's dissertion, Northwest China Normal University, 2006), 14.
[95] The Ministry of Education and the National Sport Commission, 'The Temporary Regulation of Physical Education in Schools', in *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC*, volume 1 (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1957), 76–77.
[96] Grant Jarvie, Dong-Jhy Hwang and Mel Brennan, *Sport, Revolution and the Beijing Olympics*, op.cit.,69-70.

thinking about physical culture and sport encompassed the following themes:

- to raise physical and social health standards;
- to socialise the population into the new establishment's system of values;
- to link sports ideologically and even organisationally with military preparedness;
- to facilitate an all-pervasive presence throughout society of forces of control such as the military and security forces, providing control from above in the event of faltering in the construction of the New Democracy;
- to cultivate popular attitudes toward physical exercise through military efforts and organization, efficiently deploying the country's scarce resources in the face of communication problems and scant sports facilities.[97]

In the 1950s, after the establishment of the PRC, the Chinese Communists' policy was to 'lean to one side towards the socialist–communist camp'. The Cold War and the bipolar confrontation between the socialist camp and capitalist camp strengthened the ideological colour of that time. Communist China eventually copied the Soviet Union's physical education policy and practice and condemned American philosophy and practice, which had been adopted by the Nationalist party and government in the 1920s and 1940s. In accordance with Marxist–Leninist values, the one-party-state elaborated a policy of 'lean to the side of the Soviet Union', which greatly impacted – even dominated – sports policy in the early PRC. In other words, the principle of 'learn from Soviet sports' was, in essence, a result of the CCP's ideology dominating sport as a part of the superstructure of Chinese society.

4.5 Conclusion

Sports and related policies in the early period of Communist China were incubated in a strong ideological and political context, with the intent of stabilising the regime and

[97] Ibid.

building the nation. Shortly after the establishment of the new regime, the Chinese government set about creating the All-China Sports Federation, which was eventually established in 1952. It was designed as a semi-state sports organisation, characterised by significant government involvement that developed numerous self-strengthening objectives focusing on mass sports.

In order to build a 'New China' from the ashes of the Civil War and the legacy of feudalism and colonialism, as well as defend the new regime, the Chinese Communists needed stronger and better educated workers to serve in national construction and economic recovery. To this end, state sports policy in the early years of the PRC worked under the principle that 'physical culture and sports serve national construction and national defence'. The state policy of 'sports serve construction' contributed to the proper functioning and stability of the new state, while the policy of 'sport serves national defence' functioned to increase nationalism to resist external threats to the Chinese nation-state.

The Party and government supported the principle that 'physical culture and sports serve the people', which, when put into practice, was intended to make sports and physical education available to the masses rather than to just a privileged minority. As a result, mass sports were emphasised under the new regime, while elite sport, viewed as a product of capitalism that served only the few, was suppressed. Following the CCP policy to 'lean to one side towards the socialist–communist camp', state sports policy in the early years of the PRC was influenced by the Soviet model. To gain mass consent and stabilise their regime, Mao and the CCP leaders expanded the principle of 'gaining broad mass consent', i.e. the 'mass line' (which had previously helped communists succeed in the pre-1949 revolution), into the practice of post-1949 new nation building. The principle of 'sport serves the people' embodied Maoism and helped the CCP realise ideological hegemony in its superstructure and consolidate political power in the 'New China'.

In the context of the bipolar confrontation of the Cold War, the dictum to ‘lean to the side of the Soviet Union’ was strongly coloured by political ideology. This actuality was reflected in sports policy in the widespread promotion of Soviet-style sports among the masses during this period, which buttressed the socialist agenda and anti-capitalist position of the CCP and strengthened its national construction project.

Chapter 5: State Sports Policies and Systems during the Period of Socialist Construction from 1953 to 1965

5.1 Introduction

Sino-Soviet relations during the Cold War influenced the direction of the evolution of China's sports policies after 1949, which was largely determined by ideology. After the CCP's establishment of socialist China in 1949, followed by the intensification of the Cold War, the new regime was effectively isolated by the deadlock between the socialist and capitalist camps; an isolation that was reinforced by the Western powers, led by the USA. Communist China was established under a geo-political situation in which the only option was to rely on the Soviets for international aid. During the first 10 years after the founding of the PRC, the Soviet Union was of huge help to China, helping China build a complete industrial, educational system and military systems.[1] China's adoption of Soviet patterns of sports throughout the 1950s has been widely viewed as the Sovietisation of sports in China. However, China's Sovietisation faltered after Khrushchev's assumption of power in 1953. Sino-Soviet relations worsened over the next few years, until China eventually espoused de-Sovietisation from 1960 onwards. The changing ideological contexts shaped the nature of China's international relationships, as well as the development of sports and sports policies during the period of large-scale Socialist construction.

At the end of 1952, Mao and the topmost leaders in the CCP redesigned China's economic, social development blueprint, officially designating the period between

[1] Soviet Union's aid to China included three parts: one was to transfer industrial technology by aiding the construction of industrial projects. For example, the Soviet government helped to build 50 key projects in the coal, electricity, steel, non-ferrous metals, chemical, mechanical and military sectors, which are badly needed to restore the economy. The second part was to develop Chinese capacity in science and technology through various forms of cooperation. The third was educational and involved helping China adjust and construct technology colleges, as well as recruiting a large number of Chinese students to study in the Soviet Union.

1953 and 1956 as the 'transition to socialism', which was immediately followed by the period of socialist construction. In 1958, the CCP launched the 'Great Leap Forward (GLF) ' campaign (1958–1960)[2], which was intended to accelerate economic and technical development of the country. However, the GLF proved to be a huge failure that was followed by a period of readjustment and recovery from 1960 through 1965. This Chapter will examine changes in dominant international and national ideology in China from 1953 to 1965, and how these influenced the construction of sports policies and systems during the transition to socialism and then the socialist construction period.

5.2 The Sovietisation of Chinese Sports: Policy and Practice from 1953 to 1960

5.2.1 Socialist Transition and Radical Socialist Construction

In regard to the transition from a New Democratic Society towards a socialist society, Mao and the party leaders originally thought that 3 years of economic recovery would be followed by 20 years or more of a New Democracy Society, after which time China would 'cautiously' advance to socialism.[3] However, on 24 September 1952 at a secretariat meeting of the Central Committee of the CCP, Mao argued that: 'We should complete the transition towards a socialist society within 10 years to 15 years,

[2] The Great Leap Forward was an economic and social campaign by the CCP from 1958 to 1962. The campaign was led by Chairman Mao Zedong and aimed to rapidly transform the country from an agrarian economy into a socialist society through rapid industrialization and collectivization.

[3] In July 1949, in a speech at the graduation ceremony of the China Central College for Youth League Mao Zedong claimed that: '20 years later, when our [China's] industry develops to a certain extent, and then we [China] will consider entering into socialist stage according to the situation at that time.' See Mao Zedong's Speech at the Graduation Ceremony of the First Cadets of the China Central College for Youth Leagues (4 July 1949), Beijing: *The Party's Literature, no.* 5, 2009: 9. In June 1950, at the Second Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Mao pointed out that: 'It will be a very long time in the future to carry out socialist transformation nationwide, namely the nationalisation of private industries and the socialisation of agriculture…after new democratic reforms, and national economic and cultural undertakings become flourishing, and various conditions are permitted, and only when the people of the whole country agree after consideration, and then can we calmly and properly enter the period of socialism.' See 'Mao Zedong's Speech at the Second Session of the CPPCC National Committee (June 14, 1950)', Selected Works of Mao Zedong, sixth volume, (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999), 81; In February 1951, Mao Zedong put forward the idea 'Three years of Preparation, Ten year Plan for Economic Construction' (ibid., 143). 'Three years' refers to the three years of economic recovery period, while '10 years' refers to the implementation of the new democracy. In other words, until 1951, Mao believed that it would take 10 or 20 years to develop a new democratic economy. See the *Selected Works Regarding Economy of Zhou Enlai* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1993), 122.

rather than starting the transition period 10 years later.'[4] This speech illustrated the change in steps and methods concerning the transition from New Democracy to Socialism, which clearly differed from his original idea. Mao's decision soon led to Party action. In December 1953, the Central Committee of CCP declared the policy 'Mobilising All Forces with a Great Struggle to Build China into a Socialist Country'.

Why did Mao Zedong change the idea of long-term implementation of the New Democracy in the autumn of 1952 and put forward the general line for socialist transition? In addition to the accelerated pace of industrial nationalisation in the new democratic construction period, a key concept that promoted this change in Mao's ideas is that the Communist Party was ready to implement the first Five-Year Plan in 1953, to carry out large-scale economic construction centring on heavy industry. According to the experience of the Soviet Union's industrialisation and the situation at home and abroad, China's Communist Party decided to begin the development strategy centred on the development of heavy industry in economic construction. China was a country with a shortage of funds, and therefore giving priority to the development of capital-intensive heavy industry under those conditions, China was bound to use the authority of the state to accumulate funds, human resources and material resources into heavy industry, so the transition to a Soviet model of socialism was very natural.[5]

In 1953, China officially began the first Five-Year Plan and commenced a systematic socialist transformation of agriculture, handicraft, capitalist industry and commerce. In September 1956, the 8th National Congress of the CCP officially announced

[4] According to the literature records, it was at this meeting that Mao Zedong first proposed the idea 'Transition to Socialism' in the 1950s.. For a more detailed explanation, see Bo Yibo, *Recollections of Several Major Historical Decisions and Events* (Beijing: Party School of the CCP Central Committee Press, 1997), 220.

[5] Sun Daiyao, An Analysis of the Industrialisation Background of China's Rapid Transition to Socialism in 1950s. *Leading Journal of Ideological & Theoretical Education*, no.2 (2004) :45–49.

completion of the socialist transition,[6] marking its entrance into a phase of comprehensive and large-scale socialist construction in China. In 1957, China's national economy maintained rapid growth, which was balanced by fiscal revenue and expenditure. Nevertheless, Mao argued that the industrial growth rate of 1957 (10%) was far less than 1956 (31%), and that agriculture failed to reach the planned growth rate of 4.9%, which meant that the party's adopted position in 1956 to resist advancement was totally wrong, and was most likely responsible for the adverse economic and politic consequences.[7] Subsequently, at the Third Plenum of Eighth CPC Central Committee held in October 1957, Mao publicly criticised anti-venturesome advance[8] and emphasised that: 'We must be promoters for the revolution'. In March 1958 at the Politburo meeting held in *Chengdu*, the 'Great Leap Forward (GLF) ' was formally unveiled and was fully upgraded after the second session of the 8th National Congress of the CCP, held in May 1958. A slogan 'Take steel as the key link, leap forward in all fields' was put forward.

In order to support the GLF, a large amount of labour was transferred from rural areas to cities, while the People's Commune Movement was extensively carried out in rural areas, resulting in extensive conflict between increasing food demands of the urban

[6] A Resolution issued by the CCP Central committee of the 8th National Congress of the CCP, held from 15–27 September 1956, stated that: 'So far, the socialist translation has won decisive victory, which shows that the contradiction between proletariat and the bourgeoisie has been largely solved in China, and system of class exploitation with thousands of years comes to an end and the socialist society system in China has basically established.' This indicates the end of the socialist transition in September 1956. For more detailed explanation on the completion of the socialist transition in 1956, see the Resolution in the political Report of the 8th National Congress of the CCP (27 September 1956), (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1956), and also the 'Resolution on a Number of Historical Issues in the History of Our Party [CCP] since the Founding of the People's Republic of China' (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1983).

[7] Ibid.

[8] From the fourth quarter of 1955 to the first half of 1956, some targets of Chinese economic development were set too high and they even ignored economic law. According to a report by the State Planning Commission in January 1956, the total investment by local provinces had reached 15.3 billion RMB, and later was updated to 20 billion RMB, doubling the original one. However, the annual revenue only increased by 9.29%. As a result, the increase of investment of infrastructure resulted in tensions between revenue and expenditure, shrinking investment in other aspects of the national economy. Considering the adverse effects resulting from unrealistically high targets, Liu Shaoqi (Vice Chairman of the PRC) and Premier Zhou Enlai embarked upon new economic measures at the end of January 1956 designed to correct these effects. At the Second Plenum of the Eighth CPC Central Committee held in November 1956, some dissidents attacked this venturesome advance in the economic plan, and even argued that communism was incapable of leading the development of China's economy. This made Mao feel that anti-venturesome advances promoted right-wing forces. He therefore repeatedly criticised anti-venturesome advances and even claimed that they equated to anti-socialism and anti-Marxism. See Guo Dajun, *The History of the People's Republic of China* (1949–2007), (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2011), 88; Bo Yibo, *Recollections of Several Major Historical Decisions and Events*, (Beijing: Party School of the CCP Central Committee Press, 1997), 531–532.

population and the reduction of agricultural production. Exaggerated production reports, resulting from the anxiety of failure to meet production targets, were accepted as reality.[9] For example, in regard to agriculture, the 1958 growth rate target of 6.1% was set in February and was increased to 16.2% at the 'Chendu Conference' in March of the same year.[10] In order to accomplish and even exceed the unattainable target, production figures were exaggerated nationwide.[11]

In 1959, things started to go wrong. Speedily-manufactured farm machinery fell to pieces when used. Tens of thousands of workers were injured after working long hours and falling asleep at their jobs. Steel produced by the backyard furnaces was too weak to be of any use. Buildings constructed by this substandard steel did not last long. Moreover, the backyard production method had taken many workers away from their fields, so desperately needed food was not being harvested. The harvest for 1959 was 170 million tons of grain – far below what China needed at the most basic level. In many parts of China, starvation occurred. As a result, the GLF ended in catastrophe, resulting in tens of millions of deaths, as well as a serious imbalance between the proportions of the national economy,[12] large-scale infrastructure, inflation and market supply.[13]

At the Ninth Plenary Session of the Eighth National Congress of the CCP held in January 1961, officials admitted to the adverse impact of the GLF. The Party and government proposed a strategy of 'readjustment, consolidation, enrichment and

[9] Roderick MacFarquhar, John K. Fairbank, ed., *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 15, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992), 385.

[10] The Conference of the CCP Central Committee was held in Chendu in March 1958.

[11] For example, on 23 June, the *People's Daily* stated that: 'a wheat experimental field in Gucheng County, Hubei, created a "high-yield" record, with 4,689 *Jin* [catty] of wheat per *mu* [1/15 acres] field.' Another example comes from a report in the *Biography of Chen Yun*, which states: 'On June 30, in Anguo county, Hebei, a test land reached 5,100 catty per *mu* yield.' See Jin Chong, Chen Qun, *Biography of Chen Yun* (Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2005), 412.

[12] As a result of the one-sided development of heavy industry, the imbalance of the national economy was aggravated still further. There was an obvious decline in light industry, while agriculture was seriously damaged. In 1959, China's grain output was only 340 billion *jin*, 60 billion *jin* less than the output of 400 billion *jin* in 1958. In 1960, the national grain output dropped to 287 billion *jin*, less than 287.4 billion *Jin* in 1951. See Wu Li, ed. *The economic history of People's Republic of China* (Beijing: Chinese Economy Press, 1999), 457.

[13] Yang, Dennis Tao.'China's Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961: A Survey and Comparison to Soviet Famines'. *Comparative Economic Studies* 50, no.1(2008):1–29.

focusing on increasing quality' to adjust the proportion of the various departments of the national economy. Overall, the adjustment included two aspects: the first was the adjustment of the relationship between supply and demand. It not only involved adjustments to the amount of demand in total, but also to the supply and demand structure. The second aspect was the adjustment of production relations, that is, the adjustment of the economic system, which was not conducive to economic development during the GLF period. After a three-year adjustment, the serious imbalance of the economic structure caused by the GLF and the serious shortage of consumer goods caused by the GLF was basically reversed.[14]

5.2.2 Soviet Model and Establishment of a Centralised Sport Governing Body (SPCSC)

The Chinese elite sports system is known as 'whole country support for the elite sports system' or 'Ju guo Ti zhi' in Chinese. According to Wu Shaozu, former Director of the SCSPE between 1988 and 1998, the system was officially established in the 1950s, developed in the 1960s and 1970s and gradually developed its own character from the 1980s.[15] It is widely argued that the establishment of the State Physical Culture and Sport Commission (SPCSC) in 1952 was a watershed in the history of sport in modern China,[16] marking the establishment of a centralised

[14] The economic adjustment focused on three aspects: The first aim was to reduce the industrial production plan index. For example, in 1962, the industrial production and construction plan, especially the major industrial products, such as raw coal, steel, iron and wood, was adjusted repeatedly. The second aim was to reduce the scale of industrial infrastructure. Capital construction investment in early 1962 was 6.7 billion *yuan*, reduced to the level of simple maintenance of production. By the end of 1962, the investment in capital construction actually completed was 7,126 billion *yuan*; a decline of 5,614 billion *yuan* compared with that in 1961. The third aim was to streamline staff and reduce populations in cities and towns. In 1961, the Central Committee of the CCP issued a document titled 'Notifications of a Number of Issues on Reducing Staff and Workers' and vigorously encouraged those workers who had arrived from rural areas after January 1958 to return to their hometowns and participate in agricultural production. As a result, by the end of 1961, the number of workers in the state decreased by 8,730 million, while the number of workers in the industrial sector fell by 547 million. The urban population had decreased by 10 million people and grain sales had dropped by 4 billion *jin.* See China Statistics Bureau (eds.), *Statistical Yearbook of China* (1984) (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 1984), 110,114.

[15] Wu Shaozu, *et al*., eds., Sports History of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1999 (Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 1999), 92.

[16] For a detailed discussion on the importance of the establishment of the SPCSC in the history of sport of the PRC, see Xiong Xiaozheng, ed.,'A Historical Survey of the Reform of China's Sports System', *The Current Situation and Future Development of Sports Science*, (Beijing: Beijing Sport University press, 2002), p: 6; Yang Hua, 'The Successful Experience and Existing Problems in the Development of Competitive Sports in China since the 1980s', *Journal of Chengdu Sport University* 28, no. 1, (2002):1–7; Hu Xiaoming, 'Reform of the whole nation system', *Journal of Physical Education* 9, no.1(2002):1–3; Ling Ping, 'The Developing

government sport system.

In fact, its establishment may be traced back to the PRC's first Olympic Journey. While the ACSF was making efforts to mobilise the masses to participate in sports activities nationwide, it was informed on 28 February 1951 that Finland would like to invite China to participate in the 15th Olympic Games in May 1952 in Helsinki. Beijing had not intended to participate in the Games, but it changed its thinking when the Soviet Union's Ambassador to China informed the Chinese government that the Soviet Union planned to participate in the 15th summer Olympics for the first time.[17] The Soviet Union at that time had already built robust sports teams and was ready to compete against the U.S.A. As part of the socialist camp, the Kremlin hoped that Beijing would also compete.[18]

In the meantime, Taiwan, ruled by the KMT, was also invited by the IOC and had already decided to participate in the Games. In consideration of Taiwan's involvement, the Soviet Union encouraged the PRC to participate, and reminded the PRC to declare its IOC membership if China wished to participate in the 1952 summer Games. Consequently, while Beijing was making efforts to negotiate with the IOC with regard to Olympic membership, the ACSF began to prepare for the Games. A notification titled 'Selecting and Training Elite Athletes' was jointly issued by the Organisation Department of the CCP Central Committee and the Central Committee of the

Models and the Changing Modes – Research on the Reform of Sport Management System and its Mechanism', *Journal of Physical Education* 8, no.1(2001):1–4.

[17] On 15 February 1951, Finland's First Minister visited the office of Zhang Hanfu, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC. Before he left, he received instructions: seek new possibilities for Beijing to attend the Finland Olympic Games. However, Finland proposed that the ACSF was not to participate in the Olympic sports games, but only to send a delegation to participate in the Olympic Art Exhibition, to promote Chinese civilisation and expand the influence of the new Chinese regime. In January 1952, Luo Shen, the Soviet ambassador to China, told the Chinese side that the Soviet Union would organise a delegation to participate in the Finland Olympic Games, and suggested that China should also send players to participate. The views of the Soviet Union played a key role and the ACSF began to actively prepare to participate in the Olympic Games. For a detailed discussion, see Tang Jun, 'The Chronicle for New China's first Time to Participate in the Olympic Games', *Memories and Archives*, no. 5 (2010): 4-9.

[18] The Soviet Union attached much importance to participating in the Helsinki 1952 Summer Olympics, and regarded it as a means to compete with the U.S.A. They were very careful in their preparations and intended to achieve their purpose: 'It never rains but it pours'. For detailed information, see Zhang Xiaoyi, Zhang Hui, The Whole Story about New China's Participation in the Olympic Games in Helsinki – Interview with Mr. Xiong Douyin, *Journal of Physical Education* 15, no.11(2008):1–3.

Communist Youth League of China (CYLC) on 18 February 1952.

Beijing's motivation to participate in the Olympic Games was closely linked to China's ideological and political ambitions, as can be seen in a policy document issued by the CCP's Central Committee and the Central Committee of the CYLC, which stated:

> International sport competitions are flourishing worldwide. International friends wish China to participate in these events. Recently, we have announced that China will send an Olympic team to the Helsinki Olympics. However, sport in China has been poorly developed in the past. After participating in some international competitions in recent years, we are well aware of the low performance of China's competitive sports teams, which is incompatible with China's international status. We must change this situation! Sport must be promoted and the performance in competitive sport must be improved.[19]

Following tough negotiations, the IOC eventually proposed a compromise, inviting both Beijing and Taipei to participate in the Games.[20] China failed, however, to win

[19] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed., The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981) (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 40.

[20] On 12 February 1952, the Chinese government appointed Shen Zhibai, a second secretary in the Chinese Embassy to Sweden, as the representative of the ACSF to attend the IOC General Assembly held in Oslo. However, when he contacted the Secretary General of the conference, he was told that the PRC could not attend the meeting because the PRC was not yet a member of the IOC. Under this condition, the representatives of the Soviet Union and Bulgaria proposed the issue of PRC's Olympic qualification, and terminated Taiwan's representative in the meeting agendas for 13 and 14 June. The discussion regarding this issue failed to reach a consensus. On 16 June, Ades Thrun, the IOC Chairman, clarified the IOC's position, stating that the IOC hoped to solve the problem of China in the coming year and that henceforth, two Chinese organisations, one from Taiwan and one from mainland China, would not be allowed to participate in the Helsinki Olympic Games. Following negotiations with the PRC government, the IOC decided to continue its discussion on the membership issue of the Chinese IOC at the Forty-seventh Executive Council meeting of the IOC, which was held in Helsinki on 17 July. On 18 July, the day before the opening of the Olympic Games, the Finland Olympic Organising Committee invited the ACSF to participate in the Olympic Games. Considering that the IOC's invitation only invited the PRC to the Games, without mentioning Taiwan, the PRC decided to accept it. On 19 July, Zhou Enlai, then the Premier of the Chinese Government, approved his country's participation. For a more detailed explanation on the competition between Beijing and Taipei in participating in the Helsinki Olympics, see Tang Jun, 'The Chronicle for New China's first Time to Participate in the Olympic Games', *Memories and Archives*, no. 5(2010): 4–9.

any medals in the 1952 Olympic Games.[21] In contrast, the Soviet delegation achieved dramatic success, impressing the world. The Soviet success in Helsinki convinced Communist China that socialist countries could beat capitalist countries on the international stage. On the way home, the Chinese delegation paid a visit to the Soviet Union, where they were surprised by the self-contained sports facilities and well-established sports administration system. Shortly after returning to Beijing, in August 1952, Rong Gaotang, the head of the delegation and the Secretary-General of CYLC, reported to the Central Committee of the CCP and Central Government of the PRC. He proposed that China should adopt the Soviet Union's model and develop a centralised administrative system to ensure the selection of elite athletes, to win medals in international sport arenas and satisfy the country's political and diplomatic requirements.[22] According to Wu Shaozu's *The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China*, Rong stated that:

> The ACSF is a non-governmental [or Semi-State] organisation, which does not fit the current development of sports in China. In order to strengthen the [Party's] leadership, we propose to set up the State Physical Education and Sport Commission – a governmental organisation. The State Physical Education and Sport Commission should be under the direct leadership of the State Council.[23]

At the 19th session of the Central Committee of the Central Government on 15 November 1952, the 'Resolution on Establishing Central Committee of Sport and Physical Culture (CCSPC)' was approved. In September 1954, the resolution was renamed as the SCSPE.[24]

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[21] The Helsinki Olympics started on 18 July 1952, but Beijing did not receive the official invitation from the IOC until the previous day. When the PRC's delegation arrived in Helsinki, all games had nearly finished. Only one athlete participated in the men's 100-metre backstroke race. See Wu Shaozu, ed., Sport History of People's Republic Of China (1949–1998) (Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 1999), 49.

[22] Deng Liqun, Ma Hong, The Biography of He Long (Beijing: Contemporary China Publishing House, 1993), 56-57

[23] Wu Shaozu. op. cit., 49.

[24] The founding of the National Sports Committee originally implemented a committee system and all committee members were derived from the government's Administration Council, the army and included some sports

The SCSPE differed from the ACSF in terms of the structure and function of the sports governing body, as well as in ideological orientation. Firstly, the ACSF was a semi-official organisation, while the SCSPE was a centralised governmental body, on the same level of importance as various ministries such as the Ministry of Education, Finance, or Commerce.[25] As a Chinese scholar in modern Chinese sports history explained to this author, 'The Chinese political system in the Mao era and even now was featured with "the horizontal concentration" of state power in the party organisation, longitudinal concentration in the Central Committee of the Party, the power of the Party is concentrated in one person's character, the sports system follows this characteristic to a great extent'.[26] His argument is echoed by another interviewee, an anonymous official from the Policies and Regulations Division in the General Administration of Sport of China, who stated:

> The highly centralised sport governmental system was influenced by the entire political system of the Party and the historical experience of the CCP in revolutionary war. The centralised leadership system formed during the revolutionary war could effectively mobilise the masses and ensure that the party was able to centralise strong political forces to achieve victory in the revolutionary war. [. . .] The establishment of the Chinese sports system in the early days of the PRC did not go beyond the background of the times. It was also governed by the rule of the establishment and operation of the central administrative system of the Party-state. For example, the establishment of the CCSPC in 1952 was attached to the Central People's government, the highest organ of state power and the highest organ of State

celebrities. The twenty-eighth meeting of the Central People's Government Committee was held on 18 September 1953. The first batch of members was appointed in this meeting and included leaders of the departments of the government and Liberation Army, as well as prominent individuals in sports circles.

[25] Fan Hong, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System' in Comparative Elite Sport Development: systems, structures and public policy, Barrie Houlihan and Mick Green (eds.), (Oxford Butterworth-Heinemann, 2008), 28.

[26] Interviewer No. 4 (Professor in Chinese Sport history, Shanghai Sports University) in discussion with the author, 8 July 2014.

> Administration in China. The Government Council founded in 1952 was, in fact, the executive organ of the state administration [the CCSPC affiliated]. It was not until 1954 when the State Council became the highest organ of state power, the CCSPC was incorporated into the State Council and then renamed as the SCSPE.[27]

Despite the different timings in formation and transformation of the Party and government systems, academic circles generally believe that since the founding of the PRC, the relationship between the Party and the government has experienced a process of moving from separation to union. Some scholars consider the First Five-Year Plan, launched in 1953, to be the start of the political system of party politics, with the Party's emphasis on economic policy being gradually adopted by the government.[28] Some scholars believe that since 1953, due to excessive emphasis on the opposition to dispersion, local administrative authority has increasingly concentrated on the government departments, while at the same time, according to Mao Zedong's instructions, all major and important problems of the government departments are discussed first by the Party Committee then implemented by the government. [29]

According to Weber, the legitimacy of the CCP is mainly due to Communist ideology and Mao's pragmatic Mass Line, such as the land reform. Although the early period of the PRC between 1949 and 1956 experienced comprehensive strengthening of the economic and socialist transformation and the construction of the political system, the Communist Party did not realise that its legitimacy based on ideology changed to a legal-rational position. Nevertheless, it 'successfully, quickly established China as the

[27] Interviewer No. 9 (Deputy director of Department of Sport policy and Regulation, the GAS) in discussion with the author, 25 August 2011.

[28] Liu Lin, 'Historical Investigation and Thinking of the Relationship between the Party and Government in our Country Since the Foundation of the People's Republic of China', *Theoretical Perspective* 13, no.4 (2005):55-57.

[29] Jiang Jinhui, 'From the Party's Centralized Leadership to the Rule of Law - the Evolution of the Party's Leadership since the Founding of the People's Republic of China', *The Research and Teaching of the History of the Party*. no.1 (2000):30–34.

most powerful, most typical centralised political system and economy in history'.[30]

From this point onwards, the government's involvement in sports became a legal, straightforward process, with the official establishment of a bureaucratically configured sports policy system exhibiting high degrees of state involvement. Organised, centralised sport began to replace voluntary, decentralised sport from 1952 onwards. As far as the relationship between sports and the Party during the early years of the PRC (and even throughout the Mao Era and into the 1980s) is concerned, Dong Jinxia has observed that:

> As befitted a socialist state, sport was exclusively financed by the state. Sport is mediated through the state, which locks in all the structures of society as a whole. In every aspect of transformation, the Communist Party played a leading role. The Party's policies, strategies and plans determined, to a considerable extent, the direction of Chinese society […] in post-1949 China. The planned reconstruction of sport was, in fact, partly a holistic political strategy that embraced not merely sport but the whole of society.[31]

Secondly, the ACSF focused on the development and promotion of mass sport under the principle 'sports serve national construction, national defence and the people'. The SCSPE aimed not only to promote mass sport, but most importantly, to produce socialist elite athletes to win medals in international sporting arenas and to compete with capitalist, Western countries.[32] As a result, the Departments of Elite Sport within the SCSPE were given special emphasis in the state sports system within this

[30] Hu Angang, *Historical Comments on China's Politics and Economy (1949-1976)*, (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2008), 148.

[31] Dong Jinxia and Mangan, JA., 'Football in the New China: Political Statement, Entrepreneurial Enticement and Patriotic Passion'. *Soccer in Society* 2, no.3 (2001): 79–100.

[32] Fan Hong, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System', in *Comparative Elite Sport Development: systems, structures and public policy*, p28; See Fan Hong, 'Elite Sport in China: Politics, Policy and System', in *Comparative Elite Sport Development: systems, structures and public policy*, p: 28; Xiao Mouwen, The Historical Evolution of Mass Sports Policy in New China. *Sports Science*. 2009;29(4):89–96; Xiong Xiaozheng, Cao Shouhe and Lin Dengyuan, 'From the Combination of Popularization and Improvement to the Coordinated Development of All Kinds of Sports', *Sports Literature and History* 15, no.5(1997):16–20.

centralised, government sports system (see Figure 5.1).

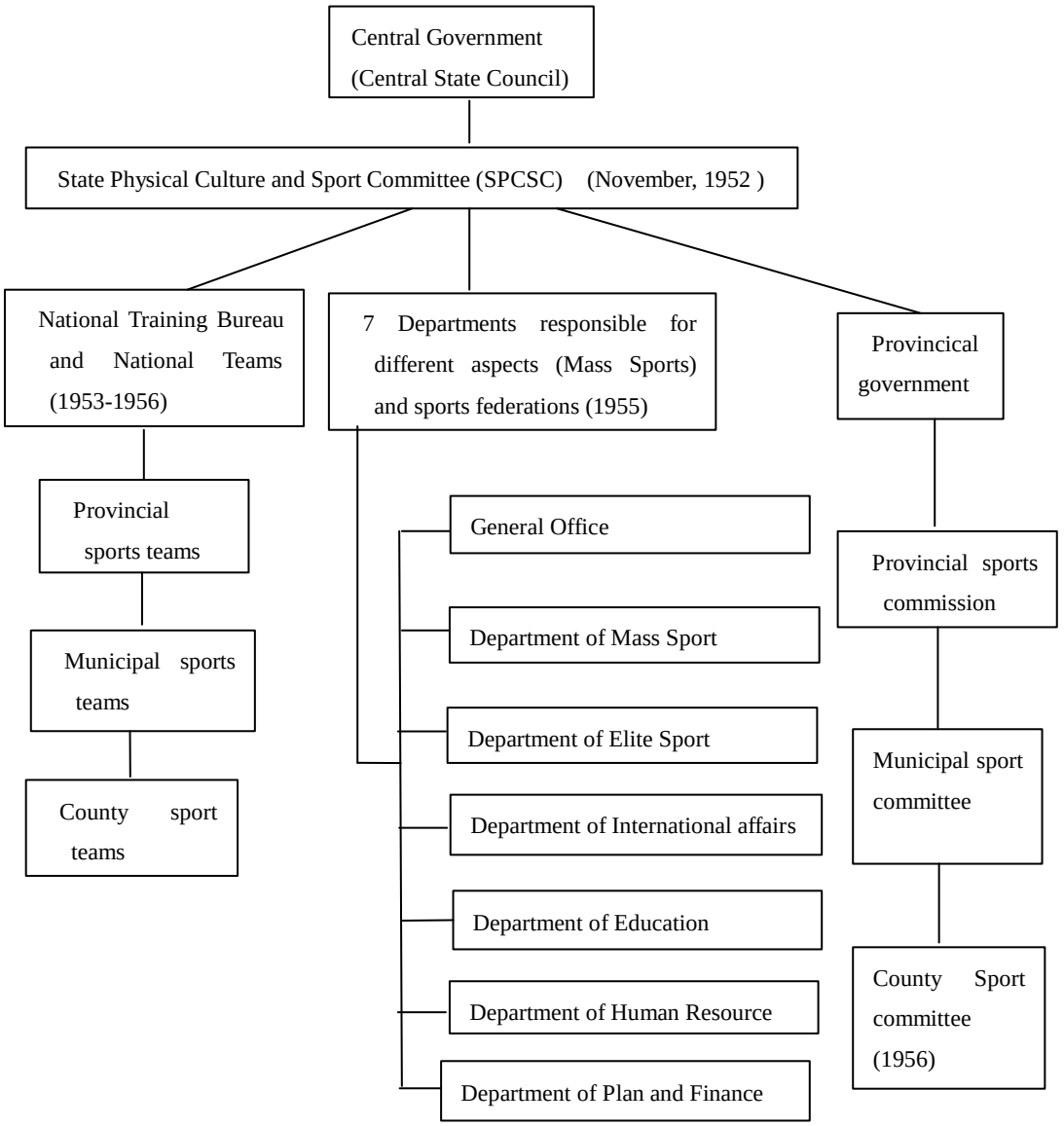


Figure 5.1. Administrative Structure of State Committee Sport and Physical Education of PRC in the 1950s

Source: The figure was developed by the author.

Thirdly, the SCSPE was featured as being obvious Sovietisation. Arguably, the Soviet Union's state theory and government model are among the important factors influencing the establishment of the central administration system in the PRC.[33] To

[33] Zheng Chuankun, *'On the Characteristics of the Administrative System in the Early Days of the Founding of PRC',* Administrative Law Research 3, no.3 (1995): 12–16; Suzanne Ogden, China's Unresolved Issues: Politics, Development and Culture, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1992.

some extent, in the early days of the founding of the Communist Party, the Communist International Commissioner injected the principles and methods of the Lenin doctrine into the body of the Chinese Communist Party, when it was still in its infancy.[34] The Chinese Socialist revolution therefore shared the Soviet Union's basic theory.

