

From Frozen Ponds to Organized Competitions: The Growth of Skating and Ice Hockey in Korea, 1886–1938

Kyoungho Park

Jeju National University

Karam Lee

Gyeongsang National University

The encounter of American Protestant evangelicalism and Japanese imperialism formed in Korean society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries became a steppingstone for the acceptance of modern winter sports in Korea. In particular, skates introduced by American Protestant missionaries and the Young Men's Christian Association formed an imaginary space to counter Japanese imperialism in Korea during Japanese colonial era. Ice hockey introduced along with skating is a representative product that evolved in this process. The history of the introduction of American ice hockey to Korea also had a dual imperial influence between the United States and Japan, and in another direction, there was a voluntary acceptance process by Koreans who recognized ice hockey as a modern product.

Keywords: Korean ice hockey, American Protestant missionaries, Young Men's Christian Association, Japanese Colonialism

On February 10, 2018, a unified women's ice hockey team from South and North Korea, Team Korea, marked a historic milestone by participating in the 2018 Olympic Winter Games. This event was recognized as a significant moment, for although the teams had previously joined forces in various competitions, they had never participated together in the Olympic Winter Games. As the Olympics were intended to promote peace, the media, both in Korea and abroad, focused their attention on the team. The spectators who gathered in large numbers at the Kanto Hockey Center did not want to miss this historic moment. However, several people were turned away, as the tickets were sold out.¹ Team Korea, unfortunately, gave a disastrous performance of "all games all losses" at the PyeongChang Olympics. Team Korea's participation in the Olympic Games was also ridden with problems such as internal conflicts between players caused by heterogeneous athletic environments and the involvement of political objectives in the sporting event.² However, when Team Korea scored its first goal at the Olympics, it wrote a new history of sharing ethnic homogeneity through sports.

Park is with Jeju National University, Jeju, Korea. Lee is with the Department of Physical Education, Gyeongsang National University, Jinju, Korea.

Lee (leegang3889@gnu.ac.kr) is corresponding author.

Interestingly, among several winter sports events, ice hockey was selected as Team Korea's event because of the similar levels of performance between the two Korean teams and the possibility for many players to participate.³ More importantly, Korea had a history of joint ice hockey teams before the division of the Korean Peninsula in 1948. The North American game of ice hockey had been introduced into Korean society before the Korean War and had become a leisure winter activity. After the division, it continued to be a winter team sport in both South and North Korea. However, the question remains as to when, by whom, and under what context ice hockey was introduced into Korean society. Little scholarly attention has been paid to the history of winter sports in the context of the acceptance of modern sports in South Korea. Sport history scholarship focusing on the introduction of modern sports in Korea, which began simultaneously with the opening of ports in the late nineteenth century, has mainly focused on popular sports such as baseball, soccer, basketball, and volleyball, largely neglecting winter sports. Although there have been some studies of the history of winter sports in Korea, they are limited to fragmentary interpretations owing to a lack of historical materials, in particular there has been no historical review of the origin of ice hockey in Korea.⁴

In the late nineteenth century, as Korea became an arena of competition for the imperialist powers surrounding East Asia, modern sports began to flourish. For example, baseball, which became a popular sport in Korea, was introduced during the Korean Enlightenment period under the dual influence of the United States and Japan by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and missionaries from the United States. It was also used as a tool in Japan's colonial assimilation policy during the early twentieth century.⁵ Given that ice hockey is part of the North American sports culture, its introduction was a product of Korea's unique political situation. Through this research, we review the evolution of Winter Games and the introduction of ice hockey in Korea from a historical perspective that considers the diverse and complex history of the acceptance of modern sports in Korea to determine how ice hockey was introduced and spread in Korean society. To do this, we reviewed documents on missionaries' actions during this period, YMCA annual reports, and newspaper articles related to ice hockey. The Enlightenment Era, during which missionaries were active, was closely aligned with the emergence of modern sports in Korea. Therefore, there is a correlation between the activities of missionaries to propagate modern civilization in Korean society and the introduction of modern winter sports in Korea. Given this, we also examined, *The Korean Repository* and *Korea Mission Field* magazines, which provided information about Korean history, culture, and contemporary conditions to inform late nineteenth-century missionaries about Korea's situation. The primary sources also included the newspapers, *Dong-a Ilbo* and *The Chosun Ilbo*, which held the largest readership nationwide during the Japanese colonial period and contributed significantly to the development of various modern sports, including winter sports. The development of sports competitions during the Japanese colonial period was greatly facilitated by the sponsorship and support, coverage, and promotion of various newspapers including *Dong-a Ilbo*. During this period, sports events and newspapers were inseparable, as continuous organization of events that could attract public interest played a crucial role in expanding the readership of newspapers and increasing the visibility of newspaper companies, inherent to the nature

of the media being able to attract the attention of the masses.⁶ Through an analysis of these sources, we aim to understand the introduction of modern Western winter leisure activities in Korea during the Enlightenment period and then examine the development trends of ice hockey in the colonial context of Japanese rule.

