2 Strategies for locating professional sports leagues

A comparison between France and Korea

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Introduction

When the hosts of the 2002 Football World Cup Finals were announced, it was a double surprise: first, because two countries (Japan and South Korea) were chosen to co-organise the event and, second, because these countries had not traditionally been considered as homes to football. As occurred in 1994 in the United States, the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA) implemented a world-wide development strategy by assigning its major event to two countries with strong economic potential but weak football cultures. The shift from the 1998 World Cup organiser, France, to Korea in 2002 provided an opportunity to examine a major transformation in the structure of collective sports that has been underway for the past 20 years. In an increasingly deregulated world, the companies that produce spectator sports championships are being concentrated and privatised under the pressures of strong market growth. This movement toward globalisation has been the impetus for new location strategies that affect all the various parties involved in sports: private and public investors, governing bodies, public authorities (local and national), the general public – and the leagues themselves.

This chapter compares the location strategies of the French and Korean professional football leagues from a dual perspective, that of geography and that of management. The characteristics of each country's entertainment sports industry are highlighted and used to shed light on a social evolution that is under way, since the implications of global transformation in sports certainly exceed football. The investigation of developments in spectator sports in fact seems to be a valid means to gain insight into wider society and civilisation. After presenting the two major models of professional league organisation (the North American and European systems), we will examine the Korean and French situations in detail to distinguish both similarities and differences. We will then look at the significance of space within these structures by analysing team location from a dynamic point of view. Finally, we will emphasise the importance of the spatial strategies underlying these systems, as well as the effects concomitant with both countries being involved in the organisation of World Cup Finals.

League function

The organisation of a championship between professional sports teams presupposes a group of clubs, called a 'league', that agree to compete. In addition to this athletic engagement, the clubs, acting also as commercial enterprises, compete in the economic market, both upstream (recruitment of players) and downstream (sales of stadium tickets, negotiations for broadcasting rights and retransmission, partnership contracts with sponsors and the search for funding from local communities). Thus, when sports entertainment companies take part in a championship, they are confronted with a dual obligation to collaborate and compete, sometimes with contradictory aspects.

First, clubs are compelled in principle to compete economically. Although physical distance reduces the intensity of competition for customers whose catchment area in the market place is limited (stadium spectators, local sponsors and local communities), the clubs generally find that potential purchasers are confronted with multiple offers (broadcasting rights and national sponsors). Very naturally, this competition results in two main tendencies observed in the majority of sports: a tendency toward concentration and/or the temptation for active parties to create agreements.

Second, the intensity of sports competition and its uncertain outcome are also factors that determine the level of public interest – and thus the club resources. When one team overwhelmingly dominates the sport, there is a drop in revenues, including those of the most powerful club. Thus, the quality of the show in terms of power to entertain and dramatic intensity is a key factor of success and presupposes clear agreements between teams on the rules and their application, as well on league organisation – fixture schedule, formula and rules (Cairns *et al.* 1986; Fort and Quirk 1995; Neale 1964; Primault and Rouget 1996; Szymanski and Kuypers 1999). The simultaneous competition and collaboration that is called for in both the athletic and economic realms of spectator sports has resulted in special terms of regulation and exemptions from certain principles of competition in liberal economies. This is often referred to as 'sporting exception', and it has been effective in the United States for buying and selling players since the 1920s and for the negotiation of television rights since 1960 (Cairns *et al.* 1986; Quirk and Fort 1991; Scully 1995). This derogation of common law is currently being sought in Europe by the governing bodies of the major collective sports (Bourg and Gouguet 1998; Durand 2000; Husting 1998; Kesenne 1996).

Two models of professional league organisation

Club locations and strategies for organising championships have varied appreciably across times and countries. However, two major types of structuring process have generally been agreed upon. The first is primarily observed in Europe and South America and consists of holding championships based purely on athletic criteria. Access to competition (national or continental) is only possible through a system of promotion/relegation based on the rank achieved in the preceding season. In

the majority of cases, a team is necessarily attached to its city by means of a registered number allotted by the national federation. A club thus cannot change its city without authorisation from its federation. European clubs, for example, are often located in specific cities because of the historical presence of the club's original backer, whether that be a local government or an industrial enterprise. This marked presence of strong federations has led to their monopoly of both the sport and its territory: only one national federation in each country and one confederation per continent. This structure is capped by a single international federation, the 'owner' of the sport in charge of its exploitation (Bale 1989; Vamplew 1988).