It is well recognised that at the start of the Communist regime in China, the CCP's establishment of political and administrative systems relied heavily on both the current and historical traditions, such as the existence of multiple classes in society, a democratic coalition government. Some scholars argue that after the end of the Civil War, the Communist Party established a multi-party coalition government, which inevitably led to the establishment of a socialist society dominated by communist ideology. The government's claim to legitimacy was inevitably based on communist ideology.[35] When he visited Xibaipo in 1956, Mao commented to Mikoyan: 'Although the government organisation is different from the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, its nature and purpose is still under the leadership of the Communist Party, and the future goal is to realise socialism and communism'.[36]

In the early years of the PRC, the impetus for Chinese sports borrowed directly from the Soviet Union, as is illustrated by a speech delivered by Marshal He Long (Head of the SCSPE), after visiting the Soviet Union. His public lecture, entitled 'Sport in the Soviet Union: the Strong Force to Construct Communist Society', described the development of sports in the Soviet Union and stated: "How to develop sport in China is still a new area for us. We must be under the leadership of the Party and Chairman Mao, and follow the great role model of the Soviet Union to develop Chinese sports

[34] MacFarquhar R., The Emergence of Revolutionary China, 1949–1965, The Cambridge History of China. vol. 14, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p: 68.
[35] Zhang Jian, 'Legitimacy and Chinese Politics'. *Strategy and Management*. no. 5 (2000):1–15.
[36] Party Documents Research Office of the CPC Central Committee ed., 'The Chronicle of Mao Zedong, 1893–1949', 2nd volume (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 1993), 34.

with arduous efforts".[37]

5.2.3 Soviet Model and the Chinese Sport Policy and System from 1953 to 1957

Elite sport: Producing Socialist Elite Athletes

The Chinese elite sports system consists mainly of administration, training, selection and competition structures. It is characterised by centralised management and administration, with guaranteed financial and human resources throughout China, to ensure maximum support for the elite sports.[38] All four structures were primarily developed in the 1950s.

Selective and training system

The Soviet model is credited with helping the Chinese selection and training system to take shape. First of all, China's national team system was established on the basis of the Soviet model. Prior to 1952, the PRC lacked any well-organised national team system or competition system. Except for the national basketball team, the PRC had no national teams prior to 1953. Most teams were simply temporary training classes, representing the PRC to compete in international competitions. After 1952, in support of the policy to 'learn from Soviet Sports' and 'inviting Soviet professionals to China and sending Chinese to the Soviet Union',[39] not only were national teams[40] set up in China, but Soviet coaches and experts in elite sports were invited to introduce modern training methods, technology and their experience. In September 1953, for instance, a delegation of senior Soviet gymnastics coaches and champions was invited to China.[41]

[37] He Long, 'Sports in the Soviet Union is the Power to Promote Communism Construction'. *New Sport.* no.11(1954):5.

[38] Hao Qin, 'Lun zhongguo tiyu 'Juguo tizhi' de gainian,tedian yu gongneng' [The Definition, Characteristics and Functions of the Chinese Elite Sports System]. *Journal of Chengdu University of Sport*. no.3(2004) :15–19.

[39] Wu Shaozu, op. cit., 41.

[40] National teams were established for basketball in 1951, for athletics in 1953, table tennis in 1954, swimming in 1954, badminton in 1954, gymnastics in 1955 and for volleyball in 1956. See Fu Yannong (ed.), *The History of Sport in China*. 5th volume, op. cit., 77.

[41] Aid from the socialist camp soon generated positive results. For instance, 24 swimming athletes received training in Budapest in 1954 and 1955. Among them was Wu Chuanyu, who received training in Moscow in 1953 and then in Budapest in 1954. During the 9 months of training in China, Wu only improved by 0.1 second

More importantly, Beijing signed agreements with Moscow and other Eastern-European allies to enable Chinese national teams to train in Eastern Europe. According to these agreements, with the exception of the swimming team which went to Budapest (Hungary), almost all other Chinese national squad members went to the Soviet Union. There was frequent exchange and interaction between sports teams from China, the Soviet Union and some Eastern European countries during this period. In 1954 alone, Chinese sports delegations were sent to the Soviet Union and East European countries 13 times, while Soviet and Eastern European delegations visited China four times.[42]

In order to train talented athletes from a young age, China adopted the Soviet Union's amateur sport school model. Prior to 1956, almost all national team members were selected from over 6,000 provincial and municipal games according to a player's performance.[43] Influenced by their Soviet experience in terms of elite sport training, the SCSPE became convinced that early specialisation was essential, especially in athletics, gymnastics, table tennis and swimming, to produce more high-profile athletes and become successful in international competitions. In 1955, the SCSPE set up amateur sports schools in Beijing and Shanghai, which markedly improved the physical quality and performance of Chinese athletes. Subsequently, in 1956, China issued 'The Regulation of the Youth Amateur Sports Schools'. By the end of 1957, 159 youth amateur sport schools had been established across China in 92 cities and 20 counties, enrolling more than 17,000 students with athletic talent.[44]

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from 1:11.7 to 1:11.6 in the 100m backstroke event, whereas during 8 days of training in the Soviet Union he reduced the time to 1:6.4. At the 1st International Youth Friendship Games held in Bucharest in August 1954, Wu won a gold medal in the Men's 100m backstroke event, becoming China's first World Champion. See Cultural and History Research Committee of the SPCSC, Chinese Swimming Association, *The history of Chinese swimming*, (Wuhan: Wuhan Press, 1996), 74–78.

[42] Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (eds.). 'Carry forward the People's Sports Undertaking in China', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949–1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 16.

[43] Between 1953 and 1956, China established national teams for track and field, table tennis, badminton, volleyball, swimming, and gymnastics, amongst others, but most competitors were amateur sports enthusiasts selected from more than 6,000 games or competitions at the city level or above. See Wu, *The History of Sport in the People's Republic of China*, 52.

[44] Li Xiumei, 'The Concise Edition of Sports History of People's Republic of China', (Beijing: Beijing Sport University press, 2001), 128.

Competition system

To improve its performance in elite sports, China set about establishing a sports competition system based on the Soviet model. In 1956 the SCSPE issued 'Rules and Regulations of the Competitive Sport System of the PRC, in which 43 sports were designated as competitive sports and the structure of fulltime sports teams at provincial and national levels. Sports regulations were specified, including requirements for organizing regional sports competitions. The SCSPE also decreed that the National Games would take place every four years, to promote performance in competitive sports.[45]

In April 1956, in order to develop a competition system and encourage athletes to improve their performance, the SCSPE issued the 'Rules and Regulations of Classification of Athletes' and the 'Rules and Regulations of Classification of Referees'. These documents classified athletes and referees according to performance, with reference to the Soviet model. By the end of 1956, 39,000 people were identified as first-, second- or third-level athletes, while 46 outstanding athletes were awarded the title of the 'Master of Sports'.[46] At the same time, state sports associations were established, for participation in international sporting events. Apart from the National Basketball association, which was established before 1949, most state sports associations were set up during this period.[47] Under the leadership of the SPESC, there were frequent national and regional sport competitions, as well as qualifying matches.

The well-organised training and selection structures and establishment of sports

[45] Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (eds.)., 'Provisional Regulations on sports competition system in People's Republic of China (Draft)' and 'Grade Standards of Athletes in Various Sports', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949–1981)*, 27–29.

[46] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (ed.), Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1949–1991) (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1993), 206.

[47] State Wrestling Association in 1953, State Tennis Association in 1953, State Cycling Association in 1953, State Volleyball Association in 1953, State Gymnastics Association in 1954, State Athletic Association in 1954, State Weightlifting Association in 1954, State Football Association in 1955, State Shooting Association in 1956, State Badminton Association in 1957, State Skiing Association in 1957, State Ice Hockey Association in 1957, etc. Wu Shaozu. op.cit., 51.

competitions system soon led to good results. By the end of 1956, 102 national records had been created; 78 occurred in 1955 alone, in comparison with 18 between 1949 to1954, and only 8 prior to 1949.[48]

Mass Sports: Serve Socialist Construction

In line with the principle of transition towards socialism, all resources and forces of the entire country were mobilized to serve the socialist transition. Mass sports were required to serve socialist construction. On 8 January 1954, the CCP's Central Committee released a document 'Instructions on Strengthening People's Sports' stating:

> Improving people's health and enhancing the people's physique is an important task of our Party [CCP]. Particularly, our country is now a period of planned economic construction, which requires more people with healthy bodies. However, the people's health fails to meet the needs of all kinds of works. In addition to strengthening health services and the gradual improvement of working, developing sport is the most active and effective way to remedy this situation. [. . .] Currently, our country is striving for the tasks of socialist transition, therefore strengthening sport has great significance.[49]

Marshal He Long delivered a speech 'Struggling for Developing Mass Sport under the Leadership of the General Line' at the 1st plenary session of Central Committee of Physical Education and Sport of the PRC, held on 16 January 1954. He stated that 'sports must positively serve the transition toward socialism'.[50] In response, the *People's Daily* released an editorial in February 1954 entitled 'Actively Developing

[48] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport ed., Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1949–1962), (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1964), 54.

[49] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC ed., 'Report on Strengthening the Work of the People's Sports (8 January, 1954)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), p: 17.

[50] He Long, 'Striving for Mass Sports Under the Direction of the General Line', *People's Daily*, 25 March 1954.

Mass Sport'. It stressed:

> 'The mass of the people is the most valuable capital to build socialism, and a healthy and strong body is an important guarantee for building socialism. Promotion of mass sports will be a major approach to improving people's physiques.'[51]

Rong Gaotang, Vice-Director of the Central Committee of Sport, echoed Marshal's directive in his speech delivered at the First National Congress of the PRC in September 1954, entitled 'Developing Sport is an Indispensable Part of Building Socialism'.[52] In October 1955, the First National Worker Sports Meeting of the PRC was held in Beijing, and included senior leaders of both the CCP and central government, such as Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai. Liu Shaoqi, then the Chairman of the PRC, presented an inscription entitled 'Developing sports and enhancing health to serve socialist construction'. Zhou Enlai, the premier of the PRC, presented another inscription, entitled 'Developing employee sports and promoting socialist construction cause'. These policies were backed by the words of the Party leaders and demonstrated their determination to develop sports for socialist construction.

To develop mass sports and physical culture, China continued to incorporate Soviet sports philosophy into Chinese sport. While promoting broadcast gymnastics around the country, the SCSPE introduced the Soviet Union's 'Ready for Labour and Defence System' (LDS) into China. The Soviet LDS targeted the entire society; workers, soldiers and students. As expressed by Fan et al., although the CCP believed in motivating the population to participate in sport and physical activities, they also expected the Labour and Defence programme to serve as an organised, efficient

[51] Editorial, 'Actively Carry out Mass Sports Activities', *People's Daily*, 9 February 1954.
[52] Rong Gaotang, '*Developing Sport is an Indispensable Part of Building Socialism*'(26 September, 1954), Proceeding of the First National Congress of the PRC, edited by People's Publishing House. Beijing: Peoples Publishing House, 1955.

model to motivate the population for socialist construction.[53]

As early as 1951, based on the Soviet Union's LDS *(Lao Wei Zhi)*, several selected schools, such as the No. 4 Middle School of Beijing and the High School affiliated with Beijing Normal University were selected to carry out 'Standard of Physical Exercise for Summer Time'.[54] On 4 May 1954, China issued the 'Regulations of Chinese LDS', based on the 1946 vision of the Soviet Union's LDS. This document specified that 'the LDS is a foundation of the PRC's physical education, the objective of which is to conduct all around physical education and to train people to be healthy, brave, optimistic defenders and builders of socialism.'[55] Eventually, based on the practice of Chinese LDS and the 1955 version of the Soviet Union's LDS *(Lao Wei Zhi)*, the SPESC updated the Chinese LDS in 1956. In general, the Chinese LDS consisted of three categories based on age: juvenile grade, adult first grade and adult second grade. In each grade, participants were grouped by sex and different targets defined the grades: the juvenile grade aimed to comprehensively develop the physique of young people and to stimulate their interest in sports; the adult first grade was required to develop youth and adult physiques and guide their participation in sports; the adult second grade aimed to improve athletes' techniques.[56]

To encourage more people to pass the LDS, China's sports authority established the *Lao Wei Zhi* badge system, which rewarded athletes when they achieved certain standards.[57] This encouraged the regular participation of 100 million people in sports activities, with approximately 2.67 million people passing the LDS and around 222,500 people attaining certain LDS standards by September 1958.[58] The LDS

[53] Fan Wei, Fan Hong & Lu Zhouxiang, Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre and Post-Beijing 2008. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27,no. 14-15(2010) : 2380–2402.
[54] Over 500 groups consisting of more than 7,000 students ranging from college to middle school took part in the trial workout. A total of 1,400 reached the required standard and were awarded medals.
[55] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC ed., 'Interim Provision of Labour and Defence System', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), p: 218.
[56] Wu Bangwei, *Basic Knowledge of Sports Theory*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1957), pp: 60, 61, 62.
[57] Anonymous, *Manual for Exercise of Labour and Defence System*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1956), 2.
[58] He Long, 'Opening Speech of the First National Games of PRC, *New Sport*. 1959;18:1.

involved all age groups, but focused on school students, particularly secondary school students. From June 1952 to the end of 1954, 12,740 students from 187 schools and colleges took part in the first grade LDS workout sessions; 1,159,000 students from 3,360 schools and colleges took part in the LDS juvenile grade.[59]



Figure 5.2. Certificates and badges issued by the labour and guard system

Source: http://baike.baidu.com/image/ea85a945d84fcc35cefca35

In short, following the principles of 'sports must positively serve socialist construction' and 'learn from the Soviet Sport', the Soviet model had profound effects upon China's state sports system during the 1950s, in both elite and mass sports.

As Houlihan has noted, 'Sport is a mirror of society and consequently, it is a reasonably accurate reflection of the prevailing ideology found within a particular state at a particular time'.[60] Traditional scholarship on the Cold War assigned ideology to a centre of conflict between the capitalist and socialist camps, in which the Soviets were portrayed as bent on expansion, driven by a combination of traditional interests and Marxist-Leninist ideology. Conflict in ideology between the two blocs was also reflected in the field of sport. With the world divided into two

[59] Central Institute of Educational Science ed., *Chronicle of education in People's Republic of China (1949–1982),* (Educational Science Press, 1984), 100–103.

[60] Barry Houlihan, *Sport and International Politics* (New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf,1994), 15.

camps, the nuclear stalemate and an intensification of the 'battle for men's minds', sport became an arena of considerable social significance. As Howell has observed, the USSR 'was the first major country in modern times to realise the full extent of the political significance of sport'.[61] The Soviet Union amazed the world when its athletes achieved second place with 71 medals at their first Olympic Games in 1952.

During the Cold War, sport served as a propaganda weapon and arena for psychological and political warfare in Eastern and Western countries. In particular, socialist countries became obsessed with medal counts in competitive sports, because highly-ranking athletes served as role models in society and could potentially be used as political tools against the West. During the 1950s period of the Cold War, China sided with the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union and adopted the policy 'learn good sports experience from the Soviet Union'.

Gramsci considered hegemony to be spontaneous acceptance of the moral and cultural values of the ruling class by the majority of the subordinate class. As a Soviet historian has noted, 'the growing impact of socialist sport on the condition of and trends in the world sports movement is one of the best and most comprehensible means of explaining to the masses the advantages of socialism over capitalism'.[62] The proletariat or subordinate class became convinced of the rightful domination of the communist regime. During the 1950s period of the PRC, sport was expected to improve in performance to 'match China's international status', [63] so that Chinese communists could demonstrate the superiority of socialism over capitalism.

[61] Reet Howell, The USSR: Sport and Politics Intertwined. *Comparative Education* 11, no.2, (1975):137–145.

[62] Yu. A. Talaev, 'Sport-Oblast' mirnogo sorevnovaniya (editorial)', *Teoriya I praktika fizicheskoi kul'tury.* no.1(1973):8.

[63] Li Xiumei, Concise Version of Sport History of the People's Republic of China (Beijing: Beijing University of Sport Press, 2001), 9.

5.2.4 Sovietisation of Sport and the Great Leap Forward from 1958 to 1960

Although the GLF was primarily focused on agriculture and heavy industry, it soon spread to every aspect of Chinese society, including sports. In early 1958, based on the Soviet Union's experience, the SPCSC initiated 'The Plan of Achievements in Sports in Ten Years'. Its aim was to promote Chinese sports under the 'two legs walking system', with the simultaneous development of elite and mass sports.

At the Second Session of the CCP's National Congress in May 1958, Mao pointed out that 'our industry output should catch up with Britain within 15 years or less. Our agricultural output should exceed major capitalist countries in advance. Our science and technology should catch up with the advanced countries as soon as possible'.[64] In September 1958, the State Sport Committee issued a new 'Ten Year Plan for Sports Development', in which the relevant targets were improved. For instance, one of the targets related to elite sport in the previous plan, 'to cultivate 8 million active athletes and five thousand elite athletes in ten years',[65] was rewritten to 'cultivate 50–70 million active athletes and 10–15 thousand elite athletes'.[66] According to the previous plan, 40 million men and women were expected to pass the *Lao Wei Zhi* fitness grade and 8 million people were expected to achieve the adult second grade or athlete standard of *Lao Wei Zhi* by 1967.[67] This was reformulated as a target of '150 million people should meet the requirement of LDS as primary target while 50 million were to achieve the athlete standard *Lao Wei Zhi*'[68] in the new plan.

The 'Ten-Year Plan for Sports Development' acted as a guideline to promote the GLF in sports nationwide. China's strong ambitions are vividly illustrated by a poster

[64] Li Maosheng, ed., *History of the People's Republic of China*, (Beijing: China Broadcast and Television Publishing House, 1991), 163.
[65] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC ed., 'Report on the Ten Year Plan for the Development of Sports (September 19, 1958)'. *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 40.
[66] Ipid., 40.
[67] Ipid., 40.
[68] Ipid., 40.

issued in 1958 (see Figure 5.2), in which the Chinese national flag was hung much higher than that of Western countries, such as the USA, the UK, or France, with a robust Chinese athlete wearing a national emblem on his chest charging through the winning tape.

During the GLF process, the competition system in elite sports was strengthened further. To select the best athletes to compete in the first National Games in 1959, qualification matches were held in provinces and cities nationwide. In 1958 alone, 5,303 sports competitions were held, involving 920,000 participants. Intensive competition inspired local sports committees to improve the training and selection of elite sports. For example, in Hunan Province, although professional elite sport teams had been established in 1956, there were only three provincial sports teams, including a female gymnastic team, female volleyball team and a male basketball team. To reach the goals set in the 'Ten-year Plan for Sports Development' and prepare for the National Games, several new competitive sport teams were established, including athletics, gymnastics, volleyball, handball, table tennis, weightlifting, boxing and tennis. By February 1959, Hunan Province had 27 provincial sports teams and more than 300 athletes.[69] Eventually, under the momentum of the GLF, not only were all national records surpassed by the end of the 1950s, but world records were broken 31 times by 39 Chinese athletes, marking a performance peak in China's elite sports since the founding of the PRC.[70]

[69] Yuan Weimin, ed., Sports History of People's Republic of China. local valume (Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 2002), 295.
[70] Ibid, 295.

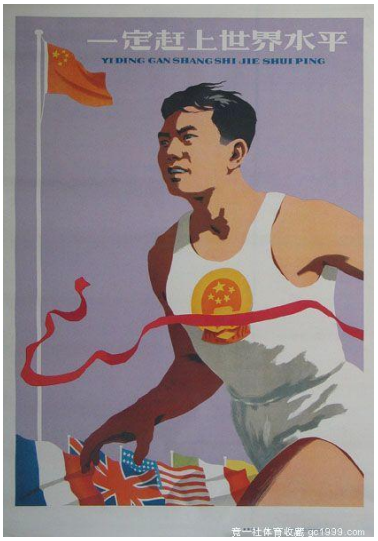


Figure 5.3. A 1958 Poster entitled 'Must come up with the world level'
Source: Gu Bingxin ,1959[71]

In mass sports, encouraged by the GLF, sport programmes such as the 'National Physical Education and Sports Month' and 'Physical Education and Sport Week', 'Sport Movie Propaganda Week' and 'Sport Propaganda Day', were organised throughout the country. These events deliberately involved large numbers of people. For instance, a 'National Physical Education and Sport Week' held in Shanghai in March 1958 incorporated an oath-taking rally that numbered 10,000 people, designed to encourage political consciousness and participation in the GLF of sports. During that week, more than 3 million people participated in various sport activities, including broadcast calisthenics, calisthenics for production, field calisthenics, Tai chi and rope skipping.[72] The intention to create a spectacular scene was supported by inspiring slogans adopted throughout China to mark the GLF of sport, such as 'Hundred Days Fighting', 'Ten Thousand People Doing Gymnastics' and 'All People in the Country Pass the Standard of Lao Wei Zhi'.

In order to attain these extremely high targets, fraudulent practices were prevalent:

[71] Gu Bingxin, 'Must come up with the world level', in Editorial Board Dongfeng Pictorial (eds.), Dongfeng Pictorial. no.6 (1959):18.
[72] Office of Shanghai Chronicles, ed., *Shanghai Sports Week*, Accessed from: http://www.shtong.gov.cn/node2/node2245/node4455/node13281/node13473/node60867/userobject1ai15137.html (accessed 21 July 2013).

participants took shortcuts to pass the Lao Wei Zhi test and statistical data were universally modified so as to achieve the higher-level tasks. Consequently, some 'model units' emerged in large numbers.[73] Ironically, bragging and unrealistic behaviour received recognition and praise. Conversely, those that remained committed to pragmatic principles were regarded as right-wing conservatives and were criticised. For instance, at the 1958 National Sport Conference, Anhui province and Shanghai were criticised for their 'conservative plan'. Hebei province, by contrast, was praised for its magnificent (but impossible) promise.[74]

Adverse effects of the GLF soon occurred. Due to food shortages, scarce medical supplies and overtraining, considerable numbers of athletes seeking to achieve those extremely high targets were injured during training sessions. By the end of 1961, an SPCSC survey of 691 athletes in national sports teams identified that 348 (50.3%) sustained injuries; 22.3% were seriously injured and could no longer participate in training, while some sports teams reported injury rates as high as 90% and even 100%.[75] These adverse effects of the GLF extended to mass sports, particularly in schools. Soon after the GLF was launched, the *Lao Wei Zhi* programme began to dominate sports activities and physical education in schools.[76] Promotion of *Lao Wei Zhi* encouraged a boom in sports activities, but physical education classes were seriously damaged by overtraining, excessive physical exercising and over-testing. Food shortages and malnutrition led to the reduction of physical education classes from four times weekly to once-weekly and cancellation of sports events, while morning and work-break exercises were retained in urban schools at minimal levels,

[73] Wu Shaozu et al., eds. Sports History of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1999 (Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 1999), 107.

[74] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC ed., 'Report of the Sports Work Meeting of the SPCSC in 1958', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 30.

[75] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed. 'Report of the Sports Work Meeting of the SPCSC in 1961', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 54–58.

[76] According to the 'Ten-Year Plan for Sports Development', 40% of students in the first-class ranks of colleges and universities were required to reach the first level of the LDS and all graduate students had to reach LDS by 1959; 20% of students in second-class colleges and universities were to reach the second level of the LDS and all graduate students had to reach the secondary standard of LDS; 10% of students in the third-class colleges and universities had to reach the second level of the LDS. See 'Report on the Ten-Year Plan for the Development of Sports' (19 September 1958), Op. cit., 40.

but nearly halted in rural schools.[77] Consequently, students' physique and health declined sharply. A report conducted in 1961 among 15 provinces revealed that fewer than 44% of secondary school graduates had achieved the required health standards, while an army medical examination report identified that only 30% of young people were of sufficient physical condition[78] to qualify for recruitment into the army.

In summary, between 1958 and 1961, under the influence of the GLF, the Chinese state sports policy and practice caught up with and exceeded Western powers in the field of sport. Although the GLF of sport ended in failure, the elite sports system, including training and competitions was strengthened, and the government gained experience in organising mass sports activities. These laid the foundation for the development of policies and systems of physical education and sports, which continue to operate in China today.[79]

5.3 Militarism, 'De-Sovietisation' and Training Communist Athletes: State Sports Policy and Practice from 1961 to 1965

The failure of the GLF (1958–1960) and the Great Famine in 1960 changed national policy. As mentioned earlier, in 1960, the CCP's Central Committee issued a guideline entitled 'Readjustment, consolidation, filling out and raising standards', which was intended to adjust the interrelationships between the various sectors in the national economy (especially between agriculture and light/heavy industry) and to reduce the scale of construction, to slow the pace of development.[80]

[77] National Sport Committee, 'Minutes of Symposium of Sport Cadre of Education Bureau (Commission)', in *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 396-400.

[78] National Sport Committee, 'The Report Approved by the State Council on Mass Sport Symposium', in *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 277-281.

[79] Fan Wei, Fan Hong & Lu Zhouxiang, Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre- and Post-Beijing 2008, *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27,no.14-15 (2010):2380–2402.

[80] Guo Dajun, The history of the people's Republic of China (1949–2007), (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2011), 117–118.

5.3.1 Strategic Readjustment, Sino-Soviet Split and the Rise of Militarism

In addition to this strategic adjustment of the economy, China's national defences faced significant challenges from potential military threats in the early 1960s. One such threat arose from the Sino-India Border Conflict, which began with a dispute over the sovereignty of two main sectors along the border that were claimed by both China and India: the Western sector – Aksai Chin, and the Eastern sector – the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, based on the Mcmahon Line presented by the British at the 1913 Simla conference.[81]Despite repeated warnings from Beijing, India attempted in 1961 to establish a military presence in the disputed territories and expel the Chinese. The war began with skirmishes in the summer of 1962. Significant fighting occurred in October and November 1962 along the three widely separated fronts. In virtually every battle, the Chinese forces either outmaneuvered or overpowered the unprepared Indians. In less than six weeks of bloody fighting, the Chinese army completely drove Indian forces back behind Chinese claim lines.[82] However, under Mao's instruction, Chinese troops retreated to the north of the McMahon Line and kept to the territory in Tibet which they had claimed in 1960.

Another incident was the Sino-Soviet split, which occurred in the early 1960s. In general, in the context of the Cold War, the PRC adopted the diplomatic policy 'Lean to one side towards the socialist-communist camp' and maintained a close relationship with the USSR during the Stalin era. However, Khrushchev, Stalin's successor, sought to build his country's strength according to his understanding and adopted new domestic and foreign policies, favouring in particular a peaceful coexistence with the USA. Mao was greatly dissatisfied with the Soviet Union's foreign policy towards the

[81] Aksai Chin lies to the east of the Kashmir valley and covers an area of about 37,250 sq .km (14,380 sq. miles) – currently occupied by China. China calls the eastern sector South Tibet, covering an area of 83,743 sq. km (32,333 sq. miles), which is currently occupied by India. In addition, there are a few small chunks of territory in between these two sectors, which are largely irrelevant when compared to these two major distinct territories.

[82] James Barnard Calvin, *The China-India Border War (1962)*. Quantico: Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1984, 60–64.

USA, the leader of the Capitalist camp. More importantly, Khrushchev initiated a campaign of de-Stalinisation in February 1956, accusing Stalin of causing terror, deportations and executions in the latter years of his reign. Mao, who enjoyed supreme power in the CCP as Stalin had in the CPSU, was afraid that de-Stalinisation could threaten his power in the CCP.

The Sino-Soviet friendship was damaged further by several incidents that happened in 1958 and 1959.[83] From 1960 onwards, the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations led to Moscow's decision to withdraw its expertise and support from China.[84] Furthermore, after the Sino-Indian Border conflict, the Soviet Union announced neutrality, yet also supported India.[85]Consequently, the early 1960s witnessed an increasingly strained Sino-Soviet relationship. At the Party's 'Seven Thousand Cadres Conference' in January 1962, Liu Shaoqi, then the PRC Chairman and second in command in the CCP, pointed out that the Soviet Union had become revisionist and advocated that the CCP should learn the Soviet lesson.[86] In 1964, as Khrushchev stepped down, Mao sent Prime Minister Zhou Enlai to restore relations with the Kremlin, but this attempt failed.[87]

The Vietnam War (1955–1975), another Cold War military conflict, was fought between the North Vietnam Government led by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), supported by its communist allies, and the South Vietnam Government led by the Republic of South Vietnam, supported by the USA and other anti-communist

[83] On 21 July 1958, Pavel Yudin, the Soviet ambassador, proposed to Mao that the Soviet Union and China build a joint submarine fleet. Mao rejected the proposal, saying that the USSR's real objective was to control China's coastline. After the GLF was launched by Mao in 1958, the CPSU criticised China's action, sparking another wave of anti-Soviet sentiment throughout China. On 23 August 1958, the Communist Army in Fujian province shelled Jinmen Island, which was controlled by the Republic of China (Taiwan). USSR leaders were enraged by this military operation, because the PRC did not inform them beforehand. See Shen Zhihua, ed., *The History of Sino-Soviet Relations,* (Beijing: Social Science Literature Press, 2011), 45 ; Shen Zhihua, Causes of the Crumbling of the Sino-Soviet Alliance and Its Consequence, Study on the History of the Communist Party of China, no.2 (2007), 29–31.

[84] On 16 July 1960, the USSR withdrew 1,390 Russian experts in China and cancelled 257 science projects and 343 contracts, available at http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/4162/64165/67447/67995/4590633.html (accessed on 12 February 2014)

[85] Shen Zhihua, ed., *The History of Sino-Soviet Relations,* (Beijing: Social Science Literature Press, 2011), 123.

[86] Zhang Suhua, *Change: the Seven Thousand People's Congress (January 11, 1962 to February 7),* (Beijing: China Youth Press, 2006, p: 56.

[87] In October 1964, the CPSU Central Committee revoked Khrushchev's leadership and Brezhnev assumed the role as the first Secretary. The CCP wanted to improve relations and sent Zhou Enlai to participate in the October revolution celebrations. However, the leaders of the CPSU claimed that there was 'no slight difference' with Khrushchev in terms of the policy towards China. See Shen Zhihua, ed., Op. cit.,135.

countries. The US government believed that South Vietnam played a significant role in American national security, which required a world of politically diverse nations, rather than a bloc of Communist countries united in a hostile ideology. [88] The USA became involved in the Vietnam War when they sent troops to support the South Vietnamese government against the North Vietnamese communists. Needless to say, the CCP leaders regarded the Vietnam War as an offensive by the USA against China.[89] Thus, when senior North Vietnamese leaders requested Chinese military aid in April 1965, China did not hesitate to provide support for the DRV authority.[90] The Vietnam War, in essence, was a war between two different political camps, or ideologies. Furthermore, in East Asia, the Eisenhower Administration had adopted a policy of encouraging and supporting the GMD 's military assaults on the coastal areas of the Chinese Mainland.[91]

Facing a growing military threat from India, the Soviet Union and the USA, the Central Committee of the CCP declared that it was necessary 'To train all Chinese citizens to be soldiers (全民皆兵)' to prepare for war. One of their major measures was to develop military organizations across the country. On September 29, 1959, Mao stated: 'Imperialists bully us so much, and this needs to be taken seriously. Not only do we need to have a strong regular army, but we need to set up the people's militia. In this way, if imperialists invade China, we will make them unable to move a

[88] William J. Rust, Kennedy in Vietnam: American Vietnam Policy, 1960-1963, Da Capo Press, 1985, x.

[89] When meeting with North Vietnam representatives in 1964, Mao remarked: "Best turn it into a bigger war… I'm afraid you really ought to send more troops…Don't be afraid of US 'intention, at most it's no worse than having another Korean War. The Chinese army is prepared, and if America takes the risk of attacking North Vietnam, the Chinese army will respond immediately; our troops want a war now.'

[90] To counter overwhelming US-led air strikes in North Vietnam in 1965, Ho Chi Minh, the President of Vietnam Labor Party, requested Chinese Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) units. In response, PLA units began flowing into North Vietnam, including the 67th AAA Division, with an estimated 25,000 to 45,000 Chinese combat troops in total. See Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam War, 1950-1975*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000),134.

[91] Numerous crises have occurred over the Taiwan Strait since 1949, when the Nationalist Party moved its government to Taiwan. Around the time of the armistice in Korea in the spring of 1953, GMD forces launched increasing air and naval attacks and harassment against the Mainland from offshore islands under their control, with US military assistance and support. The GMD's actions were offensive in nature and constituted another front opened by the US outside the Korean Peninsula. Thus, after the July 1953 armistice in Korea, the PLA's strategic centre of gravity gradually shifted to the southeast, where it had strengthened its deployment along the southeast coast. For more detailed information about the crises in the Taiwan Straits in the 1950s, see Dwight D. Eisenhower, State of the Union Address (2 February 1953), in American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents 1950-1953, ed.US State Department (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1957), 61–65; Bruce A. Elleman, Taiwan Straits: Crisis in Asia and the Role of U.S. (Navy, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2014), 75–89.

step in our county'.[92] Over the following three months, 5,000 militia divisions were set up across the county, involving more than 220 million people, forming powerful Armed Forces.[93] All people in China aged between 16 and 25 were called upon to join the militia. As well as organizing military training, the People's Armed Forces Department (*ren min wu zhuang bu*)[94] began to be established at grass roots levels, including communes, factories and colleges, staffing professional cardre.

5.3.2 State Sports Policy in a Period of 'Austerity' from 1961 to 1962

The adverse impact of the GLF in sports was not officially admitted until the National Sports Conference held on December 5, 1961. Subsequently, the SPCSC changed its policy in 1961 to be consistent with the Party's policy 'Readjustment, Consolidation, Enrichment and Focusing on Increasing Quality'.

In general, the SPCSC identified a policy of 'active rest' in sport.[95] In mass sport, sports activities in cities were enormously reduced in scale and quantity, although some less costly sports, such as broadcast calisthenics, table tennis and chess, survived in part.[96] In 1961, most rural areas in China were severely affected by widespread famine and disease associated with the continuous fall in grain

[92] Bei Xiao, 'Review on "Three Implementation" of Militia Work in the New Period under the Guidance of the Scientific Outlook on Development', *Chinese Militias*, no.7(2012): 6–7.

[93] Ibid., 6–7.

[94] Since 1951, the Department of People's Armed Forces has been established in most counties and municipal districts throughout China. In 1954, it was renamed as the Military Service Bureau and changed back to the Department of People's Armed Forces in 1958. This military department is set up in the administrative regions at the county, township and subdistrict levels and in other large organisations such as enterprises and schools.

[95] This can be seen from the minutes of the 1962 National Sport Conference. It stated that: 'the present injuries rate must take a turn for the better, while the new injury rate during the training should contain at the lowest level', and 'athletes with serious injuries should receive full treatment, and those with light injuries may engage in appropriate training except for receiving treatment; athletes without injuries should receive normal training'. See The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Report of the Sports Work Meeting of the SPCSC in 1962', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949-1981)*. Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982, 396.

[96] For instance, in Shanghai, Taichi was widely practised in factories, enterprises and government institutes in 1961; the Qiyi machinery factory, Shanghai, organised a Taichi workshop for 40 employees suffering from chronic diseases and achieved positive outcomes. Office of Shanghai Chronicles, ed., 'Qiyi machinery factory organized workers to practice Taichi Chuan in 1961', *Worker Sports*, 25.

production,[97] sports activities were forced to stop, apart from in a few relatively wealthy areas.[98]

In competitive sport, shrinking budgets led to the shrinkage of sports teams and the focus shifted to key sports. In 1961, the SPCSC required sports committees at all levels to trim non-essential sports teams.[99] As a result, military sports teams at the provincial level ceased; national sports teams, including archery and horsemanship, were only retained in certain areas (e.g. speed skating teams were retained in just a few provinces in northeastern China), while all outstanding competitive sports teams at and below county level were disbanded.[100] In 1962, the SPCSC adopted a policy of 'focusing on 10 key sports', whereby 10 sports were selected from the previous 43 competitive sports modelled on the Soviet model in 'The Competitive Sports System of the PRC' issued in 1956. They included athletics, gymnastics, swimming, football, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, shooting, weightlifting and speed skating. Sports teams suffered further reductions. Outstanding sports teams were only retained at or above the provincial level.

5.3.3 State Sports Policy and the System from 1963 to 1965

As the national economy began to recover, China adjusted its sports policy. In December 1962, the national sports conference decreed that sports committees at all levels were required to actively carry out various mass sports activities. According to

[97] Between 1957 and 1960, heavy industry increased 2.3-fold, while agriculture fell by 22.8%. Grain production was minimal in the first half of 1960. The Central Committee of the CCP issued 'The Directive on Reducing the Rations in Rural Areas and Cities' on 7 September 1960. Except for those working at high temperature, high altitude, underground, or who were engaged in heavy manual labour, everyone else in the urban population had to reduce their ration standard by 2 kg per person per month. See the Literature Research Centre of the CCP Central Committee, ed., A Selection of Important Literatures Since the Founding of the PRC (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1993), Volume 13, 565–570. In rural areas, the situation was so difficult that even the peasants' lives were hard to maintain. In 1960, the grain occupancy of the rural population in China had fallen to 429 kg from 589 kg in 1957, with an average daily ration of less than 1 kg per person and only a few vehicles per person in the worst affected area. See Zhao Fasheng, (ed), *Food Work in Contemporary China*, Beijing: Chinese Social Science Publication, 1988, p: 108.