Historical Background: The Acceptance of Western Modern Sports in Korea

British journalist and author Peter Hopkirk called the political, diplomatic, and military imperialist struggles in Asia in the nineteenth-century “The Great Game.”⁷ Although Korea was not a major participant in this game, it was not outside the major powers’ radar. The country of Korea was a strategic space where the great powers trying to move south into East Asia and Japan’s ambition to advance into Central Asia collided directly and indirectly. In this process, starting with the Treaty of Ganghwa with Japan in 1876, Korea entered coercive treaties with various powers, opened its doors, and became a space that directly triggered the Sino–Japanese and the Russo–Japanese Wars,⁸ battles between empires to secure control over the country. In the late nineteenth century, Korea became a geopolitical hot spot where the ambitions of the empires collided in struggles for the coercive opening of the ports and country.

The opening of ports and the Sino–Japanese War served as an opportunity for Korea to accept modern civilization from the West. However, Western culture was not quickly absorbed by Korean society because, starting with the opening of the ports, there was a conflict within Korean society between the Conservative group, which sought to maintain the existing order, and the Enlightenment group, which aimed for modernity. However, the contemporary Korean social atmosphere gradually began to accommodate the demands of the Enlightenment group. This shift was partly influenced by Korea’s experience of the Sino–Japanese War when the mighty Qing Dynasty was unexpectedly defeated by Japan, a smaller nation. This event led Koreans to understand that Japan’s victory was a consequence of its rapid embrace of Western modernization.⁹ Consequently, the belief took hold that Korean society must embrace modernization and attain self-reliance to guard against potential threats from Japan.

At this juncture, Christian missionaries responded to the national demands of Korean society. Unlike many Asian and African countries, Korea at that time was not directly ruled by a Christian-majority country, but rather by Japan. In Korean society, dominated by Japanese imperialism, the church was the hidden savior of the people.¹⁰ In the late nineteenth century, many Koreans realized that the most crucial endeavor in preparing for Japan’s potential aggression was to embrace modern civilization, which laid the foundation for national strength. This led to a collaboration with the Christian community, which at the time was propagating the Gospel through the avenues of modern civilization and education. This was how Korea’s bond with American Christianity eventually solidified. This process also resulted in the practical civilizational benefits of medical and educational missionary work introduced by American missionaries. For example, missionary Horace N. Allen (1858–1932) played a decisive role in helping American Christianity win

the trust of Koreans by treating a relative of the royal family who was seriously injured in the Gapsin Coup (1884).¹¹

Thus, American missionaries became a conduit for modern civilization. They were key players in the introduction of modern sports to Korea. Indeed, the history of the acceptance of modern sports in Korea shows that most modern sports were introduced to Korean society by the American YMCA and missionaries. The American YMCA was the first of its kind established in Korea in 1903; it was a key organization that introduced and spread modern sports such as baseball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball through the physical education work for which Philip L. Gillett, the first secretary, was responsible.¹² In addition, several American missionaries introduced various modern sports in the process of spreading the Gospel. For example, William M. Junkin (1865–1908), who came to Korea in 1892, first introduced soccer at the Pyongyang Theological Seminary, and in 1902, introduced baseball at the Yeongmyeong School in Gunsan.¹³ American missionary Henry M. Bruen (1874–1959), who arrived in Korea in 1899, brought baseball equipment to Daegu as part of his efforts to preach the Gospel and teach his students.¹⁴ The modern sports introduced by the YMCA and its missionaries spread rapidly as the Enlightenment Group and contemporary youths realized that modern sports were an important means of national self-improvement. Thus, they were adopted in school curricula, sports events, and YMCA sports projects and took root in Korean society in earnest.¹⁵

The political context of the Japanese colonial period profoundly influenced the introduction of modern sports in Korea. Japan's shift from a policy of military rule to cultural governance following the March 1st Movement marked a decisive turning point.¹⁶ During the period of cultural governance, Japan implemented a policy of colonial assimilation through modern sports culture, which proved to be a double-edged sword: Japan embraced modern sports culture for the political purpose of making Koreans forget the colonial status quo, while allowing for limited spaces of physical autonomy for Koreans. Consequently, systematic sports activities were organized with the establishment of the Korean Sports Association, and various modern sports competitions gained momentum in Korea.¹⁷ When Korea started winning against Japan in sports competitions, such victories were celebrated as national ones; consequently, modern sports rapidly integrated into Korean society.

