



# Urban Innovation through Mega Sport Events: Evidence from the City of Seoul

Yongjin Ahn\*, Minkyung Kim\*\*

**Abstract** A mega sport event as the globalization phenomenon is not only the symbol of the process of modernization but also the vehicle to upgrade global power and hold a dominant position in the world competition under the post-industrial era. This study notifies the role of mega sport events as a strategy for urban innovation in the context of global and local. Comparing the different roles of mega sport events between developing countries and developed countries, we intend to answer two questions: 1) what explains the nature and role of mega sport event, and 2) what are the major evidences of the transition in the globalization era. The conceptual framework, based on the temporal and spatial perspective, provides the mechanism through which the strategy for urban innovation has been changed from ‘motivation for modernization’ to ‘rethinking of localization.’ Focusing on the case of Seoul, we also compare major issues between two phases: role of agent, urban form, and urban development. Finally, this study sheds light on the concept of ‘glocalization’ which means the convergence of globalization and localization; and suggests the roles of (local) agent for hosting mega sport events.

**Keywords** Urban innovation, mega sport events, global city, modernization, globalization, glocalization

## I. Introduction

Every two years, global attention is paid to mega sport events (e.g., Olympic Games and FIFA world cup) through the various mass media. A history from 1955 to 2005 of bidding for hosting mega-sport events provides two notable points as much as the competition for gold medal (Table 1). One is that the competition for bidding has been rapidly increasing since 1980. Unlike the situation prior 1980, five cities or more took commonly part in a bidding process for selecting the hosting city of the Summer Olympic Games from 1996 to 2010.

---

Submitted, April 28, 2021; Accepted, May 1, 2021

\* Associate Professor, Ph.D., School of Architecture, Seoul National University of Science & Technology, Seoul, Korea; [dadaist21@seoultech.ac.kr](mailto:dadaist21@seoultech.ac.kr)

\*\* Corresponding, Professor Ph.D., School of Architecture, Seoul National University of Science & Technology, Seoul, Korea; [mkkim@seoultech.ac.kr](mailto:mkkim@seoultech.ac.kr)



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons  
Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

Most host cities, such as Tokyo, Montreal, Moscow, Los Angeles, Athens, and Beijing should have experienced failure to get finally the chance to host the Olympic Games. In particular, Paris was not allowed for hosting in spite of three trials. In this process, both governmental sectors (e.g., central and local government) and private sectors (e.g., NGO and corporation) have poured their visible and invisible endeavors to gain the right to host mega-event by the various channels.

**Table 1 Cities bidding for the Summer Olympic Games, 1960-2012**

1960	1955	Rome	Budapest, Brussels, Detroit, Lausanne, Mexico City, Tokyo
1964	1959	Tokyo	Brussels, Detroit, Vienna
1968	1969	Mexico City	Buenos Aires, Lyon, Detroit
1972	1966	Munich	Detroit, Madrid, Montreal
1976	1970	Montreal	Los Angeles, Moscow
1980	1974	Moscow	Los Angeles
1984	1978	Los Angeles	Teheran
1988	1981	Seoul	Nagoya (Japan)
1992	1986	Barcelona	Amsterdam, Belgrade, Birmingham, Brisbane, Paris
1996	1990	Atlanta	Athens, Belgrade, Manchester, Melbourne, Toronto
2000	1993	Sydney	Berlin, Beijing, Manchester, Istanbul (Brasilia, Milan, Tashkent withdrew)
2004	1997	Athens	Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Istanbul, Lille, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, San Juan, St. Petersburg, Seville, Stockholm
2008	2001	Beijing	Bangkok, Cairo, Havana, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Osaka, Paris, Seville, Toronto
2012	2005	London	Paris, Madrid, Moscow, New York

Source: John R. Gold and Margaret M. Gold (2007)

The other is that there is the tension between ‘developed countries’ where “rapid industrialization is dependent on the spatial concentration of modern infrastructure and productive activity” and ‘developing countries’ with “an initial state of relatively low levels of urbanization, restricted modern sectors, and unevenly developed infrastructure” (Scott, 2002). For example, in final bidding for both 2008 and 2010 Olympic Games, cities in developing countries such as Beijing, Bangkok, Cairo, and Moscow, competed with cities in developed countries such as London, Paris, and New York. Obviously, although developing countries have relatively lower competition than developed countries in terms of social capital and economic performance, they participate decidedly the bidding with a high risk of failure. The latter also take part in a competitive bidding even if they have already taken their position as a global city.

On the other hand, under the current COVID-19 pandemic, the planned Tokyo 2020 Olympic was postponed for 2021 to control the spread of its outbreak. However, the uncertainty still remains whether the Tokyo Olympic will declare

the opening in 2021 or will be canceled again. It is expected that the cancellations have social and economic impacts on national economies in Japan (Hoang et al., 2020). Why are many cities and countries eager to host mega-sport events? This study starts by answering that question. This is because mega-sport events as the globalization phenomenon are not only the symbol of the process of modernization but also the strategy to upgrade global power and hold a dominant position in the world competition under the post-industrial era.

Although all cities take part in the bidding process for the same reason, 'joining the global trend,' there might be a difference in terms of the nature and role of mega-sport events between two types of country. In other words, in developing countries, mega-sport events play as an opportunity to put it (country or city) on the map of 'global village' with homogeneous characteristics of modernity. On the other hand, in developed countries, hosting mega-sport events has emerged as a means for cities to strengthen their identity as a leader of global cities with heterogeneous characteristics of locality and tradition. Therefore, this study aims to understand the relationship between a mega sport event and globalization by answering the following questions: 1) what explains the nature and role of mega-sport events; 2) what are the major evidences of the transition in the globalization era.

To do this, the remainder of this paper is largely arranged into four. First of all, both literature review and theoretical framework for the relationship between mega-sport events and social trend related to global process from the temporal and spatial aspects are described. Next, this study examines the change of nature and role of mega sport events based on the longitudinal approach from transition to glocalization, while comparing the major issues between two stages: 'tradition to modernization'; 'globalization to glocalization'. Thirdly, the specific evidences on the difference between two stages are also suggested from the case study of Seoul Olympic (1988) and FIFA World Cup (2002). Finally, the challenge and potential of a mega sport event are discussed in the context of roles of agent, urban form, and urban development.