[98] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed., 'Work Summary of Mass Sports in 1961 and Work Plan of Mass Sport in 1962',Op. cit., 54-58.

[99] The 10 key sports refer to track and field, gymnastics, swimming, football, volleyball, table tennis, shooting, weightlifting, and speed skating.

[100] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed. 'Work Plan of the SCSPE in 1961' (19 March 1962), Op. cit., 54-58.

the practical needs of production, work and study, mass sports had to focus on schools, with consideration to factories and plants, after which the sports were extended to rural areas.[101]

Mass Sports: 'De-Sovietisation' and Sports Militarism for National Defence

Under this policy, mass sports began to recover in urban areas. According to a survey conducted in 1963 involving 51 plants and enterprises in Tianjin, the number of employees who regularly took part in sport activities had increased from 15% in 1961 to 30% on average and as much as 40% in some plants and enterprises.[102] In some provinces where the economy recovered faster, such as in Shandong province, broadcast gymnastics and work-break exercises were resumed.[103] In schools, physical education and sports activities were restored in 1963. First of all, physical education class was increased to twice a week. Sports activities were also actively promoted in school, particularly after China published the fourth set of broadcast gymnastics in April 1963.

Chinese state policy for mass sports was characterised as militarism during this period. As noted earlier, in recognition of the escalating military threat from foreign aggression in the early 1960s, the Party slogan was 'To train all Chinese citizens to be soldiers' and the People's Armed Forces Department was widely established below the county level. Militarism and sports, two completely different institutions, as one exists to protect and serve a country while the other is solely for entertainment, were once again interwoven throughout China. At the national sports conference in 1965, military sports were heavily promoted, to educate the people about national defence and military techniques.[104] In rural areas, mass sports activities were

[101] 'Minutes of 1963 National Sport Work Conference', op. cit., 85-93.
[102] Wu Shaozu, op. cit, p: 139.
[103] Wu Shaozu, op. cit, p: 139.
[104] 'Minutes of 1963 National Sport Work Conference' (1 January 1965), op. cit., 85-93.

combined with military training. Communes in the countryside were staffed by professional military sport instructors responsible for military training and sports. In urban areas, in addition to the re-establishment of the Sports Clubs of National Defence (*guo fang ti yu ju le bu*),[105] a special section or department was added to the local and provincial sports commission; the 'military sports section/department'. Budgets and instructors were provided for the development of military sports. As a result, mass sports associated with military training, including swimming, long-distance running, hang gliding, shooting, mountain climbing, martial arts, radio sports (*wu xian dian*), aeromodelling (*hang mo*), marine modelling (*hai mo*) and parachute jumping were widely practised throughout China. In 1964, four military sport activities (swimming, shooting, communications and climbing) rose to prominence because of their martial arts value. In 1965, the SPCSC, the PLA General Staff Headquarters and the CYLC Central Committee jointly issued the 'Notification on Extensively Carrying out Mass Swimming Activities', leading to nationwide military water training. In Shandong province for example, the number of people participating in military water training between May and September 1965 reached 2.5 million.[106]

Sports combined with militarism is a phenomenon with rich historical antecedents. Ancient Greece used sports to enhance the fitness and physique of their citizens for war. In England, the introduction of gymnastics into elementary schools after the passing of the 1870 Education Act sought to increase students' fitness, strengthen military power and to save money by reducing the Poor Rates and the costs of crime.[107] Sports participation fosters a sense of unity, identification, and social bonds. In the first half of the 1960s, facing increasing military threats and endangerment of national security mainly from India, South Vietnam, the USA and the Soviet Union,

[105] Sports clubs practising national defence increased from 174 in 1957 to 1,408 in 1960, and were widely established at above the county level. In line with the new state strategy, national defence sports clubs were heavily cut back and were only established in cities.

[106] Fu Yannong, General History of Chinese Sports. Fifth volume (1949-1979), (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 2008), 232.

[107] James Riordan, The Political Role of Sport in Britain and the USSR. (Salford: The Centre for Leisure Studies, 1980), 78.

China initiated a nationwide campaign to promote mass military training. Mass sports were widely integrated into military training activities and school physical education classes were turned into military training courses.[108] As a result, under the Party slogan 'To train all Chinese citizens to be soldiers', state sports policy worked to encourage more people to participate in sports for its martial arts value, rather than to build their bodies and enhance solidarity and nationalist sentiment.

Another significant characteristic of sports policy during the 1960s was 'De-Sovietisation', which emerged out of the Sino-Soviet Split at the end of the 1950s. Researchers agree that the reasons for the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations are complex and multifaceted, including a conflict of national interests and ideological differences, as well as the Soviet Union's 'great nation chauvinism' and the individual factors of the leaders on each side.[109] Shen Zhihua's analysis is persuasive. He points out that:

> In addition to the widely-acknowledged division between socialist powers, some peculiarities existed in regard to the Sino-Soviet relationship. In particular, leadership and ideological struggles between China and the Soviet Union meant that each sought to be the leading power in international communism.[110]

The Sino-Soviet split led to the Kremlin's order for the withdrawal of Soviet experts from China in 1960, after which time the Soviet model began to disappear.[111] As a part of culture and superstructure, sport has been affected by the ideological split

[108] Fan Hong, Lu Zhouxiang. Sport, militarism and diplomacy: training bodies for China (1960–1966). *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.1 (2012): 30–52.

[109] Zhu Ruizhen, 'The Root of the Split between China and the Soviet Union' in China Russia Relations History Research Association ed., 'The Trend of Sino-Soviet Relations after the War', (Beijing: Social Science Literature Press, 1997), 91–101.; Wang Zhenyu, 'An Analysis of the Reasons for the Breakup of Sino-Soviet relations', *Anhui Historiography*, no. 3 (2004):101-103 .

[110] Shen Zhihua, Causes of the Crumbling of the Sino-Soviet Alliance and Its Consequence, *Research on the History of the Communist Party of China*, no.2 (2007): 29–31.

[111] For more detailed information, see Shen Zhihua. Soviet Experts in China: 1948–1960, (Beijing: China International Press, 2003).

between the two socialist countries, each of which claimed that they built and cultivated 'comradely and brotherly' friendship. In sports fields, *Lao Wei Zhi* was a typical event that was infused with 'de-Sovietisation'. Inspired by a strong Soviet ideology, *Lao Wei Zhi* was a dominant sports programme in China throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. De-Sovietisation replaced the *Lao Wei Zhi* with Youth Physical Training Standards in 1964. However, de-Sovietisation failed to remove all Soviet influence in the field of Chinese sport, as expressed by an interviewee:

> The Sino-Soviet split led ideologically indeed to weakening the impact of the Soviet model on Chinese sports: a lot of Soviet experts were withdrawn; some Soviet training methods [in competitive sport] were replaced; the *Lao Wei Zhi* suffered stagnation, but the centralised governmental sport system set up under the influence of the Soviet model was not affected by this change, but continued to strengthen for some time.[112]

Elite Sports: Standardisation of the Sports System to Train Communist Athletes

After implementing a short-term austerity policy, the SPCSC began to change its policy in competitive sports. Athletes and coaches were required to spend more time on training and new training methods were encouraged. State policy began to focus on standardisation of the elite sports system.

Selective and training system

As Fan Hong has noted, China has one of the most effective systems worldwide for systematically selecting and producing sports stars from a very young age.[113] This system, based on the Soviet model and primarily developed in the 1950s, was officially implemented in 1963 when the SPCSC issued its 'Regulations of

[112] Interviewer No. 5 (Professor in Chinese Sport History, South China Normal University) in discussion with the author, 8 July 2014.
[113] Fan Hong,'Innocence Lost: Child Athletes in China'. *Sport in Society* 7, no3 (2004):338–354.

Outstanding Athletes and Teams'.[114] This document aimed to improve the elite sports system and management structure, covering competition, education, coaching, athletes, medical support, the organisational structure, management and leadership.

At the 1964 National Sport Conference, to further improve selection and training systems, the SPCSC emphasised the importance of amateur sports training and stated: 'It is required to make full use of various forms of amateur training and run youth amateur sports schools, aiming to produce reserve forces for professional sports teams'.[115] At the 1965 National Mass Sport Conference, the SPCSC re-emphasised that the "sport committee at all levels should concentrate on sports schools, to continually produce and send outstanding athletes to professional sports teams".[116] Furthermore, the SPCSC required local sports authorities, particularly those in rich provinces, to establish key amateur sport schools, in which athletes could enrol in a half-day of study and a half-day of training.

By 1965, a well-organised selection and training system for competitive sports took shape in China, characterised by three grades: grass-roots amateur sport schools, key sports schools, professional sports teams and national teams (see Figure 5.4). To encourage athletes to train harder and attain glory for the nation, the SPCSC issued its 'Inspection of the National Records and the Reward System' in May 1963. This document proclaimed that athletes would be awarded medals and honours according to their performance and achievements.[117] The SPCSC also issued an updated 'Rules and Regulations of Classification of Athletes' and 'Rules and Regulations of Classification of Referees' in October 1965, with the aim of normalising the management of athletes and referees.

[114] Fan Hong, Ping Wu & Huan Xiong. Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sports System and its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no.4 (2005):510–529.
[115] 'Minutes of 1964 National Sport Work Conference (1 January 1965)',op. cit., 94.
[116] 'Minutes of 1964 National Mass Sport Work Conference (3 June 1965)', op. cit., 94.
[117] 'Inspection of the National Records and the Reward System', op. cit.

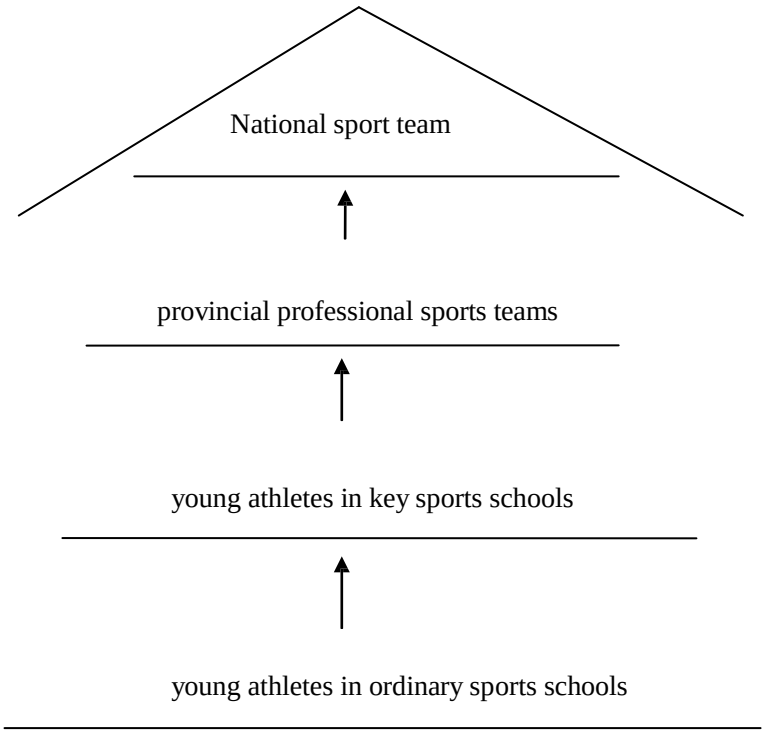


Figure 5.4. Pyramid of Selection and Training Systems of Elite Sports

Competitive system

Austerity policies meant that sports competitions at grass roots level (factories and schools) were cancelled after the failure of the GLF and China's involvement in international competitions shrank dramatically. 1961 and 1962 witnessed the smallest amount of China's participation in international sport competitions since 1957 (see Table 5.1). Furthermore, world record-breaking achievements by Chinese athletes dropped sharply from 27 in 1960 to 12 in 1961 and then to 1 in 1962.[118]

[118] Wu Shaozu, op. cit., 558.

Table 5.1. Chinese Athletes Participating in International Sports Competitions (1957–1965)

Year	Participants (times)	Sports Competitions (times)
1957	1,666	45
1958	1,051	90
1959	1,732	104
1960	1,212	81
1961	631	76
1962	459	42
1963	1,387	80
1964	1,302	102
1965	1,665	158

Source: Wu Shaozu, 1999[119]

Nevertheless, China did not ignore the role of competitive sports in producing athletes. Due to escalating military threats and after withdrawing from most international federations because of the 'Two Chinas Issue',[120] the government focus turned strategically to domestic sports competitions. China issued its policy to 'Train the soldiers [athletes] at home and compete against the foreign competitors' (*guo nei lian bing yi zhi dui wai*).[121] Meanwhile, the SPCSC required sport commissions at all levels to concentrate their resources on the Party's definition of 10 key sports (track and field, gymnastics, swimming, football, basketball, volleyball, table-tennis, shooting, weight lifting and speed skating) to reach international level within 10

[119] Wu Shaozu *et al*. (eds.), Sports History of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1999 , Op. cit.,551.

[120] In 1949, most of the Olympic committee members fled to Taiwan with the ROC government, and managed to maintain contact with the IOC, claiming jurisdiction over Olympic affairs both in the mainland and in Taiwan. In the Melbourne Olympic Games of 1956, both the PRC and Taiwan were invited to take part, since by that time both were recognised by the IOC. However, PRC quite the games in protest against Taiwan's participation, and continued to demand the expulsion of Taiwan after the Games. Frustrated over the representation issue, in 1958 the PRC withdrew its membership from the IOC and nine other international sporting organizations in protest against 'two Chinas' policy of the IOC and international word.

[121] 'Minutes of 1965 National Mass Sport Work Conference (January 1965)', Op. cit., p.99

years.[122]

Political and ideological education was also emphasised, aiming to cultivate athletic fighters with communist consciousness, to encourage them to train harder and win glory for the country. As early as 10 October 1960, at Beijing's national meeting on competitive sport training, political and ideological education of athletes was proposed. After 1963, this stance was highlighted in state policy, mainly through several incidents initiated by the Party. In the early 1960s, the CCP's Central Committee called upon the nation to learn from the spirit of hard work as exemplified by several socialist models, including Lei Fen and Wang Jinxi.[123] On 24 January 1964, an editorial 'Calling on the Entire Army to Learn Guo Xingfu Training Method'[124] was published in the *Liberation Army Daily*. Subsequently, on 20 February, an editorial entitled 'What Can we Lean from Guo Xingfu "Teaching Method?" 'was published in the *People's Daily*, exhorting people to learn from the principles of military training. At the 1963 National Sport Conference, the SPCSC asked that 'all athletes who are able to engage in normal training should conduct hard training and struggle to improve performance and win glory for our country!'.[125] The SPCSC then issued a directive in March 1964, requiring all athletes to learn from the PLA and socialist models (e.g. Wang Jinxi and Lei Fen), particularly the PLA's motto to 'Never fear hardship and death'.[126]

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[122] At the National Sport Work Conference in January 1965, China's government decided to strive to achieve the plan issued in 1958 to develop 10 major projects within a ten-year period and thus improve the performance of other sports. See the 'Minutes of 1965 National Mass Sport Work Conference (January 1965)', Op. cit., 99.

[123] Wang Jinxi was born into a poor peasant family. In 1956, he was admitted to the Chinese Communist Party. When Mao and the Party Central Committee decided in February 1960 'to fight' a massive battle to open up the Daqing oilfield in North China, Wang and his famous No. 1205 drilling team rushed to the bleak grasslands. Undeterred by bitter cold, fatigue, injuries and difficulties, Wang and his team kept working hard and successfully brought Daqing's first production well into operation in 1960. Wang was honoured by his colleagues as the 'Iron Man'. The government called upon the whole nation to learn from Wang's spirit of working hard and made him a role model for workers, peasants and students.

[124] Guo Xingfu, a commander in a regiment of the Nanjing military region, not only developed but innovated the PLA's military traditional training methods, infusing them with hatred of the class and the enemy, concentrating hatred of the enemy at the tip of the knife. He trained the company to be 'red and professional' (i.e. to be both socialist-minded and professionally competent). On 3 January 1964, the PLA's Military Committee issued instructions to call for the entire army to learn Guo Xingfu's teaching method.

[125] 'Minutes of 1962 National Mass Sport Work Conference (March 1963)', op. cit., 85–93.

[126] The principles of the PLA's tradition were required learning in the sports sector. This is illustrated by an editorial published in the *Sport Daily* on June 11, 1964. It stated that: firstly, 'three basic rules and one principle', which referred to firstly a rule of developing an understanding of the complexity, strictness and the mentality required in preparing for real battle, incorporating principles of heavy and intensive training. The

China's ambitions to surprise the world through the achievement of competitive sport were reignited. In 1964, the CCP Central Committee stated that the 'performance of competitive sports should be quickly improved to earn greater victory for the country and strengthen national prestige'.[127] At a national training work meeting held in December 1964, the SPCSC required sport commissions at all levels to fight against conservative ideology, dogmatism and arrogance in sports training and, for the first time, the SPCSC announced the training principle of 'Train hard and diligently, and bear a heavy load' [san cong yi da], which has served ever since as an important principle for competitive sports training in China.

State sports policy, which characterised the normalisation of the competitive sports system and training of communist elites, quickly realised positive results. In 1963 alone, 20 world records were broken, including 4 world championships; in 1964, competitive sport was further strengthened, paving the foundation for its second peak in 1965, when world records were broken 41 times.[128]

In short, after the failure of the GLF, the Chinese government changed its state sports policy in mass sports. In recognition of the escalating military threat from outside the country, the Party endorsed the strategy 'To train all Chinese citizens to be soldiers', which led to a marked domination of sports militarism in state policy. State policy for elite sports focused on using limited resources to develop a few sports and to produce communist athletes capable of successfully performing at a high level.

second rule embodied the 'Three fearless', meaning a fearlessness of hardship, fatigue and difficulties. The third rule consisted of 'Five commitments', meaning a total commitment to political loyalty, to training of the body, understanding technique, and to be tough and hard. See the Editorial, 'Embarks from strict, from Difficulty and from the actual Combat to Train, *Sport Daily*, 11 June 1964.

[127] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, ed. 'The CPC Central Committee Approved the request of the SPCSC to Hold the Second National Games' (28 January 1964), Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1964), (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1965), 120–121.

[128] Ibid.,148.

5.4 Conclusion

From 1952 to 1960, Chinese physical education and sport in the areas of sports policy, administration structure, training system, talent recruitment, athletic ranking system and the organisational forms of mass sport underwent a process of Sovietisation. The Soviet model helped to establish the SPCSC as a powerful, centralised, hierarchical government organisation that in 1952 displaced the ACSF, China's semi-official sports organisation. In essence, the highly centralised sports administrative system was a feature of China's political system and the Party-state system, which adopted Sovietisation for China's use in terms of historical origin and internal mechanisms, based on both historical experience of the CCP in revolutionary war and its ideological choices.

In 1952, China was both influenced by the Soviet Union, which regarded sporting success as a measure of national vitality and prestige, and by the idea that in the sports arena could compete with the USA. Thus, the government decided to develop competitive sports, resulting in a 'two legs walking system' from 1952 to 1966: elite and mass sports were developed simultaneously. In competitive sports, China set up a well-structured sports system modelled on the Soviet Union's system, to meet China's political and diplomatic demands. China also incorporated Soviet philosophy into mass sports. The Soviet Union's LDS was promoted nationwide, serving as an organised and efficient model to motivate the population for socialist construction in the 1950s.

After the failure of the GLF, the CCP changed its policy to 'readjustment, consolidation, filling out and raising standards'. Sports policy was adjusted, becoming consistent with the Party's line. In 1961 and 1962, China witnessed a sports policy featuring 'active rest', which significantly reduced the development of sports in terms of scale and quantity. As the national economy began to recover, China adjusted its state sports policy in 1963. In competitive sports, policy focused on using limited

resources to provide special and intensive training for potential athletes in a particular sport, to enable them to compete on the international stage;[129] this eventually resulted in the standardisation of elite sports systems. In mass sports, China's state policy prioritised sports in schools and factories and plants in urban areas, then extended the sports to rural areas. Facing military threats and the endangerment of national security from India, South Vietnam, the USA and the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, state sports policy encouraged people to participate in military sport activities to build strong bodies and enhance solidarity and nationalism for the country's defence. The Sino-Soviet split weakened the ideological impact of the Soviet model in Chinese sports, but the centralised government's sports system and especially its competitive sports system that had been influenced by the Soviet model not did not change, but strengthened.

The concept of cultural hegemony and perspective of legitimacy assist with the understanding of the relationship between ideology and sports, as well as the relationship between sports and party. During this critical phase of the Cold War, the ideological conflict between capitalist and socialist camps was reflected in the field of sports. The Sovietisation of sports indicated that the CCP dominated sport as the ruling class and its controlling and prevailing ideology formed part of the government's superstructure. During the GLF, Chinese state policy was largely driven by the party's radical ideology, which aimed to convince Chinese people and demonstrate to the world the advantages of socialism over capitalism. This ideology meant that the CCP secured greater support of the masses to maintain the Party's dominating position and gain political legitimacy. This ideology influenced state sports policy during the GLF and encouraged championships and the spirit of sporting heroes in competitive sport. Participation in sports was heavily emphasised, to not only encourage a spirit of cohesiveness amongst the masses, but also to demonstrate to the world how happy, healthy and strong China had become under socialism. The

[129] Fan Wei, Fan Hong & Lu Zhouxiang, 'Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre- and Post-Beijing 2008'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27,no14-15(2010):2380–2402.

GLF eventually had an adverse effect on sports participants, athletes and physical education systems in schools. Nevertheless, the Sovietisation of Chinese sports and the GLF laid the foundation for the policy and systems of Chinese physical education and sports that remain in place today.

Chapter 6: State Sports Policies and Systems during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976

6.1 Introduction

It is argued that political ideology is driven by the need for all political forces to legitimise their strategies and programmes; they create an appropriate intellectual narrative that serves as a logic to justify their dominance in certain key areas of a society's political life, and in the economy of power distribution. [1] Chinese Communists have always stressed the importance of ideological dominance as a means of ensuring the Party's control of society.[2] In 1966, Mao launched his final revolutionary drama, 'the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution', marking the start of one of the greatest political and social upheavals of modern history.[3] The purpose of the Cultural Revolution was to prevent the restoration of capitalism and re-establish the purity of Communism threatened by so-called revisionists and capitalists over the previous 17 years.

The subsequent 10 years of civil strife (officially dated as the period from May 1966 to October 1976) witnessed the most serious setbacks and losses for the Party and the state since the founding of the PRC.[4] However, as Fan Hong has argued, the Cultural Revolution was 'not all bad' for the development of sport.[5] The year 1971 was a

[1] Kerry Brown, 'The Communist Party of China and Ideology', China: An International Journal 10, no.2 (2012): 52-68.
[2] Hsi-en Chen and Sin-ming, 'Thought Reform in Communist China', *Far Eastern Survey* 24, no. 12 (1955): 177–184.
[3] The official Chinese Party verdict on Mao and the Culture Revolution is set forth in the 'Resolution on Certain Questions in the History Our Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China', Sixth Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, 27 June 1981, *Beijing Review*, 6 July, 1981: 10–39.
[4] The Central Committee of the CCP, *The Resolution of Several CPC's Historical Issues since the Founding of PRC* (27–29 June 1981) at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1981.
[5] Fan Hong, Not all bad! communism, society and sport in the great proletarian cultural revolution: a revisionist perspective, The International Journal of the History of Sport 16, no.3 (1999): 47-71

turning point for the development of sport, when the SCSPE, namely the Sports Ministry, was re-established and 'Ping-pong diplomacy'[6] facilitated a new era of Sino-American relations.

The themes of this chapter are divided into two sections. The first discusses the relationship between the dominance of anti-elitist ideology and the breakdown of the national elite sports system in the first stage of the Cultural Revolution from the perspective of Gramsci's cultural hegemony, and offers an analysis of the ideological roots underlying radical mass sports in China. The second section focuses on how sports policies and systems adjusted to changing ideology during the second stage of the most significant political unrest in the history of the PRC between 1971 and 1976.

6.2 State Sports Policies and Systems from 1966 to 1970

6.2.1 Anti-Elitism, Culture Hegemony and the Breakdown of Elite Sports Systems

According to the 'Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' issued in August 1966, 'the unfolding of the great proletarian cultural revolution touches people to their very souls and constitutes a new stage in the development of the socialist revolution in our country, a deeper and more extensive stage'.[7] Convinced that revisionists in the party had changed the original meaning of Maoism and communist ideology of the CCP, Mao regarded his leadership as representing the name of the proletarian revolution and the fight against bureaucratic structures and elitists. As a result, most of the senior party members and leaders at every level were labelled as followers of 'elitists and bureaucrats', who had lost touch with the masses. Mao and his followers launched the Cultural Revolution with the intention of re-establishing the ideological purity of Communism under threat from the revisionists and capitalists. By recreating

[6] For detailed information about Ping-pong diplomacy, see Section 6.3 of this chapter.

[7] The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, 'Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCPC) concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1966), 1.

unpolluted Maoism,[8] they aimed to transform, revitalise and re-claim the leadership of Maoist and proletarian ideology throughout culture, education, literature, media, drama, film and sports.

Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony makes it possible to re-examine the deeper origins of the ideological struggle-cultural leadership. According to Gramsci, political power is exercised not through force, but through a dominant worldview, or ideology, expect where hegemony breaks down. Gramsci and Mao both contend that the survivability of a regime in modern conditions does not simply depend on its military and economic power, but also on legitimacy and, in particular, whether the cultural leadership or 'soft power' (i.e. when people follow those in power without being forced to do so) is embedded in people's hearts. Mao and Gramsci believe that superstructure is not always determined by economic ideology. This raises two points of apparent contradiction: firstly, under the capitalist system, the proletariat can surrender to bourgeois ideology as a 'social consensus', which helps the 'bourgeoisie to rule itself'; secondly, under the conditions of socialism, where socialist transformation has taken place as a result of economic ideology, the superstructure can be bourgeois, but never in a complete and automatic sense, because of the socialist transformation of the means of production.[9] In other words, under socialist conditions, the proletariat can help bourgeois society to rule itself 'culturally' after losing its economic status and foundation, and even let the bourgeoisie destroy the ideological legality of the socialist system. According to Gramsci, a shake-up of cultural legitimacy happens before or after the separation of the capitalist system and the workers' interest. In this regard, Mao's thoughts and actions are consistent with Gramsci's views. Thus, the crisis of 'cultural and ideological legitimacy' will be a sufficient condition for the proletarian – economic crisis is unnecessary. This can be seen from Mao's speech in 1964, in which he claimed:

[8] Guo Dajun. et al., *The History of the People's Republic of China 1949–93* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 1995), 187, 205–6.
[9] Han Yuhai, 'The Long Revolution: Mao Zedong and Cultural Leadership'. *Theory and Criticism of Literature and Art* 26, no.1 (2008): 9–21.

> The possible failure of socialism does not lie in that its economic foundation has been shaken first, but the loss of cultural legitimacy happened first [in fact, this refers to the Soviet Union].[10]

Although both Mao and Gramsci emphasise the importance of culture and ideology in any superstructure, they differ in their viewpoints concerning cultural revolution. Gramsci lived in a capitalist country under a fascist dictatorship. His political goal was to gradually disintegrate power held by the bourgeois state, through the process of 'molecular invasion'. Gramsci emphasised the concessions of the proletariat in the alliance and highlighted the proletariat's cultural superiority over other classes, and he hoped to reach an 'alliance' through coordination and consultation rather than violence.[11] He therefore defined hegemony as the process by which the dominant classes or factions, through their privileged access to social institutions (such as the media), propagate values that reinforce their control over politics and the economy. His theory of hegemony contends that different classes of people can stand side by side in one society and that any sustained and effective political power must be grounded in a certain degree of consent and support from its subordinated groups.[12] In contrast, Mao's revolutionary hegemony emphasises insurrection and violence as the means whereby one class overthrows another.

Ideological purity during the Cultural Revolution was achieved not only through pervasive public dissemination of Maoist ideology, but also through criticism and destruction, as well as revolutionary action. The early part of the Cultural Revolution witnessed chaotic, violent political upheaval and ferocious ideological debate. Shortly after the resolution announcing the Cultural Revolution was passed at the Eleventh Plenary Session of the CCP 8th Central Committee on 8 August 1966, large numbers

[10] Mao Zedong, *Talk on Reading the Textbook of Political Economics in Soviet Union*, Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, volume 8 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1999), 132.
[11] Perry Anderson, The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci, (London: Verso Books, 2017), 15-16.
[12] Han Yuhai, op.cit., 9–21

of young people in urban areas were mobilised to rebel against revisionism within the CCP. Schools were closed and students were encouraged to join Red Guard units, which denounced and persecuted teachers and intellectuals, engaged in widespread book burnings, enforced mass relocations, and upheld Mao's cult of personality. The political campaign triggered widespread unrest. In January 1967, the Cultural Revolution entered a new stage of violence, overthrowing all those in positions of authority in the Party and the government who refused to accept Mao's new revolutionary order.[13]

The turbulence of the Cultural Revolution soon extended into the field of sport. Mao believed that the SCSPE had broken away from the Party's leadership and the dictatorship of the proletariat, to become an 'independent kingdom'.[14] On 12 May 1968, under Mao's instruction, the Cultural Revolutionary Communist Centre Committee with the State Council and the Central Military Commission issued a Military Order (later called the '5.12 instruction') to disband the SCSPE and sports commissions at all provincial and county levels. It stated:

> The SCSPE has been a black headquarter for capitalists and revisionists for 18 years. A few powerful people, including He Long and Rong Gaotang, took the capitalist road and controlled it. They neglected people's interests and their health. They concentrated only on small elite and on medals. They rejected Chairman Mao's revolutionary guidance, and built up their own black empire. The work of the SCSPE in the past mainly served the purpose of the restoration of capitalism. The old sport administration and training system therefore should be destroyed and replaced with military control.[15]

[13] Philip Bridgham, 'Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967: The struggle to Seize Power'. *The China Quarterly (Cambridge University Press)*, no. 34 (Apr-Jun 1968): 6–37.

[14] Wu Shaozu. *et al*., eds., *Sport History of People's Republic of China 1949-1998* (Beijing: China Book Publishing House 1999), 172.

[15] The Central Committee of the CCP, the State Council, the Central Military Commission and the Central Committee of Cultural Revolution, *The Central Committee of Cultural Revolution jointly issued an order for the military takeover of the State Sports System (referred to as the '5.12' order), People's Daily*, 12 May 1966.

Wei Jizhong, former Director of the International Affairs Office in the Sports Ministry, recalls: 'In 1966, a campaign against "capitalists" and "revisionists" was launched within the SCSPE, and all leaders, regardless of rank, were denounced. The rebels persecuted those officials, and labelled them enemies of the people.'[16] More than 1,000 employees of the SCSPE were sent to a 'May 7' Cadre School[17] in Shanxi province where they were forced to accept re-education by engaging in labour.[18]

After the turbulent 'Red Storm' in March 1967, Mao ordered the Army to take over ministries and state commissions, including the SCSPE, to maintain control of society.[19] Sports committees at all levels were taken over by the army, which sent many officials to the 'May 7' Cadre School for re-education. In Shanghai alone, 306 personnel in over 1,800 sports personnel were persecuted and dismissed, while 702 were sent away for 're-education'.[20] As a result, the governing bodies of sport at all levels throughout the country were destroyed.

The confrontation in the field of sports essentially concerned the relationship between elite and mass sports.[21] The cultural revolutionists regarded elite sports as representing elitism that only served the bourgeoisie, while mass sports were for the proletariat, the masses. Since the Cultural Revolution aimed to eliminate bourgeois ideology and revisionism, anti-elitist ideology targeted the leaders in the field of sport and people in authority.

This rejection of elitism and revisionism fuelled the launch of a nationwide campaign denouncing sports trophies. By 1967, the administrative system in competitive sports

[16] Wei Jizhong, My Sports Career (1958–2008), (Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House, 2008), 41.
[17] 'May 7' cadre schools were established during the Cultural Revolution in accordance with Mao's 7 May instruction, which included a letter to Lin Biao, designed to force the party's cadres and educated people into re-education and peasant labour.
[18] Wu Shaozu, op. cit., 172.
[19] By September 1969, revolutionary committees were established in 29 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions; 21 of them (72%) were headed by ex-Army personnel. In addition to the SCSPE, 17 national ministries and commissions were transferred to Army control.
[20] Fu Yannong, *The Sports History of PRC*, 301.
[21] Fan Hong, 'Not all Bad! Communism, Society and Sport in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: a Revisionist Perspective'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 16, no.3(1999): 47–71.

was almost completely dysfunctional, the entire training and competition system had collapsed, and almost all professional sports teams at all levels were dismissed. Any surviving sports teams had to suspend normal training sessions.[22] For instance, 47 provincial football teams were disbanded and 1,124 outstanding players and 115 full-time coaches had to leave the field.[23] Nian Weisi, a member of the Chinese national football team at this time, recalls:

> Since the founding of the PRC, although from time to time, various political campaigns were carried out, the influence this time (i.e. the Cultural Revolution) was different from before in terms of intensity and extent. The previous political campaigns like 'the struggle against three evils and five evils (*San fan wufan*)', or 'the struggle against rightists' (*Fan you pai dou zheng*) were all under the leadership of the party (CCP) and completed within a few months, but this campaign was extremely serious and there were not any signs of coming to an end at all. In addition, previous campaigns did not affect normal work, however, this campaign had gradually escalated from 'engaging in revolution by suspending classes', 'making revolution by connecting each other', to totally stopping work and production. In the field of sports, large number of sports teams stopped training. [. . .] As the campaign progressed, training sessions were totally abolished, and those who continued to work hard on the training field were denounced as '*bai zhuan lu xian*' [being less concerned about politics and only focused on academic research]. In this context, working hard was a kind of political and social failure, so who would be willing to engage in professional training?[24]

[22] Wu Shaozu, op. cit., 175.
[23] Wu Shaozu, op. cit., 175.
[24] Nian Weisi, *Gratification and Pathetique – This is My Football Career*. (Beijing: Beijing Sport University Press, 1995), 120–122.

'Anti-revisionism' also played a role in paralysing the system of elite sports. Under this principle, some outstanding coaches and athletes, particularly any athletes who had experienced time living overseas, were labelled as 'royalists', 'black elite' and 'counter-revolutionists', or even denounced as spies and persecuted. Xu Yingsheng, a world table tennis champion, recalls: 'At the time, in the eyes of rebels, athletes were regarded as 'capitalists' while international champions were called representative of revisionists, and those people who continued to focus on training were criticised for not paying enough attention to political campaigns. They were denounced as boycotting the Cultural Revolution'.[25] The national table tennis team had acquired the most international championship and glory, so became the main target of attack. Many athletes and coaches suffered severe persecution and died. Three famous world-class table tennis players, known as the 'Pingpong sanjie' (Pingpong Three Elite) – Fu Chuanfang, Jiang yongning and Rongguotuan, committed suicide due to unbearable torment.

The sports competition system almost vanished entirely. National and international competitions were completely cancelled from 1967 through 1969.[26] Competitive sports went into sharp decline. As Nian Weisi states, 'after engaging in the campaign for 5 years, football athletes lost their skills and gained body weight due to the lack of training. When the team returned to training in 1970, the average age was 28 years and the team had lost most of their skills. When I was reorganising the national football teams, I truly felt that it would be extremely difficult to make a recovery, let alone improve from where we had peaked before the cancellation of training and competition'.[27]

[25] Xu Yinsheng, *I and Table Tennis* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1995), 152.
[26] Wu Shaozu, op. cit., 175.
[27] Nian Weisi, *Gratification and Pathetique – This is My Football Career* (Beijing: Beijing Sport University Press, 1995), 127.