Frozen Ponds and Skating Parties: The Introduction of Ice Skating in Korea

To trace the birth of ice hockey in Korea, it is necessary to understand the origins of skating in the country with the opening of ports in the late nineteenth century, which precipitated modern winter leisure activities in Korea. The birth of ice hockey resulted from the introduction of its necessary precondition, skill in ice skating. It was Americans who introduced skating to Korea. At the center of this effort was Horace N. Allen, from Delaware, Ohio, who was an 1883 Miami Medical College graduate interested in medical missionary work, which he began in Korea in 1884.¹⁸ In 1897, he was appointed U.S. ambassador to Korea, in which position he continued practicing the medical Gospel and introduced

various elements of modern civilization to Korea.¹⁹ The origin of skating in Korea can be understood in conjunction with Allen's activities. On December 1, 1886, he sent a letter to the Mackenzie Company in Shanghai, asking them to manufacture skates that fit him and his wife.²⁰ In addition, Allen's letter to his sons in the United States in 1900 demonstrated Allen's passion for skating during his time in Korea:

I was skating again last evening, and my ankles are now becoming strong enough to enjoy it. I have a very good pair of skates that I got from Mr. Wakefield. The ice was very fine and the day was not too cold.²¹

Although Allen did not come to Korea specifically to introduce skating to the country, the sport was nonetheless introduced to Korea through his efforts, as it was a winter leisure activity he enjoyed in his home country.

There are also records of skating parties that were held in palaces in Korea in the late nineteenth century. An article published in the February 1895 issue of *The Korean Repository*, an English monthly magazine founded by an American missionary in Korea in 1892, stated:

The skating parties at the palace on January 17 and 21 were largely attended by foreign residents of the Capital. The ice on the pond was in good condition and the feeling was general that hearty thanks were due to Their Majesties for the gracious invitation. The summer-house on the island was warmed and a light collation was served.²²

The above confirms that the king and the queen hosted a skating party for foreign residents in the Hyangwonjeong Pavilion in Gyeongbok Palace in Seoul. The pond in the pavilion became a great outdoor skating rink, and Emperor Gojong told an American medical missionary, Dr. Oliver R. Avison,²³ that he wanted to skate.²⁴ Emperor Gojong and Queen Min arranged the skating party as an opportunity to communicate briefly with the outside world outside the view of the Japanese, who had been visibly hostile.²⁵ In other words, the Korean royal family, which under the influence of China and Japan, had failed to embrace modernization, used the skating rink as an intermediary space to strengthen its network with the United States and Europe.

In the early 1900s, American missionaries in Korea enjoyed skating as a leisure activity. In the *Korean Mission Field*, an English monthly magazine published by U.S. missionaries in Korea, an article relates how Dr. Oliver R. Avison enjoyed skating on a frozen rice paddy with his sons. Contemporary Koreans observed these scenes with interest and admiration.²⁶ They referred to skating as "Bing Jok-Hee (playing with ice shoes)."²⁷ In the eyes of Koreans, who were new to skating, the game was a modern cultural institution that involved wearing shoes on ice. Thus, Korean winter games originated in American missionaries' leisure activities. They brought ice skating to Korea as a winter pastime, which led to Koreans' curiosity about modern winter games.

Dong-soon Hyun was the first Korean to demonstrate this interest by skating himself. In 1905, he bought skates from the YMCA manager Philip L. Gillett. At the time, Koreans did not buy skates because they were not aware of how to use them. Hyun bought a pair made of metal simply out of curiosity.²⁸

He bought them but did not know how to use them. He then went to visit Philip L Gillett the missionary, and only then did he know that it was “skates” that slid on the ice. There is an anecdote that Mr. Hyun tried to skate on ice several times in Gucheon, Samcheong-dong, near his house at the time, but did not move forward, but did eventually succeed after much effort. This was the beginning of the Korean people putting skates on their shoes and sliding on the ice.²⁹

Dong-soon Hyun was curious and active. He not only bought new cultural objects, but also made efforts to learn how to use them. Moreover, Gillett, called the “father of modern sports in Korea,” greatly influenced the introduction and development of various modern sports in Korea in his capacity as the first secretary of the YMCA. As a devout Christian, he instilled the image of a strong man among Koreans through sports.³⁰ Importantly, not only did Gillett bring skates to Korea, but he also taught Hyun baseball, after which he became a pitcher for the YMCA baseball team.³¹ At that time, when he was a member of the YMCA, he was captivated by the new era of modern sports after meeting Secretary Gillett. He displayed interest in the skates that Gillett had brought, and eventually embraced the sport of skating. Hyun was the first recorded Korean to skate.³²