## **II. Literature review and conceptual framework**

There has been much literature regarding mega-sport events and globalization with keywords of tourism, place (or city) marketing, urban regeneration, global city, world competition, modernization, globalization, global citizenship, and so on. The literature can be largely and roughly categorized into three: the nature and history of mega-event (Matheson and Baade, 2004; Roche, 2000a; Roche 2002a; Roche, 2002b; Roche, 2003; Roche, 2006a); tourism and place marketing (Paddision, 1993; Brown and Massey, 2002; Horne and Manzenreiter,

2004; Jones, 2001; Kavartzis, 2004; Kim et al., 2006; L'Etang et al., 2007; Lee and Taylor, 2005; Malfas et al., 2004; Richards and Wilson, 2004; Smith, 2005; Higham, 1999; Horne, 2004); the socio-cultural characteristic of mega-event (Andranovich et al., 2001; Boyle and Haynes, 2000; Harvey and Houle, 2001; Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006; Misener and Mason, 2006; Roche, 2000b; Jarvie, 2003).

First of all, from the perspective of social science, studies that touched the nature and history of mega-event widely range from the relationship between nations (or modernity) and mega-event to the global context including 'global citizenship.' This genre is usually more focused on the growth of national and global dimensions paying attention to the power (or role) of agent and the potential for 'global society.' Especially, much volume conducted by Roche has provided precious knowledge on modernization which contributed to making the basic frame of this essay. For example, Roche mapped the general relationships between nations and mega events from nationalism in the phases of nation-building to internationalism in the twentieth century (Roche, 2006a).

Next, studies, focused on tourism and place marketing, find the reason why a city is truly concerning with mega-event from tourism, seeing it not only as a major strategy for economic development and bringing foreign direct investment but also as a generator for the intrinsic brand value of the city. For example, the financial success of the Los Angeles Olympic Games (1984) encouraged other cities which find a way of prosperity to take part in bidding process for hosting, reminding the economic importance of major sports events (Gratton et al, 2000). All in all, from the perspective of economics, much of them investigated the impact of mega-sport events on economic dimensions of host cities, but the results from each specific host city are mixed due to several problems in terms of measurement and assumption.

Lastly, many studies from the perspective of sociology investigated the impact on socio-cultural dimension, especially more focusing on a local network, social capital, and the sociological meaning of sport "as a vehicle for social inclusion and community revitalization" (Jarvie, 2003). Unlike the perspective of economic development, studies on the relationship between social capital and mega events explain the nature (including effect) of the hosting of an event with a different axis of 'generating positive social benefits', putting much emphasis on civic pride, community identity, and community development/network (Misener and Mason, 2006). Also, some of them have introduced the concept of 'global village' addressing the media feature of mega-event.

Mostly, earlier studies examined the relationship between mega-event and various social arrangements in the context of globalization without consideration of the different type of country (i.e., 'developing' and 'developed'), whereas Matheson and Baade (2004) raised the question of whether mega-sport events provide the way to prosperity for developing

countries. In this article, it championed that hosting might be more of a monetary burden under the developing countries rather than the means of achieving economic development through the comparison of factors against hosting and factors for hosting. This study concentrated, however, solely on economic dimensions regarding the benefit cost analysis, ignoring other dimensions which mega-event can affect positively, as mentioned in other literature. In addition, the earlier studies which illuminated the nature and history of mega-event do not treat deeply the concept of glocalization, which significantly represents the importance of the local context or identity.

From the introduction and literature review, some issues can be suggested as follows. The first and most notably, the characteristics of mega-event dramatically changed after (pre) modernization era. As mentioned in earlier section, this trend can be captured by the rapid increase of the number of cities which took part in the bidding process since 1980 when the post-industrial era has emerged. Next, different approaches are required in understanding the relationship between mega events and cities with a different social (or urban) context due to the time lag in terms of the development process (e.g., urbanization and industrialization) as well as the variance in the extent of development. Lastly, a study on globalization and mega event is extending its interest into socio/cultural-based issues more intangible from economic-based issues more tangible, paying attention to the relation of global-local.

The conceptual framework provides the comparison analysis to better understand the nature and role of mega-event, based on the temporal perspective from traditional - to glocalization era as well as on the spatial perspective from space of place, space of flow, and space convergence. Finally, the difference between the nature of mega event in modernization era and that in globalization era is to be investigated, capturing the characteristics of post-industrial era for which might give some clues to that issue.

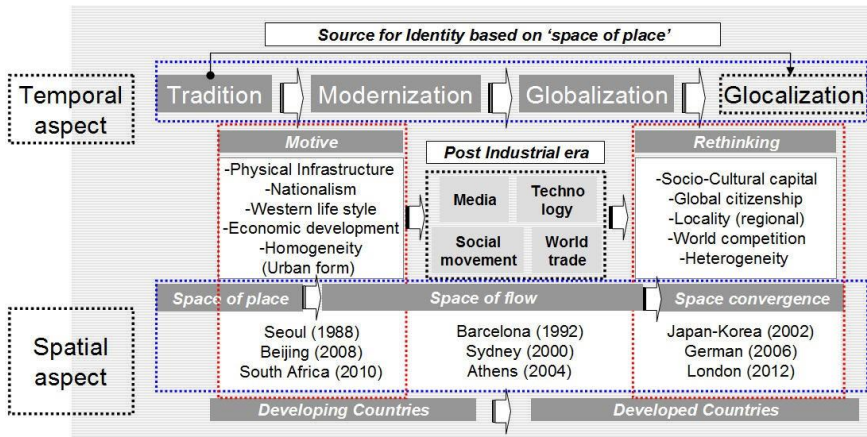


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of mega sport events

First of all, there are largely five terms explaining the process of development of human society: tradition, modernization, post-industrial era, globalization, and glocalization. No consensus reaches in defining them clearly except for the term of ‘tradition’ because they are on a continuum of human history, but modernization and globalization can be commonly characterized as a convergent process. In other words, modernization (theory) notes “a linear, incremental, discontinuous but an irreversible” process of social transformation from traditional to advanced (‘modern’) society (Rostow, 1964). Transition incorporates the concept of ‘nation-state,’ ‘western life style,’ and ‘homogeneity’; more focuses on economic development and construction of physical infrastructure through the process of urbanization, industrialization, and westernization.