6.2.2 The Cult of Mao and Radical Ideology of Mass Sports

Soon after the launch of the Cultural Revolution, mass sports activities in factories and plants came to a standstill. In January 1967, as the Cultural Revolution began to seize power, a campaign of armed struggle was launched between factions holding different views.[28] The entire country plunged into chaos, while GDP growth plummeted (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Status of the National Economy (1966-1968). Units in billions (RMB)

Yearly Total Output	Compared with National Revenue Industry and Agriculture of the previous year	Compared with the previous year
1966	253.4 +17.3%	158.6 +17.0%
1967	230.6 –9.6%	148.7 −7.2%
1968	221.3 –4.2%	141.5 −6.5%

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1993), *China Statistics Press*, 1994 edition. pp: 15.

Due to political disorder and the falling economy, mass sports declined in general. School students were ordered to suspend their schooling and conduct rebel campaigns against capitalists in power within the CCP, which plunged the schools into chaos. In May 1966, teaching activities in schools ceased completely. By the end of 1966, administrative leadership in the government was almost paralysed. Many school leaders and teachers were denounced by students and forced to undergo corporal punishment, while nearly all primary and secondary schools were closed nationwide.

Maoist leaders placed a high value on political work and on China's ideological superstructure. This emphasis on ideological reform took many forms: the memorisation of Mao's writings and events associated with Mao, the reorganisation of China's artists into propagandists for Maoism, and the promotion of the mass

[28] Roderick MacFarquhar & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 15: *The People's Republic, Part 2: Revolutions within the Chinese Revolution, 1966–1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1987, 169.

sports movement (Richard Curt Kraus, 1989).[29] Karl Marx, the creator of the ideology on which Chinese communism is based, opposed the cult of the individual.[30] However, Mao's era was marked by the cult of personality, which peaked during the Cultural Revolution. Large-scale mass sports programmes were regularly organised throughout the country to meet political and military needs. On 16 July 1966, Mao swam across the Yangtze River in Wuhan,[31] inspiring the masses to carry out large-scale swimming activities. Thereafter, 16 July was designated as an official anniversary of Mao's feat. In Shandong province, the Towns and Cities Revolutionary Committees at the town and city levels[32] widely responded to Mao's call for organising unprecedented large-scale mass swim programmes. In Harbin, on 16 July 1968, hundreds of thousands of people attended a swimming programme to celebrate the second anniversary of Mao's swim across the Yangtze River. In order to demonstrate their loyalty to Mao, some of the swimmers held up his portraits and the slogan 'Long live Chairman Mao' while crossing the river (see Figure 6.1).

[29] Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in Chin*a: *Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 152–3.

[30] Karl Marx, Marx To Wilhelm Blos In Hamburg. *Der wahre Jacob*, 1908, 288.

[31] Mao's first swim across the Yangtze River in Wuhan was on 31 May 1956. His last swim there was on 16 July 1966. During this period of time, Mao reportedly swam across the Yangtze a total of 17 times.

[32] The term "revolutionary committee" originated in the Soviet Union, where it referred to a power structure that combined the military and the state. China's revolutionary committees formed following power seizures by rebel and Red Guard factions that led to nationwide administrative paralysis. By September 1968, committees had been set up in all provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions across the country.



Figure 6.1. People swimming across the Songhua River in Harbin, Heilongjiang province, on 16 July 1968, in celebration of the second anniversary marking Mao's swim in 1966 across the Yangtze River. Some of the swimmers held aloft his portrait and the slogan 'Long live Chairman Mao'.
Source: http://www.fotoe.com/image/20082642

The cult of Mao in mass sports is illustrated by the use of his instructions about calisthenics, which became a famous quotation throughout the Mao era. His words originated from a military arts troupe and were later introduced into the Beijing University of Sports (then called Beijing Workers, Peasants and Soldiers College of Sports), where the gymnastics were improved by professional coaches and then launched nationwide. Chi Zhenguo, then a junior student of Beijing University of Sports in 1967, recalled:

> Soon after Mao's calisthenics quotation appeared, it was introduced into Beijing Sport University (BSU). In order to reach the political goal, the university immediately organised calisthenics teachers and students to revise, supplement and demonstrate it. After hundreds of thousands of handouts were ready, mobilisation meetings were held. Publicising Mao's quotation about gymnastics was treated as an important political mission. Staff and students made public resolutions to accomplish this political task

> and then advance to rural areas, communes, and factories to teach gymnastics, just like soldiers marching forward across the battlefields.[33]

Chi Zhenguo recollects that the calisthenics set included 6 sections, each of which was composed of simple dance movements. The calisthenics movement was mixed with political slogans and Mao's quotations: the first section of the movement stated that 'the CCP is the core leading force for our cause; Marxism-Leninism functions as the rationale in directing our thoughts and the movement'. This movement only involved upper limb exercises, including raising both arms, chest forwards, head up, showing extreme faith and respect for the CCP and Marxism-Leninism. The second section was a chest-expanding exercise, which was accompanied by the text 'we should trust masses and the Party (CCP)'; the third section was whole-body movement representing labour, such as swinging a hammer or cutting wheat, emphasising 'paying attention to revolution, promoting production and preparing for war and famine'. The fourth section comprised turning body movements, symbolising that 'we support all that our enemy is opposed to'; the fifth section emphasised that 'rebelling is reasonable', accompanied by a kicking movement, while the sixth section demonstrated that 'nobody can compete with the integration of the army and citizenry as a whole'.[34] Everyone was expected to put effort into these exercises. If they failed to do so, they were denounced as being disloyal to Chairman Mao, and classified as counter-revolutionists.

6.3 State Sports Policies and Systems from 1971 to 1976

6.3.1 Ping-pong Diplomacy and the Rebirth of Competitive Sports

Damage to the system of competitive sports was at its height between 1968 and 1970

[33] Chi Zhenguo, 'An Anecdote of the Cultural Revolution – Chairman Mao's Quotation Calisthenics'. *The Journal of Sports Culture Guide*, no.8 (2003): 64.
[34] Ibid., 64.

under anti-elitism, anti-revisionism and Maoism ideology, fuelled by revolutionary zeal and violent class struggles. This situation changed in 1971, due to the urgent need to improve Sino-American relations. Several events that occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s encouraged Beijing to reconsider its diplomatic relationships with the Soviet Union and USA. The clash with Soviet troops on Zhenbao Island (Damansky) in the Ussuri River in March 1969 aroused concern in Beijing that Moscow would escalate what had hitherto been a series of minor confrontations.[35] A series of clashes on the northwestern frontier, particularly in Xinjiang, occurred in August. Rumours began to emanate from Eastern European sources that the Russians were sounding out their allies about a 'surgical strike' against Chinese nuclear weapons installations.[36] Sino-Soviet border clashes increasingly made China aware that the Soviet Union, rather than the USA, was its major threat. Chinese communists pondered how to maintain national security in the face of these events.

Beijing implemented a new diplomatic policy seeking closer relations with Washington as a counterweight to Moscow, although it was not easy to overcome the long-held distrust between China and the USA. The government faced substantial hurdles in overcoming factional opposition to dealing with Washington.[37] Sino-American relations had remained at a stalemate since the 1950s, especially as the USA became more committed to the Vietnam War. Mao finally opted for the policy of rapprochement after Zhou Enlai assembled a high-level group of revolutionary heroes to study the issue and they declared themselves in favour of improving relations with the USA.[38] On 25 December 1970, a photo of Mao and prominent American journalist Edgar Snow standing side by side on the Tian'an Men

[35] Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 263.
[36] Ibid., 263.
[37] Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945-1996* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 237.
[38] Chen Jian and David L. Wilson, 'All Under Heaven Is Great Chaos': Beijing, the Sino-Soviet Border Clashes, and the Turn Toward Sino-American Rapprochement, 1968–1969", *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* (Winter 1998): 155–175.

Rostrum was published on the front page of the *People's Daily*,[39] conveying a message that China was willing to improve relations with the USA.

For America's part, while President Nixon was known for his strident, anticommunist rhetoric, he became obsessed during this time with the possibility of forging better relations with Beijing.[40] However, he had to consider the fact that in the mid-1960s, ~90% of Americans viewed China negatively and ~70% regarded China as the greatest threat to world peace.[41] Nixon's administration implemented its political intention through ingenious means. At the end of 1969, Henry Kissinger, then National Security Adviser to the Nixon administration, asked Walt Stoessel, then the US ambassador to Poland, to convey a message to make contact with the Chinese ambassador in Warsaw.[42] Nixon also attempted to deliver some information to Mao through Pakistan's President Yahya Khan and the Romanian leader Nicolae Ceaușescu, who maintained close ties with China.

'Ping-Pong Diplomacy' and 'Friendship First, Competition Second'

The 31st World Table Tennis Championships in 1971 provided the leaders of China and the USA with a good opportunity to open up dialogue. Although the PRC had withdrawn from almost all international sports federation memberships, in response to the 'Two China Issue' and the PRC had refused to be involved in any international sports events that recognised two Chinas, Beijing maintained its membership in the World Table Tennis Federation. The Cultural Revolution meant that the PRC missed

[39] On 1 October 1970, the 21st anniversary celebration of the founding of the PRC was held in Tian'anmen Square. At the invitation of Zhou Enlai, Edgar Snow attended the National Day ceremony. Returning to his residence, Mao explained to his surrounding staff why Snow was given such a high courtesy: 'The drinker's heart is not in the cup. I put a balloon first and touched the nerves of the United States'. Wu Xujun, 'Mao Zedong's five step chess: opening the door of Sino-US relations'. See Lin Kexu Tao, Wu Xujun, The Truth of History, (Beijing: Central Party Literature Publishing House, 1998, 1st Edition, 231). In order to attract attention from the United States, the *People's Daily* ran a front-page story on Christmas Day 1970 accompanied by a photograph of Chairman Mao Tsetung and American journalist Edgar Snow standing side by side atop the Tian'anmen rostrum; at the top of the page, the Mao quote for the day was: 'All the peoples of the world, including the American people, are our friends'.

[40] Xu Guoqxi, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports, 1895–2008*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2008), 119.

[41] Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945–1996* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 237.

[42] Ibid., 237.

the 29th (1967) and 30th (1969) World Table Tennis Championships.

The 31st World Table Tennis championship was scheduled for March 1971 in Japan. To promote this event and ensure that it was truly a world class competition, Japan invited China, who formerly dominated this event worldwide. The PLA officers in the SCSPE did not dare to accept, fearing that 'Western foes' might sabotage the Chinese team's performance. Zhou Enlai was aware that China should make an appearance during this championship as part of China's return to the international community.[43] He therefore petitioned Mao in writing, asking for instructions: 'This competition has become a serious international struggle, so we should go to Japan to participate in the tournament; we propose 'Friendship First, Competition Second', even if we lose, it does not matter'.[44] Mao responded accordingly: 'Our team should go. Our athletes should not be afraid of death and hardship'.[45]

During the championship, the American and Chinese players became friends.[46] When the Americans knew that the Chinese delegation had invited Britain, Australia, Canada, Colombia and Nigeria to visit China after the championship, the Chairman of the American Table Tennis Association expressed his team's desire to visit China as well. The gesture was overt and clear. When the Chinese delegates asked Mao for

[43] Zhou firstly accepted a visit of Koji Goto in early 1971 and then granted an article published in the *People's Daily* on 2 February 1971, claiming that Beijing expected to take part in the 31st World Table Tennis Championship. He then arranged a meeting with relevant persons, including high-ranking officials of the SCSPE, coaches and athletes of the table tennis team, to explain why new China should take part in this competition. See details in Xu GuoQi, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports,1895–2008* (Harvard University Press, 2008), 172.

[44] Feng Xianzhi, Jin Chong, ed., *Biography of Mao Zedong (1949–1976)*, (Part II) (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 2004), 128.

[45] For Mao Zedong's manuscript of instruction for Zhou Enlai's report on the Chinese table tennis delegation's participation in the 31st World Table Tennis Championships, see Feng Xianzhi, Jin Chong, ed., Biography of Mao Zedong (1949–1976), (Part II). (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 2004), 128.

[46] In a TV programme, Zhuang Zedong recalled that: "On the bus trip to the competition venue, an American table tennis player got on the Chinese team bus. The trip took 15 minutes, but nobody dared to contact him because we all grew up with the slogan 'Down with the American imperialism!' And, particularly, the string of class struggle was tightened unprecedentedly during the Cultural Revolution. Zhuang hesitated for 10 minutes, but he suddenly recalled the instruction "friendship first and competition second" by Premier Zhou before our departure. He believed that the American player was just an athlete and not a policy maker, so we should show Chinese friendship to him. Finally, Zhuang came up from his back seat to greet him through an interpreter and presented him with a silkscreen portrait of Huangshan Mountains. After this incident was reported to Mao, he was aware that this might be an opportunity to build a relationship with America, so decided to invite America's ping pong team to visit Beijing. See Zhuang Zedong, interview by Dong Lu in the Programme ''Zhuang Zedong's Whimsical Ping-Pong Affection', BTV, China, 26 August 2011.

instruction, he decided to extend the invitation to the American team. Nixon was surprised, saying: 'I never expected that the initiative toward China would be realized by means of a table tennis team's visit.'[47] He immediately approved acceptance of the invitation. In return, the Americans invited the Chinese team to the USA in 1972. The exchange of visits between the Chinese and American ping-pong teams not only coined the term 'Ping-Pong diplomacy', but led to Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972 and a thaw in US-China relations.[48] Sport played a significant role in bringing the two nations together.

In 1971, China secured more than just 'Ping-Pong diplomacy'. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly passed Resolution 2758 on 25 October 1971, recognising the PRC as being the only lawful representative of China and thus ending the 'Two China' issue. The Sino-American rapprochement and China's return to the UN in the early 1970s created a good international environment for China's exchange with the rest of world.[49]

Following in the footsteps of China's table tennis teams, teams from basketball, volleyball, and other sports including swimming, track and field, weightlifting, badminton and tennis joined in the diplomatic campaign in 1973 and 1974.[50] The principle 'Friendship First, Competition Second' and 'Ping-Pong diplomacy' helped China to improve its friendships with other Western countries, as well as strengthen political unions with Third World countries. In August 1973, the first Asian-African-Latin American Table Tennis Friendship Invitational Tournament was

[47] For more detailed information about the Sino-American 'ping-pong diplomacy', see George Santel. *Nixon's Autobiography* (Chengdu: Chengdu Press, 1996), 86; Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap,1978) First Edition, 457.

[48] Zhuang Zedong, Chinese 'ping-pong diplomacy' player, available from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21400699, (accessed 10 February 2013).

[49] Wu Shaozu, 'Passionate Care, Kind Instruction – Written in Memory of the 100th Anniversary of the Premier's Birthday', *Sports Culture Guide* 16, no.1 (1998): 4-8.

[50] On 14 April 1971, the Chinese Women's Basketball Team paid a visit to Cuba, the first visit to a foreign country since the launch of the Culture Revolution. The Chinese Track and Field Team visited Albania in July, 1971; the Beijing Women's and Men's Basketball Teams visited Guinea in September 1971, while the Women's Volleyball and Men's Basketball Teams visited North Korea in December 1971. See 'Cuban football team visited China on 21 May 1972', *China Sports Yearbook 1966–1975*, (Beijing: People Sports Publishing House, 1983), 12–13.

held in Beijing, involving more than 1,100 athletes and representatives from 86 countries.[51] The notice to this meeting stated that:

> Asian, African and Latin American peoples have similar historical experience and are now facing the same struggle for survival. We are all overwhelmingly aware of the importance of solidarity and co-operation. Sport exchange may help to achieve a common aspiration, the solidarity between the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Therefore, athletes from three continents should take a variety of forms of exchanges to contribute to the friendship and solidarity between Asia, Africa and Latin America.[52]

'Ping-Pong diplomacy' and the restoration of China's lawful seat in the UN provided China with a favourable external environment to return to the international arena. On 17 December 1973, the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) approved the PRC as the only lawful representative of China. Two days later, China agreed to take part in the 7th Asian Games to be held in Teheran.[53] This change in foreign policy marked China's participation from 1973 onwards in international sports organisations, such as the International Weightlifting Federation, and the International Rowing Federation.

Changing Policies in Sports and the Rebirth of the Elite Sports System

'Ping-Pong diplomacy' changed not only the status of the country, but also Peking's sports policies. To help elite sports to play a positive role on the international sport

[51] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (eds.), 'Press Release of the Asian-African-Latin American Table Tennis Friendship Invitational Tournament', *Yearbook of Chinese Sport 1973–1974*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 37–38.

[52] Editor, 'Press Release of the Asian-African-Latin American Table Tennis Friendship Invitational Tournament'. In *Yearbook of Chinese Sport 1973–1974*, Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport,ed., 37–38. Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982.

[53] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (eds.), *China Sports Yearbook (1949–1991)*, First volume (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1993), 65.

stage, the Communist Party decided to restore its Sport Ministry, the SCSPE. In February 1972, the 'Military Order' was abolished.[54] Army officers and soldiers returned to their regiments. Those employees who used to serve in the Sport Ministry were called back from the countryside to Beijing.[55] The following two years witnessed the gradual recovery of sports governing bodies at the provincial and city levels across the country.[56] For example, the Li Jing County Sport Committee was established in 1954 in County Li Jin[57], Shandong Province (see Figure 6.4). From 1967 to 1969, the County Sport Committee was controlled by the military, while the sports administration was in charge of the Sport Section of Political Department, County Revolution Committee.[58] In 1974, the County Sport Committee was re-established and in 1977, it was incorporated into the County Education Bureau.[59]

[54] In 1972, Mao Zedong proposed that the Central Committee of CCP earnestly study the issue of the 'Decision on Concentrating Our Forces on Carrying out the Tasks of Supporting Leftists, Agriculture, Workers, Military Administration and Military Training' (abbreviated as 'Three Support and Two Military'). To this end, the General Political Department of the PLA and the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CCP carried out investigation and research, and drafted the 'Decision on Several Issues of Three Support and Two Military (Draft)'. According to this document, in order to strengthen the unified leadership of the Party, military control could be abolished after the establishment of the Party Committee in all places and units.

[55] According to Li Menghua, the former Director of the SCSPE, in the face of the new situation and tasks, the Military Control Commission (MCC) was aware that only those cadres with professional skills or a background in sport could carry out these tasks correctly. For more information, see the Editorial group, *Li Menghua's Sports Road*, (People Sports Publishing House, 2011), 56.

[56] For example, in early 1973, in Wuhu, a city in southeastern China, a Sports Commission was re-established; the Shanghai Sports Committee was re-established in 1973; in Yue Yang, a city in the centre of China, the Sports Committee was re-established in 1973; in Pan Zhihua, a city in western China, the County Miyi Sports Commission was established in 1973.

[57] County Lijing was taken over by the Communist Party in 1944. From 1944 to 1955, the Department of Education, County Government and County Communist Youth League commonly were responsible for sports.

[58] The Revolutionary Committee was the organisational form of local governments at all levels and of some departments in the central government during the Cultural Revolution. On 1 July 1979, the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress approved the proposal of the amendment of several provisions of the constitution of the People's Republic of China, to reorganise the Revolutionary Committee in the government at all levels. The organisational form of the Revolutionary Committee was not revoked until the 1980s.

[59] Office of Local Chronicles Compilation of Shandong Province, *Sports Chronicles of Shandong Province Chronicles* (Shandong People's Press, 1993), 85.

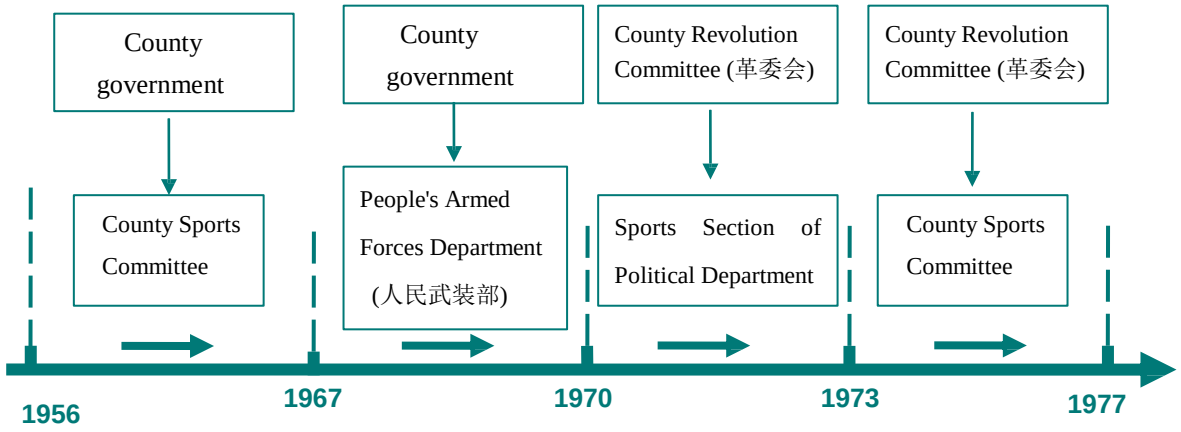


Figure 6.2. Evolution of the Sport Administrative Structure of Country Lijing (利津), Shandong Province (1956–1977)

Besides this re-establishment of the administrative system, training and selection systems were also restored after 1971. At the State Meeting of Youth Amateur Sport Schools held in September 1972, it was resolved that a national amateur sport training network would be established. Sports committees at all levels were required to restore sports schools.[60] By the end of 1974, 1,459 such schools had been reopened.[61] Sports competitions were frequent in every county, region and province. Professional training was also gradually resumed. By the end of 1973, most provincial and national teams started training schedules for national and international competitions.[62] Based on the restoration of training and the selection system, the competition system began to recover. The years from 1973 to 1975 witnessed increasing numbers of sports competitions.[63]

[60] According to the Minutes of Meeting of the National Work Meeting of Amateur Sports School in 1961, the Amateur Sports School should be run by the local, municipal and county sports committees, and then in practice become a sports training network. See The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC ed., 'Minutes of Meeting of the National Work Meeting of Amateur Sports School in 1961', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 85.

[61] General Administration of Sport of China, 'A Review of the Youth Amateur Sports Training in China: Review, Current Situation and Reform Strategies', available from http://www.sport.gov.cn/n16/n1152/n2463/127237.html2003-07-24(accessed 5 July 2013)

[62] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Minutes of National Work Meeting of the Sport Training in 1973', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 511.

[63] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (eds.), *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1975)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 13–14.

However, anti-elitist and anti-revisionist ideology still dominated the country in all aspects. Any action had to have a 'legitimate' political banner. Policies and measures aiming to restore and promote the elite sports system and improvements in elite sports performance had to be consistent with anti-elitism, anti-revisionism and defending Maoism. This is illustrated by the theme of a 1972 conference entitled 'Rigorous Training, Strict Requirements, and Make Effort to Climb the World Peak for Cultural Revolution',[64] in which improving athletic performance related directly to the ideological revolution. Furthermore, on 27 November 1973, the *People's Daily* published news regarding athletics, gymnastics and weightlifting competitions, under the banner of 'Encouraged by the spirit of the 10th National Congress of the CCP, striving to improve athletic skills'. The text stated: 'All elite sport teams should pursue a goal of catching up with the world advanced level, summon revolutionary enthusiasm, and promote drastic change'. It added that the improvement in athletic performance must be guided under the principle 'Class Struggle as the Key Link, Linking Practice of Sports, and Relentlessly Criticizing those Revisionists, Headed by Liu Shaoqi, Lin Biao; Clearly Distinguishing between Championitis and the Technique First'.[65]

Occasionally, politics or political ideology can confront and replace sporting outcomes, such as nationalism, individualism and aggression.[66] Ping-Pong diplomacy is a case in point. The slogan 'Friendship first competition second' served a serious political and diplomatic purpose. Sport deserves credit for helping the PRC reconstruct and transform both its internal and external images for the better. The change in sports policies was aimed at restoring elite sports in the early 1970s and was a result of the political struggle and conflict between the two great world powers, the USA and the Soviet Union, in the context of the Cold War. Fraternalism in sports

[64] The National Sport Training Work Meeting in 1972 put forward the goal of "Rigorous Training, Strict Requirements, and Strive to Climb the World Sports Peak for the Revolution". See 'Minutes of National Training Work Meeting in 1972', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 67.

[65] Editorial, *People's Daily*, November 27, 1973.

[66] Fan Hong and Xiong Xiaozheng, 'Communist China: Sport, Politics and Diplomacy'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 19, no. 2-3, (2002): 319–342.

played a central role in international relations and represented a sentimental pragmatism concealing calculated national interest.[67] When Communist China encountered an ideological, economic and military threat from Western capitalists led by the USA in the 1950s, Mao adopted the policy of 'lean to one side towards the socialist-communist camp', leading to Sovietisation of Chinese sport throughout the 1950s and the 1960s. The Sino-Soviet split that arose from a divergence in national interest and ideological dogma triggered changes. The key for the PRC leadership was to achieve national security and fulfil its national interests in these new circumstances. Mao therefore moved from a Pro-Soviet to a Pro-America diplomatic strategy. Sport was once again required to assist with the implementation of political and diplomatic goals. Ping-pong diplomacy enabled China to make approaches to those Western imperialists that it had formerly opposed. Ironically, under the slogan of 'Friendship first competition second', so-called 'apolitical' sport helped Communist China to open the door to the Western world for the first time after 22 years of isolation.[68]

During the Cultural Revolution, Maoism, anti-revisionism and anti-elitism were widely upheld and dominated the entire superstructure and even the whole of Chinese society. Sport as a part of culture in the superstructure had to draw a clear ideological distinction between elitism and revisionism. As a result, competitive sports policies represented a unique scenario: on the one hand, sport had to maintain consistency with anti-elitist and anti-revisionist ideology advocated by Maoism and proletariat hegemony, while conversely, elite sport was required to serve international diplomatic purposes, which encouraged a policy of restoration and promotion of elite sport. Sport had the unique ability to communicate with the outside world when other formal channels failed.

[67] Ibid., 319–342.
[68] Ibid., 319–342.

6.3.2 Maoism, Revolution and Sports for the People

Mao's theory about the Cultural Revolution was a natural response to the Soviet threat and the political and social changes in the Soviet Union, and 'sinicisation of Marxism'.[69] Generally speaking, at least two general tendencies have endured in orthodox socialist countries since their inception. Firstly, as Alfred Mayer has noted, the Communist regime has a tendency that isolates 'society away from any alternative idea and ideology, and places all organizations and community life under the leadership of the Party'.[70] Meyer termed this a 'primitive accumulation of legitimacy'. Secondly, since the victory of the Chinese revolution was achieved independently by the Chinese Communists, the CCP has naturally developed a set of revolutionary and construction theories embodying its own characteristics, as have other socialist countries such as Yugoslavia, Albania, Cuba and Vietnam, according to their own experiences. As expressed by the Yugoslavian dissident Milovandeje Lars: 'Where the Communist revolution independently wins victory, a unique developmental path is produced inevitably'.[71] Mao's agenda of revolutionary hegemony highlighted the construction of national form as its central task, which is close to Gramsci's 'national-popular' theory. As Mao stated, 'Chinese culture should have its own form, its own national form. National in form and new-democratic in content – such is our new culture today'.[72] Differing from classical Marxism that encompasses 'an urban, cosmopolitan and foreign thought', Mao's view of classic Marxism is that it is 'a form that in its rural, nativist, national-popular incarnations is accessible and acceptable by the peasants, and operative as a pragmatic, ideological guide for action'.[73]

[69] The sinicisation of Marxism is the process of combining the basic principles of Marxism with the concrete reality of China and constantly informing the theoretical achievements of Marxism with Chinese characteristics. To be specific, this process combines the basic principles of Marxism with the practice of Chinese revolution, construction and reform, incorporating China's excellent historical traditions and culture, and seeks to adhere to Marxism while developing Marxism. See Gao Ying, Mao Zedong thought and the Outline of theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2014.

[70] Alfred G. Meyer, Legitimacy of Power in East Central Europe. In Eastern Europe in the 1970s, edited by Sylva Sinanian, Istvan Deak, Peter Ludz, (New York: Praeger Publishers,1974), 56–57.

[71] Milovan Djilas, The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System (New York: Harcourt Brace Jo-vanovich, Publishers, 1957), 89.

[72] Mao Zedong, 'The Theory of New Democracy (January 1940)', in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, volume 2, (Beijing: People's Press, 1991), 698.

[73] See Arif Dirlik. 'The Predicament of Marxist Revolutionary Consciousness: Mao Zedong, Antonio Gramsci, and the Reformulation of Marxist Revolutionary Theory', *Modern China* (9 April 1983): 182–211.

Mao legalised the hegemony of the mass or peasant movements in the Chinese revolution. In Mao's view, China was a third-world, agrarian country; the mobilisation of the peasant class should be the first and foremost task of the Communist revolution. As Mao often emphasised in his earlier revolutionary works and socialist practice during the 1950s, the issue of the peasant class and the masses remained central to the national revolution. By 1966, Mao's sense of direction and energy were consumed by power struggles in the party and by his obsession with ideological concerns, which in his view far outweighed the economic problems. Besides the direction exemplified by the Cultural Revolution, Maoist ideology became a means of control and spiritual guidance of the masses. The people's fanatic worship of Mao (at least in the early days of the Cultural Revolution) became the best form of support for Mao's deified rule. At the Ninth Party Congress in 1969, Mao's guideline 'continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat' was written into the Party constitution and the steady, rational economic development plans issued by the Eight Party Congress in 1958 was lost in the emphasis on class struggle.[74]

In essence, Mao did not aim to establish equal standing between intellectuals, officials and the masses. Rather, he sought subordination of the intellectuals to the proletarian hegemony. In May 1960, British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomerie met Mao in China. After returning to England, he wrote: 'The fundamental Mao Zedong's philosophy is very simple. People play a decisive role, whereby every year the cadres are required to stay at the grassroots level for a month and maintain contact with the masses, in order to win the trust of the people'.[75] In 1965, Mao asserted that 'the

[74] Mao's theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat was written into the political report of the 9th and 10th National Congress of the CCP, and the Constitution of the Communist Party, adopted at the 4th NPC, had become the fundamental guiding ideology of China's national political activities during the Cultural Revolution. The fundamental concept of this ideology was that, to secure the proletariat's acquisition of political power and the establishment of a socialist system, a political revolution would necessitate a class overthrow of another class and this 'continuing revolution' would be achieved by adopting the 'Cultural Revolution'. See The History of the Communist Party of China (1949–1978), volume 2 (Beijing: Party History Press,2011), 167.

[75] Montgomerie, 'My Talk with Mao', *Reference News (in Chinese)*, 12 June 1961 (originally published in *The Sunday Time*s, 12 June 1961).

officials in China are a class, and one whose interests are antagonistic to those of the workers and peasants'.[76] He encouraged vigorous rebellion: 'Let those, who will make fierce attacks, demonstrate in the streets and take up arms to provoke change. I definitely approve'.[77]

Mao defined national form as 'rural, nativist, national-popular incarnations' accessible and acceptable for the peasants and the masses, as opposed to urban, cosmopolitan and elitist cultures. As with literature and arts of the masses (*qun zhong wen yi*), Mao Zedong attached great importance to the development of the masses from the time of the Yanan Era (1935–1948). On 8 July 1971, the *People's Daily* published a report entitled 'Hold high the Great Red Banner of Mao Zedong Thought, Carry out Revolutionary Mass Criticism' that included three articles: one by the Beijing Sport Committee titled 'Sport Must Serve Workers, Peasants and Soldiers' and two written by the Sport Bureau of the Shandong Revolutionary Committee entitled 'Stick to the Principle of Sport Serving Workers, Peasants and Soldiers' and 'Our Poor and Lower-middle Peasants (*Pin xia zhong nong*) Need Sport'.[78] These reports attempted to underscore the importance of mass sport and justify sport for the proletariat, including worker, peasants and soldiers. In this context, at the state sport conference held in 1972, mass sport was highlighted. In August 1974, Deng Xiaoping, then Vice Premier in charge of education and sports, pointed out: 'Chairman Mao has always advocated that mass sport should be prioritised, and the "Developing sports and promoting people's health" is in essence for the masses. Thus, the SCSPE should strive to do it well.'[79]

[76] According to the 'Decision on a Number of Current Problems of Work in Rural Areas (Draft)' adopted by the Central Committee of CCP, Mao asserted that there was a serious and sharp class struggle in Chinese society at that time. Mao and his supports therefore insisted that if the socialist education movement was not engaged in rural areas, China would inevitably face counter-revolutionary restoration. On 15 January 1965, Mao Zedong commented on the situation of the socialist education by Chen Zhengren, then Minister of agricultural machinery. He wrote: 'The bureaucratic class is sharply antagonistic with the working class and the poor and low-middle-class peasants'. See Chen Yang, Mu Jianchun, Mao Zedong and Chen Zhengren, *Extensive Collection of the Party History*, no. (2017), 14–20.

[77] See Mao Zedong's speech at the Hangzhou Conference, (December 21, 1965), *Red Flag*, no.9 (1967): 1–5.

[78] Editorial, 'Hold high the great red flag of Mao Zedong Thought, and carry out the great revolutionary criticism in depth', *People's Daily*, 8 July 1971.

[79] On 8 August 1974, when Deng Xiaoping met China's national team about to participate in the Asian Games, he stressed: "Chairman Mao has always advocated that sports is mainly of mass issue, which is called 'Developing

During the Cultural Revolution, actions and policies had to be consistent with Maoism. Sport was no exception. *New Sport*s, an official organ of the SCSPE, published an editorial article in 1973 entitled 'Take vigorous action to promote physical exercise and sport in the countryside'. It stressed: 'We must understand that promotion of sport and physical exercise in the countryside is to implement Chairman Mao's revolutionary sports line'.[80] Another article, entitled 'Booming Development of Mass Sport across the Country', published on 1 February 1973 in the *Sports Daily* stated:

> Carrying out socialist culture and sporting activities is not only related to people's health, but to attack the bourgeoisie ideology, to occupy the socialist ideological and cultural front.[81]

Maoist leaders went to extreme lengths to satisfy their political goals during the Cultural Revolution, and the mass sports movement was at its peak during this time, particularly in the countryside.[82] A typical case is illustrated by events in XiaoJinzhuang, a village in Baodi County, Taijing. Between 1974 and 1976, Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, visited XiaoJinzhuang three times. From June 1976 to August 1976, she arranged a writing group to 'sum up the experience' and published 69 articles, news reports and poems relating to XiaoJinzhuang in the *People's Daily.*[83] The 'Learn from the XiaoJinzhuan' campaign was widely disseminated throughout culture, arts and sports.

Sports and Enhancing the People's Physique'. This is in essence a mass issue (qun zhong xing wen ti). Thus, the State Sports Committee must do well." See Wu Shaozu, Deng Xiaoping's sports complex, *China Sports Daily*, 2 February 1997.

[80] Editor, 'Take Vigorous Action to Promote Physical Exercise and Sport in the Countryside', *New Sport* 24, no. 1 (1973), 2.

[81] Editor, National Mass Sports Activities are Vigorously Developing, *Sports Daily*, 1 February 1975.

[82] Fan Hong and Lu Zhouxiang, Sport in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.1(2012): 53–73.

[83] XiaoJinzhuang was portrayed as a typical model of Cultural Revolution or revolution in the ideological field. Jiang qing challenged the 'pure production' standpoint of Deng Xiaoping, and emphasised the importance and benefits for consciousness and culture that the Cultural Revolution had brought to the rural areas.
Jing qing promoted XiaoJinzhuang by taking the form of praising the 'ten new things', including 'running a political evening school', 'writing poems by peasants' and 'singing model operas by peasants'. Being a model, XiaoJinzhuang's experience has swept the country.

Developing sports in the countryside became an important political mission for provincial and county sports commissions. In February 1975, the *Sports Daily* stated that the underlying aim and principle of socialist sports was to serve the peasants, who accounted for 90% of the population. It wrote:

> If we do not pay attention to the peasants, the principle 'sport serves proletarian masses (the peasants, workers and soldiers)' will become empty words. If we do not occupy the countryside with our revolutionary healthy sport, then the 'Four Olds (*Si jiu*)'[84] will fight back. Sport is not only a physical activity, but a political tool to fight against bourgeoisie.[85]

To promote sports of the masses in the countryside, sports leadership groups and sports teams were widely established at village and county levels. For instance, in Wen Jiang County, Sichuan province, sports leadership groups were set up in 14 communes, with more than 200 stadiums, 158 brigades and 80 ball teams.[86] In Qinhe County, Hebei province, all 215 production brigades had sports leadership groups, totalling 319 sports teams. The sports administrative structure was greatly strengthened throughout rural areas (see Figure 6.5) and farmers were strongly encouraged to participate in physical exercise and activities.