Hyun’s skating experience did not end as a simple hobby. He was a member of the YMCA Physical Department and represented a sports club at that time. It is highly likely that other YMCA members, imbued with the open nature of Western sports, participated in skating under Hyun’s influence. This speculation is supported by historical records of the YMCA in Korea producing skates at the time. For example, in 1913, the Industrial Department of the YMCA in Korea produced sharpened sheets.³³ In addition, the YMCA’s 1925 annual report recorded the participation of its members in skating.³⁴ This shows that the YMCA functioned as an educational institution and a channel for the spread of skating in Korea.

Around the same time, skating was also introduced into Korean schools. In the early twentieth century, skates were imported directly from the United States for practice at Hanseong High School and Whimoon Uisuk in Seoul. In addition, a modern intellectual, Chi-ho Yun, brought skates to Korea from the United States in 1916 and enjoyed skating on frozen rice fields in Cheongnyangni. This is why an increasing number of Korean skaters began to visit natural ice fields such as Changgyeongwon, Gyeonghoeru, and the Han River in winter.³⁵ Thus, skating in Korea spread from the Americans to Koreans in the early 1900s. At the center of this process were the YMCA, an American religious organization, various educational institutions, and the voluntary acceptance of Koreans who began to enjoy skating.

A Growing Fascination: Skating and Ice Hockey Competitions

Skating, which began as a leisure activity for Americans in Korea, gradually evolved into a winter sport throughout the country. From the 1920s, partly under Japanese influence, skating developed into a form of competition beyond leisure. After experiencing the March 1st Movement in 1919, Japan changed the form of its

colonial rule from unauthorized to cultural control. This transition contributed to the revitalization of modern sports in colonial Korea because Japan allowed sports for Koreans as part of its assimilation policy and permitted participation in sporting events as a way of blurring the political interests of its colonial subjects. For example, in 1920, the Joseon Sports Association, a Korean sports organization, was established and held various sports competitions. In this context, skating began to emerge as a competitive sport.³⁶

Skating competitions have been held in Korea since 1910, with Japan as the main rival. In February 1910, an ice sports event hosted by the Japanese newspaper *Chosun Nippon Newspaper* was held on the Han River, with a large number of Japanese officials attending the event and showing keen interest.³⁷ In addition, ice sports events were held for students, mainly in Japanese schools. For example, in 1918, a student ice sports meeting was held at Gyeong-Seong High School.³⁸ Speed skaters dominated this event. According to contemporary newspaper articles, the races involved passing a set distance, such as 100 m, 400 m, 800 m, 1,500 m, and 5,000 m, the fastest.³⁹ In the 1920s, Japanese and Korean sports organizations held national ice skating competitions, such as the Jeonjoseon Ice Skating Competition, and full-fledged skating competitions were promoted.⁴⁰ Japan allowed Korean subjects to participate in skating competitions they hosted.

In 1920, there was a rapid escalation of skating competitions between Korean and Japanese athletes. In a match between Korean and Japanese teams on the Han River in 1929, the Korean team emerged victorious. This event was considered a pivotal moment in Korean skating history, propelling the advancement of skating in Korea that in turn catalyzed the demand for diversified winter sports in the country.⁴¹ More broadly, this was the culmination of Korean society's growing fascination with ice activities from the late nineteenth century, which deepened as skating gained popularity and Koreans grew more accustomed to it. Thus, the first figure skating community was established in 1924. Comprising eight Korean men, this group embarked on the study of figure skating by sourcing foreign literature, which culminated in a demonstration of figure skating at the first All-Korea Skating Championships in 1925. In 1928, a friendly figure skating match took place between the Korean team and a visiting Japanese skating delegation.⁴² There was also a burgeoning interest of Korean youth in ice hockey, a team sport of this era.