The second model of league organisation dominates in the United States and in most countries with a liberal culture outside the European continent. In this model, the leagues are closed and access to the championship is based on the agreement of members, who take into consideration more than just sports criteria. There are no monopolies, however: private operators are free to try to create new competition. The history of professional sports in North America in fact shows tremendous market discord during the 20th century. The pressure of potential new entries and constant monitoring by public authorities for illegal income barriers have tended, at least in theory, to maintain a steady pressure on the market players (Danielson 1997; Noll and Zimbalist 1997; Quirk and Fort 1999). This system of co-optation has led to the organisation of leagues that meet mainly economic and non-sporting criteria. There are two types of qualifying criteria. One is the operator's solvency, which is particularly significant. The operator must not only compensate the other network franchises, but also ensure its team's operation for a minimal length of time. The other criterion is the club's location, which must be good enough to ensure a sufficient client base to generate significant receipts. In many cases, the receipts are shared between the teams (for example, receipts from national broadcasting rights and merchandising and gate-money for visiting and home clubs). The clubs in place therefore will agree to a new qualifying member if this new partner is able to generate wealth for all league members.

Another major characteristic of the system is the geographical mobility of the teams. With the agreement of other franchises, any team can change its location. Since 1950, 47 teams in the four major American leagues have changed cities. Another major difference between the two models concerns national teams. The American model does not allow an 'American' team to participate in the major leagues. The participation of an American team in world championships or the Olympics is thus based on prior permission from each team member's employer, which is contrary to the European model where the best players are under strong pressure to join the national team. In fact, the annual fixture list under this model avoids overlap between certain inter-club and inter-country competitions.

The professional football leagues in France and Korea

The French and Korean football leagues thus follow different models: 'European' for the French league and 'North American' for the Korean league. However, as

for all typologies, there are some idiosyncrasies specific to each case. For maximal clarity, we will present the dominant strategies in the two countries through an analysis of three key aspects: the place of football in the French and Korean cultures, the respective league structures and the respective sources of financing.

Table 2.1 shows some of the similarities between the two countries. One can note, however, a relative weakness in the number of actual Korean players, and especially of those registered for training. Nevertheless, this base of regular players, although not constituting a sufficient number of customers, is a sign of strong 'goodwill' for the clubs. By assigning the World Cup to Japan and Korea, the FIFA signalled that one of its objectives was to develop football in this part of Asia and build demand. One can also note a strong popular attachment to the national team in Korea, which is unknown in the North American major leagues (Bayle and Durand 2000). This phenomenon was strongly amplified by the very good results of the Korean team in 2002.

Table 2.2 shows that some of the differences between the two countries are very marked. The respective relationship of each country to one of the pure models presented above is particularly strong, so the divergences between them are quite fundamental. It is interesting to note, however, that in the French case, the clubs evolved toward a legal type of private business corporation during the 1990s and thus moved toward the American model to some extent.

Table 2.3 shows that France essentially follows the European model and receives the bulk of its financing from public governing bodies, both directly (subsidies and purchase of services) and indirectly (building of stadiums) (Andreff 2000; Durand 1999; Hoehn and Szymanski 1999). In Korea, the public sphere has only slightly intervened up to now, although the 2002 World Cup provided the Korean taxpayer with the opportunity to discover the joys of public financing of sports arenas. As in the North American model, local communities now make up for private investment, and the *chaebols* (the principal club operators since the league origins) are still financing teams ... and their losses. Paradoxically, one thus observes a tendency toward privatisation in the French clubs and an increase of public intervention in Korean spectator sports. In both countries, however, professional sports are regarded as powerful elements of social cohesion, collective and national identity, in spite of their many commercial aspects.

France: club dispersion throughout the country

The criteria just examined are important for understanding each league's spatial organisation and its system of club location. The Korean league disperses its clubs primarily along the country's major spatial 'articulations', a phenomenon that appears less obvious in France because of historical factors and the impact of public intervention. But, paradoxically, both systems produce a similar spatial structure of professional football, either through a preoccupation with non-competition or by default. An analysis of the organisation of these two leagues over time and in space shows the two systems more clearly.