On the other hand, globalization can be broadly defined as “the stretching of similar economic, cultural and political activities across the globe” (Short and Kim, 1999) as well as the transformation “generating transcontinental or interregional flows” and incurring “networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power” (Manzenreiter, 2004), reflecting the characteristics of the post-industrial era which represent the change of traditional economic system. The advanced media communication and technology contributes to ‘time-space compression,’ which refers to the process that accelerates the experience of time and reduces the significance of distance (Harvey, 1990), thereby spurring a free world trade and restructuring of economic competition in a homogeneous economic community. The change into a more homogeneous space can also be demonstrated by the concept of ‘space of place’ and ‘space of flow’ (Castelle, 2000). According to him, ‘space of places’ refers to the inherited meaning that place itself has, that is, where the local-based life is structured through enough

time, whereas ‘space of flow’ can be defined as “the material organization of time-sharing social practices that work through flows” (Castells, 2000). Thus, ‘space of place’ in an industrial city can be transferred into ‘space of flow’ in post-industrial city, and under the condition of ‘space of flow’ ‘the end of geography’ which refers to the collapse of the national (or regional) boundary is insight. From this background, Friedmann and Wolff (1982) and Sassen (1991) more stressed the process of world-wide economic integration (i.e., global capital) and transnational corporations through their concepts of ‘world city’ and ‘global city.’ As another global trend, cultural globalization also emphasizes global identity in multi-dimensions, such as language, ethnicity, and region, linking to transnational and global movement patterns of people and goods (commodities).

However, when it comes to the spatial perspective, cultural globalization becomes more complex. That is, as mentioned by Short and Kim (1999), “the growth of cultural flows has increased sameness between distant places; but it has also fostered the complexity of local cultures,” and “the creation of de-territorialized cultures is re-territorialized in different forms in different places” (Short and Kim, 1999). The last transition to glocalization in Figure 1 starts from this mixed concept of globalization. Unlike earlier transition, it can be characterized as socio-cultural capital, locality, and heterogeneity. Those are able to be acknowledged as alternatives of economic-oriented value, nationality, and homogeneity, respectively, responding to rigid convergent process in the modernization era. What is more, as Scott (2002) considered the city-region as “privileged sites of generalized competitive advantage,” ‘socio-cultural capital,’ ‘locality,’ and ‘heterogeneity’ from that locality, mentioned before, can be resources in unlimited world competition. All in all, ironically, the recurrent route (i.e., tradition to glocalization) for revisiting (or rediscovering) visible and invisible traditional values (e.g., placeness and cultural identity) forms an important basis in the relation of global-local. This different stream is in line with ‘space convergence’ concept Castell (2002, 2004) mentioned as follows.

*“The space of places organises experience and activity around the confines of locality. What is critical in our society is that cities are structured and restructured simultaneously by the competing logics of the space of flows and the space of place. Cities do not disappear into the virtual networks. Rather, they are transformed in the interface between electronic communication and physical interaction. They are transformed by the combination in practice of cities, networks, and places but without fully integrating them.” (Castells, 2002: 554)*

*“In a world of spatial networks, the proper connection between these different networks is essential to link up the global and the local without opposing the two planes of operation.” (Castells, 2004: 90)*

Next, paying attention to the spatial-temporal significance, conceptual frame suggests the transition of mega-event, in terms of a strategy of global city from ‘motivation for modernization’ to ‘rethinking for glocalization,’ as shown in Figure 1. More specifically, ‘Motive’ is the stage of diminishing difference and joining world system (global capital) more homogeneous and standardized within the tension between tradition and modernization including similar concept of ‘Westernization,’ ‘Americanization,’ ‘Cocacolonization’ as a convergence into a single culture (Boyle and Haynes, 2000; Khondker, 2004). On the other hand, ‘Rethinking’ is the stage of increasing the variety and (re)finding locality, in part, from the source of tradition more heterogeneous and diverse within the integration between the global and the local through the concept of ‘adapted or complex globalization’ and ‘glocalization.’

This dichotomy can be adapted to categorizing bidding countries in relation to the extent of development: developing and developed countries. For example, Seoul (1988), Beijing (2008), and South Africa (2010) are more likely to follow the convergent process, even if some countries (or cities) co-exist in the same period. This is because there might be a distinctive difference not only in economic dimensions but also in the socio-politics dimension. In other words, the spatial difference could make some evidences (or symptoms) which present the characteristics of modernization in the globalization era. By extending the discussion, it is possible to say that Tokyo (1964), Seoul (1988), and Beijing (2008) have different temporal and spatial effects, but they are following a sort of ‘path-dependence’ in terms of converged process.

From this conceptual frame, therefore, this paper has some strength in that there is little research more focused on the difference between two types of country, and that the issue regarding the strategies of mega-event embraces the extended concept of globalization (i.e., glocalization) beyond the narrow view of economic dimensions as well as the tension between global and local. The following section provides in more detail the changing nature of mega event, focused on the two stages mentioned above.

### **III. The nature and role of mega-sport events**

The nature and role of mega-event in the modernization era can be explained by three keywords: nationalism, economic development (e.g., industrialization and urbanization), and westernization (Roche, 2000a; Roche, 2003; Roche,



2006a; Roche, 2006b). In other words, mega-event is directly or indirectly not only the product of nationalism to justify the regime but also the tool to improve the weakened economic situation, especially, for post-war reconstruction, and follow the western social setting across the multi-dimensions (e.g., economic, political, and cultural policy).