The role of the founding figures in the history of modern sports in Korea is crucial. Koreans who experienced the new North American sports culture promoted the popularity of ice hockey in Korea. Yong-Gu Kim, called the father of Korean skating, was responsible for this. In 1925, he founded the Baekgu Gurakbu, Korea's first skating club. "The term 'Baekgu Gurakbu' is a combination of 'baek' meaning 'white' and 'gu' meaning 'dog,' with 'gurakbu' representing the Japanese pronunciation of the English word 'club.' 'Baekgu' symbolizes Koreans' tradition of wearing white clothing and their fervent desire for liberation during the Japanese occupation, akin to a white dog running freely."⁴³ He was a representative sportsman who also played an active role as a basketball player and track-and-field athlete.⁴⁴ He also contributed to the founding of the first Korean ice hockey team, the Yeonhee College men's ice hockey team, in 1931 by coach Yeong-Seong Kim and captain Yong-Gu Kim. Young-Seong Kim was the Korean name of Horace H. Underwood (1890–1951), son of Horace G. Underwood (1859–1916), the founder of Yeonhee College.⁴⁵

Thus, the establishment of Korea's first ice hockey team can be interpreted as the result of the leadership of the Korean skating pioneer Yong-Gu Kim, with the support of Underwood.

The establishment of an ice hockey team at Yeonhee College was an important driving force for the popularity of ice hockey in Korea (Figure 1). Yeonhee College first created an ice hockey rink and built infrastructure for ice hockey practices and competitions at that time.⁴⁶ The establishment of the men's ice hockey team at Yeonhee College marked a turning point for winter sports in Korean society. At the time, competitive activities in winter mainly revolved around speed skating. Ice hockey was a sport that required not only skates but also other equipment, which made it less accessible to the general public due to cost-related issues.⁴⁷ However, the pioneering efforts of Yeonhee College were a catalyst for spreading awareness of the unique advantages of team competition in winter sports, leading to its widespread acceptance, primarily among male universities. The foundation of the Yeonhee College team led to the creation of other school teams, such as Boseong College, as well as trips to Pyongyang, Manchuria, and Japan, among other places, adding to the spread and increased popularity of ice hockey. In particular, the ice hockey team of Yeonhee College, composed of Koreans, played a national match against the Japanese team residing in Korea at the time, raising national interest in ice hockey.⁴⁸ The Yonhee Professional Ice Hockey Team improved quickly after its establishment, and in 1932, it displayed a performance equal to that of Japanese teams. Later, in 1936, at the Joseon Skating Federation held at the Yongsan Railway Link, they beat the Japanese team of Gyeongseong Imperial University and won the championship,⁴⁹ earning the Yonhee Professional Ice Hockey Team the right to participate in the seventh All-Japan Ice Skating Championship in Japan. However, the team was eliminated in the preliminary rounds of the competition.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, it showed remarkable growth compared with the founding period.

The basis for the development of ice hockey in Korea during the Japanese colonial era was the National Sports Festival, which allowed colonial subjects to



Figure 1 — Korea's first ice hockey team, Yeonhui Professional. Source: Korean Sport and Olympic Committee, *Daehanminkuk cheyuk 90nyeon [90th year of sport in Korea]* (Seoul: Korean Sport and Olympic Committee, 2010).

participate. In 1925, Japan held the Joseon Shrine Tournament to reproduce “Joseon” as an exemplary member of the empire. The Joseon Shrine Tournament was a Joseon preliminary match for the Meiji Shrine Tournament held by the Japanese imperial family for national unity through sports. At the time, this competition served as a platform for Korean athletes to battle against the colonial authority without actual conflict and was the sole avenue through which colonized Koreans could temporarily triumph over Imperial Japan. In 1933, the name of the event was changed to Joseon Shrine Bongchan Festival.⁵¹ In 1938, the ice hockey team at Yeonhee College participated in this competition. Importantly, they defeated the Japanese teams in this competition and won the championship.⁵² The colonized Koreans could thus confirm their national identity by confronting Japan in baseball, basketball, cycling, and other athletic activities.⁵³ At the same time, they competed against Imperial Japan through ice hockey, promoting the growth of Korean ice hockey. Subsequently, however, the Korean Ice Hockey League, including the ice hockey team at Yeonhee College, was suspended; owing to the Sino–Japanese War in 1937 and the Pacific War in 1941, Japan stopped sporting events in colonial Korea.⁵⁴

Thus, Japan’s cultural rule in the 1920s turned skating into an active competitive activity for the colonized Koreans to defeat Japan. As ice hockey is a team sport, it was a game with conditions favorable for sublimation into a confrontation between ethnic groups. In this context, ice hockey was primarily a men’s sport during the Japanese colonial era; it was only in 1998 that the first Korean women’s ice hockey team was established. The Japanese colonial period was the cradle of Korean ice hockey, which functioned as an exclusive winter sport for male Korean university students to engage in national competitions against Japan.⁵⁵ Moreover, the Yeonhee Professional Ice Hockey Team, the first Korean ice hockey team born in this historical context, played an important role in expanding the base and popularization of Korean ice hockey during the Japanese colonial period.