Table 2.1 Football's place in French and Korean society

	France	*Korea*
Football history	Introduced at the end of 19th century by English sailors National Association created in 1919	Introduced at the end of 19th century by English sailors National Association created in 1928
General practice	2,994,000 including 800,000 adults in training and more than 1 million players and as many children	520,000 including 2,157 adults in training and 14,000 children (sources: FIFA Big Count 2000)
Football status	Most popular sport practised Dominates all other spectator sports Large TV audience and huge popularity (national team and clubs)	Average in terms of practice Secondary spectator sport behind baseball and basketball Large audience for internationals, moderate spectator turn-out for domestic leagues
National team	World and European champions Strong attachment	One of the best Asian teams for many years Very strong attachment

Table 2.2 League structure in France and Korea

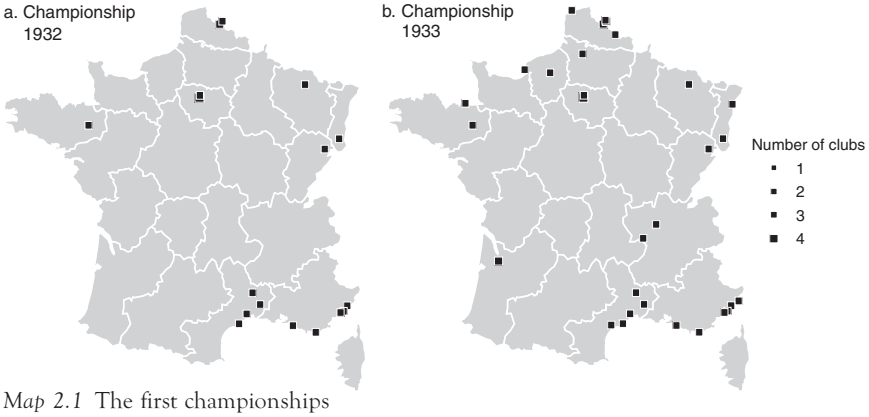
	France	*Korea*
League history	1932 Growth of team numbers from 1960 to 1990 Stabilised near 40 teams	1983 First professional football league in Asia Progressive growth from 3 to 12 teams
Sports structure	Championship with home and away games; League Cup (since 1993)	Regularly changes; multiple competitions
Championship access	Sports criteria (sometimes economic since 1991) Promotion/relegation system	Economic criteria; closed league Admission of new teams based on requests and needs
Legal structures	Private limited companies (since 1990s) Public companies and non-profit organisations (disappearing)	Private companies subsidiaries of large industrial groups Public enterprises (since 2000)
Governing bodies	National federation, legal monopoly delegated by the state 25 years ago National league managing championship	Private league Strong relations with National Federation (KFA) for management of national team and refereeing FIFA rules (but no drawn games before 2001)

Table 2.3 Sources of financing football in France and Korea

	France	*Korea*
Operators	Private (companies and individuals) and public	Major companies (*chaebols*): Hyundai (3 clubs), Samsung (1), LG (1), Ilhwa (1), Posco (2), SK (1)
	Since the 1990s, media groups and sports companies buy clubs located in large towns	Since the end of the 1990s, local authorities are more involved in the clubs
	Strong place for local government	
Sources of financing	TV rights (high growth)	Corporate sponsorship (advertising and PR)
	Corporate sponsorship (advertising and public relations)	TV rights (SBS, KBS)
	Gate receipts and merchandising (22,000 spectators/match in Division I, 8,000 in Division 2): growth	Gate receipts and merchandising (10,000 spectators/match): growth up to 2002, showing decrease in 2003
	Local government (arenas for financing, seats purchased)	Weak presence of public bodies (but 10 new stadiums financed by state funding for World Cup 2002)
Financial standing	Endemic loss, better controlled since 1990s	Endemic loss, but in 2000/2001 aggregate benefits (US$1 million)
	Strong public financing (local and national)	Crisis in Korean society in 1999 (Daewoo bankruptcy, etc.), gradual withdrawal of some major industrial groups

Creating a championship

The first professional football championship in France was held in 1932. It was created under pressure from several clubs that found amateur football to be both outmoded and riddled with hypocrisy. Team distribution was based on the sport's history and the urban and economic structure and thus concentrated on two zones: the industrial northeast and the Mediterranean frontage (Map 2.1). Many clubs, like FC Sochaux, became bound to companies attracted not only by the media coverage of sports, but also by the social animation that sports offer. These clubs were located in traditionally industrial areas: north of a line connecting Caen to Montbeliard. On the Mediterranean frontage, the clubs grew mainly in the major seaports, thanks to a long history of sports activity in these towns and the presence of many immigrant workers (especially Italian and Spanish). Beyond these economic and social factors, club development also followed a traditional process of hierarchical diffusion: team creation was based in part on the city's rank in the urban hierarchy (Ravenel 1998a), which explains the presence of clubs apart from the two traditional zones (Rennes, Bordeaux, Lyon, and Toulouse, for example). After WWII, the national championship stabilised in spite of some