According to Roche (2000b) and Hargreaves (1986), modern sports event can be considered as ‘invented traditions’ in the process of nation-building at the end of the 19th century and a sort of ‘ritual’ where the distinctive national narrative and identity are symbolized and amplified by events. In this process, the nation (or state) concept takes over its role as an agent with the central power to build modernized social settlements. Especially, physical infra-structures are (re)constructed to provide the civilized social condition as well as to form the basis of economic development. This explanation is much more concerned with the cases of western European countries in the context of pre-modern, such as German (1936) under the Nazi authority, Britain (1948), which lifted the mood of post-war, and the U.S. (1984) under the cold-war ideology (Roche, 2000b).

In post-World War II, however, there were newly-born or reshaped countries in a different context of the western civilization, such as Japan (1964), Korea (1988), and China (2008) (Roche, 2006b). Like western European countries, they have used the event not only as a tool to enhance social cohesion and maintain economic development, but also, in particular, as a motive that provides the transformation from traditional society to modern society (including the concept of westernization). In this process, things accustomed to traditional society (e.g., life style, social institution, and human settlements) have been replaced by the western ones, and finally, there was no difference between non-western and western. That is, the transition to modernization has caused the ‘commodification of place’ as well as the loss of identity (or meaning) of place (Mahyar, 1999). In return for the convergence, however, the host cities could obtain broadly the honorable title of ‘being fully civilized’ by providing the formalized or standardized sports utilities as well as homogeneous urban form (e.g., well-constructed road and high-rise buildings) accustomed to western visitors.

Major characteristics in the post-industrial era: development of media-information technology (e.g., satellite T.V. and world-wide-web), economic transition, social movement, and world competition, allow mega-event to confront with the dramatic change in its nature role. The first and most importantly, the power of media that ascribes to the innovative advance of media-information technology enables the mega event to obtain the title of ‘media event’ in the ‘global village’ (Roche, 2002a). Furthermore, the development of communication interface that includes internet and intra-net makes mega-event represented everywhere without the time restraint and qualified as a harbinger of globalization (Rowe, 1998). This point makes it

possible for mega events to be a channel of a transnational corporation as well as an effective tool to advertise host cities to a global citizen as a consumer of place marketing.

Next, the economic transition to the service-based economy urged existing cities centered on the manufacturing-based industry to reorganize their socio-economic structures with a creative and innovative way of “leading edges of the contemporary economy, such as high technology industry, services, and cultural-products industries” (Scott, 2002). For example, truism and urban regeneration can be good alternative models to respond to the industrial decline. In other words, cities not only pay their attentions to the external investor outside the world by improving their old images but also revitalize their local economies by implementing lots of regenerating projects as an internal motive power (OECD, 2007). In this process, hosting a mega event can be understood as one of the strategies for ‘city marketing’ which puts much emphasis on ‘place identity’ to “boost the global integration and economic competitiveness of city” (Short and Kim, 1999).

Lastly, both the surging of the various social movements, such as individualism, feminism, and echoism, and the reshaping of the national institutional structure mentioned in the earlier section make it possible to reconsider the local and citizen as another agent, paying more attention to major characteristics that the local contains in terms of the socio-cultural dimension (e.g., environment and cultural diversity). As Scott (2002) pointed out, strong central governments with “tightly bordered national economies” which generated a national urban system in the post-war decade, realized that it is difficult to reflect the varied and specific needs of different localities under “the cross-border competitive pressures,” thus, for the pursuit of significant competitive advantages, “many city-regions are also finding themselves faced with important new tasks of local political integration and representation.” What is more, under the unlimited competition from which any city is not entirely free, each local tries to find a way to overcome competitive pressures by obtaining the competition from local identity based on the heterogeneity. In this sense, while mega-sport events in the modernization era emphasized the conversion to the western value with nationalism and economic development, the nature and role of mega-event in the globalization era requires a different convergent process more focused on the heterogeneous characteristics of the locality.

Two key questions, however, can be raised: ‘locality of what?’ and ‘locality of why?’ First of all, with regard to the answer for ‘locality of what?’ it draws on the tension between structure and agency. Basically, this paper follows the perspective that hosting the mega-event depends more on the ‘willingness of agent’ rather than the force of ‘structure,’ even though the latter affects directly or indirectly the ‘will of the agent.’ That is, unlike other convergent processes by global capitalism (e.g., labor- and monetary flows) and political globalization

(e.g., the intervention of international organization), a global mega event as cultural globalization is relatively more flexible and less rigid than the formers, and also the judgment by the agent is more likely to be importantly considered in the convergent process, that is, in this case, “whether or not it takes part in a bidding process for hosting.” Furthermore, as mentioned in the earlier part, the concept of the agent can be extended to the level of local and individual through the various ‘social movements’ and ‘the cross-border competitive pressures.’ This transition to multiple local regimes would help to interpret the local policy and go beyond the limitation of the dichotomy between the global and the local by (Smith, 2000). Also, as mentioned before, ‘space of place’ based on the local-based life would work critically in organizing the diversity of local situation, experience, and activity (Castells, 2002). Thus, the concept of ‘locality’ can incorporate both concepts: ‘sense of place’ and ‘local’ as an agent, thereby, it is possible to (re)structure knowledgeable locality.

Next, with regard to the answer for ‘locality of why?’ it draws on the tension between globalization and glocalization. While globalization is concerned with macro-sociological issues addressing the convergence between various multi-dimensions (e.g., technological, economic, political, and cultural interrelationships), glocalization is more involved in a micro issue with the twin processes: macro-localization and micro-globalization, to “help alleviate the conceptual difficulties of macro-micro relationship” (Khondker, 2004; Robertson, 1995).

Furthermore, ‘glocalization’ as a terminology, modeled on Japanese word ‘dochakuka’ which means ‘adapting farming technique to one’s own local condition,’ can be defined as “formed by telescoping global and local to make a blend” (Robertson, 1995), it has been usually used to capture the complexities of the ‘global-local’ theme by combining homogeneity with heterogeneity (Robertson, 1995; Swyngedouw, 1997). Also, according to Waters (1995), the concept of globalization is “an obvious object for ideological suspicion because, like modernization, an earlier and related concept, it appears to justify the spread of Western culture and of capitalist society by suggesting that there are forces operating beyond human control that are transforming the world.”