Ice Hockey in Korea During the Japanese Colonial Era

Most modern Korean sports were introduced and promoted during the arduous ordeal of modern Korean history from the late nineteenth century to the Japanese colonial period. The characteristics of sports, including physical excellence and strength, evolved as they manifested the popular will of colonial Korea to overcome invasion and colonial rule by great powers. Japan’s victory in the Sino–Japanese War served as a decisive opportunity for Korea to experience modernization in the late nineteenth century. Owing to the beginning of actual oppression by Japan, a perception arose in Korean society that modern sports had to be accepted for self-improvement. Contact with Americans was the primary springboard for this. The introduction of modern American sports culture into Korean society took place through two channels. The first was an unintentional funnel, in that modern sports were introduced as a leisure activity by and for American missionaries. The other was the use of modern sports as a means of spreading the Gospel. Modern American sports, including winter sports, were used as educational programs by the YMCA and mission schools. American missionaries and the YMCA brought skating, which they enjoyed, to Korea from the

United States; skating spread throughout Korea with the dissemination of the messages of the Gospel.

The era of Japanese colonial rule—a tumultuous phase in Korean history—acted as a catalyst for the proliferation of modern sports. This phenomenon stemmed from the introduction of modern sports by Americans, creating a platform for physical confrontation with Imperial Japan. The art of skating, imparted by American missionaries, additionally presented an opportunity to showcase the supremacy of Koreans. Through this intricate process, the Yeonhee Men’s Ice Hockey Team was established in 1931 with the proactive support of the noted American figure Underwood and under the visionary leadership of the Korean skating trailblazer Kim Yong-gu. From its inception, the Yeonhee Men’s Ice Hockey Team clinched numerous victories, triumphing not only in domestic competitions but also asserting dominance over Japanese teams in diverse ice hockey tournaments held in Japan. This exceptional feat elevated the team to emblematic status, symbolizing Korea’s resilience against Japan’s colonial dominance. The team’s ice hockey matches provided the general population with a momentary respite from the indignation of colonial rule. Consequently, this achievement was a pivotal cornerstone in the incorporation of ice hockey into Korean society during the Japanese colonial era.

Young-Han Cho explained the colonization and modernization of East Asia under the simultaneous influence of the Japanese empire and the United States through the framework of “double binding,” a term used to explain the uniqueness of Japanese imperialism and anti-colonial consciousness in areas that simultaneously experienced the empires of Japan and the United States. Cho used this concept to describe the history of Korea, which resisted the Japanese Empire under Japan’s direct rule while adopting modernity from the United States. Baseball is a prominent example of this.⁵⁶ The acceptance of modern winter sports in Korea also needs to be examined from this point of view and beyond a linear interpretation. Beneath the history of Korean ice hockey lies a story of growth spurred as a response to the Japanese empire in team competition within the backdrop of modern leisure introduced by Americans. In other words, ice hockey should not be perceived as unilaterally introduced to Korea by Americans as a cultural diffusion phenomenon. The process involved simultaneous political influence from the United States and Japan, as well as proactive responses from Koreans. The introduction of North American ice hockey to Korea was influenced by the dual imperialism of the United States and Japan; concurrently, Koreans accepted and recognized ice hockey as a modern product. As such, ice hockey in Korea, which was born as a leisure activity of Americans in Korea in the late nineteenth century, is a modern product of the Japanese colonial era that spread in earnest in Korean society due to its voluntary acceptance by Koreans who recognized it as a means of confronting Japan in the form of a team sport.

Sports culture has a history of continuous evolution and expansion. Just as skating, a winter sport in the West, was introduced to Korea as a modern leisure sport that evolved into a medium to form the national identity of colonized Korea, so sports will continue to globalize in response to the changing environment and social relationships. A representative example is ice hockey at the 2018 Pyeong-Chang Olympics, which served as a basis for strengthening the national identity of the divided motherland.