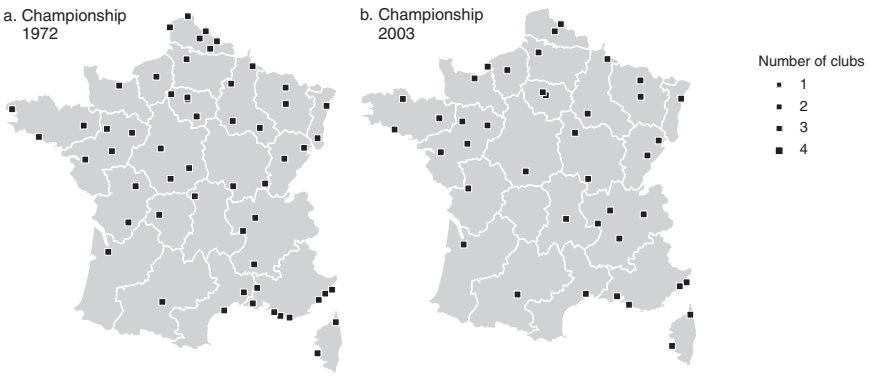


Map 2.1 The first championships

extension toward Corsica, the Massif Central and the west. The southwest remains devoid of teams and seems like a zone of resistance: rugby has conquered both supporters and investors.

The crisis in French professional football

By the end of the 1960s, professional football was dying out. Its best training was not on the level of the best European clubs, and France's team, the showcase for national football, was accumulating defeat after defeat. The public stopped attending the games and there was significant drop in gate-receipts. The crisis also deeply affected the players: a number of them preferred to return to amateur standing and stable employment elsewhere, rather than earning a living in the difficult and ungrateful world of professional football with no guarantees. The very survival of professional football was threatened and, in response, its leaders decided to open the national championship to amateur clubs for a two-year period, a decision that launched vast changes in the spatial structure (Map 2.2a) (Ravenel 1998a).



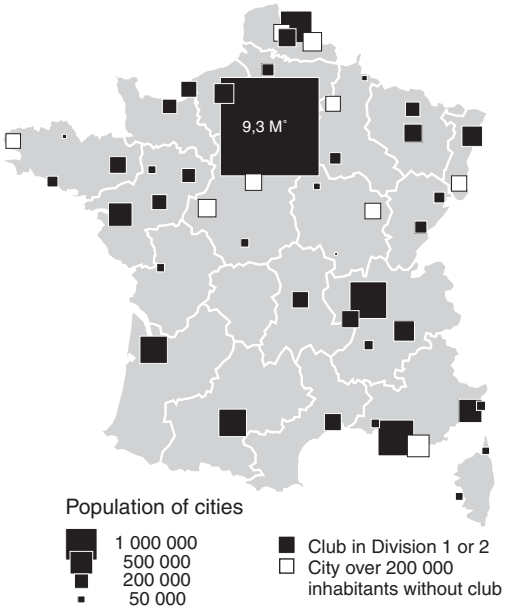
Map 2.2 Dispersing the clubs

This decision, taken at a time of acute crisis, had a major impact on club location and the survival of professional football. Recognised clubs of today like Auxerre, Guingamp or Laval undoubtedly would never have reached professional standing as quickly if this transitory stage had not occurred. A welcome geographic success accompanied the survival of professional football: the gulf between professional and amateur football was finally bridged, and the professional teams became more equitably distributed. Professional football in fact moved closer to its base: to the mass of those registered in training. This superposition of two complementary spaces inevitably gave rise to a substantial number of players moving into the professional market and thus ensured a new labour pool for economic activity.

A scattered structure

Since the 1960s, the spatial structure has evolved very little. Some areas remain without teams because of strong competition from rugby, others because of a weakness in terms of the urban framework. At the end of an almost 70-year diffusion process, however, the clubs have conquered all the large cities and gradually introduced a relatively homogeneous spatial distribution (Map 2.2b).

French club location conforms to an urban hierarchical model. The largest cities all have at least one team – from among the best – but as we have underlined above, exceptions do exist. In 2003, only 20 of the 38 French teams are in cities of more than 200,000 inhabitants and some major centres do not have a team (Map 2.3). For the majority of them, their clubs took part in national competitions



Map 2.3 Clubs and urban hierarchy

in the past, but insurmountable financial difficulties eventually put an end to this. The most striking element of this distribution, however, is the very weak spatial concentration: Paris and its region have only two teams (of which one is in Division 2), whereas a fifth of the population lives there. Lyon and Marseille also have only one club, like all the other large French cities. This is surprising since no specific measure prevents teams from concentrating in the biggest centres, to avoid potential competition, for example. By way of comparison, in the 2003/2004 season London has five clubs in the Premiership, Madrid three, Barcelona two, Milan two, etc., all at a continental level. We see here, in fact, a system in which the local authorities intervene massively and contribute to geographic dispersion. Who, on reflection, can easily imagine a single town administration, or the general or regional council, wanting to give subsidies to several teams at once? These governing bodies have no reason to multiply their investments in several directly competing clubs and instead prefer to invest in other sectors, thereby offering a wider range of leisure activities to the public. A sports system highly dependent on public financing will necessarily undergo a spatial de-concentration of activities out toward other large cities of the country (Ravenel 1998b).