From this definition of glocalization, ‘adapting farming technique to one’s own local condition,’ and the characteristic of globalization, ‘forces operating beyond human control which are transforming the world,’ it is possible to assume that globalization is more related to the force of structure, whereas glocalization has much to do with agent power. Thus, it makes sense to suggest agent power (or agent willingness) as a basis of -locality of why?- with two factors of -locality of what?-.

<i>Globalization</i>	<i>Glocalization</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Convergence of multi-dimensions</li><li>- Macro-sociological approach</li><li>- The force of structure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Twin process: Macro-localization Micro-globalization</li><li>- Micro-sociological approach</li><li>- Agent power (agent willingness)</li></ul>

**Figure 2 Comparison between the concept of globalization and glocalization**

Based on those discussions, mega-event as a strategy for the world competition can be largely examined through the three factors: ‘locality’ (i.e., agent and identity), ‘placeness’ (boundary), and ‘cultural entity’ (contents and activity). The formation to be combined can be realized by the actions, such as city marketing, selling place, and place marketing, as an alternative to restore the decline of traditional sources of prosperity and employment (Ward, 1998). Also, space is turned into a place through the way of representing discursive acts (Short and Kim, 1999).

#### **IV. Case study: the city of Seoul**

From the global perspective, firstly, this section illustrates a brief overview of Seoul as a global city, focused on three remarkable events: Olympic Games, financial crisis, FIFA World Cup, then, to explain the change of nature of mega-event Olympic Games (Stage I: from tradition to modernization) and FIFA World Cup (Stage II: from globalization to glocalization) are compared by discussing several items in the process of hosting: the characteristic and role of agent (regulation/deregulation), urban form (homogeneity/heterogeneity), and urban development concept (economic development/cultural and sustainable development).

Furthermore, these items can be respectively linked to the three concepts proposed above: local agent, sense of place, and cultural identity, from ‘locality of what?’ That is, based on the answer of ‘locality of what’, an ‘agent’ itself can be considered as one of the entities that local has. Thus it is important to examine the characteristics and role of the agent. Also, urban form and urban development can be understood as a way of revealing and expressing the sense of place and cultural identity through the physical environment more tangible.

Seoul, as the capital of South Korea, is one of the major cities in the world of which population is about 10.3 million as of the end of 2005 and the total area is 605.52 square kilometers (<http://www.seoul.go.kr>). Moreover, as shown in Table 2, Seoul metropolitan area which includes In-cheon city and Gyeong-gi province not only ranks the fourth largest metropolitan area with 19.5 million

inhabitants but also is regarded as the archetype of high density urban area with Tokyo- and Osaka metro area.

**Table 2 Urban area population and density ranking**

Urban Area	Population	Square Miles	Density	Square Miles	Density	Year
Tokyo-Yokohama	34,250,000	3,025	11,300	7,835	4,350	2005
Jakarta	20,600,000	1,050	19,600	2,720	7,600	2005
New York	19,712,000	4,349	4,500	11,264	1,750	2000
Seoul-Incheon	19,500,000	750	26,000	1,943	10,050	2002
Manila	19,150,000	550	34,800	1,425	13,450	2007
Sao Paulo	18,700,000	1,000	18,700	2,590	7,200	2005
Mexico City	18,100,000	825	21,900	2,137	8,450	2005
Osaka-Kobe-Kyoto	17,250,000	1,050	16,400	2,720	6,350	2005
Mumbai, MAH	17,000,000	300	56,700	777	21,900	2001
Cairo	16,250,000	490	33,200	1,269	12,800	2006

Source: Demographia (2008)

The compact and high population development is supported by economic development. As we know from the term ‘the miracle on the Han River.’ Seoul attained brilliant economic growth over the last four decades. Based on the economic development, the city hosted the Olympic Games in 1988, and the successful host contributed to putting its name broadly on the world map. However, after 10 years, economic intervention by global capitalism required the city to transform its structure. Through the efforts for wide restructuring not only from the public sector but also from the private sector, the city overcame the financial crisis and formed the basis of taking a leap to the global city with the globalized standard. Finally, in 2002, Seoul was the first city in Asia to host FIFA World Cup with other cities in Japan, which provided a critical opportunity to develop into an upper-level city.

Several economic indexes well present the dynamic growth during this period. As described in Figure 2 (refer to Appendix), GDP in Seoul increased continuously \$88.9 million in 1994 to \$193.1 million in 2006 except for the period 1997 to 1998 when IMF intervention was activated, and FDI (foreign direct investment) also increased \$1.3 million in 1994 to \$11.23 million in 2006 even though it shows more dynamical change than GDP. As displayed in Figure 3 (refer to Appendix), the number of foreigners in Seoul increased 34,632 in 1992 to 229,072 in 2007, taking about 30% of the number of the whole country. In particular, after FIFA World Cup, the number of foreigners increased 28%, firstly being over 100,000. Furthermore, the latest economic data regarding the best financial cities indicated that Seoul ranked continuously 9th financial and commercial cities in 2007 and 2008 (<http://www.citymayors>).

## **1. Stage 1: From tradition to modernization**

Traditionally, Korean politics has been characterized by power controlled by the central government. In 1980's, the political situation of Korea was extremely disordered due to the tension between the authority established by military power and the individual desiring democracy. To break up the political demand for democracy, the military government deployed 'the 3S policy' (i.e., Screen, Sports, and Sex). For example, baseball and soccer pro-league have been established during this period. In this context, like other host countries in the modernization era, the Korean military government tried to gain the justification of regime and social cohesion, based on nationalism, for economic development by hosting of Olympic Games.

The aggressive role of the central government as an agent was, in detail, shown in the process of hosting. Food regulation that bans selling the dog for eating was totally implemented across the host cities including Seoul. Also, a driving regulation that admits a two-shift driving ('odd/even system') was forcedly introduced to avoid traffic congestion during the hosting period. In addition, each school at the elementary- and intermediate level should have prepared for a mass-game to celebrate Olympic Games by government enforcement.