[84] The 'Four Olds' referred to old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits.
[85] Editorial, Must Serving *Gong Nong Bing* (the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers) and Strive to Do Well in Rural Sport. *Sports Daily*, 28 February 1975.
[86] County Committee of Chronicles of Wenjiang, eds. *Wenjiang County Annals*, (Chengdu: Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1990), 24.

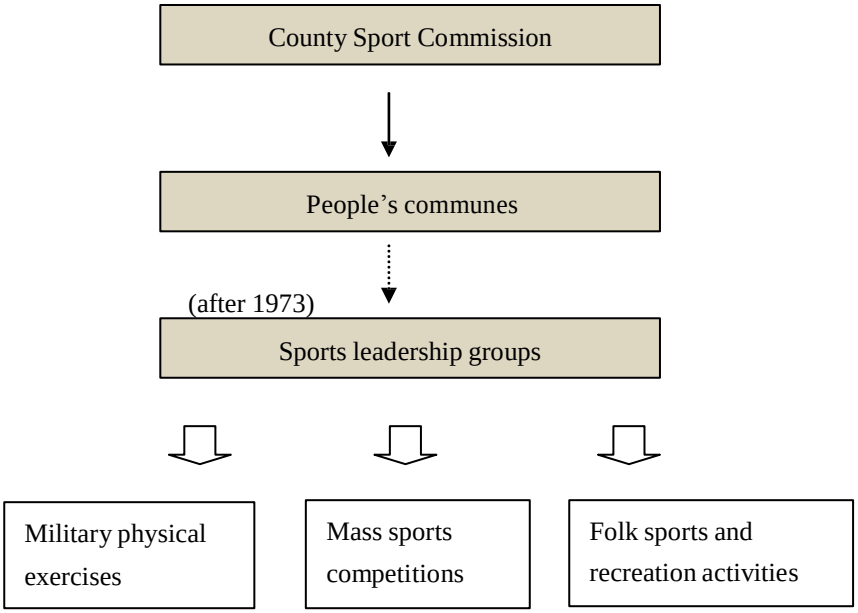


Figure 6.3. Sports Administrative Structure during the Cultural Revolution (1971–1976)

The mass sports movement grew in response to an escalating revolutionary campaign. In 1975, Jiang Qing announced the 'Ten Pieces of Experience of Xiao Jinzhuang' and issued a slogan '600 million farmers 600 million athletes' (*liu yi nong min liu yi yun dong yuan*), in which mass sports in rural areas related directly to the mass movement. In some counties, Sport Commissions required every commune to establish sports teams and organise travel for farmers to go to the city for performances and competitions; some counties launched programmes such as the "thousand people broadcast calisthenics", in which people who did not attend would have 'work points'[87] deducted. Consequently, many farmers were released from regular work to participate in training and performing.

[87] The work-points system is a labour reward system that takes labour work as the measure of labour and the distribution of personal consumption goods. It originated from the Soviet collective farm and was widely adopted by the rural collective economic organisations in China. According to the work-points system, peasants were to receive points reflecting the quantity and quality of output and set in terms of a staple, such as rice. The awarding of work-points was usually made every day on the basis of the total points allotted for each division of the day (where chores varied over the working day). Before the 1980s, China's peasants were paid according to their work-points, calculated by an individual's working hours and output. See Charles Hoffmann. *Work Incentive Practices and Polices in the People's Republic of China 1953–1965* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1967), 44.

The mass sports movement effectively united the proletariat, workers, peasants and soldiers into one body that could conduct an ideological class struggle against revisionists, class enemies and political opponents. Thus, the proletariat cultural hegemony achieved absolute domination in the superstructure of Chinese society. This large-scale mass movement required extensive, complex social organisations that enabled revolutionary campaigns to permeate every part of Chinese society. Mass sports systems and organisations were particularly well developed in the countryside, where revolutionary campaigns were extreme. Thus, the meteoric rise in mass sports during the Cultural Revolution was not only a result of proletarian revolution in the socialist construction period, but also a reflection of proletarian cultural hegemony in superstructure, as seen from the perspective of Gramsci's theory of ideology.

6.4 Conclusion

The Cultural Revolution highlighted ideological struggles, with the aim of realising Maoism and proletariat leadership in the superstructure. Changes in ideological preferences meant that competitive and mass sports experienced different fates during the Cultural Revolution. Anti-elitism and anti-revisionism led to a breakdown of sport elitism as well as the entire competitive sports system in the early years of the Cultural Revolution (1967–1970). In contrast, mass sports, especially large-scale mass sports programmes, became extraordinarily successful under Maoism, based on the charismatic personality and proletarian ideology of Chairman Mao.

In the early 1970s, the situation changed for military and diplomatic reasons. After the Sino-Soviet border disputes escalated into substantial military conflict at the end of the 1960s, China altered its diplomatic dealings with the USA. 'Ping-Pong Diplomacy', under the principle of 'Friendship First, Competition Second', played a positive role in helping China surmount the legacy of distrust between the USA and China, and contributed to China's political union with Third World countries. In support of sports diplomacy, China restored and developed the elite sports system.

However, anti-elitism and anti-revisionism struggles continued to dominate every aspect of China during the Cultural Revolution. Competitive sports policies had to remain consistent with the dominant ideology in order to survive. While these policies had to agree with anti-elitist and anti-revisionist ideology advocated by Maoism and proletariat hegemony, competitive sport was required to serve a diplomatic purpose internationally, resulting in a policy of restoration and promotion of elite sports. Simultaneously, mass sports were subjected to political and ideological needs, in order to serve the broad masses and keep them happy.

Gramscian hegemony provides a significant frame of reference from which to re-examine the relationship between sport and ideology during the Cultural Revolution. From the perspective of cultural hegemony, a main feature of the Chinese revolution is the construction and consolidation of a revolutionary hegemony through the Cultural Revolution. Maoists have always stressed the importance of the ideological homogeneity of the proletariat as a means of societal control. For Maoist leaders, the Cultural Revolution was aimed at regaining the power of the state, restoring Maoism and the proletariat's dominance in the superstructure, legalising hegemony among the mass movements in Chinese revolution.

During the Cultural Revolution, Maoism, anti-revisionism and anti-elitism were widely upheld as a hegemonic ideology that dominated the entire superstructure and all of Chinese society. Sport, as a part of the superstructure culture, had to draw a clear ideological distinction between elitism and revisionism. Under this condition, competitive sports collapsed because of anti-elitist ideology. Sport was required to serve the broad masses, enabling Maoism and the proletariat cultural hegemony to maintain homogeneity, purity and leadership over the superstructure of Chinese society. It led to the policy 'Sport for the people', which peaked during the Cultural Revolution and the entire Mao Era. Mass sport was emphasised as an appropriate way to serve the proletariat, leading to the dominating policy of "sport for the people".

Mao's revolutionary hegemony highlighted insurrection and violence and enabled one class to overthrow and rule another. Thus, ideological purity during the Cultural Revolution was achieved through not only pervasive public dissemination of Maoist ideology to gain the support of the masses, but also by criticism, destruction and revolutionary means. The depth of social mobilisation promoted under Mao's revolutionary ideological struggle developed mass sports to the extreme, leading to the establishment of mass sports nationwide.

Chapter 7: Sports Policies and Systems in the Early Years of Reform and Opening-up, 1977–1989

7.1 Introduction

Mao's Cultural Revolution and theory on 'Continuing the Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' did not prevent socialism from changing its color, but it did stimulate general reflections about ideological struggles in the superstructure and about the future of Communist China in the post-Mao era. The Party's economic reforms, led by Deng Xiaoping, replaced class struggle as the central task of the Party with more pragmatically measured economic ones. Arguably, China's reformist ambition played a crucial role in every aspect of the transformation experienced by Chinese society. However, developing a market economy was not as straightforward as the socialist reformers had imagined. The student-led pro-democracy movement from 1986 to 1989 made the Communist leaders re-think the relationship between economic construction and socialist ideological leadership. These events provided the context for the development of sports in modern China. This chapter is organized into three sections: the first explains ideological change and the shift of state policy priorities for sports at the end of the 1970s. Sections Two and Three analyze the transformation of the elite and mass sports policies and systems in the context of social and economic vicissitudes experienced by China during the 1980s.

7.2 Changing State Policy Priorities for Sport from 1977 to 1980

Mao's death in September 1976 removed a towering figure from Chinese politics, but did not terminate Mao thought and its influence on Communist China. After the defeat of the Gang of Four, Hua Guofeng, Mao's selected successor, was confirmed as Party

Chairman and Premier. Hua clung to the 'Two Whatevers'[1] and adhered to the principle of 'class struggle' as a key link in China's economic and social development. The 11th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was held on 18 August 1977. A press release stated:

> The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, lasting 11 years, has been ended by smashing the 'Gang of Four' as a symbol. However, this is by no means the end of the class struggle, and the end of the continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must follow Chairman Mao's teachings, and carry the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through to the end.[2]

In this context, the national sports conference was held in January 1978. This conference identified the strategy of promoting mass sports and elite sports simultaneously, detailing a phased approach to their realization: within the following 3 years, it is required to create a new situation of mass sport, while the performance of one-third of competitive sports should approximate or reach the international advanced level.[3] within the next 8 years, while promoting the popularity of mass sport, the performance of most competitive sports should approach or attain world advanced level.

To achieve these strategies, a series of measures was identified that aimed to:

1) strengthen the leadership of the sports commission at all levels,

[1] 'Two Whatevers (*liang ge fan shi*)' refers to the statement that 'We will resolutely uphold whatever decisions Chairman Mao made, and unswervingly follow whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave'. The 'Two Whatevers' did not originate from Hua Guofeng, but from the editorials published simultaneously in the *People's Daily*, *Red Flag* and *The People's Liberation Army Daily* on 7 February 1977. The editorial was written by Wang Dongxing and agreed upon by the Political Bureau of the CCP's Central Committee. For a detailed explanation of 'Two Whatevers', see Luo Pinghan, *The Details of the Party History - Tracing to its Source of Some Important Events of the Communist Party of China in the Past 90 years* (People's Publishing House, 2011), 60.

[2] Editorial, The Press Communique of the 11th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the *People's Daily*, 18 August 1977.

[3] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed), 'Minutes of Meeting of the National Work Meeting in 1978', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 122-126.

2) **vigorously strengthen ideological and political work**, **adjust and improve the political work, facilitate the function and role of political institutions, learn from the People's Liberation Army, summarize this experience, and establish a set of political work systems and methods suitable for sports systems** [text bolded by the Author]

3) widely develop mass sports and establish a new era of socialist sports competitions

4) establish reasonable rules and regulations

5) establish a cohesive training network

6) develop sound technological innovation and improve the quality of training

7) improve sports science research and technology

8) enthusiastically foster sporting talent

9) effectively guarantee logistics support

10) restore and establish an organisation that encompasses all sectors of society[4]

Clearly, these measures indicated a strong ideology and a politically-oriented nature (as exemplified by the second clause). Maoist class struggle and revolutionary ideology maintained domination throughout this conference.

7.2.1 Deng's Pragmatic Approach to Economic Reforms

By the end of the 1970s China had lost economic vitality[5] and the masses were eager to embrace a new social reform to free them from endless class struggles and man-made disasters. In a series of speeches between 1979 and 1980, when Deng had

[4] Ibid., 125.

[5] Before the 1978 reform, although China's GDP maintained its growth (11.7% in 1978), its proportion of GDP in relation to the world's GDP was basically unchanged (i.e. in 1952, China's total GDP accounted for 5.2% of GDP of the world, but had fallen to 5% in 1978). An even larger problem was that China's economic structure in 1978 was unsound, with a sluggish economy. This was reflected by several aspects: First, the proportion of industry and agriculture was unbalanced. Although the total industrial economy of China ranked 10th worldwide in 1978, its value of agricultural output had dropped to 24.12% of the total product of the country's social output. The average total of grain possessed by farmers had not increased from the level recorded in 1957. Second, urban wages were very low. In 1965, the annual salary of employees of both state-owned and collective enterprises was 652 *yuan*, which had fallen to 605 *yuan* in 1976. Third, China's employment rate had become its largest social issue. About 20 million people in the country were unemployed, including 1.5 million ex-servicemen, college graduates, students who had completed secondary vocational and technical schools, 7 million young intellectuals residing in rural areas, and about 2.3 million people in urban areas. See Su Xiaohe, *Notes on the Centennial Economic History*, (Beijing: Oriental publishing house, 2016), 45.

supreme sovereignty over China, he emphasised the significance of economic success for political stability and legitimacy. He stated:

> If socialism is always poor, it will not stand. […] Economic work is the biggest political issue at present, and the economic problem is the overriding political issue. . . Political work should be carried out through the economy, and political problems should be solved from the economic point of view. […] The aim of our revolution is to liberate and develop productive forces. […] The revolution in productivity is the most fundamental revolution.'[6] (Deng, 1994)

However, shaking Mao's ideological legacy – 'take class struggle as the key link' – was not easy at that time. Reformists had to make ideological breakthroughs. Between 1977 and 1980, China arranged for several study tours consisting of senior officials to investigate major countries in Europe and North America. Upon their return to China, the delegations reported to the Politburo. The Party leaders were surprised to learn about the enormous gap between China and the outside world. At the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978, Deng Xiaoping summarized the effect of the trips: 'The basic point is that we would acknowledge that we are backward, that many of our ways of doing things are inappropriate, and that we need to change'.[7] Deng delivered a crucial speech at this meeting, entitled 'Emancipate the mind, seek truth from facts and be united as one looking to the future", which essentially cleared the way for the reform and open-up policy.[8] The Third Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP was held on November 18, 1978. Its central theme was to shift the focus of the Party's work from 'class struggle' to

[6] Deng Xiaoping, *ng Xiaoping Anthology*, second edition (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994), 91, 195, 231, 311.
[7] Ezra F. Vogel,'Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China' (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 135.
[8] Jiang Zemin,'Speech delivered at the 20th anniversary of the third Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP', *People's Daily*, 19 December 1998.

'economic construction'.[9]

Deng's pragmatic economic reforms responded to this theme. After the Cultural Revolution, the most urgent question for the CCP was how to reform China and provide the people with a much-needed increase in living standards, without relinquishing past principles that were so deeply ingrained in Chinese society, and without losing the legitimacy for the CCP as China's ruling party. Oksenberg and Bush argue that although there was no "clear-cut ideological alternative to Mao's thought',[10] the CCP, in essence, turned to a more flexible and pragmatic policy of 'seeking truth from facts'.[11] Deng officially introduced four fundamental principles into CCP's ideology: (1) uphold the socialist path; (2) uphold the people's democratic dictatorship; (3) uphold the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC); and (4) uphold Mao Zedong thought and Marxism-Leninism. Chen has argued that these fundamental principles tend to resist any significant change, as such change would inevitably change the identity of the ideology *per se* and therefore the nature of the party.[12]

7.2.2 Development of Elite Sports as a Key

The Party's strategic decision to endorse a pragmatic ideology impacted greatly on Chinese society in every aspect, including sports. In his broadcast Spring Festival Speech in January 1979, Wang Meng, head of the SCSPE, alluded to the shift in focus in the field of sports.[13] When the state sport conference was held in February 1979, the conference formulated four main missions for the years 1979 and 1980. Three of those missions were directly related to elite sports:

[9] Ibid.
[10] Michael Oksenberg & Richard Bush, 'China's Political Evolution, 1972-1982', in The China Reader, ed. Orville Schell & David Shambaugh (New York: Random House, 1999), 17.
[11] Deng Xiaoping,'Hold High the Banner of Mao Zedong Thought and Adhere to the Principle of Seeking Truth from Facts' (September 16, 1978), Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol. II, (Beijing: People's Publishing House ,1994), 127.
[12] Feng Chen, *conomic Transition and Political Legitimacy in Post-Mao China: Ideology and Reform* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 13.
[13] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, *China Sports Yearbook 1979* (Beijing: People Sports Publishing House, 1980), 22.

1) successfully hold the 4th National Games in 1979 and actively prepare for the 1980 and 1984 Olympic Games, and strive to create good results;

2) widely develop mass sports and emphasise youth school physical education;

3) actively strengthen amateur training and accelerate the training reserve force of outstanding athletes, to establish and improve the training networks at all levels throughout China's larger cities;

4) strengthen sports science and technology, and resolve all problems relating to high performance sport.[14]

The SCSPE asked sport commissions at all levels to actively prepare for the 1980 and 1984 Olympic Games, and exhorted them to strive for rankings in the top 10 aggregate scores in the 1980 Olympic Games. The SCSPE's goal was for 15 medals, with one or more in each of the following fields: gymnastics; weightlifting; diving; shooting; and archery. Moreover, the teams were expected to win a gold medal. Obviously, elite sport was highlighted at this conference. Why China suddenly changed its previous strategy into one that prioritised elite sport in 1979 is revealed in the conference minutes:

> In view of the fact that the performance of China's competitive sports lags far lower than that of advanced countries in the world and that a number of sports failing to qualify for the Olympic Games, it is imperative that we prepare well for the 1980 Olympic Games. The SCSPE and provincial sport committees must focus on increasing competitive sport in 1979 and 1980. […] Domestic and international sport competitions should be carried out in favour of China's performance in the Olympic Games and World Championships. […] We have to strive to lift our country to the ranks of a world sport power![15]

[14] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(eds.), Minutes of National Sport Work Meeting in 1979 (Summary)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 132-139.
[15] Ibid.

As Sport Minister Wang indicates, China renewed its membership in the IOC and subsequently other international sports organisations in the late 1970s. In early 1979, the SCSPE submitted a 'Report on Accelerating Performance and Improving the Level of Competitive Sports' to the Central Committee of the CCP. According to this document, the SCSPE suggested that 'increasing the overall level of competitive sport should be the main task of sport in the coming years.'[16] At the National Sport Conference in January 1980, the priority of competitive sport policy was further emphasised. Wang Meng explains:

> Our country is now still poor and it is impossible to put more money into sport. On the one hand, therefore, the sport development plan must proceed from reality; on the other hand, including sport in the national plan, could give play to the superiority of socialism by implementing centralised and unified leadership, and mobilising the initiative of various parts and aspects of the country and focusing on allocation of financial and material resources. By so doing, sport in our county can improve quickly in spite of being economically backward.[17]

Wang's statement illustrated the government's desire to use sport to enhance national self-esteem, self-confidence and dignity. Tan Hua, a Chinese sports historian, argues that the SCSPE decided upon this strategic direction after the Party and central government shifted their focus to economic construction at the end of 1978. It is also a main symbol of what was later called the Olympic strategy.[18]

The three years from 1977 to 1980 witnessed a change in priority from state sport policy determined to develop mass and elite sports in combination, to one that

[16] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Request for Instructions by the about Accelerating the Improvement of Athletic Performance', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1982), 140-144.
[17] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Wang Meng's Work Report at the 1980 National Sports Work Meeting', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949–1981)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 151.
[18] Quoted from an interview conducted in Shanghai, November 2014.

prioritised elite sports. This was the result of an ideological breakthrough and Deng's pragmatic approach to the economy and social policy. Elite sport was expected to play a part in stimulating the nation's enthusiasm and motivating people towards modernisation.

7.3 State Elite Sports Policy and System in the 1980s

7.3.1 Nationalism, Legitimacy and Olympic Strategy: The Rise of Elite Sports Ambitions

Taking part in the 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Moscow would have been a wonderful opportunity for China to demonstrate her new image following the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy. However, two months before the Games, Beijing announced that it would boycott the Moscow Olympic Games, in unison with the American-led boycott of the Games protesting against the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. Chinese athletes did not appear in Moscow.

Elite Sports Successes and Nationalism in the early 1980s

Despite missing the 1980 Olympics, Chinese athletes continued to demonstrate their sporting excellence. In the domestic arena, the 5th National Games of China was held in Shanghai in 1983, where 66 players and 39 teams broke 60 national records, while 3 world records were broken.[19] The most notable event was the men's high jump, where Zhu Jianhua, an athlete from Shanghai, broke world records twice during the qualification contest for the Games. Zhu went on to break the world's high jump record in the finals of the National Games and in 1983 was universally deemed to be one of the world's best athletes.

In the international arena, sports competitions became places where the Chinese people could witness the glory of China, feel proud of being Chinese and sense unity

[19] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), *Yearbook of Chinese Sport 1949-1991* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1993), 492.

as part of a great nation.[20] In the 1979 World University Games, held in Mexico, the 17-year-old Chinese diver Chen Xiaoxia defeated a well-known Soviet athlete and won a gold medal. Soon after, a slogan 'Go beyond Asia and join the advanced world rank'[21] was adopted for encouraging Chinese elite sports. Another far-reaching slogan 'Band together, Revitalize the Chinese Nation' emerged in March 1981, when the Chinese men's volleyball team defeated the South Korean men's volleyball team and qualified to compete in the Men's Volleyball World Championship. In response, ~4,000 Beijing University students celebrated in the streets, singing the National Anthem and shouting out this slogan (see Figure 7.1).



Figure 7.1. A member of the Chinese Men's Volleyball Team lifted up by Beijing University students in victory celebrations

Source: http://sport.wz.zj.cn/View.aspx?nmid=1714

A similar sense of patriotism and nationalism was evident when the Chinese women's volleyball team won the world championship for the first time, when they defeated Japan on 16 November 1981. Tens of thousands of students and citizens in Beijing gathered in Tiananmen Square to celebrate all night long. They shouted 'Long live China! Long live China's Women's Volleyball Team!'[22] The next day, the volleyball

[20] Fan Hong, Ducan Mackay and Karen Cristensen, *China Gold China's Quest for Global Power and Olympic Glory* (Great Barrington: Berkshire Publishing Group, 2008), 67.
[21] This slogan originally was put forward in *China Sport Daily* on 10 September 1979, aiming to inspire Chinese athletes to earn more honour in Asian and international competitions.
[22] Editorial, '1981: China Women's Volleyball Team Brought Glory to the Chinese Nation', *Nandu Weekly*, 18 July 2008.

team's victory was headlined in almost every Chinese newspaper. The *China Daily* published an article titled 'Learning from the Spirit of the Chinese Women's Volleyball Team (CWVT) revitalises the Chinese Nation'. It stated: 'By using the spirit of the CWVT to develop modernisation, do we need to worry about how to achieve the modernisation?'[23] That same day, the *Sports Daily* published an article entitled 'All Walks of Life Should Learn the Spirit of CWVT', in which the Chairman of the Chinese Women's Federation stated: 'To push forward the great cause of socialism, all walks of life should learn from spirit of CWVT, establish long-range ambitions, maintain a down-to-earth and hardworking spirit and do their own job well'.[24] An editorial published in January 1982 in the *Sports Daily* entitled 'Contribute to the Development of Socialist Culture and Ethics' concluded that 'Sport and patriotism have never been so close. The influence of sport on people's minds and life has never been so strong'.[25]

Zhao Yu has argued that after winning three championships in succession, the Chinese women's volleyball team was no longer only a volleyball team, but a hero and model for the entire nation to emulate.[26] These athletic heroes became an inspiration for people from all walks of life to put their maximum effort into their work. They also became a political slogan spurring on millions of Chinese to strive for modernisation.[27] An interviewee in this research, Xie Qionghuan, the former Director of the Department of Policies, Laws and Regulations in the SCSPE, explains:

> It was a period when full-scale modernization construction was carried out across the whole country, as people were eager for change. The sporting excellence and the slogans met the needs of the times, therefore people's

[23] Commentary, *Learning Women's Volleyball Team, Revitalizing China* – China Won, *People's Daily*, 16 November 1981.
[24] Deng Yingchao, All Walks of Life Come to Learn the Spirit of Women Volleyball, *Sports Daily*, 16 November 1981.
[25] 'Contribute to the Development of Socialist Culture and Ethics'. *China Sports Daily*, 1 January 1982.
[26] Zhao Yu, Defeat in Seoul in the *Three Sport Reports*, (Wuhan: Changjiang Literature Art Publishing House, 1998), p: 10.
[27] The 'Four modernisations' encompass industry, agriculture, national defence, and science and technology.

> pent-up passion, having been depressed during the Cultural Revolution, suddenly exploded, forming the wave of patriotic sports in the early 1980s.[28]

Knowing that China's absence from the Moscow Olympic Games had upset the IOC,[29] Beijing was determined to attend the 1984 Los Angeles Games. In March 1982, Deng Xiaoping told the visiting IOC president Juan Samaranch that although Sino-American relations were not especially close, China would participate in the 1984 Los Angles Games.[30] Despite the abrupt cessation of sport and cultural exchanges between China and the USA in 1983 following the Hu Na incident,[31] Beijing decided against boycotting the 1984 Olympics because China did not want to forfeit the opportunity to return to the international arena. Thus, in 1984, China won its first Olympic gold medal and ranked fourth in the gold medal count.

As Lu Zhouxiang has noted, continued sporting successes throughout the 1980s energized the Chinese people and forged links between sports and nationalism, patriotism, collectivism and heroism.[32] Enormous achievements in Chinese elite sports proved the validity and necessity of the priority policy for elite sports established in the early 1980s. Chinese officials openly acknowledged that they viewed sport as an instrument for the promotion of national pride and identity. Wang

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[28] Interviewer No. 1 (Xie, Qionghuan, Formal Director of Department of Sport policy and Regulation, the General Administration of Sport of China) in a discussion with the Author, 10 October 2010.

[29] China's failure to appear at the Olympics incurred criticism from the IOC. Its President, Lord Killanin, complained to the Chinese Olympic Committee: 'Having worked for so long for the recognition of the Chinese Olympic Committee, I must admit, from a personal point of view, I would have considerable reservation in proceeding with the candidature of a new member of the IOC, if the Chinese Olympic Committee does not participate in the [Moscow] Olympic Games.' Killanin to Zhong Shitong, 28 March 1980, IOC Archives, Republic People of China, correspondence, 1980. Quoted from Xu Guoqi, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports, 1895–2008* (Cambridge (MA) and London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 198.

[30] Wu Shaozu (Author) Yu Wei (ed.), Deng Xiaoping's Sports Complex, Accessed on 3 August 2013 from http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/85037/85038/7183986.html.

[31] Hu Na, in the Chinese women's tennis team, was National Champion in 1978. On 20 July 1982, she competed in the USA for Federation Cup tennis tournaments in Santa Clara, California. Hu slipped out of her hotel room on the eve of a key competition and applied for political asylum. Despite warnings from Beijing, the USA granted her asylum in April 1983. China promptly labelled Hu Na as a "defector" and ceased all bilateral sports exchanges with the USA in 1983, including China's participation in pre-Olympic cycling, rowing and canoeing events that were held in Los Angeles.

[32] Lu Zhouxiang, *Sport and Nationalism: A Comparative Study between China and Ireland*, PhD thesis, University College Cork, 2010, 381.

Meng, then the head of the SCSPE, stated: 'A gold medal is a sign of success. Flag-raising and the playing of the national anthem in major international competitions meet the common interests of millions of Chinese people, and are the honour of the Chinese nation.'[33]

Pragmatic Nationalism, Legitimacy and the Olympic Strategy

Modern Chinese nationalism arose in the late 19th century in fervent response to the country's decline from a 'Middle Kingdom' to one that was weak, poor and backward in comparison with the West. As Wu Guoguang has observed, the first wave of modern Chinese nationalism took place in the early 20th century and reached its zenith in the May Fourth movement.[34] This wave of nationalism laid the foundation of China's modern national identity, and of the Chinese nationalist and communist revolutions that were to follow.[35] In the last two decades of the 20th century, nationalism as a powerful ideology re-emerged in Chinese politics.[36] This time, the Chinese reformists and Chinese people shared an identical goal; to engage in domestic reform and open the door to the outside world.

Chinese sporting excellence in the 1980s remained tightly bound to nationalism and the Communist Party's political outlook. Xu Guoqi has observed: 'China's participation and even interest in modern sports has been largely motivated by nationalism. But by importing modern sports from the West and taking part in world competitions, China has simultaneously used sports to express its worldview, promote its status in the world, and declare its national identity'.[37] Zhao Suisheng considers that nationalism as an ideology was instrumentalised by the Communist Party in the

[33] 'Wang Meng's Work Report at the 1980 National Sports Work Meeting', op. cit, 151.
[34] Wu Guoguang, From Post-Imperial to Late Communist Nationalism: Historical Change in Chinese Nationalism from May Fourth to the 1990s, *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (2008), 467–482.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Xu Guoqi, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sport*s, 1895–2008, op. cit., 3.

1980s in its pursuit of modernisation of the country and legitimacy of authority. Zhao Suisheng argues that the Communist state adopted nationalism because the notion elicits a sense of unity and encourages loyalty to the state.[38] In his view, pragmatism characterizes the attitude of leading Chinese politicians towards nationalism in the PRC.[39] According to Zhao, the most important feature of this pragmatism is the state's emphasis on the instrumentality of nationalism for rallying support in the name of building a modern Chinese nation-state.[40]

At the end of the Maoist era, since the planned economy model was unable to provide effective incentives for people to work hard, the government initiated social movements, in particular the GLF and the Cultural Revolution, which brought the economy to the verge of collapse. After Mao's death, the CCP under Deng Xiaoping attempted to progress from a command economy to market socialism. Deng and the CCP reformists had to introduce two important changes in direction: first, they needed to campaign for the eradication of ideological and psychological obstacles to market-oriented economic reform; second, performance, especially economic performance, was required to consolidate the fundamental basis for the legitimacy of the CCP and the party-state.[41] Since Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong was no longer the official ideology, there was no longer a convincing argument for preserving the communist one party rule.[42]

For pragmatic leaders under Deng, performance-based legitimacy was more important and effective than Mao's revolutionary ideology for transforming society in post-Mao China. The communist leaders were eager to consolidate legitimacy and domination over Chinese society by gaining the support of the general public. Weber's original

[38] Zhao Suisheng, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), p: 209.
[39] Ibid, 209.
[40] Ibid, 209.
[41] Zhao Dingxin, *The Power of Tiananmen: State–Society Relations and the 1989 Movement* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 42.
[42] Zhao Suisheng, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, (Stanford University Press, 2004), p: 211.

formulation did not include performance legitimacy. However, Weberians such as Lipset[43] and many other scholars[44] in contemporary Chinese politics emphasized the importance of state performance for the stability of a regime. Based on Weber's classification of legitimacy, this research identifies the legal electoral, ideological and performance frameworks as representing state legitimacy. Arguably, scant evidence shows that the party-state constructed its legal legitimacy in the 1980s, at least before 1989. However, we note that among the top officials, while most believed that economic reform and development was the only future for China, they (especially the leftists) had also inherited a sense of belonging to the Marxist-Leninist and Maoist era. More importantly, these officials maintained their faith in communism and still viewed ideology as a part of the foundation of state legitimacy. During the 1980s, legitimacy of the party-state was not derived purely from either ideology or performance.

How best to understand the relationship between nationalism in sports and legitimacy of the Party? As Xiao Gongqi has argued: 'The previous ideology has gone into decline. A large country such as China needs something to keep the country together. So nationalism is taking the place of the previous ideology as the coalescing force.'[45] It is difficult to judge whether nationalism can completely replace communism as the basis of a new ideological legitimacy. In reality, nationalism assumes a partial function, just as Maoism did in the Maoist era, to unite people. As Roskin has noted: 'China's regime retains authority by means of patriotism and performance-based legitimacy.'[46] Besides nationalism, the pragmatic leaders attempted to secure the consent of the common people through performance-based legitimacy and thus

[43] Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (New York: Anchor Books, 1963), pp: 64-69.

[44] For the most recent debates on state legitimacy in contemporary China, see Hongxing Yang & Dingxin Zhao (2015). Performance Legitimacy, State Autonomy and China's Economic Miracle, Journal of Contemporary China, 24:91, pp: 64-82. Florian Schneider and Yih-Jye Hwang, 'The Sichuan earthquake and the heavenly mandate: legitimising Chinese rule through disaster discourse', Journal of Contemporary China 23(88), (2014); Jinghan Zeng, 'The debate on regime legitimacy in China: bridging the wide gulf between Western and Chinese scholarship', *Journal of Contemporary China*, no 23(2014):88.

[45] Quoted in Steven Mufson, "China's New Nationalism." *Washington Post National Weekly Ed*., April 1-7, 1996.

[46], Michael Roskin, *Countries and Concepts: Politics, Geography, Culture*. 10th ed. (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2009) , 426.

achieve hegemony. After Deng Xiaoping came into power in 1978, he immediately shifted attention from political campaigns and economic collectivism to a market-based economy. The prioritisation of economic development by Deng and the CCP was overwhelmingly supported by the masses and his economic reform was highly successful.[47] As Rawski has observed, 'a national consensus' favoured rapid economic development and continued market-oriented reform. Su Xiaobo argues that, in this sense, Deng's reform was successful in creating a consensus among the masses and the Communist party secured hegemony through performance-based legitimacy.[48]

Performance-based legitimacy was also seen in the field of sport. In the 1980s, sporting success was interwoven with nationalism and used to secure the goodwill of the masses as a means of proving that Deng's pragmatic ideology was correct. Inspired by Chinese athletic achievements in the 1984 Summer Olympics, Deng Xiaoping stated: "Now it is evident that the impact and influence of sports are so great that they reflected a country's economy and civilization. Sport attracts and inspires so many people. We need to promote elite sport more".[49] This view was reflected by official policy. The central government published "The Further Promotion of Sport" in October 1984. This document highlights the relationship between sports and politics, as well as the government's ambition to be a great sporting power:

> Sport has a close relationship with people's health, the power of the nation and the honour of the country. It plays an important role in promoting ideological awareness of the broad masses, modernisation targets, establishing foreign relations and strengthening national defence. Therefore, the Party and society have recognised the importance of sport in our society and will further develop sport in China. [. . .] The remarkable achievement in sport, especially the

[47] Su Xiaobo, 'Revolution and Reform: The Role of Ideology and Hegemony in Chinese Politics', *Journal of Contemporary China*, no. 20(2011): 69, 307-326.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Wu Shaozu ,Yu Wei (ed.), 'Deng Xiaoping's Sports Complex', Accessed on 3 August 2013 from: http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/85037/85038/7183986.html.

> success at the 1984 Olympics, has restored our self-confidence and national pride. It has stimulated a patriotic feeling among all the Chinese both at home and abroad, and enhanced China's international influence. […] Comparing with the advanced world-level, our sports still have a long way to go. **To shorten the gap with advanced world-level as soon as possible, our policy is to develop mass sport and elite sport, and gradually improve China's elite sports performance and increase the popularity of mass sports.** [text bolded by the Author] […] We should build our country into **a great power in sports** [text bolded by the Author] within this century.[50]

It is worth noting that 'great power in sports (*ti yu qiang guo*)' in this document is defined in terms of both mass sports and elite sports. This is also observed in another document 'Further Create a New Situation in Sports' issued by the SCSPE in 1983. This document was the first to promote the target of building China into a great sporting power within the 20th century and listed key indicators:

1) Half of the country's population should participate regularly in sports activities;
2) The performance of most elite sports should be near worldwide levels;
3) Completion of venue construction to hold the Asia Games and Olympic Games;
4) Improve the structure of the sports cadre team, strengthen sports research and produce world-class scientific achievements relating to sport.[51]

Elite sport was increasingly prioritised at the level of state policy in the pursuit of a dream of "Great Power in Sport" in the 1980s. In August 1985, the First Symposium

[50] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed. Notification of the Central Committee of CCP about Further Promotion of Sport (October 5, 1984), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982–1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 14-17.