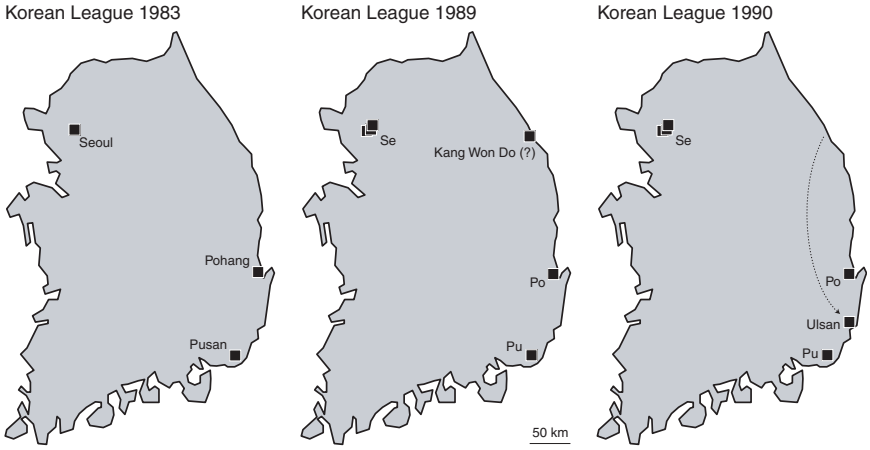
Korea: from *chaebols* to the local communities

The spatial evolution in Korean professional football is not easily comparable to that in France because of Korean football's relatively short history and the small number of teams (12 in 2003). However, by analysing space it is possible to observe a location strategy that, paradoxically, has points in common with the French strategy.

The strong points of Korean space

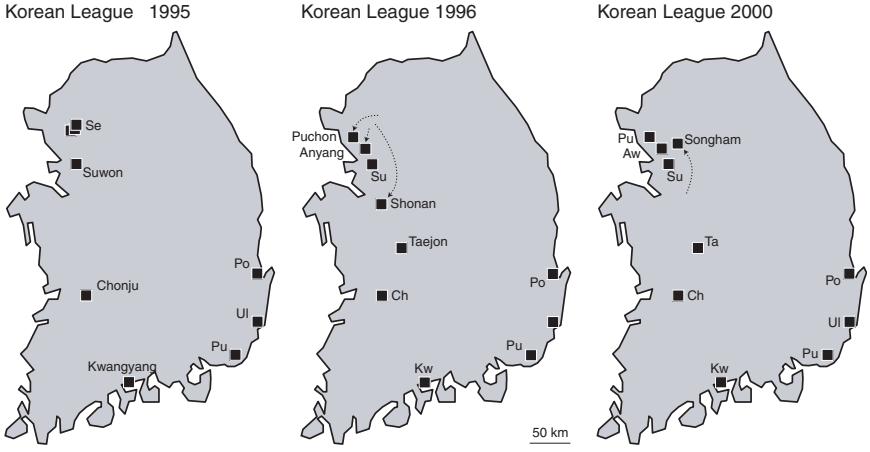
The Korean football league (K-League) was founded in 1983 by six teams (Map 2.4). Three were professional and are still active today (Daewoo Royals, Yukong Elephants, POSCO). The three others (Kookmin Bank, Hanil Bank and Halleluya) were company teams and ceased competing in 1986. The three professional teams were respectively located in Busan, Seoul and Pohang. Busan and Seoul are the two major Korean cities and Pohang is an industrial city where the gigantic iron and steel company, POSCO, is located. Gradually, other teams have integrated into the league, which is present in the great demographic and economic structures of the country. In 1989, two new teams appeared in the capital (LG Hwangso and Ilhwa Chunma) and another appeared in the Kangwon-Do region in the northeast (Hyundai Horang.i). A concentration is observed in Seoul, the country's economic and demographic centre.