The dramatic change of urban form presents the transformation to the westernized life style. Auto-oriented life style required a well-connected road system. Through the 'Han-River Master Plan,' two highways ('North-riverside road' and '88 Olympic road') for connection between east and west area were constructed, and several bridges, one of which was also named as '88 Olympic bridge', have connected north and south area with the modernized technology.

Moreover, the landscape around the '88 Olympic road' which connects Kimpo airport to the Olympic stadium in Jam-sil was specially managed to attract the attention of visitors from abroad. For example, as shown in Figure 3, a traditional, but bad-conditional, housing type located around the '88 Olympic road' was firstly redeveloped into a high-rise and westernized housing type by the public project (Sohn, 2003). As another example representing the change of urban form, the McDonald chain was firstly introduced in 'Ap-gu-jeong', which is called Beverly-hills in Seoul in 1988. Since that time, lots of other franchise restaurants from western society have had a boom.



Source: Google Earth (2008).

Note: This picture shows the transition of housing type from (C): traditional or pre-modernized type to (B): westernized type around the 88 Olympic Stadium

**Figure 3 Satellite Map of Han-river, the change of urban form (housing type)**

## **2. Stage 2: From globalization to glocalization**

The discussion of the shift from central-based to local-based approach begins with the introduction of the ‘local self-government system’ in 1995. It is still difficult to think that the ‘local self-government system’ of Korea has been completed and well activated, but this shift of agent power gives an important clue in understanding the change of nature and role of mega-event.

As an example of the decentralization of power to local government in Korea, in the field of planning, the approval authority of local-level physical master plan and large-scale urban development projects transferred central government into local government (Kim et al., 2006). Moreover, the shift from ‘the military regime’ to ‘the civilian regime’ which refers to the opposite concept of the military regime also implies the change of agent's role in hosting.

Unlike an earlier stage, the characteristic of agent shown in the process of hosting changed national-driven into local-driven, and an aggressive role of government authority also changed into various ways of non-regulatory encouragement and voluntary program by citizen participation, instead of government enforcement by the central government. For example, food regulation regarding the ban selling the dog for eating fairly changed into ‘recommended,’ and driving regulation changed into ‘tax incentive’ which encourages ‘one off-driving day among 5 days’ during the hosting period.

In addition, depending on the city, home stay program was voluntarily operated, which provides lodgings for visitors from abroad. Those ‘recommend,’ ‘incentive,’ and ‘voluntary’ programs are good examples which explain, in part, not only the change of agent from national-driven hosting based on the nationalism to local or citizen-participant hosting based on local situation and citizenship, but also the result of social movement based on individualism and

cultural relativism which admits and respects cultural diversity (i.e., heterogeneity).

The distinctive change of urban form is shown in unique architectural style of stadium (Figure 4, 5). While 88 Olympic main stadium designed by Kim, Soo-Geun, affected by Frank Lloyd Wright who is one of five masters of modern architecture, has been considered as an archetype of modern architecture in Korea (Min and Hwang, 1996), FIFA World Cup Stadium designed by Ryu, Chun-Soo whose works are more focused on the harmony between the modernity and the locality in terms of architectural style, has been evaluated as the unique local architecture which symbolizes a traditional kite of Korea.

Furthermore, an earlier stage was more focused on the construction of physical infrastructure for economic development through the national-driven comprehensive plan, whereas, in this stage, through the ‘Millennium-City plan’ driven by a local agent with the principle of sustainable development, the construction of info-cultural capital characterized by media for a leap into a regional gate city, was emphasized. More deeply, Sang-am DMC (Digital Media City) project for the cultural complex where the FIFA World Cup stadium is located reshaped existing landfills into eco-city environmental friendly with a huge attractive open-space (Figure 6).



Source: <http://image.naver.com> (2008)  
**Figure 4 88 Olympic Stadium**



Source: <http://image.naver.com> (2008)  
**Figure 5 FIFA World Cup Stadium**





Source: Google Earth (2008).

Note: Unlike the site plan for mega-event of earlier stage, Sang-am DMC shows the exemplary case of urban revitalization and environmental remediation with the various eco-cultural contents: (A): Eco-park; (B): Media complex; (C): FIFA Stadium

**Figure 6 Satellite Map of Sang-am DMC, Reshape landfill into eco-city**

**Table 3 Summary of comparison analysis on two stages**

	<i>Stage I</i>	<i>Stage II</i>
Role of agent	National-driven - Government enforcement (Regulatory)	Local-driven - Citizen participation (Not regulatory / Voluntary)
Urban form	Homogeneity - Westernization - Modernized architecture style	Heterogeneity - Local identity for regional gate city - Unique architecture style
Urban development	Economic development - Focused on physical infra structure (Road, Bridge, Public projects)	Info-cultural development - Focused on digital media contents (Reshaping landfill to eco-city)

## V. Conclusion and discussion

From the basic assumption that there might be the different nature and role of mega sport events between developing - and developed countries, this paper examined the relationship between mega-event and social trend related to global process, drawing on the conceptual framework based on the spatial-temporal significance and reviewing relevant literature which includes the nature and history of mega-event, tourism and place marketing, and the socio-cultural characteristic of mega sport events. We argue that in contrast to the state-

directed, culture-converging mega events happening in developing countries in the modernization periods, the mega sports events in developed countries in the post-industrial era are local-oriented and culture-divergent, driven by the glocalization trend. To support this argument, this article suggests the example of Seoul that has both experiences – the Olympic game in the modernization era (1988) and the World Cup game in the glocalization era (2002).

As a result, it was found that there is a difference in terms of the characteristics and role of agent, urban form, and urban development. More specifically, the characteristics of agents have changed into a more localized or citizen-participant approach. Also, lots of efforts to find the local identity and value subsuming various cultural elements have been deployed in urban form and development. Based on these findings, it is possible to say that the theoretic approach suggested here is fairly persuasive and meaningful in an understanding of mega sport events as a globalization phenomenon even though two samples from a single case area were conducted.