[51] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Notification of the State Council's approval of the SCSPE's Request for Further Creation of a New Sports Situation'(1983), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982–1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 9.

of National Sport Development Strategy was held in Xi Ning, where the Society of Strategic Research for the Development of Physical Education and Sport produced the 'Olympic Strategy' for the SCSPE in 1985. The new strategy aimed to develop elite sports, despite the nation's limited resources.[52] The quest to become a great power in sports was highlighted in the 'China Sport Development Plan for the years (1985-2000)'.[53] According to the minutes of the 1987 Symposium of National Sport Development Strategy, elite sports performance was the most emphasised item in the 'Great Power in Sports' agenda,[54] which was acknowledged as being a phenomenon that was increasingly adopted by the common people. In 1988, Li Menghua, head of the SCSPE, spoke about strengthening the Olympic strategy:

> **Ranking among the best in the Olympic Games is the leading indicator for the great sport powers.** [text bolded by the Author] By 2000, we expect to achieve this target by taking 3 steps, respectively in the 1992, 1996 and 2000 Olympic Games. Specific requirements should be met at each step. In the 1992 Olympic Games, we plan to win 8-12 gold medals and a number of silver and bronze medals. In 1996 and the 2000 Olympic Games, could we set 15-20 golden medals as a target? **Wining 20 gold medals or so and ranking in the top 6 in aggregate score can be called a sports power in the world.** [text bolded by the Author][55]

[52] Fan Hong, Ping Wu and Huan Xiong, 'Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sport System and its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games.' *The International Journal for the History of Sport*, vol. 22 No.4, 2005, pp: 510-529.

[53] At that symposium, some scholars argued that great sports powers should refer to those countries with advanced mass sports and leading elite sports, namely those that had sports funding, sophisticated plans for achieving mass and elite sports, sufficient sports facilities and equipment for large-scale competitions and mass sports, and a sports population that exceeded 50% of the general population. Others argued that great sports powers did not equate to sports contributions from developed countries, as 'greatness' was reserved for those countries that achieved outstanding results in major international competitions. Those countries with outstanding sports equipment and large-scale sports populations, such as Finland, Sweden, Demark and Switzerland, could only fall into the category of sports in developed countries, because they had not ranked amongst the best in global tournaments. Thus, as China won first place in the gold medals and surpassed Japan in aggregate scores in the Asian Games, could be termed a great sports power globally. See Cao Shouhe, Zhao Yumei, "Evolution of the Origin and Meaning of 'Sports Power' and 'Sports Power'", *China Sports Science and Technology* 46, no.1(2010), 15-18.

[54] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, ed. 'The Summary of the National Sports Development Strategy Seminar in 1987, *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1988)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1991), 76.

[55] Compile Group of 'Li Menghua's Sports Road', *Li Menghua's Sports Road* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 2011), 305-307.

This plan spelt out the government's commitment to elite sports and its determination to become a "great power in sports", as well as its Olympic strategy.

Reform and Making Strides Towards Elite Sports as a Priority

In addition to nationalism, elite sports policy in the 1980s was largely driven by the reform itself. 1978 marked a turning point in the history of the PRC, with a shift of its work emphasis from politics, or 'class struggle' to economic construction, or 'socialist modernisation'.[56] However, Chinese economic reform began in 1980, with the first three years devoted to reform in the countryside.[57] Prior to 1984, changes to the economic system had resulted in changes in urban areas, such as increased decision-making powers amongst the state-owned enterprises, the emergence of self-employed workers[58] and different employment systems in enterprises with foreign investment, particularly in the special economic zones along the coasts. By the end of 1983, urban self-employed workers numbered 380,000[59] and 190 Chinese-Foreign joint ventures had been established.[60] These reforms contributed to the growth of the national economy in the early 1980s (see Table 7.1).

[56] Tan Tsou, *The Cultural Revolution and Post-Mao Reform: A Historical Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 144.

[57] Deng Xiaoping, 'Key Points of Talks in Wuchang, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, and Shanghai (January 18-February 21),' in *Deng Xiaoping's Anthology* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1993), 370-383.

[58] Gao Shangquan, Chi Fulin (eds.), The Development of China's Non-governmentally and Privately Operated Economy (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1996), 58.

[59] At the time of the founding of the PRC, the proportion of the collective economy was very low, while the proportions of the urban and rural individual economies were large. After 1956, with the completion of the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts, capitalist industry and commerce, the output value of the individual economy in urban and rural areas gradually decreased, while the state economy and the collective economy was strengthened. Vigorous implementation of the people's commune in the 1960s fostered the rural collective economy, which rapidly gained ever-increasing shares. After the launch of the Open Door Policy in 1978, the proportion of the total output value of the publicly-owned economy, such as the state economy and the collective economy, gradually decreased, while the private and individual economy, the joint-stock economy, and the foreign investment economy gradually secured larger proportions. For example, between 1978 and 1987, the proportion of China's industrial output value fell from 77.6% to 59.7%, the collective economy rose to 34.5%, and the individual economy, the private economy, the 'three capital' enterprises (referring to 'three kinds of foreign-invested enterprises or ventures: Sino-foreign joint ventures, cooperative businesses and exclusively foreign-owned enterprises in China) and the non-public sector of the economy rose from almost zero to 5.6%. There was a corresponding increase in the proportion of self-employed workers.

[60] Editorial Team of the China Economic Yearbook (ed.), *China Economic Yearbook 1984*, (Beijing: Economic Management Press, 1985), IV-52; Editorial Team of the China Statistical Yearbook ed., *China Statistical Yearbook 1985*, (Beijing: China Statistical Press, 1985), 214.

Table 7.1. Status of the National Economy (1981–1985)

Year	Total Product of Society	Total Value of Output (industry and agriculture)	National Revenue
	Increase rate (%)	Increase rate (%)	Increase rate(%)
Average (1953–1978)	**7.9**	**8.2**	**6.0**
Average (1981–1985)	**11.0**	**11.0**	**9.7**
1981	**4.6**	**4.6**	**4.9**
1982	**9.5**	**8.8**	**8.3**
1983	**10.3**	**10.2**	**9.8**
1984	**14.7**	**15.2**	**13.5**
1985	**16.5**	**16.8**	**12.3**

Source: Outline of National Economic and Social Development during the Sixth Five-year Plan period (1981-1985)[61]

The remarkable growth of the economy and the resulting socio-political benefits of the rural reforms greatly encouraged the reformists under Deng and led to the determination of an all-round economic reform.[62] At the national conference on ideological work held in January 1983, Hu Yaobang, then General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CCP, issued the general policy of 'Comprehensive, Systematic, Firm and Orderly' reform.[63] At the national conference of transportation and industry in April 1983, Zhao Ziyang, then Vice President of the CCP's Central Committee, decreed that 'the pace of reform should speed up'.[64] In January 1984, Deng inspected four special economic zones and spoke about further enhancements for economic reform. At the Third Plenum of the Twelfth Central Committee of the CCP in October 1984, the Party transferred the emphasis of economic reform from the villages to the cities.[65]

[61] Sun Jian (ed.), *Economic history of the People's Republic of China (1949-1990)* (Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1994), 7.
[62] Orville Shell & David Shambaugh (eds.), *The China Reader: The Reform Era* (New York: Random House, 1999), 65.
[63] Xu Dashen, *The Memoir of People's Republic of China*, Fourth volume (Changchun: Jilin People's Publishing House, 1994), p: 608.
[64] The Editorial Department of Economic Management of the PRC (ed.), *A Memorabilia of Economic Management in People's Republic of China* (Beijing: China Economic Publishing House, 1986), p: 505.
[65] Chen Sheying, 'Economic Reform and Social Change in China: Past, Present, and Future of the Economic State'. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 15,no.4(2002): 569-589.

The resolution on economic system reform in late 1984 triggered a wide range of systematic reforms. In March and May 1985, the Party and Central Government made decisions on science and technology system reforms, as well as educational system reforms. In September 1986, the Party issued another decision on the reform of the cultural system. System reforms at that time became a significant issue associated with all aspects of socialist modernisation and a primary task for the development of China's sports.[66]

In line with economic and political reforms, China's sports policies and systems were transformed in the 1980s. Reform of the economic system triggered a wide range of reforms. The SCSPE released its 'Resolution on the Reform of the Sports System (draft)' on 15 April 1986, launching the reform of the sports systems. In regard to the background of this policy, Zhang Caizhen, former Director of the Department of Policy in the SCSPE, stated:

> The primary motivation for sports system reform arose from the strategic decision issued by the second generation of central leadership in the CCP, led by Deng Xiaoping at the third Plenum of the 11th CCP Congress in December 1978. […] The overall environment of state reform played a decisive role in decisions regarding sports system reforms. If the state did not implement reform and shift its emphasis from work to sports, how could reform go ahead in the sports systems?[67]

The change in sports policies was necessary to bring the sports system into line with changes in other parts of Chinese society: politics, the economy and culture. In April

[66] Fu Yannong, *General History of Chinese Sports (1980-1992). The Sixth volume* (Beijing: People's Sports Publishing House, 2008), 100.
[67] Fu Yannong, Gu Bai and Li Yan, A Review of Several Issues in Sports Reform in the 1980s. Interview of Zhang Caizhen, Vice Director of the National Sports Commission. *Journal of Physical Education.* 2008;15(7):1-4.

1986, the SCSPE issued its Draft Resolution on the Reform of the Sports System.[68] The major objective in this document was to raise the standard of elite sports, as can be seen in the various clauses.[69] These included 10 aspects of China's sport, **six of which** (bolded by the Author) related directly to elite sport and aimed to:

1) strengthen the role of the SCSPE in leadership, coordination and supervision;
2) **establish a scientific training system to form a multipurpose, multichannel and multilevel reserve of athletic talent;**
3) **improve the system of sports competitions, gradually realising socialisation, diversification and institutionalisation;**
4) promote mass sports towards a higher level;
5) promote traditional Chinese sports and pastimes;
6) **promote sports science research;**
7) reform the sports and physical education systems;
8) **emphasise the ideological and political significance of sports;**
9) **improve the system of rewards for competition;**
10) **develop flexible policies for international sports exchanges.**[70]

7.3.2 The Development of the Elite Sports System: Policy and Practice

Administrative System

The administrative system in Chinese sports experienced two major adjustments in the 1980s. The first was in 1982 when the Department of Elite Sport was divided into four Departments responsible for different elite sports, while the Department of

[68] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Resolution on the Reform of the Sports System (Draft)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 67.

[69] Ibid., 67-79.

[70] Ibid., 67-79.

Military Sport was disbanded.[71] The second occurred in 1986 after the launch of reforms to the sports system.

In 1988, the State Council launched the second round of institutional reform,[72] intended to gradually establish a modern management system with Chinese characteristics, namely, a functional, well-structured, well-coordinated, flexible and efficient administrative system.[73] According to the 'Revolution on the Reform of the Sports System', sports administrative system reform mainly involved the transformation of the State-led sports system into one that was run jointly by the State and various social organisations (e.g. sporting associations, private sports clubs), and strengthening of the leadership of sports committees at all levels.[74] Wang Lanming, then the Deputy Director of the State Commission Office for Public Sector Reform, has argued that the key to institutional reform in 1988 was to transform the functions of government, first promulgated in 1949.[75] On 10 August 1988, the State Commission of Public Sectors Reform identified principles in the institutional reform of the SCSPE defining it as a functional department under the State Council, with its

[71] In the 1950s, learning from the experience of the Soviet Union, China established the 'Central National Defence Club', 'All-China Sports Federation' and set up the Departments of Military Sports in the SCSPE, in order to train the reserve forces of the national armed forces with military knowledge and skills. Throughout the 1950s and 1970s, the significance of national defence was greater than that of sports, and it is also a means of educating people about patriotism and the concept of national defence. In the 1980s, economic development was the main focus of the government and China gradually abolished the military sports in government agencies.

[72] Due to the restrictions imposed by the highly centralized power of the economic management system, government institutional reform in 1982 failed to realize the transformation of functions. The State Council therefore relaunched this reform of the system in 1988. It focused on vigorous transformation of government functions. See Institutional Reform of the State in 1988, accessed on 23 August 2012 from: http://www.gov.cn/test/2009-01/16/content_1206984.htm

[73] The lack of implementation of planned changes to economic management by the 1980s meant that more and more government institutions were being established and numbers of personnel were constantly increasing, in the name of reform. By the end of 1986, State Council had 72 departments; 11 more than in 1982, with over 5,000 staff members. After the theory of planned commodity economy was put into practice, it became urgent to carry out institutional reform. In April 1988, the first session of the Seventh National People's Congress approved the State Council's reform plan. The reform process reduced the numbers in the Ministry and State Council Committee from 45 to 41, and its directly affiliated institutions from 22 to 19. Non-permanent organisations were reduced from 75 to 44. The Department's Bureau was reduced by 20%. After these institutional reforms, State Council staff members were reduced by more than 9,700 people. For the first time, the Transforming Government Functions was set up as a key to reform of government institutions. Unfortunately, the reform of local institutions originally scheduled for 1989 was postponed. See Nan Xiang Hong, *Southern Urban Daily*, '1988 reform Point out Non-separation of government administration and enterprise management', 3 April 2008.

[74] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Resolution on the Reform of the Sports System', op. cit, 68.

[75] Wang Lanming, Review and Reflection on the China's Six Reform of Centralised Administrative System since the Reform and Opening-up. *Chinese Administration Management* 25, no.10 (2009):7-16.

main tasks listed as follows:

1) research, formulate and implement state sports policy;
2) direct and inspect sports committees at all levels;
3) lead and cooperate with other industry trade associations to actively carry out sports activities;
4) cooperate with other sectors to develop sports, i.e., the sectors of education, health, culture, the Communist Youth League and the armed forces;
5) lead and cooperate with all relevant departments to organise sports programs and facilities, construct and supply sports equipment;
6) devise sports laws and regulations, research and promote systematic reform of the sports sector;
7) issue a plan for national sports competitions, organise state sports competitions, examine and approve competition rules and national records;
8) issue overall arrangements for national sports events and direct the training of professional and amateur sports teams;
9) develop an arena for international sports exchange and organise international sports competitions;
10) lead and organise sports propaganda and cultivate professional talent and ability;
11) cooperate with local government and local Party committees to strengthen the political aspect of sports;
12) lead the All-China Sports Federation and support activities of the Chinese Olympic Committee.[76]

In line with the seventh clause, the SCSPE set up the General Administration of Elite Sport Training and Competition Department in 1988 (see Figure 7.2). According to the eighth clause, another department for elite sports was added. By the end of 1988, six of the 14 departments in the SCSPE were related to elite sports (see Figure 7.2).

[76] The Office of the State Council(ed.), Resolution on Institutional Restructuring of the State Council at the First Session of the Seventh National People's Congress (NPC, 9 April 1988), the *People's Daily*, 10 April 1998.

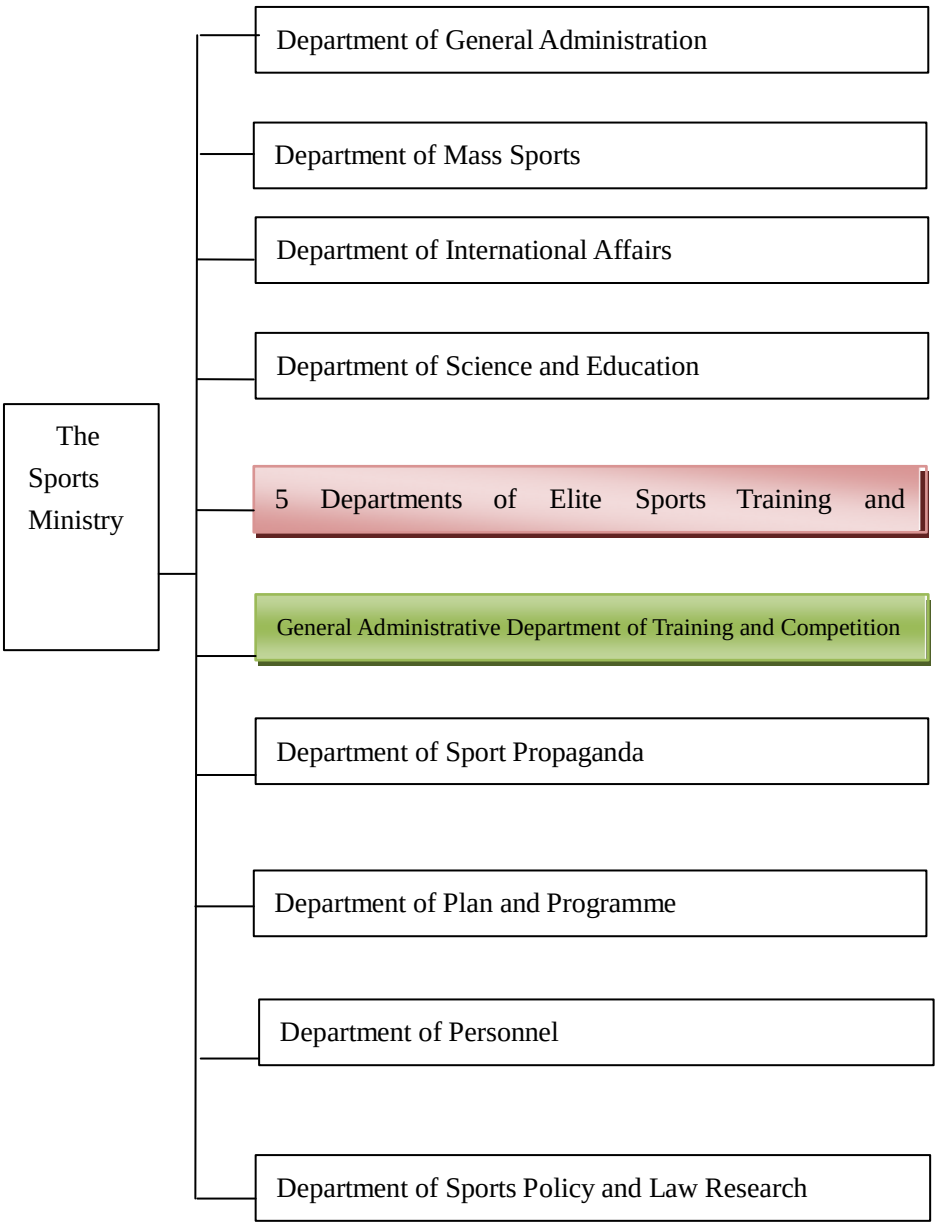


Figure 7.2. Administrative Structure of the SCSPE from 1988 to the mid-1990s

Selection and training system

In its bid to secure more medals, China's government focused on Olympic sports. At the 1980 National Sport Conference, Wang Meng noted that 'only if the key sports were highlighted and strengthened, could more outstanding athletes be produced'.[77]

[77] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Wang Meng's Work Report at the 1980 National Sports Work Meeting', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949–1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 152.

His instructions were soon turned into policy. On March 28th 1980, the SCSPE issued both the document 'Views on Establishing Outstanding Sport Teams'[78] and 'Views on Layout of Key Competitive Sports'.[79] In March 1980, the State Council issued its 'Instruction on Speeding up the Level of Competitive Sports'.

That instruction explained that almost half of China's 203 gold medals won at the 1980 Olympic Games belonged to the four major sports of athletics, gymnastics, swimming and weightlifting. However, fewer than 25% of elite Chinese athletes trained for these sports,[80] whereas over 35% of elite Chinese athletes were trained in team sports, including basketball, volleyball and football, which achieved only five gold medals.[81] The document concluded that 'it was urgent for China to make a change'.[82]

In response, the Chinese government adopted the policy 'Focus On Olympic Sports While Giving Due Consideration to Ordinary Sports' (*yi ao yu hui wei zhong dian, jian gu yi ban*). The 1980 State Sports Conference issued a decision to focus on 13 key sports nationwide: table tennis, badminton, athletics, swimming, diving, gymnastics, lifting, football, basketball, volleyball, shooting, archery and speed skating. In late 1985, the SCSPE convened a working meeting on the training of excellent athletic teams and issued a guideline intended to condense the task, emphasise key sports and optimise the structure of elite sports.[83]

Besides its focus on Olympic sports, China adopted two main strategies designed to

[78] Ibid., 485.
[79] Ibid., 493.
[80] The Olympic programme comprises sports, disciplines and events. A sport is that which is governed by an International Federation (IF). A discipline is a branch of a sport comprising one or more events. An event is a competition in a sport or discipline that is part of a finishing list or achieves a ranking.
[81] The National Bureau of Statistics. *China Industrial Statistics Yearbook (1949-1991)*, volume 2, (Beijing: China Statistics Publishing House, 1992), 191.
[82] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Wang Meng's Work Report at the 1980 National Sports Work Meeting', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 141.
[83] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Summary of the 1985 Training Work Meeting of National Excellent Sports Team (excerpt)', (16 January 1986), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1986), 427.

strengthen selective and training systems in the 1980s. The first was to expand the channels of the selection system by mobilising various social forces. As early as 1979, the SCSPE called on sports committees at all levels to expand the cultivation of high-level athletes and the sports teams in both the sports and trades sectors.[84] In 1980, the SCSPE emphasised that the sports sector should support and help the trades sector to establish outstanding sports teams and thereby extend the selection and cultivation of outstanding athletes; amateur sports schools should be adjusted according to the arrangements of key sports; sports training should be actively carried out in schools with a sports tradition.[85] In 1983, the SCSPE specifically required that high-level sport teams should be established in big factories, enterprises, and colleges.[86] At the 1985 National Conference of Directors of Sport Commission, the SCSPE emphasised that sports operations had previously relied completely on resources from within the sports sector, particularly above the provincial level, and failed to account for social forces (such as neighbourhood and village associations), resulting in a lack of competitive vitality. Henceforth, the SCSPE advocated multipurpose, multilevel sports operations.[87]

The government encouraged a combination of sports and education in the cultivation of athletic talent. In 1986, the SCSPE issued its 'Speeding up the Cultivation of the Athletic Reserve for Excellent Sports Teams'. This document for the first time directed the combination of sports and education in cultivating reserve talent in athletic sports. Following this policy, in November 1986, the Education Ministry and the SCSPE jointly released the 'Develop Extracurricular Physical Training and

[84] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Minutes of 1979 National Sport Work Meeting', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 136.
[85] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), Report on Several Issues on Accelerating the Improvement of Athletic Level (1980), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 142.
[86] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Notification of the State Council's Approval of the SCSPE 's Request for Further Creation of a New Sports Situation' (1983), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 9.
[87] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Report of the SCSPE to the State Council on the 1985 Work Meeting of the Directors of the Sports Committees (April 24, 1985)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1986), 47.

Improve Athletic Skill Performance of School Sport'. One year later, the Education Ministry announced that it had designated 51 colleges as pilot units to recruit high-level athletes.[88]

Another policy was to introduce a competitive mechanism into the elite sports system. Prior to the 1980s, state enterprise employees in China were guaranteed lifetime employment and an occupation-based social welfare system (e.g. housing, healthcare, and even education and employment for their children) under a system dubbed the 'Iron Rice Bowl'. Prior to 1989, almost 90% of all employees worked in the state sector and had permanent job tenure.[89] By 1994, 26% of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) offered employment contracts to their employees.[90] The lifetime employment system effectively guaranteed social stability by providing permanent jobs and social welfare, but inevitably resulted in lower efficiency. Enterprises did not need to face pressure from market competition or the threats of takeover and bankruptcy, because SOEs could depend on the state to solve their troubles. Under this permanent employment system, being a coach in the sports system was a permanent role. To encourage coaches to work hard and improve athletic performance, the government set about dismantling the 'Iron Rice Bowl' system. The policy document 'On Further Creating New Situation of Sport' released in 1983 stated:

> It is required to change the state of 'Iron Rice Bowl'. The key is to activate an employment mechanism. The measures include: 1. Trial recruitment, self-reported and public discussion, the Association recommended contract; 2. Regular assessment examinations, evaluations, promotion of titles; 3. Rotation and continuing education systems; 4. Changing the way of

[88] Department of Science and Education of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Notification on Pilot Recruitment of High Level Athletes in Colleges and Universities (9 April 1987)', *The Collected Compilation of Current Higher Sports Physical Education Documents (1980-1992)* (Beijing: Beijing Sports University Press, 1993), 86.

[89] The National Bureau of Statistics (ed.), *China Industrial Statistics Yearbook (1989)*, (Beijing: China Statistics Publishing House, 1989), 345.

[90] The National Bureau of Statistics, *China Industrial Statistics Yearbook (1994)*, (Beijing: China Statistics Publishing House, 1995), 451.

selecting coaches directly from athletes.[91]

By implementing the above-mentioned measures and policies, the original three-level selection and training system was transformed into four levels: Olympic and national teams; provincial squads; high-level sports teams in trade sectors, enterprises and Colleges or Universities, including Elite Sport Colleges, Physical Culture and Sport Colleges; young athletes in sport schools and schools with a sports tradition at grassroots level (see Figure 7.3). A new pyramid system of selection and training emerged in the 1980s and China began to transform the state-run system into a multi-channelled, multileveled selection and training network.

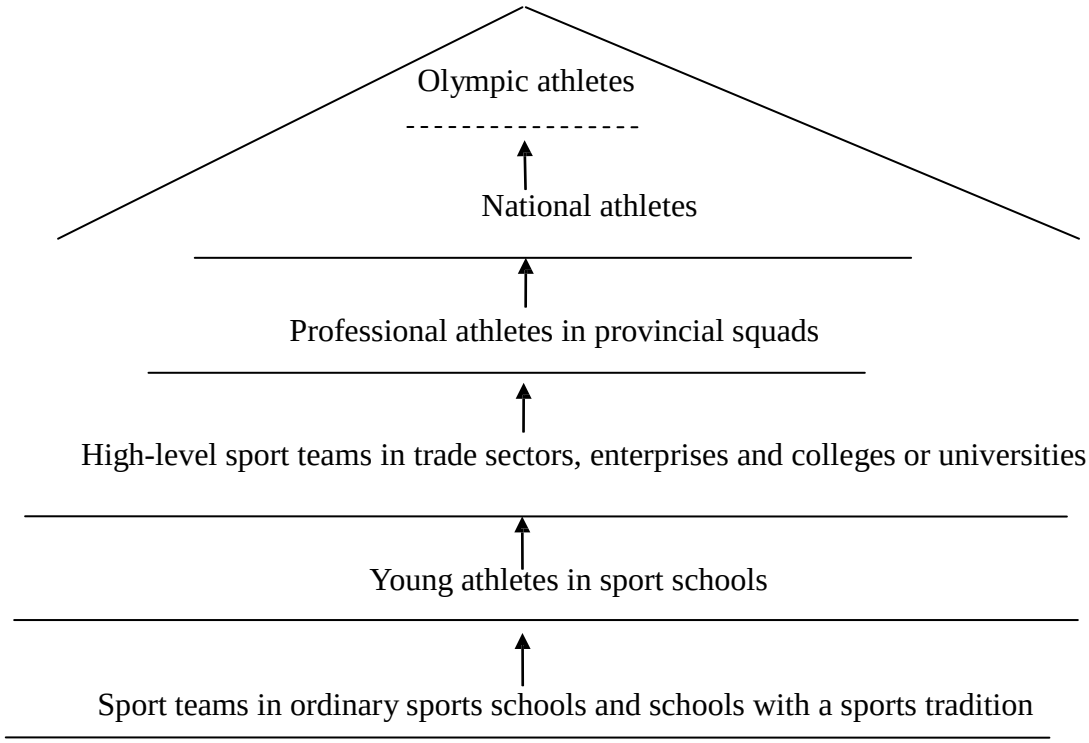


Figure 7.3. Pyramid of the Selection and Training System for Elite Sport (by the early 1990s)

[91] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, *op. cit.*, 9.

Competition System

In January 1980, Wang Meng, then-Head of the SCSPE, stated that: 'Domestic competition should be in line with international competition; domestic competition must accommodate international competitions, particularly the Olympic Games',[92] to provide athletes with the maximum experience of international competition. Consequently, most of the competitive sports events in the National Games became Olympic events. As an example, 20 of the 22 sports events in the 1983 Fifth National Games were Olympic events. In order to cater still further to international competition, the SCSPE issued its 'Regulation of Arbitration Commission, Rules of Judging and Conditions' in 1980 and the 'Methods of Recommending and Applying for International Judges' in 1981.

The Chinese government quickened the pace of its competition system reforms after launching a nationwide, holistic reform of sports systems. In 1986, the former Head of the SCSPE, Li Menghua, emphasised that the core theme underlying the reformation of the competition system was to enable competitions to mobilise various resources in the comprehensive development of elite sports.[93] At the State Conference of Directors of Sport Committees in April 1985, the government adopted a strategy of promoting the sports competition system towards institutionalisation, diversification and socialisation.[94]

Initially, China applied a hierarchical management structure. All sports competitions were classified and held on a regular basis: individual sports federations or associations, such as the National Gymnastics Federation or National Swimming

[92] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC(ed.), 'Wang Meng's Work Report at the 1980 National Sports Work Conference', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 152.

[93] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), Li Menghua's Concluding Remarks at the National Meeting of the Directors of the Sport Committee of the Provinces, Autonomous Regions and Municipalities (March 15, 1986), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 95.

[94] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed. 'Report to the State Council on the 1985 State Sports Work Meeting of the Director of Sport Committees (April 24, 1985)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 48.

Federations, held annual championships organised by individual sports federations or associations. The SCSPE was responsible for comprehensive national sports competitions, such as the National Games and National Youth Games, held every four years, while sports associations in trade industries were responsible for sports competitions in those industries; provincial sport committees were responsible for bi-annual regional and provincial sports meetings (see Figure 7.4).

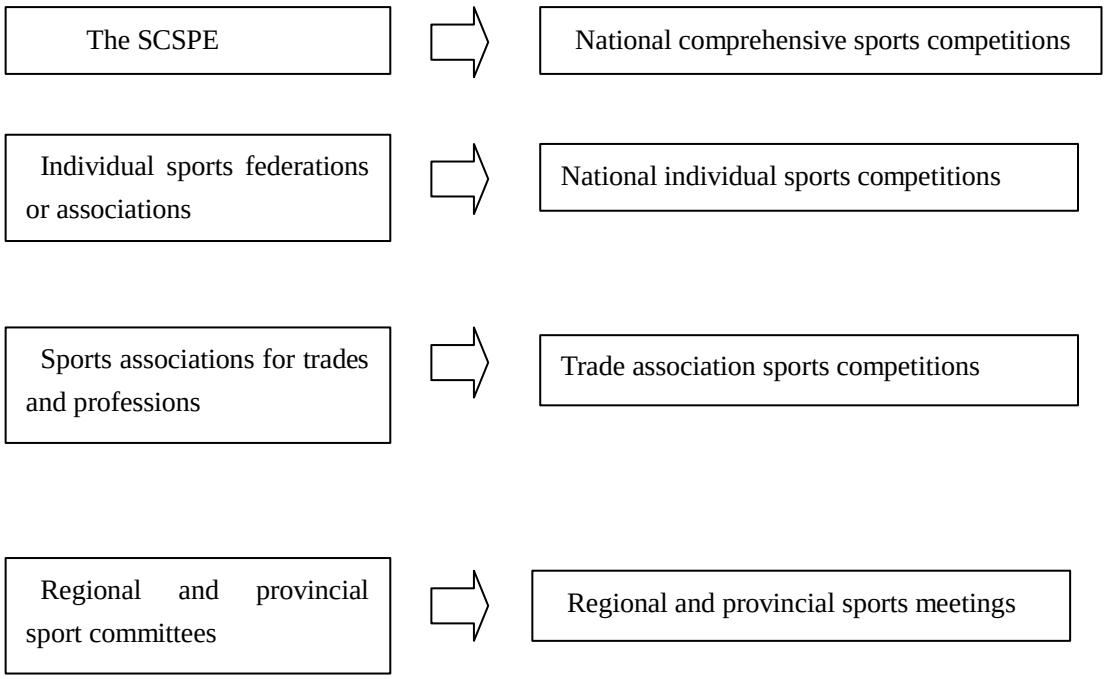


Figure 7.4. Sports competition systems in the 1980s

Next, China rescheduled the National Games and National Youth Games.[95] Prior to 1986, the National Games had been held five times in the PRC, with inconsistent spacing between the events. In the 1980s, the National Games were set to be held every four years.[96] Prior to 1979, Beijing was universally selected as the venue. In the 1980s, provinces and cities began to compete for the opportunity to host the National Games (see Table 7.2), with the aim of mobilising local government enthusiasm for

[95] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Resolution of the SPCSC on the Reform of Sport System (Draft)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 72.

[96] In order to prepare for the 1992 Olympic Games, the Seventh National Games was held in 1993, 1 year after the Games. Thereafter, the National Games was scheduled to be held 1 year after the Olympic Games.

improving the performance and facilities in elite sports.

Table 7.2. PRC National Games (1959 through 1987)

No.	Year	Venue	Timing interval (year)
1st	1959	Beijing	0
2nd	1965	Beijing	6
3rd	1975	Beijing	10
4th	1979	Beijing	4
5th	1983	Shanghai	4
6th	1987	Guangdong	4

Regulations and the scale of national competitions were adjusted, in order to adapt to international competition and improve performance. Following this principle, sports events were divided into key and ordinary Olympic events, non-Olympic events and other events.[97] National Games and National Youth Games were required to focus on Olympic events.[98] Competition conditions, regulations, schedules, apparatus and fields were identical to those used in international standards, to ensure that athletes could adapt themselves to international competition.[99] China issued the slogans 'Let the national competitions serve the Olympics (*bian quan yun wei ao yun*)' and 'Training the athletes in Chinese competitions and preparing them to fight for China at the international games (*guo nei lian bing, yi zhi dui wai*)'.

In order to expand financing channels for developing elite sports, China introduced business sponsorship into sports competitions. In October 1984, the CCP Central Committee issued its document "Notification on Further Developing Sports", which stated:

[97] The Editorial Committee of Chinese Sport Yearbook (ed.), 'National Single-event Sporting Competition System (Trial) (June 11, 1989) ', *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1988)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1989), 34
[98] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, 'Resolution on the Reform of the Sports System (Draft)', op. cit., 72.
[99] The Editorial Committee of Chinese Sport Yearbook(ed.), 'National Single-event Sporting Competition System (Trial) (June 11, 1989)', op. cit., 36

> Sport is an undertaking in China of the whole Chinese people. Administering sport should not only rely on sport commissions, but also rely on and give play to the power of the whole society. To expand financing channels, money needs to be raised from the whole society and a sports fund needs to be established. Commercial channels should be explored and sports television, radio and advertising should be put into place.[100]

This step was remarkable for the PRC. Prior to the 1980s, Chinese marketisation in the private sector economy was practically zero. China's reform and opening-up initiatives in the late 1970s, followed by the party's decision in 1984 to push forward with comprehensive reforms nationwide, led to the emergence of a novel economic system.[101] The centralised planning or 'command' economic system began to transition towards an efficiency-oriented economic system. Enterprises were encouraged to seek markets and customers, so they began to advertise their goods for sale, and one of the advertising strategies was to sponsor sports teams. Thus, commercial sponsorship expanded the competitions in running sports.

In 1984, Guangzhou Bai Yun Shan (白云山) Pharmaceutical Factory became the first enterprise in the history of the PRC to sponsor a professional sports team. After signing a contract with the Guangzhou sports committee, Bai Yun Shan decided to sponsor a Guangdong football team for 200,000 RMB per year. The football team, in return, had to use the logo of Bai Yun Shan, marking the emergence of professional athletic teams that were run jointly by enterprises and sports committees.[102] Following the example of Bai Yun Shan, a number of enterprises, such as Beijing's

[100] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), Notification of the Central Committee of CCP about Further Promotion of Sport (5 October 1984), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 14-17.

[101] Ash, Robert F., Kueh, Y.Y. (ed.),, The Chinese Economy Under Deng Xiaoping, Oxford University Press, New York; Gao, Shangquan, & Chi, Fulin eds., The Development of China's Non-governmentally and Privately Operated Economy (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1996), 85.

[102] Zhao Liping, 'Guangzhou Football's Fifty-five Years: Nearly Half a Century of the History of the Decline and Fall, *Guangzhou Daily*, 27 November 2007.