The 1990 season typified the traditional strategy of club movements in a private league. Hyundai Horang left the little-populated northeast for Ulsan, a large coastal harbour town and industrial centre of close to one million inhabitants where the group's factories are located. At this time, the geographic structure of



Map 2.4 The beginning of the K-League (1983–90)

the clubs reflected the country's economic and demographic structure: three teams in the capital and three others in the large ports of the southeast. In 1995 (Map 2.5), three additional teams joined the league: the Chonbuk Hyundai Motors, based in Chonju in the centre of the country; the Suwon Samsung Bluewings, installed in the industrial town of Suwon, the cradle of Samsung; and the Chunnam Dragons, in the town of POSCO's second iron and steel complex, Kwangyang. Of the nine clubs that made up the K-League, all belonged to large *chaebols* and reflected their geographic establishments. Some of these big groups, like Hyundai and POSCO, even had several teams, which posed ethical problems. This was seen at the repurchase of the Daewoo Royals by Hyundai following the bankruptcy of the large automobile firm in 1999. The club did not change location but saw its name transformed to the Busan Icons.



Map 2.5 Delocalisation in the Korean League

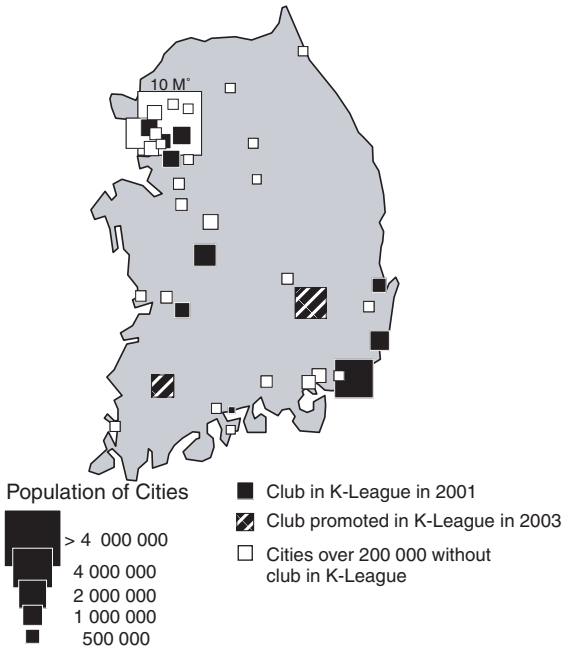
Delocalisation and dispersion

In 1996, club location strategy underwent a dramatic change (Map 2.5). To avoid too much competition among the three clubs in Seoul, franchises were assigned to the periphery. Thus, the Yukong Elephants were relocated to Puchon and became the Bucheon SK. They played in Seoul until 2000, at the Mokdong Stadium, and then were definitively installed in Puchon. The LG Hwangso joined the satellite town of Anyang, while Ilhwa Chunma was delocalised to Shonan before reapproaching the capital in 1999 by moving to Songham. This delocalisation resulted in devolution: the clubs left the capital to join large peripheral cities. Competition was thus minimised, with each team having one franchise and a local monopoly. Once again, we find similarities with the North American model, which allots a reference space to each club and limits competition with other teams of the same sport (franchise system). The K-League decision was by default: under intense competition from baseball in the capital, it preferred to install its teams in satellite industrial towns, smaller but with stronger identities. Seoul thus lost its three teams in one season. This loss was quickly compensated by an astute stratagem, however: in addition to travelling as visiting teams, the clubs were invited to participate in an additional competition organised on neutral ground – in Seoul. Although now deprived of their own clubs, the inhabitants of the capital would nevertheless be able to regularly attend professional matches. Because of limited success, however, this proposal was dropped in 2001.

In 1997, a tenth team with a very original status joined the K-League, the Taejeon Citizen FC (Daejeon Citizen). Contrary to the other clubs, which were founded and sponsored by large companies, this team emerged under pressure from the urban community of Taejeon, one of the last large cities – with Taegu – without a club in the K-League. Initially, the Nasan group was to handle the club, but the local football committee was opposed to this solution, preferring to find several mid-sized companies from the 'community of citizens' to build the team. The Korean press announced this with the following headline: 'The first football club founded by the community of the 1,350,000 inhabitants of Taejeon'.