Major characteristics in the post-industrial era are closely and strongly associated with the dramatic change of nature and the role of mega sport events. In the light of mega sport events, the concept of glocalization, which means the integration between globalization and localization, can be better illuminated by combining ‘locality’ (i.e., agent and identity), ‘sense of place’ (boundary), and ‘cultural entity’ (contents and activity). Among them, the first and most importantly, a local agent should not only consider individual stakeholders (e.g., citizen and other various NGOs) as another low-level agent but also make a close relationship with individuals to reach a consensus about the locality (local value) through the ‘self-awareness’ and ‘self-confidence.’ In this process, traditional factors including the sense of place across the multi-dimensions might be one of the valuable resources to embody local identity. Both ‘Barcelona model’ based on the inherited locality of ‘Catalan’ and other host cities (e.g., Su-won, Je-ju and Jeon-ju) for 2002 FIFA World Cup in Korea, where the physical attributes of historical, cultural assets are developed into distinctive local resources, provide a good example to interpret these traditional factors.

There are several implications taken away from this study in developing countries where nationalism, economic development, and westernization might still be dominant social issues. Regarding the role of agent, a central-based hosting at the national level might be more efficient but more likely to be driven by governmental enforcements than local-based hosting. However, citizen participation with the non-regulatory and voluntary program can be expected in local-based hosting. Regarding urban form and urban development, architectural styles symbolized by traditional and local factors can make the urban form more diverse and unique. Also, urban development driven by the info-cultural and environmentally friendly concepts might be more socially and

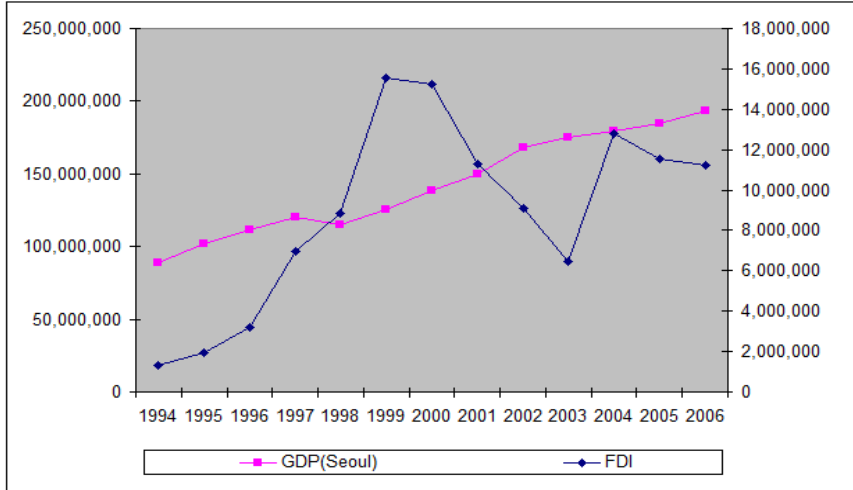
physically sustainable than driven by the physical structures for economic development concepts.

Lastly, more specific questions, such as ‘what is the more ‘desirable’ role of a (local) agent?’ and ‘what is the way of magnifying the locality or local value (contents and activity)?’ can be suggested as the issue for future study. It is also needed to define exactly the concept (boundary) of the local as the sense of place since the technology innovation and the development of transportation make the concept of physical boundary more flexible and vague. More importantly, this study focused on the nature and role of mega sport events during the transition of traditional, modernization, globalization, and glocalization. However, given the current uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, the future study should reconsider the nature and role of mega sport events in the post-pandemic era from the perspectives of social, urban, and technological innovations.

## **Acknowledgment**

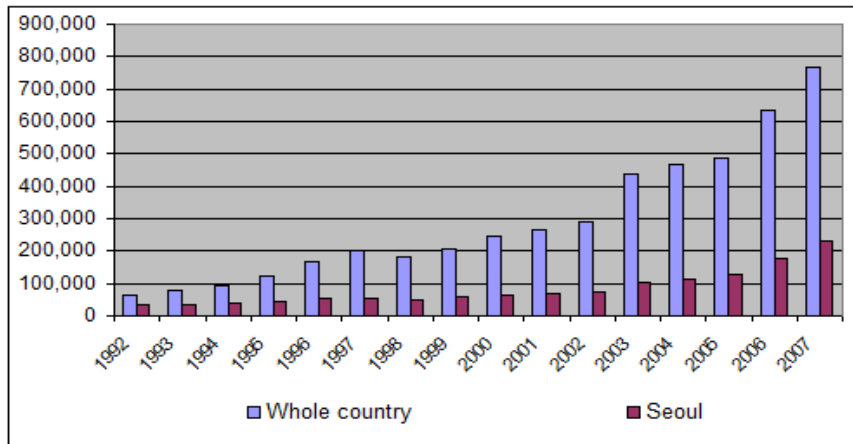
This work was supported by the Seoul National University of Science and Technology [Research fund by the SeoulTech].

## Appendix



Source: Korea National Statistical Office (<http://www.nso.go.kr/>)

**Figure 1 The change of GDP and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in Seoul**



Source: Korea National Statistical Office (<http://www.nso.go.kr/>)