Xue Hua (雪花) refrigerator factory, Guangzhou Wanbao refrigerator and Dong Bei (东北) pharmaceutical plants, all signed contracts with local sport committees and sponsored provincial football teams, triggering wide-ranging cooperation between the trades and sports sector throughout the 1980s. By the end of 1989, over 300 high-level sports teams were sponsored by enterprises.[103]

As economic reforms progressed through the 1980s, sports advertising became acceptable in China. In 1983, for the Fifth National Games in Shanghai, the government switched from 100% government funding to allowing advertising revenue to help pay for the games. Although the advertising revenues at the time amounted to only 113,600 RMB and accounted for just 1.16% of the total expenditure, this action marked a historic step in the evolution of the PRC's sport development.[104]

7.4 The Sports Policy and System in Rural China in the 1980s

As Lu Wenyun and Ian P. Henry have observed, the change in sports policy in China was jointly affected by the broad thrust of sports policy and the government's overall policy.[105] This section explores the development of the mass sports policies and systems throughout the countryside and urban areas in the 1980s, in the context of changes to state sports policies and China's overall economic development.

When the Chinese economy followed the Soviet model of economic development from the 1950s, it operated on a planned basis, prioritising the development of industry, particularly heavy industry, while the agricultural sector consistently received less attention and investment. Moreover, collectivisation and the commune

[103] Yu Xuefeng and Lu Yuanzhen, The issue of running high lelvel sports team by interprises in China. *Journal of Beijing University of Sports* 16, no.1(1993): 28-32.
[104] Ji Fang, Panoramic Universiade: The 'Economic Magnetic Field' Effect of the National Games is becoming more and more obvious, *People's Daily*, 26 October 2009.
[105] Lu Wenyun and Ian P. Henry, Historical Review of Sports Policy in Rural China (1949-2008). *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28,no.7(2011): 1055-1071.

system initiated in the 1950s did not significantly increase agricultural production. In 1977, Deng Xiaoping emphasised that only by dramatically increasing agricultural production could China ensure rapid development of the entire economy. The government introduced policies and measures to increase agricultural production and modernise agriculture. Every effort was made to improve the traditional way of tilling the land by introducing mechanisation, electrification and chemical fertilisers. China also launched its 'household contract responsibility system with remuneration linked to output (hereinafter referred to as the household responsibility system)'.[106]

7.4.1 De-collectivisation and the Organisational Vacuum in the Early 1980s

Prior to the 1980s, organising mass sports in rural China relied largely on people's communes and county sports committees, which constituted the organisational foundation for collective ownership. De-collectivisation took place as a result of the market reforms that swept through rural China in the late 1970s. The household responsibility system, which resulted in systematic changes in rural communities, was launched at the end of the 1970s.[107] As mentioned earlier, Chinese economic reform began in the countryside, the weakest link (i.e., the poorest, least productive sector) of the centrally planned economy.[108] Pre-reform collective farms in China were economically inefficient because of the high costs of monitoring sustained by their production teams.[109] The introduction of the Household Responsibility System (HRS) in 1979 is commonly credited for addressing this inefficiency.[110] The widespread

[106] The household responsibility system was an agriculture production system that aimed to preserve basic unified management of the collective economy, while contracting out land and other goods to households. Households could make operating decisions independently within limits set by the contract agreement, and could freely dispose of surplus production over and above national and collective quotas. The household responsibility system was created by the peasants but spread nationwide with support from the central government. More than 93% of production teams had adopted the system by 1983.

[107] Jonathan Unger, *The Transformation of Rural China*, (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), 56.

[108] Zhang Zhanbin, 'The Historical Process of the Reform and Development of China's Economic System', *Theoretical Vision*, no.8(2007), 12-15.

[109] Peter Nolan, *The Political Economy of Collective Farms: An Analysis of China's Post-Mao Rural Reforms.* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 89.

[110] Justin Yifu Lin, 'Rural Reforms and Agricultural Growth in China'. *American Economic Review* 82, no. 1(1992): 34-51.

adoption of this system throughout rural areas[111] meant that the household became the basic unit of production and social life, replacing people's communes. By 1985, the commune system was almost completely abandoned.[112]

The collapse of communes resulted in de-collectivisation and greatly weakened the organisational base of rural sports (see Figure 7.5). As discussed earlier, prior to the 1980s, communes played a crucial part in organising sport and recreation activities in the countryside, including military physical exercises, mass sports competitions, folk sports and recreational activities. The collapse of the communes and politicisation of mass sport practice that was cultivated in the Cultural Revolution witnessed sports in rural areas slumping to their lowest-ever levels. It was noted at the State Rural Sport Conference in January 1983 that "in most rural areas, mass sport does not develop well due to the lack of sport fields, sport facilities and organisational leadership".[113]

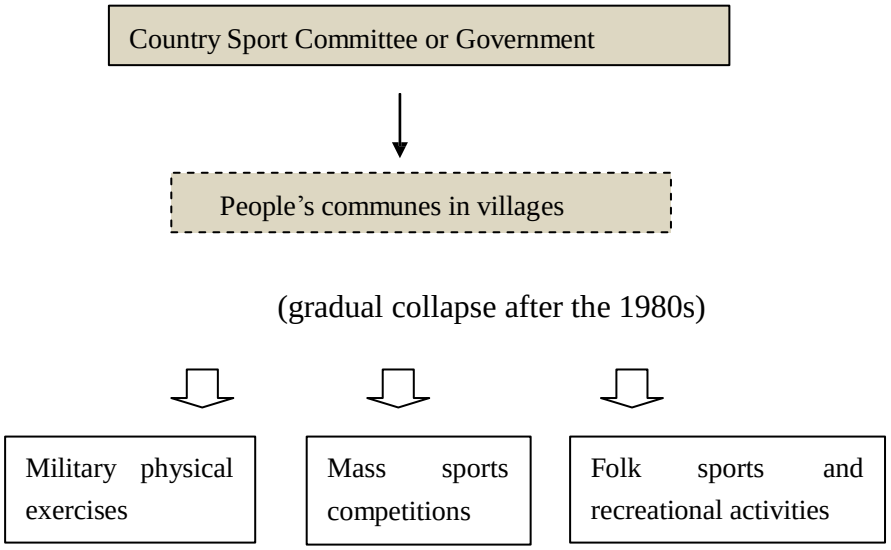


Figure 7.5. Changes in the Rural Sports System in the 1980s

[111] The HRS was first put into practice in Anhui and other places, and was hugely successful. Subsequently, the system was rapidly introduced nationwide.

[112] Most communes were disbanded in the 1980s, but some are still in place today. Among them is the village of Nanjie in Henan province, where workers begin the day by singing in praise of the country's former leader Mao Zedong. In Nanjie, workers continue to toil for low wages, but in return are provided for in other ways by the commune, which includes very good welfare benefits and free education. For more detailed information about Nanjie village, see 'Life in one of China's last communes', accessed on 10 June 2013: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8278128.stm.

[113] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, Minutes of the National Rural Sports Meeting (27 January 1983), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 266-271.

7.4.2 'Socialist Spiritual Civilization' and the tipping point of rural sports in 1983

In addition to rural economic reforms, the demographic, social and cultural changes resulting from the Reform and Open-Door Policy initiatives impacted greatly upon rural sports. Firstly, the traditional lifestyle of Chinese people underwent massive change in the 1980s with accompanying improvements in leisure time and living standards resulting from economic development, as well as the introduction of Western culture into Chinese society.[114] In the 1970s, after years of devastation during the Culture Revolution, China opened its doors to the world. Throughout the 1980s, entertainment changed from traditional themes and introduced Western elements, including films, television programs and pop music. The more relaxed political environment enabled mass entertainment culture in China to develop with relative freedom. Some of the Party leaders began to express concern about this emerging culture of entertainment and pursuit of economic development. They considered that if China only pursued economic growth, society would advance economically but regress spiritually.[115] In rural areas, for example, the household responsibility system promoted economic and social development and increased leisure time. This increase in leisure time led to concerns among Party leaders about the appearance of gambling, feudal superstition, pornography, illegal publications and youth delinquency.[116]

To address these problems, the CCP formulated new values and concepts that were intended to raise ideological awareness and guide people's recreational activities in

[114] Western films, television programmes and popular music surged into China in the early 1980s. Most of this popular culture would not normally be seen as seriously challenging the Chinese way of life, but older comrades, in particular, feared that in the spiritual vacuum that prevailed following the Cultural Revolution, even otherwise innocuous concepts and products could be greatly damaging.

[115] Wu Yuan, 'The Formation and Development of Socialist Spiritual Civilisation since the Reform and Opening up'. Accessed on 5 August 2013, from: http://theory.gmw.cn/2018-07/17/content_29917310.htm.

[116] Lu Wenyun and Ian P. Henry, Historical Review of Sports Policy in Rural China (1949-2008). *The International Journal of the History of Sport*. 2011;28(7):1055-1071.

favour of a healthy physical and moral culture.[117] The Party sought to build a system of 'Socialist Spiritual Civilisation' (SSC). Ye Jianying, then the Vice Chairman of the CCP Central Committee, voiced this concept in September 1979, which was enlarged upon by Deng Xiaoping in 1980. He argued that 'we are about to build a socialist country, which not only includes a highly developed material civilisation, but also a high degree of spiritual civilisation', 'without spiritual civilisation, without communist ideology, without communist morality, how can we build a socialist society?'.[118] According to Deng, the SSC should reflect and match the improved material conditions in large sections of society and at the same time, it should guide the cultural life of the people during the economic and social transformation of China, which had been taking place since the end of the 1970s.

In June 1981, the SSC for the first time was ranked as a part of a target of socialist construction. At the 12th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in September 1982, material and spiritual civilisation was announced as a strategic principle.[119] Thus, the political rhetoric of the CCP had moved significantly from its earlier focus on material concerns (e.g., defence and production) to more abstract concerns regarding spiritual and moral development.[120]

In November 1982, the State Rural Sport Working Conference was jointly hosted by the SCSPE, the Cultural Ministry and the Communist Youth League of China. Subsequently, the State Council issued its document 'A Summary of the National Working Conference for Rural Sports', which established a policy framework for the development of rural sports in the 1980s. According to this document, rural sports

[117] CCP Centre Committee , 'Instruction on Caring about People's Cultural Life'. Accessed on 24 August 1981: http://ndcnc.gov.cn/datalib/2004/PRCDOC/DL/DL-177519.
[118] Deng Xiaoping, 'Carry out the Adjustment Policy and Ensure Stability and Unity (December 25, 1980)', in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, volume 2, edited by the Committee of Literature Editorial Board in the Central Committee of the CCP (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994), 364-374.
[119] CCP Central Committee, *Create a New Situation of Socialist Modernisation in an All-round Way – Hu Yaobang's Report at the 12th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1982), 6.
[120] Lu Wenyun and Ian P. Henry, 'Historical Review of Sports Policy in Rural China (1949-2008)' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28,no.7 (2011): 1055-1071.

contributed to the construction of the SSC:

> The 12th Party Congress issued a series of principles and policies aiming to comprehensively create a new situation of socialist modernisation, providing a clear direction for the development of rural sports in China. The primary tasks of rural sport are to: extensively develop mass sports activities to improve farmers' health, enrich leisure and cultural life, build a socialist spiritual civilisation, and strive to achieve the overall tasks of this new historical period.[121]

The Chinese government specified two stages for the development of rural sport from 1983 to 1990. In the first three years from 1983 to 1985, except for a few rural communities with poor economic conditions, every town was required to have a cultural centre and every village was required to have a youth club, to accommodate all sorts of cultural and sport activities. During the five-year period from 1986 to 1990, the cultural centres were gradually equipped with sport facilities and even swimming pools in some villages. The government expected sport to become a part of people's lives and improve the physical well-being of the common people.[122]

7.4.3 The Rise of Rural Sports in the Second Half of the 1980s

In response to the campaign for the SSC, rural sport was emphasised by state sports policies from the mid-1980s onwards.[123] At a national sports committee meeting held in 1985, the Sports Minister Li Menghua announced that rural sports should hold an important position and that sports committees at provincial levels should pay equal

[121] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, Minutes of the National Rural Sports Meeting (January 27, 1983), *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 263.
[122] Ibid, p: 262.
[123] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, 'Concluding Remarks of Director Li Menghua at the 1984 National Meeting of the Director of the Sport Committees (12 January 1984)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), p: 42.

attention to both urban and rural sports, while sports committees at the national level should focus on rural sports.[124] He stated that the rural economic situation was generally fine but that its development was unstable. If rural sport were not promoted, it would lag behind rural economic development and fail to fulfil the needs of the common people.[125]

To adjust to the new situation in rural areas and strengthen rural sports,[126] the SCSPE issued a document in December 1984 entitled 'Suggestion on Strengthening Rural Sport Work', which stated that 'the county (rural areas) level is an important part of the implementation of the party's principles and policy of sports. Therefore, to strengthen sport at county level is to adapt sport to such a new situation, and a strategic task of the development of China's sports undertakings'.[127] Subsequently, the government conducted a nationwide programme, 'Selecting Advanced Sport County', in 1985. The SCSPE simultaneously issued its 'Sports Advanced County Selection Criteria and Methods', which was modified in 1987.

Under this policy, all those towns and villages that had a good foundation of sports were required to prioritise the development of both traditional and modern sports, increase sports funding and facilities and improve administrative organisations, while towns with good economic conditions were required to provide professional staff.[128] Wang Xianqiong, a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), has argued that this policy greatly boosted rural sport at the county level.[129]

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[124] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, 'Concluding Remarks of Director Li Menghua at the 1985 National Meeting of the Director of the Sport Committees (11 April 1985)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), pp: 52-59.

[125] Ibid, p: 52.

[126] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, 'Minutes of the National Rural Sports Meeting (27 January 1983)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 266-271.

[127] Ibid., 266-271

[128] Ibid, 266-171.

[129] Wang Xianqiong, a Proposal to Restore the Establishment of Advanced Sports County. Accessed on January 8, 2013, from http://www.mj.org.cn/mjzt/2010nzt/2010lh/jyxc/qt/201003/t20100312_81295.htm

The implementation of this policy led to changes in rural China. Firstly, the administrative structure of sport at the county level recovered and strengthened. For example, in Tan County, Shandong Province, the county sports committee appointed an executive director and in 1984, a department of mass sport was established.[130]

Secondly, at the county level, sports budgets were guaranteed and even increased. In order to be designated as a State Advanced Sports County, county governments, particularly those in richer counties, strove to improve the sports budget. In Zhangjiagan County, for example, the sports budget was 48,000 RMB in 1985, or 0.07 Yuan (CNY) per capita. In 1986, it increased to 77,500 RMB, or 0.1 Yuan per capita. Further increases between 1987 and 1990 led to a total of 120,000 RMB. The budget for building sports courts and fields amounted to 1.7 million Yuan.[131] In 1987, the SCSPE designated 78 counties as State Advanced Sports Counties.

Thirdly, sports facilities were improved at the county level. This policy required all towns and administrative villages in advanced sports counties to construct cultural centers, youth clubs and formal sports associations.[132] From 1987 to 1992, 388 counties were designated as State Advanced Sport Counties (or districts of the city), accounting for 12.9% of all counties in China.[133] Thus, towns and villages in 12.9% of all counties established rural sports associations and sports facilities.[134] In support of this policy, provincial sports committees developed the 'Selecting Advanced Sport Towns' policy. In October 1986, for instance, the Jiangsu Province sports committee selected the initial cohort of provincial towns with advanced sports.[135] In 1987, Zibo,

[130] Local Chronicle Committee of Shandong Province, *Shandong Sport Chronicles Compilation* (Ji Nan: Shandong People's Publishing House, 1993), 340.
[131] 'From building Advanced National Sport Counties to Building Strong Cities'. Accessed on 8 January 2013 from: http://www.zjgsports.gov.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1688.
[132] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, *Yearbook of Chinese Sport of China 1998*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1991), 95.
[133] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, *Yearbook of Chinese Sport of China* 1992-1993, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1998), 134.
[134] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, *Yearbook of Chinese Sport of China 1991*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1992), p: 286.; Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport, *Yearbook of Chinese Sport of China* 1992-1993, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1998), 145.
[135] 'Sport Town' - Longju Town. Accessed on 20 June 2013 from: http://www.lygmedia.com/zxxx/2011-04/07/cms191637article.shtml.

a city in Shandong province, launched its programme 'Selecting Advanced Sport Towns'. Eventually, nine towns were deemed to be advanced sport towns.[136] Thus, rural sports developed far beyond its position in the mid-1980s. Whereas in 1982 only 11 counties had 'two sports courts, one gym and one swimming pool', the number increased to 198 by the end of 1987, then to 442 in 1990.[137]

The "Socialist Spiritual Civilisation" and "Selecting Advanced Sport Towns" policies markedly strengthened the organisational structure for rural sports in the 1980s (see Figure 7.6). Peasant sports associations and sports equipment (e.g. gymnasiums, swimming pools, running tracks and stadiums) were widely established at the county and town levels. In response to this policy, provincial sport committees were encouraged to produce a policy 'Selecting Advanced Sport Towns', whereby town sports associations and facilities were promoted throughout rural China.

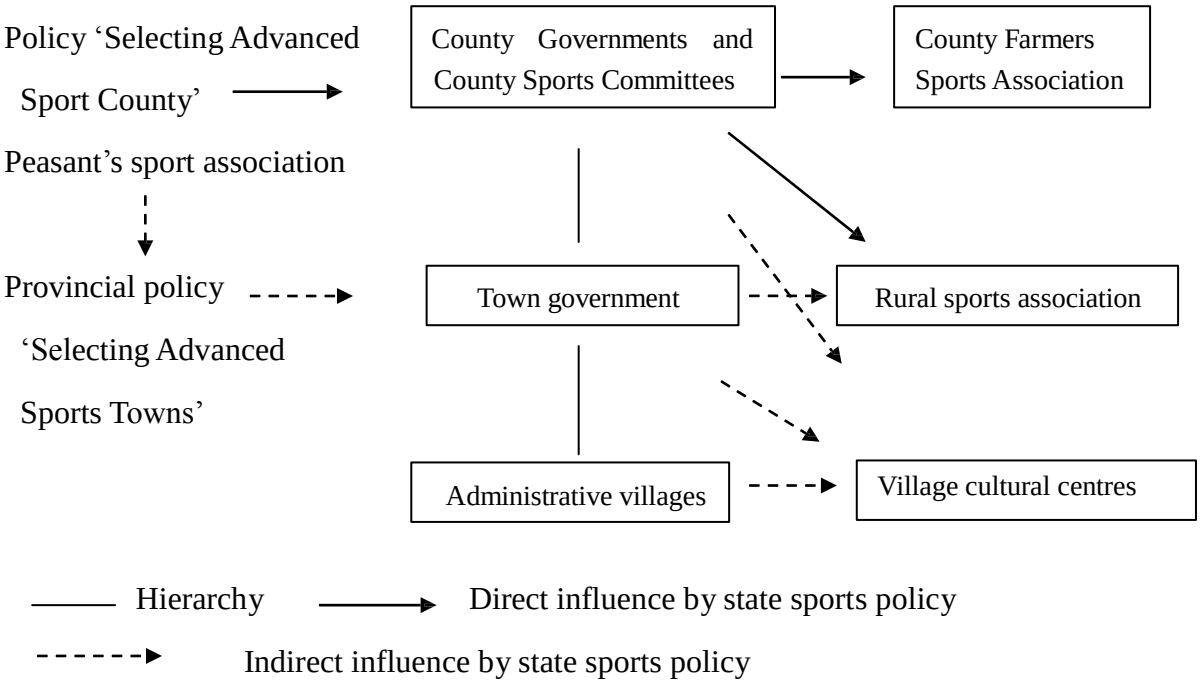


Figure7.6. The Organisational Structure of Chinese Rural Sports in the 1980s

[136] 'Chronicles of Zibu'. Accessed on 25 June 2013 from: http://www.zbsq.gov.cn/bin/mse.exe?seachword=&K=d3&A=2&rec=153&run=13.

[137] The Editorial Committee of Chinese Sport Yearbook, *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1988)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1989), 323; Department of Mass Sport of the General Administration of Sport eds., Compilation of papers of National symposium of Mass Sport (2000), (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 2000), 203.

In sum, de-collectivisation reform resulted in an organisational vacuum in rural sports by the early 1980s. Progressive economic and social development of rural China led to concerns amongst the CCP and Chinese government about the decline of spiritual life, which led to the 1983 policy 'Socialist Spiritual Civilisation', which was intended to raise ideological awareness and guide peoples' recreational activities. Rural sports were expected to be a part of socialist spiritual civilisation, to enrich the cultural life of the people and to promote a healthy physical and moral culture in rural areas, as well as match the pace of rural economic development and meet the needs of the common people. Eventually, the government adopted a policy of prioritising sports at the county level, encouraging the rise of rural sports in the 1980s.

7.5 Mass Sports Policies and Systems in Urban China

7.5.1 The Danwei System and Employee Sports

Prior to the 1980s, mass sports activities in urban areas were largely organized and played within *danwei* (work units), based on the public ownership system that had served as the PRC's fundamental economic system since the 1950s. Under the socialist public-ownership system, the PRC's labour system provided workers with lifelong employment. Permanent employees constituted over 90% of all urban workers in 1966 and over 84% in 1978.[138]

Under public ownership, all of society's resources, including sports, were controlled by a planning system in charge of mandatory distribution. The occupation-based welfare system provided employees with unprecedented economic security, covering their medical treatment, housing, education, physical fitness and recreation. As David Bray has observed, 'centred on the urban workplace, the *danwei* has been the fundamental social and spatial unit of urban China under socialism'.[139]

[138] State Statistics Bureau (ed.), *Forty Years of Endeavour, 1949-1989*, Beijing : China Statistical Publishing Housing, 1989, 128.
[139] David Bray, *Social Space and Governance in Urban China: The Danwei System from Origins to Reform*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, 3.

Although the de-politicisation or 'economisation' of Chinese general public policy liberated a leadership determined to strive for efficiency at the price of security in the 1980s, market-oriented economic reform did not commence until 1992.[140] Economic reform in the 1980s did not fundamentally eliminate the 'eating out of the common big pot' and the 'iron rice bowl' belief patterns. As shown in Table 7.3, permanent employment remained the leading form of employment in China during this period; there was no dramatic increase in the number of employees outside state- and collective-owned enterprises (i.e. non-permanent workers). Mandatory welfare systems failed to change fundamentally during the 1980s.

Table 7.3. Workers and Staff in State-Owned *Danwei* by Type of Employment, 1978-1990 (unit: 10,000 persons)

Year	Total	State-owned Enterprises Employees		Collective-owned Enterprises Employees		Employees in Enterprises Under Other Ownership	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1978	9,499	7,451	84.3	2,048	21.6	---	---
1982	11,281	8,630	85.9	2,651	23.5	--	---
1983	11,515	8,771	86.1	2,744	23.8	37	0.32
1984	11,890	8,637	72.6	3,216	27.0	44	0.37
1985	12,358	8,990	72.7	3,324	26.9	55	0.45
1986	12,809	9,333	72.9	3,421	26.7	72	0.56
1987	13,214	9,654	73.1	3,488	26.4	97	0.73
1988	1,3608	9,984	73.4	3,527	25.9	97	0.71
1989	13,742	10,108	73.6	3502	25.5	132	0.96
1990	14059	10,346	73.6	3,549	25.2	164	1.2

Source: China Statistical Yearbook (1990)[141]

[140] Sheying Chen, *Economic Reform and Social Change in China: Past, Present, and Future of the Economic State. International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 15, no.4 (2002): b569-589.
[141] Zheng Jiaheng (ed.), *Statistical Yearbook of China 1990* (Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House), 464.

In general, before the reforms and during the 1980s, the *Danwei* (work unit) served as the organisational foundation for sports in urban China and maintained its strong position in terms of resource allocation and welfare systems for the urban populace.[142] Employee sports remained the main form of urban sports in the 1980s.

7.5.2 Promoting Employee Sports for the China's Modernisation

In response to the party's decision in 1978 to commence its economic reforms and modernisation, a State Worker Sport Conference held by the SCSPE and All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) in February 1979 identified the principle 'shifting the focus to the development of sport, serving the four modernisations'. The conference emphasised the following:

> After shifting the focus of all Party work, employee sports must focus on achieving the 'four modernisations'.[143] Employee sports serve the realisation of four modernisations through strengthening general fitness of employees. The universality and regularity of employee sports activities should be a sign to test whether sport serves the 'four modernisations'. Carrying out employee sports activities must be oriented to the grassroots level, serving the industrial production, and the general masses.[144]

[142] Ge Yang, Retrospect and Prospect of the Evolution of China's Economic System since the Reform and Opening up. *Economic Review* no.1(2009):14-17.

[143] The earliest formulation of the 'four modernisations' appeared in Zhou Enlai's governmental work report delivered at the First Session of the National People's Congress in September 1954. He stated that: 'If we do not build a powerful modern industry, modern agriculture, modern transportation and modern national defence, we cannot escape backwardness and poverty.' Since then, the Party and Chinese government leaders have often reiterated the goal of realising the modernisation of agriculture, industry, national defence, science and technology, by the end of the 21th century. For more information about the formation and evolution of the 'four modernisations', see 'The Important Literature Selection since the Founding of the People's Republic of China', 5th ed., (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 1993), 125; Central Chinese Communist Party Literature Research Office, ed. Selection of Important Documents since the Twelfth Party Congress, 3 volumes (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1986), 56.

[144] Rong Gaotang, *Contemporary Chinese sports.*(Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1984), pp: 62-63.

In 1981, in order to promote employee sports in urban areas, the SCSPE and ACFTU jointly issued their 'Regulations on Sport Associations of Grassroots Level Factories, Enterprises and Institution Organisations (Trial)'. According to this document, grassroots sports associations were required to widely restore and/or establish committees comprised of the director of grassroots *danwei* (units), active practitioners and fulltime professional or part-time staff. Sports associations were required to actively carry out various sport activities that promoted employees' physical fitness and productivity.[145] The early 1980s witnessed the rapid recovery of sports associations in trade unions. In March 1978, The Ministry of Railways (MoR) became the first to restore its sports association. By the early 1990s, there were 99,142 grassroots sports organisations and 45,491 trade sports federations.[146]

As well as reinstating employee sports organisations at the grassroots level, China issued a variety of policies during this period intended to promote sports amongst workers nationwide. On August 8, 1981, the State Council reaffirmed its policy 'Notification on Carrying out Work-Break Exercises and Other Sports in Government Agencies' that was initially released in 1954. According to this document, government agencies at all levels were required to carry out mass sports and to strengthen workers' health.[147] On August 18, 1981, 13 Ministries, including the SCSPE, Education Ministry and Ministry of Health, jointly issued their 'Actively Promoting the Sixth Set of Broadcast Calisthenics' across the country.[148] According to the statistics released at this conference, in 1981 alone, ~20 million employees participated in mass sport activities, accounting for 20% of the total number of employees nationwide; sports activities were conducted in approximately 16,000 grassroots enterprises and government agencies; the number of sports instruction centres in urban areas had

[145] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC. 'Statute of Sport Associations of Grassroots Level Factory, Enterprise, Institutional Organisation (Trial) (enacted by the SCSPE and ACFTU on 23 January 1981)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)*, (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 184.

[146] Wu Shaozu *et al*.(eds.), *Sports History of the People's Republic of China*, 1949-1999 (Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 1999), 340-341.

[147] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport(ed.), *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1981)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1984), 14.

[148] Ibid, 14.

grown to ~1,800 by 1982; and work-break exercises were widely practised in factories, enterprises and public institutions.[149]

At the 1986 National Conference of the Sports Committees, the SCSPE summarised the issues plaguing the sports system at the time of the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981–1986). As voiced at this conference, issues surrounding mass sports in urban areas largely included the following: 1) insufficient numbers were participating in mass sports; 2) the sports budget was far too low, at only 0.2% of the national budget and its recent increase was still only 0.37% of the budget); 3) the investment in the sports infrastructure was also too low, accounting for 0.2% of the total government national budget; 4) too few sport venues and facilities were available and what did exist was of inferior quality to those found in many other countries worldwide; and 5) low-quality sports administration bodies and undeveloped mass sports organisations.[150] In response to these problems and in order to respond to the Party/State's decision in 1984 to speed up urban and nationwide reform, the SCSPE issued its policy document 'A Notification about Moving Further Ahead in Sports Reformation (Draft)' in 1986. This intended to realise 'transformation from the state-run sports system to a combination of government and non-governmental forces'.[151]

At the 1986 National Sports Conference, the government identified a principle 'Socialisation of Sport' that aimed to 'adhere to reform as the centre, implement the opening-up and reform policy, actively promote sport socialisation, and vigorously carry out mass sports activities to promote the health of the entire nation'.[152] At a

[149] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (ed.), *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1982)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1985), 114.
[150] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC, ed., 'Statute of Sport Associations of Grassroots Level Factory, Enterprise, Institutional Organization (Trial) (enacted by the SCSPE and ACFTU on January 23, 1981)', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1949-1981)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1982), 184.
[151] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Resolution of the SPCSC on the Reform of the Sports System', *The Collected Compilation of Sport and Physical Education Documents of the PRC (1982-1986)* (Beijing: People's Sport Press, 1989), 70.
[152] Ibid, p: 103.

seminar on socialisation of sports held from 25–29 July 1989, the SCSPE required sports to face and penetrate society, increase sports participation amongst the masses and improve the level of sports nationwide.[153]

More importantly, for the first time, participation in sports was officially defined as a task that should 'adapt to the development of society'.[154] It was emphasised that 'sport, as a part of the greater society, must be adaptable to other parts of society (e.g. education, arts and culture) and coordinate with each other'. According to the SCSPE, the socialisation of sport should embody the integrity, functionality and conditionality of the relationship between sports and other parts of society.[155]

Following the launch of the 'Socialisation of Sport' policy, China adopted three major measures to develop mass sport in urban areas in the second half of the 1980s. The first of these was to strengthen grassroots sports organizations in the industrial sector, which increased the number of grassroots worker sports organisations to 99,142 in the early 1990s, staffed by 24,000 full-time employees (see Figure 7.7).[156]

[153] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (ed.)., 'Minutes of the Symposium on Sports Socialisation', *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1990)* (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1991), 63.
[154] Ibid, 63.
[155] Ibid, 63.
[156] Li Xiumei, *Compendium of Brief Sports History of People's Republic of China*, (Beijing: Beijing Sport University press, 2001), 138.

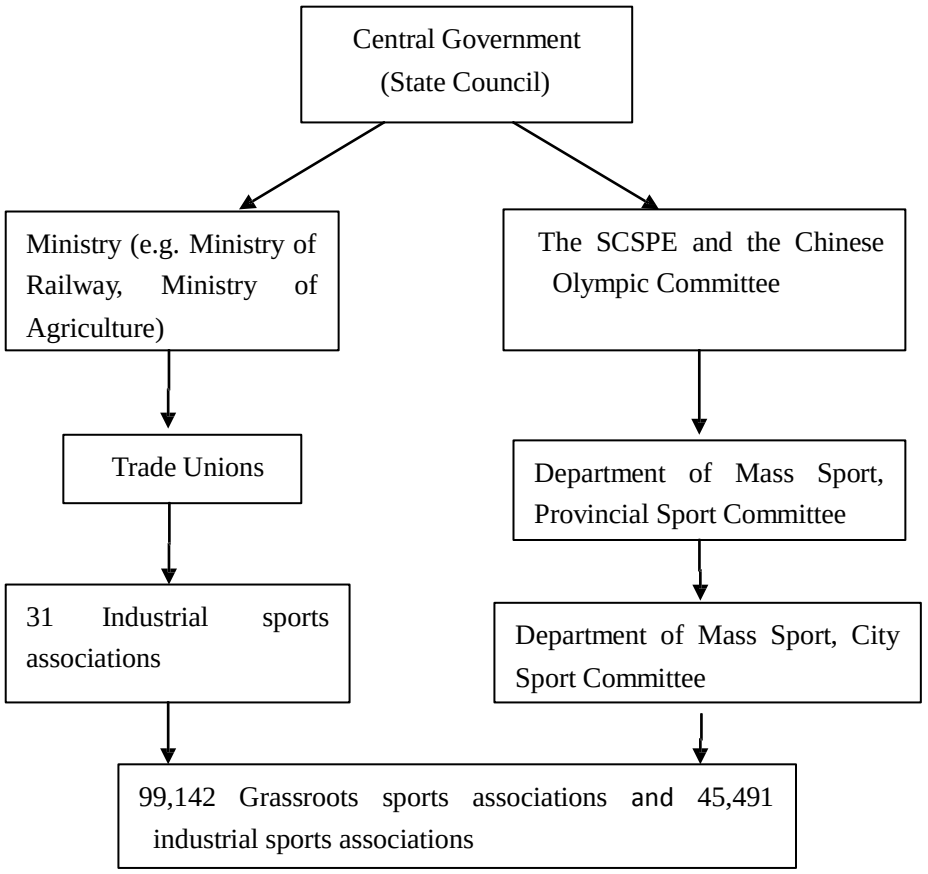


Figure 7.7. The Administrative Structure of State-led Mass Sports in the 1980s

The second measure was to develop a variety of mass sport associations nationwide, such as senior citizen sports associations, handicapped sports associations, fishing and pigeon racing associations. The senior citizen sports association of Zhanxian (儋县), Hainan Province, for example, was established in 1986, when the county government allocated 1.1 million RMB for the construction of a senior citizen sports centre, which included a gym, table tennis room, billiards saloon, croquet court and bocce ball court.[157] At the same time, the government embarked on a widespread development of regional sport associations. In Shanghai, there were 54 regional sport associations in nine districts and two counties by the end of 1986.[158] In Hebei Province, by the end of 1988, there were 619 industrial sports associations, including 18 provincial

[157] Hainan Local Chronicle Compilation Committee, 'Chronicles of Danxian (儋县) County'. Accessed on 22 June 2013 from: http://www.hnszw.org.cn/data/news/2011/01/48505/.
[158] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (ed.), *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1987)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1988), p: 232.

industrial sports associations, 102 city-level industrial sports associations and 499 county trade sports associations.[159] The growing number of regional and trades sports associations contributed to a boom in urban sports in the late 1980s. In Sichuan Province, for instance, 32 large and medium enterprises set up united sports associations, enabling the organisation of mass sports activities and competitions between enterprises.[160] As noted by Li Menghua, former Sport Minister, employee sports in urban areas increased dramatically in the 1980s as a consequence of the rapid development of sports associations in the industrial sector.[161]

The third strategy was to encourage nationwide mass mobilisation to promote mass sport, as it was during the Maoist era. The SCSPE and All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) launched a programme called 'National Million Employee Winter Long-distance Running' covering the period from 15 December 1986 through 31 March 1987, involving over 10 million workers from 20,690 grassroots *dan wei* from 36 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. Another programme, the 'National Football Competition of Grassroots Workers', was launched in July 1987 and by the end of June 1988, involved 2,077,624 workers from 19,907 grassroots units in 62 cities.[162] By 1989, sports teams were established in over 490,000 grassroots factories and mines, involving about 4,161 million workers, accounting for 30% of China's total population of workers.[163] Promoting physical culture and sports via mass movements or organizing large-scale sports programmes was an important legacy of the Maoist era that was used to develop sports in urban and rural China in the 1980s. John King Fairbank has claimed in his book '*The United States and China'* that the deaths of Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong in 1976 marked the end of the

[159] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (ed.)., *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1988)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1989), p: 227.
[160] Ibid, p: 227.
[161] The Sports Policy Research Office of the SPCSC (ed.), 'Concluding Remarks of Director Li Menghua at the 1988 symposium of the Director of the Sport Committees (May 24, 1988)', *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1949-1991)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1993), p: 121.
[162] Editorial Team of the Yearbook of Chinese Sport (ed.), *Yearbook of Chinese Sport (1987)*, (Beijing: People's Sports Press, 1988), 320.
[163] Wu Shaozu, *Sport History of People's Republic of China 1949-1998*, (Beijing: China Book Publishing House, 1999), p: 339.

revolutionary generation who had turned to the Marx doctrine in 1921 to save the nation.[164] Fairbank notes that as the achievements of most of the movements led by Enlai and Zedong may still apply, it is not possible to evaluate them.[165] In an interview conducted as part of this research, a Chinese scholar of sports history elaborated on this development:

> Emphasising mass sport and promoting sport for the people became an integral part of Chinese sports ideology in the Maoist era. Even today, it is still used as an important organisational method. […] As long as the Party-state remains an entity, neither the Party nor the government [governmental sporting bodies] can ignore this practical method, which has become a political tradition that demonstrates the powerful vitality and resilience of this government, consolidating its legitimacy.[166]

7.6 Conclusion

Following ideological breakthroughs, Party leaders under Deng Xiaoping strategically decided in 1978 to transfer the focus of work from class struggle to economic construction, leading to a new era of reform and opening-up of China to the West. This decision triggered substantial changes in many aspects of China, including sports policy. Given the fact that China would soon participate in the 1980 Olympic Games and that Chinese elite sporting performance lagged far behind the West, the government changed its sports policy in the 1980s from a strategy simultaneously promoting mass sports and competitive sports to one of prioritising elite sports. This was intended to win more Olympic medals to promote national pride and identity, increase China's international prestige and inspire the people to help modernise the country.