Notes

1. "A Month-long Journey," *Seoul Economic Daily*, February 20, 2018; "The Hankyoreh Unification Award for the 'Ice Hockey Korea Team' that Heated up PyeongChang," *Hankyoreh*, July 19, 2018.
2. "Concerns over Politicization of a Unified Team," *Maeil Business News*, January 22, 2018.
3. "Unified Women's Ice Hockey Team," *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 20, 2018; "The Two Faces of the Peace Olympics," *Yonsei University Sports Magazine*, March 2018 v. 41; "The Effect of a Single Inter-Korean team," *Kyunghyang Newspaper*, February 6, 2018.
4. Rae-Hwan Park, "A Study on the History of Korea Skating Development" (PhD diss., Dong-a University, 2012): 97–99; Dae-Jung Yun, "Development and Prospects of the Winter Sports Korea," *The Korean Journal of History for Physical Education, Sport, and Dance* 20, no. 2 (2015): 55–66.
5. Joseph A. Reaves, *Taking In a Game: A History of Baseball in Asia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002): 113–137; Jae-Woo Kim, *Seoul YMCA Cheyuk Undong 100 Nyeonsa [The 100-year sports history of the Seoul YMCA]* (Seoul: Sangrok Munwha, 2009), 39–62; Young-Han Cho, "Double Binding of Japanese Colonialism: Trajectories of Baseball in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea," *Cultural Studies* 30, no. 6 (2016): 926–948; Ka-Ram Lee and Jae-Pil Ha, "The Evolution and Symbolism of American Football in Korea," *Sport History Review* 48, no. 1 (2017): 75–90; Moongi Cho, "Toward Sport for all: Jang Gwon and Sport Promotion by the Korean YMCA in the Japanese Occupation Era," *Sport History Review* 48, no. 1 (2017): 91–105; Seungho Woo, Hwan Son, and Ka-Ram Lee, "Zainichi Koreans Invited to Home Base: Building Ethnic Identity and Its Impact on the Development of Korean Baseball (1956–70)," *Sport History Review* 51, no. 2 (2020): 186–199; Ka-Ram Lee and Gwang Ok, "The Early Cultural Evolution of Baseball in Korea (1876–1945): Unilateral Product of Cultural Imperialism or Multilateral Process?" *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 39, no. 6 (2022): 653–670.
6. Sung-Eun Kim and Mi-Hea Cho, "The Winter Sports Events through the Skating Championships: The Content Analysis of Dong-a Ilbo from 1920 to 1940," *Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research* 26, no. 9 (2014): 469–490.
7. Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia* (London: John Murray, 1990): 123–134.
8. The Sino-Japanese War was a war initiated by Japan in the name of the independence of Joseon from the Qing Dynasty, and the Russo-Japanese War was an armed confrontation between Russia and Japan over Korea and Manchuria. It is important to note that the two wars started on Korean soil. Young-Hee Suh, "The Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War: A Perspective of Korean Studies on International War Occurred in the Korean Peninsula," *Military History* 100 (2016): 119–145.
9. Sakai Hiromi, "Sino-Japanese War and Korea in the History Education of Japan," *Journal of Korean Independence Movement Studies* 50 (2015): 243–278; Tae-Hwan Kim, "The Geopolitical Origin of the First Sino-Japanese War through Change of Power in East Asia," *China Area Studies Association of Korea* 8, no. 4 (2021): 139–166.
10. Sang-gyu Lee, "Korean Christianity, Nation, and Nationalism," *Journal of Reformation* 49 (2019): 9–33.
11. Kyung-bae Min, *Allen's Missionary Work and Modern Korea-US Diplomacy* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1991): 107–118; Nak-jun Baek, *Korean Protestant History, 1832–1910* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1995): 105–113.
12. Ka-Ram Lee, "The Influence of Philip L. Gillett on the Development of Korea's Modern Sports," *The Korean Journal of History for Physical Education, Sport, and Dance* 19, no. 2. (2014): 107–111.
13. Gook-Joo Yang, "Missionaries Who Passed on Western Sports," *Monthly Chosun*, June 6, 2015.