**Figure 2 The change of Number of Foreigner in Seoul**

## References

- Andranovich, G., M. J. Burbank, et al. (2001). Olympic Cities: Lessons Learned from Mega-Event Politics, *Blackwell Synergy*. 23: 113-131.
- Boyle, R. and R. Haynes (2000). *Power Play: Sport, the Media and Popular Culture*, Longman Publishing Group.
- Brown, A. and J. Massey (2002). Literature review: the impact of major sporting events, Manchester Institute for Popular Culture, Manchester Metropolitan University.
- Castells, Manuel (2000), *The Rise of the Network Society (Second Edition)*, Blackwell, Malden, MA.
- Castells, Manuel (2002). Local and global: cities in the network society. *Royal Dutch Geographical Society. Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, v.93(5), pp. 548–558.
- Castells, Manuel, (2004). *Space of Flows, Space of Places: Materials for a Theory of Urbanism in the Information Age*, in *The Cyber-Cities Reader* edited by Stephen Graham, Routledge, London.
- Demographia. (2008). *World Urban Areas: Population & Density*. 4th Comprehensive Edition.
- Friedmann, J. and G. Wolff (1982). World city formation: an agenda for research and action. 6: 309-344.
- Gratton, C., N. Dobson, et al. (2000). The economic importance of major sports events: a case-study of six events, Routledge, part of the Taylor & Francis Group. 5: 17-28.
- Hargreaves, J (1986). *Sport, Power and Culture*. London: Polity.
- Harvey, David. (1990). *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Harvey, J. and F. Houle (2001). *Sport, World Economy, Global Culture, and New Social Movements*, Human Kinetics.
- Higham, J. (1999). Commentary-Sport as an Avenue of Tourism Development: An Analysis of the Positive and Negative Impacts of Sport Tourism. 2: 82-90.
- Hoang, V.T., Al-Tawfiq, J.A. & Gautret, P. (2020). The Tokyo Olympic Games and the Risk of COVID-19. *Curr Trop Med Rep* 7, 126–132. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40475-020-00217-y>
- Horne, J. (2004). *The global game of football: the 2002 World Cup and regional development in Japan*, Routledge. 25: 1233-1244.
- Horne, J. and W. Manzenreiter (2006). An introduction to the sociology of sports mega-events I, *Blackwell Synergy*. 54: 1-24.
- Horne, J. D. and W. Manzenreiter (2004). Accounting for Mega-Events: Forecast and Actual Impacts of the 2002 Football World Cup Finals on the Host Countries Japan/Korea, *ISSA*. 39: 187.
- Jarvie, G. (2003) Communitarianism, sport and social Capital. 'Neighbourly insights into Scottish sport', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38, 139–153.
- John R. Gold and Margaret M. Gold (2007). *Olympic Cities. The Olympic Festivals*. Routledge. 15-47.

- Jones, C. (2001). Mega-events and Host-region Impacts: Determining the True Worth of the 1999 Rugby World Cup<sup>2</sup>. 3: 241-251.
- Kavaratzis, M. (2004). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. 1: 58–73.
- Kim, H. J., D. Gursoy, et al. (2006). The impact of the 2002 World Cup on South Korea: comparisons of pre-and post-games, Elsevier. 27: 86-96.
- Khondker, H. H. (2004). Glocalization as Globalization: Evolution of a Sociological Concept. Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology. v. 1(2), www.bangladeshsociology.org
- L'Etang, J., J. Falkheimer, et al. (2007). Public relations and tourism: Critical reflections and a research agenda, Elsevier. 33: 68-76.
- Lee, C. K. and T. Taylor (2005). Critical reflections on the economic impact assessment of a mega-event: the case of 2002 FIFA World Cup, Elsevier. 26: 595-603.
- Mahyar Arefi (1999). Non-place and placelessness as narratives of loss: rethinking the notion of place, Journal of Urban Design, v.4 (2).
- Malfas, M., E. Theodoraki, et al. (2004). Impacts of the Olympic Games as mega-events, Thomas Telford. 157: 209-220.
- Manzenreiter, W. (2004). Japanese football and world sports: raising the global game in a local setting, Routledge. 16: 289-313.
- Matheson, V. A. and R. A. Baade (2004). Mega-sporting events in developing nations: playing the way to prosperity? Blackwell Synergy. 72: 1085-1096.
- Misener, L. and D. S. Mason (2006). Creating community networks: Can sporting events offer meaningful sources of social capital? Routledge. 11: 39-56.
- Min, Byung-Hoon and Hwang, Eui-Pyo (1996) Assignment of '88 Seoul Olympic as Cultural and Social Aspect: national event and architecture, Journal of Architecture Institute of Korea Kv.40 n.9.
- OECD (2007) Competitive Cities: A New Entrepreneurial Paradigm in Spatial Development. OECD Territorial Reviews.
- Paddison, R. (1993). City Marketing, Image Reconstruction and Urban Regeneration. Urban Studies, 30: 339-350.
- Richards, G. and J. Wilson (2004). The Impact of Cultural Events on City Image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001. 41: 1931.
- Robertson, R. (1995). Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity, Sage: 25-44.
- Roche, M. (2000a). Mega-events and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture, Routledge.
- Roche, M. (2000b). Rethinking Citizenship and Social Movements: Themes in Contemporary Sociology and Neoconservative Ideology, Blackwell Publishers.
- Roche, M. (2002a). "Olympic and Sport Mega-Events as Media-Events: Reflections on the Globalisation paradigm." The Global Nexus Engaged, Sixth International Symposium for Olympic Research: 1-12.
- Roche, M. (2002b). The Olympics and "Global Citizenship", Routledge, part of the Taylor & Francis Group. 6: 165-181.
- Roche, M. (2003). Mega-events, Time and Modernity: On Time Structures in Global Society. 12: 99.
- Roche, M. (2006a). Mega-events and modernity revisited: globalization and the case of the Olympics, Blackwell Synergy. 54: 25-40.

- Roche, M. (2006b). Nations, mega-events and international culture Olympics, *The SAGE handbook of nations and nationalism*. 260-272.
- Rowe, D., J. McKay, et al. (1998). *Come Together: Sport, Nationalism, and the Media Image*: 119-133.
- Rostow, W.W. 1964. *The Process of Economic Growth*. New York; Norton.
- Sassen, S. (1991). *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Scott, A. J. (2002). *Global city-regions: trends, theory, policy*, Oxford University Press.
- Seoul Development Institute (2000) *Sang-Am Millennium City Master Plan*.
- Short, J. R. and Y. H. Kim (1999). *Globalization and the City*, Prentice Hall.
- Smith, A. (2005). *Conceptualizing City Image Change: The 'Re-Imaging' of Barcelona*, Routledge. 7: 398-423.
- Smith, M.P. (2000). *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Sohn, Jeong-Mok (2003) *The history of seoul city planning*, Hanwoul.
- Swyngedouw, E. (1997). *Neither global nor local: 'glocalization' and the politics of scale*, New York: Guilford Press: 137-166.
- Ward, S. V. (1998). *Selling places*, E & FN Spon.
- Waters, Malcolm (1995). *Globalization*, London: Routledge.
- <http://www.citymayors>
- <http://www.citypopulation.de/world/Agglomerations.html>
- <http://www.nso.go.kr>