[164] John King Fairbank, Zhang Lijing(trans.), *The United States and China* (Beijing: World Affairs Press, 1999), 18.
[165] Ibid, 19.
[166] Interviewer No. 6 (Xiao Huanyu, Professor of Sport History, Shanghai Sport University) in a discussion with the Author, 25 August 2014.

Enormous achievements in Chinese elite sports in the 1980s proved that the policy prioritising elite sports was not only valid but also necessary. Nationalism or patriotism was utilised to assume the function of ideological legitimacy as a coalescing force to unite the general public. Pragmatic Party leaders encouraged performance-based legitimacy to secure the people's consent, i.e. sporting successes in the 1980s were framed as a way of proving the correctness of Deng's pragmatic ideology in the post-Mao era. China's Olympic strategy further reinforced the prioritisation of elite sports. Nevertheless, the emergence of this prioritisation was not only a consequence of the Party's ambition to become a 'great power in sport', but also a consequence of sports system reform itself. In the mid-1980s, economic system reforms were launched in urban areas, leading to an all-round systematic reform in many areas. Reform became a significant issue for the SCSPE. Competitive sports secured more resources and emphasis from the government at all levels, which ultimately strengthened the system of elite sports in the 1980s.

State policy for mass sports experienced two different trajectories in the 1980s, largely as a result of the 'Reform and Opening-up' policy and practice. Reform in rural areas assumed precedence. De-collectivisation reform greatly weakened the organisational base of rural sports, yet they were soon included as a part of the SSC, as a means of guiding people's recreational activities and promoting a healthy physical and moral culture in socialist China. This attitude fostered the emergence of state policy for rural sports in the 1980s that focused on the county level. In urban China, mass sports were required to support economic reform and the modernisation of industry. However, economic reform in the 1980s did not fundamentally change the leading role of the permanent employment system and occupation-based welfare system. The *danwei* (work units) remained the main arena for mass sports in cities. Although the 1980s witnessed a rise in mass sports policy for urban areas, the focus remained fixed on employee sports within the *danwei*. More importantly, sports

participation for the first time was officially defined as ‘adapting to the development of society’. The 1980s witnessed the widespread practice of developing mass sports activities; an important legacy of sports ideology from the Maoist era.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the main findings of this study, discusses theoretical implications and explains how the thesis is intended to contribute to the existing body of knowledge. In addition to tracing the development of PRC sports policy and systems from 1949 through 1989, this thesis has focused on three concrete objectives. First, to investigate the effects of dominant political ideology upon sports policies and systems throughout different eras. Second, to elucidate the role played by the party-state system that drove changes in sports policies and systems between 1949 and 1989. Third, to evaluate how changes in the dominant ideology between 1949 and 1989 impacted upon sports policies. After a discussion of research findings, this chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

8.2 Discussion and Research Findings

8.2.1 Maoism as a Decisive Factor in the Formation and Evolution of the PRC-initiated Sports Policies before 1978

One of the research questions posed by this study sought to determine the extent to which dominant ideology imposed itself upon sports policies and systems. The CCP's ideology penetrates every aspect of political, social and economic life in China, including culture, arts and education. The decisive role of the dominant ideology on sport policy can be clearly seen in Mao's China. In fact, in the early period of Communist China, sport and its policies were incubated within a strong ideological and political context, serving the dual purposes of stabilising the regime and nation-building. However, Communism was not always the dominant ideology directing sports policies and associated changes in Mao's China. Mao Zedong Thought or Maoism was established as the guiding ideology at the Seventh Congress of the CCP in 1945. In practice, Maoism had greater influence on sports policies than

Communism. In this regard, this study shares the views of several scholars (Dong-Jhy Hwang, Li-ke Chang, 2008[1]; Xu 2008[2]). Hwang and Chang (2008) have claimed that, since the nineteenth century, the development of sports in China has been influenced to varying degrees by imperialism, nationalism, Maoism, and postcolonial thinking.[3] Hwang and Chang highlight the relationship between Mao's philosophy on bodily health, which was deeply influenced by militarism and strong nationalist sentiment, and China's sports policies after 1949. For instance, Mao's principle of 'health above all' developed into China's early policy of physical education in schools. However, Hwang and Chang failed to analyse the relationship between the components of Mao Zedong Thought or Maoism, such as the mass line, and sports policies after the founding of the PRC, especially in relation to the early years of the PRC; Hwang and Change also failed to discuss the ideological roots of the formation of the PRC and how this impacted upon sports policy.

The Chinese Government's official interpretation of Mao Zedong Thought described three pillars: seek the truth from facts; reinforce the mass line; and maintain independence and keep the initiative in our own hands.[4] Mao's mass line is a far-reaching guiding ideology that not only helped the CCP win victory in the domestic revolution, but also directed the Chinese Communists to undertake many aspects of socialist state construction, including arts, education and sports. In regard to sports, in order to gain mass consent and stabilise the new Communist regime during the early years of the PRC, Mao and the CCP expanded the principle of 'gaining broad mass consent', i.e. the 'mass line', into post-1949 nation-building. Hence, the policy 'sport serves the people' embodied Maoism. For instance, during the early years of the PRC, the Party and Governmental policy by-line 'physical culture and sports serve the people' was echoed by Mao's later instructions:

[1] Dong-Jhy Hwang, Li-ke Chang, 'Sport, Maoism and the Beijing Olympics: One Century, One Ideology', *China Perspectives*, no. 1 (2008): 4–18.
[2] Xu Guoqi, *Olympic Dreams: China and Sports, 1895-2008*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.
[3] Dong-Jhy Hwang, Li-ke Chang, 'Sport, Maoism and the Beijing Olympics: One Century, One Ideology', op. cit.
[4] Ren Lixuan, 'Seeking Truth from Facts, Mass Line and Independence Are the Three Magic Weapons for the Party to Rejuvenate the Country, *People's Daily*, 1 November 2013.

'Developing physical culture and sports for the people'.

This thesis has attempted to analyse the impact of ideology and sports policy from the perspective of Gramsci's theory of cultural leadership and hegemony. Unlike Karl Marx's theories of domination, Gramsci relegates economic determinants to the superstructure and highlights the role played by culture and dominant ideology in this process. Both Gramsci and Mao emphasise the concept of hegemony and the significance of cultural leadership as the cornerstone of their revolutionary agendas.[5] According to Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Maoism and communism helped the CCP and the party-state realise ideological hegemony in the superstructure of Chinese society and consolidate its political power in the 'New China'. In contrast to Gramsci's hegemony, Mao's revolutionary hegemony highlights insurrection and violence and enables one class to overthrow and dominate another. Ideological purity was achieved during the Cultural Revolution not only through public dissemination of Maoist ideology to gain the consent of the masses, but also through criticism and destruction of the old ideals and revolutionary means.

The impact of Mao's hegemonic ideology on sports and related policies reached its zenith during the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976. In order to maintain their dominance over Chinese society and political legitimacy, Mao and the ruling party, the CCP, dominated all aspects of culture and superstructure, including sports, through Maoist ideology. From the point of view of Gramsci's hegemony, sports policies can be perceived as a reflection of the dominant political ideology of the Party on superstructure or culture, where sport and physical culture exist (see Figure 8.1), which is also a main concept of this thesis.

5 For a more detailed explanation, see W Huang, B Li, 'Comparative Studies on Hegemony Between Gramsci and Mao Zedong', *Journal of Tsinghua University* 27, no. 3 (2012): 125-133.

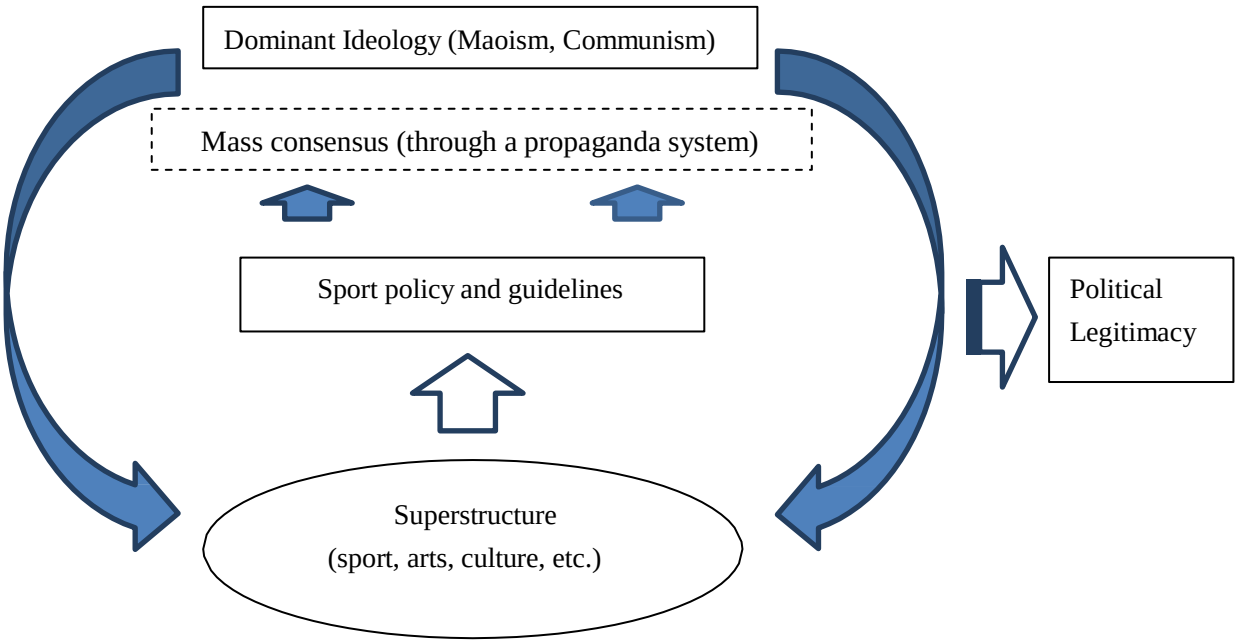


Figure 8.1. The relationship amongst dominant ideology, sports and political legitimacy from the perspective of Gramsci's hegemony

8.2.2 Pragmatic Ideology Assumes Greater Influence on Sports Policies in the Post-Mao Era

The second question posed by this thesis sought to determine whether any changes in sports policies have occurred over the years under the dominant ideology. Table 8.1 not only visualises the impact of dominant ideology on sports policy in different periods from 1949 to 1989, but also, as a main result of this study, answers the above question.

Compared with the Maoist era, sports policies in the 1980s were less affected by ideological requirements, as political ideology in the Party and government policy began to transition into economic pragmatism. This transition fostered the growth of pragmatic and performance-based features in sports policies. From 1977 to the 1980s, ideological and political factors continued to play an important role in shaping the development of Chinese sports policies. In view of China's poor athletic record and its determination to participate in the Olympic Games, China adopted the 'elite sport first'

policy in 1979. Subsequently, the remarkable achievements of Chinese elite athletes, particularly in the Olympic Games, meant that the policies 'elite sport first' and 'Olympic priority' were emphasised throughout the 1980s. These policies were largely enforced by the emergence of nationalism in sports, deliberately fostered in order to boost Chinese confidence to compete with Western powers on the world stage. Nationalism, from the perspective of Weber's revised legitimacy (Zhao, 2009; Yang & Zhao, 2015), assumed the function of ideological legitimacy as a coalescing force to unite the common people. Sporting success in the Deng Xiaoping era during the 1980s was used to gain the consent of the masses and thus prove the correctness of Deng's pragmatic ideology in the post-Mao era.

The continuing impact that ideology had upon sports policies was also reflected in the policy 'Socialist Spiritual Civilisation (SSC)'. Besides adopting a pragmatic policy that sought to reconcile politics with the economic reforms, the CCP strengthened the domination of ideology in the culture and superstructure. The SSC sought to preserve the CCP's socialist ideological orientation and protect against the unwanted societal impacts of 'bourgeois liberalism'. Including this policy as a part of the SSC reveals the impact of political and ideological requirements upon sports (see Table 8.1).

In general, however, the impact of politics and ideology requirements on sports policies lessened during the post-Mao era, as illustrated by two features:

Firstly, the rise of the elite sports priority policy in the 1980s was not only a consequence of the Party's ambition to become a 'great power in sport', but also due to reform in the sports system. In the mid-1980s, the launch of economic reforms in urban areas was a significant issue for the SCSPE. The 'elite sports first' policy meant that competitive sports were granted more resources and emphasis from the government at all levels, which ultimately strengthened the elite sports system in the 1980s.

Table 8.1. The Impact of Dominant Political Ideology on Sports Policies and Systems during Different Political Eras

Time	Dominant Political Ideology	Manifestation
1949-1952	Nationalism Maoism	1. The policy 'sports serve construction' contributed to the proper functioning and stability of the new state; 2. The policy 'sports serve national defence' functioned to increase nationalism to resist external threats to the Chinese nation-state; 3. The policy 'Physical culture and sports serve the people' was intended to make sport and physical education available to the masses rather than only a privileged minority; 4. The policy 'Developing physical culture and sports for the people' began to serve as an ideology and principle for the development of sports policies during the Mao era.
1953-1966	Sovietisation Nationalism Maoism Socialism De-Sovietisation	1. The Soviet model established the SPCSC as a powerful, centralised and hierarchical government organisation that displaced the ACSF, a semi-official sporting organisation in China in 1952; 2. The Soviet Union's ready for labour and defence system (LDS) was widely promoted through China and served as an organised, efficient model for motivating the population for socialist construction in the 1950s; 3. The Sino-Soviet split weakened the ideological impact of the Soviet model on Chinese sports; 4. The policy 'Developing physical culture and sports for the people' served as an ideology and principle to direct the development of mass sport.
1967-1976	Anti-elitism and anti-revisionism Maoism Socialism Pragmatic ideology	1. The early years of the Cultural Revolution (1967–70) witnessed a breakdown of sport elitism and of the entire system of competitive sports; 2. Large-scale mass sports programmes became extraordinarily successful due to the prevalence of Maoism, based on Chairman Mao's charismatic personality and his proletariat ideology; 3. The policy 'Sport for the people' reached its zenith during the Cultural Revolution and throughout the Mao Era.
1977-1989	Nationalism Socialism Maoism	1. The Chinese government demonstrated its strong ambition to develop sports policies and systems by socialising and commercialising sports; 2. An Olympic strategy reinforced a policy of prioritising elite sports; 3. A competition mechanism was introduced into the elite sports system; 4. The ways in which mass sports activities were conducted in the Mao era were retained as an important legacy for the development of mass sports in the post-Mao era.

Secondly, the government revealed its strong ambition to develop sport policy and systems by using its influence outside the political system, such as through the socialisation and commercialisation of sport. Since the Maoist era, Chinese society transformed from a traditional society to one that was modern, encouraged by the market-oriented reforms introduced from 1978 with the launching of the 'Open Door and Reform' policy. This market-oriented transformation was reflected by an evolution in sports policies and systems, with self-funded initiatives launched by individuals participating in sports, increased private sector involvement, legalisation of sports management and a more sophisticated, hierarchical structure of sports administration.

Under China's economic reforms (1978-1989), those who participated in sports had to 'adapt to the development of society'. The socialisation of sport in this era is attributed to its fundamental relationship with other parts of society, such as politics, economy and culture. The commercialisation of sport in the 1980s is in sharp contrast to policies ruling sports in preceding eras, with the introduction of competition into elite sports. Before the 1980s, state enterprise employees had a guaranteed income under the 'Iron Rice Bowl' policy and an occupation-based welfare system. The government's dissolution of this policy was intended to encourage coaches to work hard and improve the performance of their athletes. In order to expand financing channels for developing elite sports, the government introduced business sponsorship into sports competitions, which was a remarkable move for the PRC. As economic reform progressed through the 1980s, sports advertising became acceptable. Prior to the 1980s, there was virtually no marketisation. The introduction of commercial sponsorship greatly expanded the ability to host sports competitions.

8.2.3 The Party-State System as a Determinant for the Formulation of Chinese Sports Systems and Implementation of Chinese Sports Policies

The concept of the party-state system is key to understanding the role played by the Chinese government in developing the sports systems, as well as changes in Chinese sports policy from 1949 onwards. As Zheng Yongnian has observed, in late-developing countries such as China, political parties often dominate over states.[6] The principle difference between China and Western countries in terms of political systems lies in the fact that China adopted a one-party or party-state system. A common feature of a one-party system is that the position of the ruling party is guaranteed by constitutional law and all forms of political opposition are outlawed. The one-party state system penetrates every aspect of political, social and economic life of the country.

Party leaders in the single-party system are responsible not just for the effective functioning of the party apparatus under their control but also for peace and good governance in their region, for its successful economic performance, supervision of the unification of China's production, for maintaining high levels of morale amongst the people and for smooth operations in all aspects of life.[7] Hence, a one-party or party-state system impacts significantly upon the government's role and the way in which it develops sports and related policies. China's political system under Mao and thereafter has emphasised 'the horizontal concentration of state power in the party organisation, and longitudinal concentration in the Central Committee of the Party, with the power of the party-state concentrated in one person [the leader]'.[8]

[6] Zheng Yongnian, *The Chinese Communist Party as Organizational Emperor: Culture, Reproduction, and Transformation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 9.
[7] The Collapse of a Single-Party System: The Disintegration of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 7.
[8] Interviewee No. 4 (Xiao, Huanyu, Professor in Chinese Sport history, Shanghai Sports University) in discussion with the author, 8 July 2014.

The formulation and evolution of China's sports systems and policies embody the following characteristics: a powerful, centralised, hierarchical governing body in sports and a situation in which the leader's will and determination can be quickly and efficiently translated into government policy. This latter feature is well documented during the Maoist era. Thirdly, the Party plays a strategic role in controlling and developing government policy and sports policies. To a large extent, the Party's ideology maintains hegemony and effectively controls sports policies.

Importantly, China's party-state system does not equate to totalitarianism. Thomson and Womack attribute the establishment of China's Communist political system after 1949 to the following four factors: Chinese political tradition; the history of the modern Chinese revolution; the influence of the Soviet Union; and the history of the Chinese Communist Party before 1949.[9] Of all of these factors, the influence of the Soviet Union undoubtedly played a crucial role in establishing Communism as the dominant ideology of the CCP. The theory of totalitarianism originally developed from the study of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia; the Soviet Union served as a principle model of post-war totalitarianism for China, which sought to emulate the Soviet model. Maoist politics are marked by psychological pressure and ideological control, as well as strict personal supervision by cadres, as opposed to terrorist tactics delivered by the police force.[10] Thus, China's political system sits within a historical context of global significance that does not fully equate to the historical genre of totalitarianism.

The party-state system that was formed and developed in the Maoist era remained fundamentally the same during the next era, from 1977 to 1989. The launch of market-oriented reform affected more and more aspects of Chinese society, including the sports system. This led to the following contradictions: political and ideological requirements under the party-state system shaped the development of sports policies

[9] James Roger Townsend and Brantly Womack, *Politics in China* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Press, 1994), 30-80.
[10] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 31.

and systems, while post-Maoist market-oriented reform played a profound, irrefutable role in the shaping of sports policies and systems by promoting the modernisation of Chinese sport. Consequently, whereas Western countries developed sports policies based on free-market capitalism, China followed a socialist market-oriented economy in the 1980s, in which ideological and policy requirements based on the party-state system and the nature of socialism played a significant role in shaping sports policies and systems.

8.3 Theoretical Contributions

As far as political factors are concerned, some scholars (Fan, Wu & Xiong, 2005; Hwang and Chang, 2008; Lu, 2016) attribute the evolution of China's state sports policies to power struggles and ideologies, such as imperialism, nationalism, Maoism, and postcolonial thinking.[11] In the analysis of the relationship between ideology and sport, researchers are more concerned about the direct impact of ideologies on sports or sports policies.

Considering the key role played by ideology in China's changing sports policies and systems, this research adopted Gramsci's theory of hegemony as a principle theoretical perspective for exploring the relationship between ideology and sports. Gramsci's concept of hegemony provides a critical analytical perspective for exploring how the CCP, China's ruling party, has realised hegemony and affected sports policies through ideology. Gramsci's theory of Cultural Hegemony emphasises the importance of the ideology of the ruling class in realising the domination of society. It provides us with a lens or perspective through which we may understand the production of sport policy and its resulting changes can be seen as a result or reflection of the impact of the Party's dominant ideology on sport, as a part of a

[11] Fan Hong, Ping Wu & Huan Xiong, 'Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sports System and its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no.4 (2005): 510-529; Lu Zhouxiang. 'Sport and Politics: The Cultural Revolution in the Chinese Sports Ministry, 1966–1976', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 33, no.5(2016): 569-585. Dong-Jhy Hwang, Li-ke Chang. 'Sport, Maoism and the Beijing Olympics: One Century, One Ideology', op. cit.

superstructure, or what Gramsci called ‘civil society’.

The concept of legitimacy is linked with hegemony and ideology, as state power must be seen as legitimate by both rulers and the ruled. Weber’s classification of legitimacy is illuminating. However, Weber did not include the performance of the regime in his original theory of political legitimacy. In this research, by taking Lipset’s point of view,[12] I have identified three bases of state legitimacy: legal election; ideology; and performance. A revision of Weber’s classification is adopted for explaining the relationship between ideology and sport in the course of a shift of state legitimacy from 1949 to post-Maoist China. Enormous achievements in Chinese elite sports in the 1980s proved that the policy prioritising elite sports was not only valid but also necessary. Nationalism was utilised to assume the function of ideological legitimacy as a coalescing force to unite the general public. Pragmatic Party leaders encouraged performance-based legitimacy to secure the people’s consent, i.e. sporting successes in the 1980s were framed as a way of proving the correctness of Deng’s pragmatic ideology in the post-Mao era.

Overall, this research has made a useful contribution to the analysis and understanding of the transformation of sport policy in modern China from the perspective of the two theories discussed above.

8.4 Research Limitations and Future Research

8.4.1 Research Limitations

This research has made a significant contribution to the body of knowledge, although it must be recognised that certain limitations exist not only in regard to the research that was carried out but also for any future work into this topic. Firstly, the research

[12] For more explanation about the revision of Weber’s legitimacy and this research, please see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2, in this thesis.

involved relatively small numbers of policymakers and government officials. As explained in the methodology chapter, China's tightly centralised political system makes it extremely difficult for ordinary researchers, including this researcher, to interview high-ranking officials, even for academic research.

Another limitation arises from the documents and statistics consulted for this study. This research was designed to comprehensively explain the transformation of the sports policies and systems from different perspectives, adopting documents and semi-structured methods in relation to the research questions. However, statistical data used to support research outcomes were derived from other reference sources. Official Chinese statistics are concealed to some extent. Although this research cites official statistics related to sports funding in its investigation into national investment and budgets in elite and mass sports, China's annual statistical yearbooks have not provided aggregated funding figures in sports.

8.4.2 Future Research

More research is warranted into Chinese ideology and government policy, to explore their impacts on sports systems. This research focuses on a macro-level analysis of the changes and development of the Chinese state policy and system, involving elite and mass sports; the research has yielded a number of potential research topics. For example, one useful research area would be an analysis of discourse surrounding sports policies in China's political system, with an interrogation of the evolution of sport policy from the local perspective, focusing on the relationship between central and local government.

Another potential research area could adopt other approaches, such as figurational sociology and path dependence theory, to examine the development and evolution of the Chinese sports policies and systems. Specifically, path dependence theory could help to determine the extent to which urban sports depended upon the

unit system (*danwei*) in the post-Mao era. Similarly, path dependence theory could be used to demonstrate how difficult it was to restore rural sport to the level of prosperity it enjoyed during the Maoist era, because of de-collectivisation reforms undertaken after 1978, which fundamentally caused the collapse of the commune, which served as the organisational foundation for the survival of rural sports.

Finally, ideological and political factors ensure that the achievement of Olympic gold medals is and will continue to be a top priority for the Chinese government. Thus, the 'whole country supports elite sport' and 'Juguo tizhi'[13] policies will not change fundamentally in the near future. Chinese policymakers will continue to improve China's elite and mass sport systems in the context of market-oriented reforms and the modernisation of Chinese society. This research provides assistance to policymakers and administrators, by providing them with an overview of the transformation of China's sports policies and systems. This researcher personally hopes that the government, academic institutions and various social organisations will further collaborate in research to explore how to improve the coordination between elite and mass sports systems and how best to adapt to the transformation and development of Chinese society.

[13] For more explanation about 'Juguo tizhi' and the 'whole country support for the elite sport system', see Chapter 2 of this thesis and Hao Qin. 'The Definition, Characteristics and Functions of the Chinese Elite Sports System'. *Journal of Chendu University of Sport*, no. 3 (2004): 15–19.

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Appendix I – Sample Interview Questions

Interviewees: Research fellows, officials, participants who have experienced different periods of time during the development of China's sports.

Interview questions:

- Do you think the state sports policy is a reflection of the Party's will and zhidao sixiang (guiding ideology) on sports? In what aspects?
- What's your opinion about the effect of politicisation on sport policy and systems? Can you provide detailed information?
- What is your opinion about the difference in the influence of the Party on sports policy between the Mao era and the post-Mao era?
- Before and after the Reform and Opening Policy, do you think the government has made any fundamental changes in formulating sports policies?
- What is your opinion about the role of sport and government-oriented sports systems in contemporary Chinese society?
- Do you think the influence of the Party on sports in the Mao era continued or was retained in the post-Mao era, specifically in the 1980s and after that? In what aspects?

Appendix II – Transcription Example

No. of Interviewees	4	**Gender**	Male
Religious Believers	N/A	**Nationality**	Chinese
Place of Interview	Shanghai, China	**Occupation**	Researcher in Chinese sports history
Date of Interview	25 August 2014		

Transcription: (A: Author I: Interviewee)

A: Hello Professor [***].[1]

I: Hello Liang.

A: Thank you very much for receiving my interview. I really do appreciate it, your participation. As you know, my research topic is about transformation of sport policy and ideology. We will be talking about something related to this topic during the following 20 to 30 minutes, does that sound ok?

I: Yes, that sounds fine, thank you.

A: Let's start with ideology. The topics related to ideology in China is kind of sensitive, but its (ideology) influence and effect are everywhere. What do you think is the difference between the neutral words like 'zhi dao si xiang' (guiding ideology) and 'zhi dao fang zhen' (guideline) in policy documents and the real discourse system?

I: Indeed, as you said, ideology is a sensitive topic in China, but it is also a social consciousness that accompanies the development of the People's Republic of China from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the contemporary era. Actually, the concept of 'zhi dao si xiang' is broader than ideology. Ideology is a special form of social ideology separated from the social ideology structure, including political thought, legal thought, morality, art, religion, philosophy and other forms of social consciousness.

The 'zhi dao si xiang' is more like a guide to action. For example, the 'zhi dao si xiang' of the

[1] Names of participants have been omitted to ensure confidentiality.

Communist Party of China is its guideline for action, as well as the theoretical system guiding all the activities of the Communist Party of China, including ideology, organisation, style of work, culture, system, as well as for anti-corruption and building a clean government. Therefore, there are conceptual differences between the two, but in reality and public life, they are interchangeable. If you ask a common people, what are the differences between 'zhi dao si xiang' and ideology, it is estimated that, not to mention ordinary people, even scholars without political background may not be able to distinguish between the two.

A: Yes, I used to be confused with the two terms.

I: To be frank, the CCP has always attached great importance to the leadership in the fields of culture, art and sports. This is mainly due to the importance attached by the main Party leaders, including Mao Zedong, to the role of ideology in the superstructure and the control of society as a whole.

A: Do you think that the influence or control of the ideology on sports exists only in China, or in a certain kind of country or is it a common phenomenon in the world?

I: I think this is a universal phenomenon in the world. In this respect, the CCP is actually learning from the Soviet Union, because these two countries belong to the Socialist camp back to 1950s. In the early years of the founding of the PRC, influenced by the political and international situation at that time, the CCP must keep in line with the Soviet Union ideologically. The Labour and Defence System is a good example. Sports at that time (in 1930s) was considered a way of preparing for war for the Soviet Union.

If you've been to the Dinamo subway station in Moscow, you'll see quite spectacular arched walls in there. The wall was built in 1938 just at the climax of Stalin's cleansing campaign. The reliefs of football, tennis players, skiers and mountain climbers on the walls are symbols of the Soviet Union's national strength. Stand in these reliefs, you can feel the strong power of sports as a way of war preparation, and behind this there is a strong will of the political party to guide and control. This system is 'Ready for Labour and Defence of the USSR'. China introduced the Soviet Union's LDS in 1952, which was largely influenced by Soviet ideology at that time.

It is noteworthy that the LDS in the Soviet Union went into effect in 1931, covering all citizens aged between 10- to 60-year-olds, and was abolished in 1991. But in March this year (2014),

Putin restarted this system (LDS) in Russia. It can be said that this system is a sports policy and system with distinct political and ideological imprint.

A: So in the rest of the conversation, let's equate zhi dao si xiang with ideology.

I: That's fine.

A: When do you think PRC's sports zhidao sixiang (guiding ideology) was established?

I: I think it roughly was formed in the early years of the founding of the People's Republic. Since 1949, the guiding ideology of sports in RRC has gone through many changes in different stages. For example, the original guiding ideology was marked by Mao Zedong's inscription 'Developing Sports and Enhancing People's Physical Fitness' on 10 June 1952. In the early years of PRC, the Party and Government decided on the guiding ideology of sports work with 'sports serving the people' as its core, and formed a sports development pattern with its principles, such as 'serving labour production and national defence construction', 'developing sports and enhancing people's physique' as its basic task and 'popularising and regularising'.

Afterwards, influenced by various factors, including domestic political movement and international situation, the guiding ideology of Chinese sports has experienced many changes. [. . .]

A: What kind of changes has it experienced over the past decades?

I: Generally, I think it has gone through several stages: 'Strengthening people's physique and giving priority to the development of mass sports', 'Combining popularisation with improvement, focusing on competitive sports through system reform', 'Deepening reform, going to the market, governing the body according to law', and 'Putting people first, competing with the Olympic Games and strengthening the physique of the whole people'. [. . .]

A: Do you think the state sports policy is a reflection of the Party's will and zhidao sixiang (guiding ideology) on sports? In what aspects?

I: That's for sure. It is largely influenced by ideology, especially in the early years of the founding of the People's Republic. At that time, the Party did not attach as much importance to sports as it did later, especially in the field of competitive sports. The top department of sports was the ACSF, which was actually a group organisation or non-governmental organisation.

Although its branches were established in almost all provinces, the main content of its work was mass sports. In today's words, it's fitness-for-all. Of course, the emphasis on mass sports was also influenced by the ideology of Communism, especially Mao Zedong Thought, which emphasised serving the people and the mass line. Of course, after the reform and opening up (1978), the Party's work focused on economic construction, not as much on ideology as before [Mao era], especially class struggle, but the Party's leadership of sports work remains unchanged.

A: What guiding ideology do you think China attached importance to competitive/elite sports later? What are the reasons for this?

I: As I mentioned earlier, It's largely influenced by the Soviet Union. As you know, many Western countries, such as the USA and the UK, adopt society-oriented model for the development of sports. Most of Socialist countries, such as the former Soviet Union and China, adopted state-dominant model. In fact, China was learning from the Soviet model. In 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games, although China did not get any medals, Chinese [officials] saw the strength of sports and elite sports and the efficiency of sports management model in the Soviet Union. That is, from then on, China began to set up the SECPRC. And from then on, it [SECPRC] became a government department. In addition, we [China] also learned the three-level training network from the Soviet Union, which consists sports schools, provincial sports teams and national teams. What is the purpose? To train excellent athletes to participate in international competitions is to win glory for the country, thus demonstrating the superiority of socialism. [. . .]

A: What's your opinion about the effect of politicisation on sport policy and systems? Can you provide detailed information? For example, do you think the sports policy at that time was related to ideology? Did it play the main role?

I: That's for sure. It was during the Cold War that China belonged to the Socialist camp, so we [China] had to be consistent with the Soviet Union ideologically and politically. The influence of this ideology on us [society] is manifold, such as culture, sports, art and education. For a long time, our sports system and policies were influenced by this ideology. [. . .]

A: In your opinion, besides the external international environment, what were the main impacts

on China's sports policy before the reform in 1978?

I: China is a socialist country, the state's political system determines the direction of the development of China's sports system and policy. The dominant leadership of the CCP Central Committee on China's sports has never changed. And this should be the main reason. [. . .]

A: Before and after the Reform and Opening Policy, do you think the government has made any fundamental changes in formulating sports policies?

I: In terms of management system, no fundamental changes have taken place. After the reform, even after the market-oriented reform of sports in 1994, the management mode of sports in China is still dominated by the Government, and the market only play a supplementary role. This situation has not changed fundamentally. In the field of competitive [elite] sports, China still adopts a three-level training network, and the main competitive sports talents are still trained by the 'Juguo tizhi'. On mass sports, China began to attach importance to comprehensive fitness, diversified forms of running sports, and also began to attach importance to the role of society, such as the development of community sports, but this state-led management model has not fundamentally changed. [. . .]

A: What is your opinion about the role of sport and government-oriented sports systems in contemporary Chinese society?

I: Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, this government-led sports management model has not changed, and this model is largely related to China's political system. Because the system of the integration of the Party and the government in China determines that China's sports system will maintain this model of the whole nation system for a long time. [. . .]

A: Do you think the influence of the Party on sports in the Mao era continued or was retained in the post-Mao era, specifically in the 1980s and after that? In what aspects?

I: China's reform is top-down, not bottom-up. The development of Chinese sports is not dominated by the society, but by the consciousness or ideology of the Parties and the interests of the state. This is the characteristic of the evolution of China's sports policy and also a feature of China's social development. [. . .] This was reflected at the beginning of the reform. This characteristic has not changed fundamentally before and after the reform and opening up in 1978. Of course, after the reform, with the development of China's economy and society,

people's understanding of sports is also changing. For example, more people are engaged in sports for fitness, instead of emphasising the collective awareness of sports and winning glory for the country as before, but Chinese officials still attach great importance to the guidance of sports to serve the national interests. Many methods adopted in Mao's era of running sports are still in use today. For instance, emphasising mass sport and promoting sport for the people became an integral part of Chinese sports ideology in the Maoist era. Even today, it is still used as an important organisational method. [. . .] As long as the Party-state remains an entity, neither the Party nor the government [governmental sporting bodies] can ignore this practical method, which has become a political tradition that demonstrates the powerful vitality and resilience of this government, consolidating its legitimacy.

A: As a scholar, how do you think of the role of ideology in the current social and economic development of China?

I: In my opinion, from the historical perspective, it is reasonable for the CCP to strengthen the importance of ideology in realising the stability and development of Chinese society. The end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 marked the end of the imperial era with history of over two thousands years in China. The republican system advocated by the Revolutionary Party at that time, but the Beiyang government (1912–1928) experienced eight heads of state and thirty-two cabinet prime ministers in just 16 years, and the situation was extremely chaotic! Since 1949, China has also experienced a series of political chaos and social unrest, such as the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward [. . .]. In my opinion, for ordinary people, what China needs most is steady development and gradual democratic reform. In fact, the ideological approach of the Communist Party meets the realistic appeal of most of Chinese people. I can only say that existence is possibly reasonable.

A: Thank you very much for accepting this interview. I will transcribe the interview later. There may be some content need to be added or revised in late period. I hope to continue to get your support. Thanks.

I: Okay, that's fine.

A: Thank you. Let's make another appointment.

I: Okay, goodbye.