The World Cup equips Korea

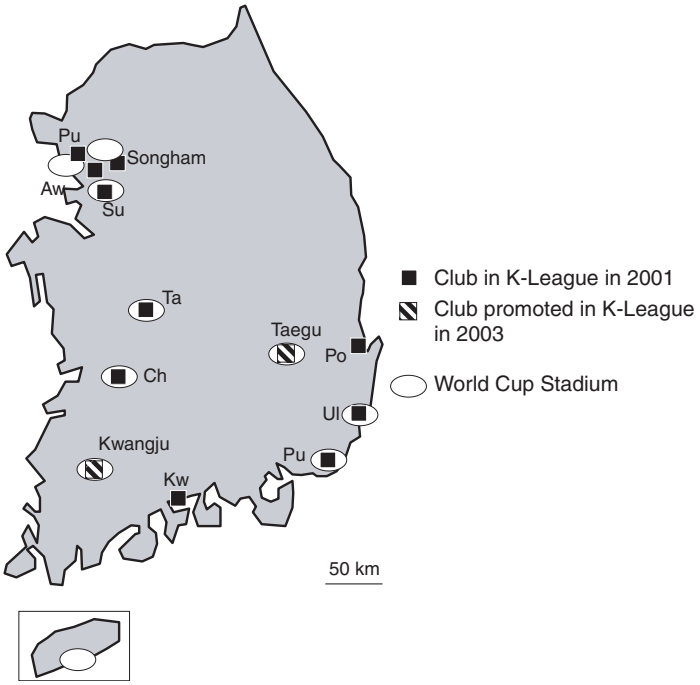
By 2001, the Korean league thus comprised ten teams whose locations were the fruit of a short but rich history. Professional football space in Korea today reflects the major articulations of Korean territory. Four teams are located in the major industrial region of Seoul and three others are in the large seaport towns of the southeast (Map 2.6). The bipolar nature of the Korean economic space, moreover, further concentrates the success: the 20 champions since 1984 have been from Seoul, Busan, Ulsan or Pohang. Nevertheless, the distribution shows some empty spaces on the map. In addition to the area around Seoul, two great centres are missing: Daegu (2.5 million inhabitants) and Gwangju (1.3 million). When questioned in 1999 about the future of the K-League, Chung Kun-Il, secretary-general of the K-League, was encouraged by recent successes and said he envisaged adding one or two teams over the next few years. As if to consolidate the map, he



Map 2.6 Korean clubs and the urban hierarchy

announced: 'There are some cities that want clubs and some companies that also want to establish teams but we haven't given them permission yet. We have to see if they have the ability to provide what is necessary. In Taegu, for example, the population is three million people, yet they don't have a team' ('K-League on the top', *FootballAsia*, September 1999).

In this interview, the K-League speaker implicitly referred to the benefits of the World Cup for building national competition. In addition to inspiring a strong popular passion for football, a major league goal was to equip the country with sports arenas of high quality so that, once the World Cup was finished, local teams could be developed, both athletically and economically. For the 1998 World Cup, several French cities obtained stadiums that matched their sports ambitions at relatively low cost because a significant part of the investment was financed directly by the French state. But France also renovated many of its existing stadiums (only one really new stadium was built, the Stade de France in Paris). Korea, on the other hand, built ten new stadiums, almost all exclusively dedicated to football (Map 2.7). Of these ten, only half were built in cities having a K-League team (Suwon, Ulsan, Busan, Jeonju and Daejeon). The clubs located in more modest towns (Anyang, Bucheon, Seongnam, Pohang and Gwangyang) kept their 20,000-capacity stadiums. The five other new stadiums confirmed the power of the urban hierarchy because they were built in Seoul, Incheon and the two large towns of Daegu and Gwangju. Only Seogwipo proposed a different



Map 2.7 The K-League and the World Cup stadiums

strategy, but locating a stadium reserved exclusively for football on this large tourist island seemed like an economic aberration, given the highly hypothetical benefits to tourism.

The location of stadiums was thus clearly based on the urban hierarchy and took into consideration the potential for long-term use of the sports equipment. Whatever the future plans for commercial and leisure activities, these stadiums had to accommodate a resident team. Thus, as of the 2003 season, the last two large cities (Daegu and Gwangju) have been integrated into the K-League by the same process as Taejeon a few years earlier. Indeed, the Daegu team (formerly Taegu Citizens Pro Soccer, now Daegu FC) was also promoted by the local community, which had a double objective. The first was to train young regional players in a football school, thereby encouraging both an athletic and a social rise in status. The second was simply to give meaning (symbolic and economic) to a sports complex with a seating capacity of 65,754, built for the World Cup at a cost of KRW 294.6 billion. As a means of regional development, a team was deemed to be essential. This same concern also pushed Gwangju toward the K-League, but this city received further pressure from the army. Indeed, the Gwangju Sangmu Phoenix uses players completing their military service. Players can thus continue their sports activities while fulfilling their mission for national defence. The stadium of 44,000 seats is now being used.