14. Man-Yeol Lee, *40 Years in Korea Henry Munro Bruen* (Seoul: Research Institute of Christian History in Korea, 1998), 25–46.
15. Nam-Gil Ha, *Cheyuksa Shinnon* [New theory on sports history] (Jinju: Gyeongsang University, 2010), 654–657.
16. The March 1st Movement refers to Korea's nonviolent resistance movement against Japan's oppressive colonial rule on March 1st, 1919; Wells, Kenneth M. "Background to the March First Movement: Koreans in Japan, 1905–1919." *Korean Studies* 13, no. 1 (1989): 5–21.
17. Hwan Son, "A Study on Establishment and Activity of Joseon Sports Association," *The Korean Journal of Physical Education* 47, no. 3 (2008): 1–13.
18. Hyoung-Woo Park, "The Backgrounds of Horace N. Allen's Application for Medical Missionary to China and Transfer to Korea," *Christianity and History in Korea* 40 (2014): 194–201.
19. Yeong-Mi Lee, "From Missionary to Diplomat: Horace N. Allen's (1858–1932) Life and Korea," *The Journal of Korean Historical Folklife* 58 (2020): 243.
20. The Academy of Korean Studies, "Allen's Document DB," <http://waks.aks.ac.kr/rsh/?rshID=AKS-2016-KFR-1230009> (accessed January 5, 2023).
21. Ibid.
22. *The Korean Repository*, February 1895, 78.
23. Avison entered Korea in 1893 for medical missionary work and played a very important role in the beginning of modern medicine in Korea. Sun-Ho Lee and Hyoung-Woo, "A Research on Oliver R. Avison's Apply for Medical Missionary and the Process of Coming to Korea," *History & Boundaries* 84 (2012): 147–170.
24. Sang-Eun Lee, Jong-Eun Lee, and Yeong-Mi Na, *100 Year History of Figure Skating in Korea* (Seoul: Miraesa, 2012), 36.
25. *Dong-a Ilbo*, February 1, 2014.
26. J.W. Hurst, "Christmas at the Hospital," *Korean Mission Field* 2, no. 4 (1906): 61–62.
27. Bing Jok Hee, *The Chosun Ilbo*, February 17, 1987.
28. *Dong-a Ilbo*, February 1, 1929; "Festival of the Ice: The 54th National Winter Ice Skating Competition," *Chosun Ilbo*, January 14, 1973. <https://newslibrary.naver.com/viewer/index.naver?articleId=1973011400239103001&editNo=1&printCount=1&publishDate=1973-01-14&officeId=00023&pageNo=3&printNo=15929&publishType=00010>
29. *Dong-a Ilbo*, February 1, 1929.
30. Lee, "The Influence of Philip L. Gillett on the Development of Korea's Modern Sports," 101.
31. *Dong-a Ilbo*, April 2, 1930.
32. *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 1, 1929.
33. Annual Report of Lloyd H. Snyder, For the Year Ending September 30th, 1913. Seoul, Chosen, 2.
34. Annual Report for the Year 1925. W.L. Nash, Seoul, Korea, 11.
35. "Skating," *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 30, 1972. <https://newslibrary.naver.com/viewer/index.naver?articleId=1972013000239103001&editNo=1&printCount=1&publishDate=1972-01-30&officeId=00023&pageNo=3&printNo=15633&publishType=00010>
36. Hwan Son, "A Study on Establishment and Activity of Joseon Sports Association," *The Korean Journal of Physical Education* 47, no. 3 (2008): 1–13.
37. Kim, *Seoul YMCA Sport Movement 100 year*, 66–67.
38. *Mae-il-sin-bo*, February 16, 1918.
39. *Si-dae-il-bo*, January 7, 1925.
40. *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 14, 1924; *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 4, 1924; *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 17, 1928.
41. *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 1, 1930.
42. Rae-Hwan Park, "A Study on the History of Korea Skating Development" (PhD diss., Dong-a University, 2012), 16–17.

43. *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 14, 1978; “Silver-haired skaters: gliding through ice of time,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 24, 2005.
44. *Dong-a Ilbo*, November 28, 1927; *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 16, 1928; *The Chosun Ilbo*, October 2, 1928.
45. “Yeonjeon Hockey, Who Played an Active Part in the Comet Gatti League, to Pyongyang,” *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 28, 1932.
46. “Yeonjeon Ice Hockey,” *Donga Ilbo*, December 24, 1931.
47. Lee, Lee, and Na, *100-Year History*, 76; Sung-Eun Kim and Mi-Hea Cho, “The Winter Sports Events through the Skating Championships: The Content Analysis of Dong-a Ilbo from 1920 to 1940,” *Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research* 26, no. 9 (2014): 483.
48. “Yonjeon Ice Hockey Expedition to Pyongyang,” *Dong-a Ilbo*, February 3, 1933; “Yeonhee Hockey Team Expedition to Tokyo,” *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 19, 1936.
49. “Yeonjeon Hockey Wins,” *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 17, 1936.
50. *Dong-a Ilbo*, January 25, 1936.
51. Hae-Nam Park, “Sport, the Field of ‘Representation Competition’ Between the Empire and the Colonized: Focused on the Chosen Shrine Athletic Meeting and Meiji Shrine Meeting,” *Institute of Japanese Studies* 26, no. 5 (2015): 111–131.
52. *The Chosun Ilbo*, January 12, 1938.
53. Hak-rae Lee, *History of Korean Physical Education* (Seoul: Jisik Sanup Publications, 1994): 188–202.
54. Ha, *Cheyuksa Shinnon*, 659–660.
55. Hak-Jun Lee, “I Am National Team Player: The Reality and Development Direction of South Korea Women’s Ice Hockey,” *Journal of Korean Society for Sport Anthropology* 8, no. 2 (2013): 45–64.
56. Cho, “Double Binding,” 926–948.