Location strategies

Even though demographics are the main criterion for team location in the French framework, access to the system is extremely open because of the willingness to make exceptions. Teams from major urban centres can encounter teams from small cities like Guingamp, Bastia, Sedan or Auxerre on equal footing, as the geographic distribution of teams is not based only on the broad outlines of power in the country. The few coercive measures that prevent access to the top levels are weak or can be circumvented by exemptions. In Korea, the clubs today are guided by the league's economic concerns, after having had an initial phase of freedom. Many problems of competition were solved by delocalisation and new clubs are now accepted only if they offer additional benefits, which often means that they must be located in zones without competition but with strong potential and the stadiums to allow economic and sports expansion. This situation is possible because of the relative newness and weakness of Korean football; it may even be an essential condition for creating a viable professional structure without a strong amateur base. Club ownership by large national companies more easily allows *ex nihilo* creation and club movement. However, this situation is changing and we can distinguish a paradoxical similarity in the two countries: a willingness to establish teams according to spatial criteria. An old process in France, this is now developing in Korea.

As in Korea, many French clubs were originally created by companies eager to acquire a sense of value both within and outside the company. But contrary to what occurred in other large European countries, this general movement was rejected jointly by the national federation and the territory-based clubs (Wahl 1989). The clubs quickly turned to public financing sources and town administrations in particular. This partnership will probably endure because the local authorities and the state find mutual advantages. High-level football, because of its popularity and global diffusion, offers a means for collective identification that the local authorities have integrated into their communication strategies. As underlined by Jean-Pierre Augustin (1995: 131), team sports 'contribute to local patriotism and the symbolic system of the territories'.

This tendency is easily observed by looking at club names. These names are far from anecdotic: they reflect a symbolic identity system that associates the teams with a social reference that includes their location. French names emphasise geographic determinants: although half the teams only use the name of a city in association with a sports reference (e.g., *Athletic* Le Havre Club), 16 add a territorial reference (e.g., Montpellier *Hérault* Sports Club) and four propose another origin (e.g., Niort *Chamois*). The influence of the local authorities mainly explains these spatial references, but sometimes the origins are older (e.g., AS Nancy-*Lorraine*).

In Korea, before the reorganisation at the end of the 1990s, the opposite seemed to be the case, with club names including a company name or some other reference, but never a city name. Since the creation of Daejeon Citizen in particular, K-League clubs have been gradually and symbolically detaching from the large companies to integrate more deeply into their cities and reference spaces. The

idea is to establish strong local roots over the long term and to truly integrate the clubs into local life. This is reflected by renaming and the development of new logos. The Yukong Elephants became the Bucheon SK, the POSCO Atoms are now called the Pohang Steelers, Ilhwa Chunma now adds its new location (Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma), and the LG Hwangso took the name of the Anyang LG Cheetahs. This is clearly a new tendency for the *chaebols* and the league. After having used football primarily as a vector of internal and external communication regarding their competitors, the major Korean companies are now anchoring their teams more deeply in geographic space to allow greater public involvement with the competing players. The regional dimension, long a key element in the Korean culture, is now being developed as a factor for football's expansion and durability. The renunciation of matches on neutral ground for the 2001 season is an additional sign of this tendency.

The organisation of a global event as important as the World Cup has not been exploited in the same way by the two countries, however. In France, the World Cup provided the occasion to renovate existing stadiums, some of which had been constructed 15 years earlier for Euro 1984. These stadiums are all located in big cities with a first division team because geographic structuring had stopped long ago. Both the cities and the clubs seized this opportunity for low-cost development. In Korea, the World Cup was seen as a means to equip a country whose professional sports needs remained unsettled: choosing locations for building the arenas responded not only to existing needs but also to desires for future expansion. This in fact was signalled by the addition of two new clubs in 2003. In this sense, a major sports event like the World Cup can be seen as highly structuring and thus as a potent factor for future reorganisation.

Both countries, however, have been confronted with the problem of building a huge stadium in a capital without a resident team. After much procrastination, France finally built the Stade de France, an 80,000-seat stadium in Paris, without having worked out its future sports utility. In fact, the Stade de France consortium managed to include a very beneficial clause in the contract negotiated with the government: the state committed itself to significant financial aid for ten years if a resident team was not found. The Stade has now shown a yearly profit since 2000 and the consortium is no longer looking for a football club since this would mean losing some highly lucrative activities (concerts, international matches, mass gatherings of one organisation or another), as well as the government subsidy. In Korea, the success of the 64,000-seat stadium built in Seoul is based on a similar principle. It has become the only profit-making stadium in Korea because of the many activities made possible by its location in a capital of 10 million inhabitants. In addition to its internationally recognised sports and artistic events, the stadium receives 30,000 visitors a day, drawn by its symbolic power or its auxiliary commercial activities. This level of success, as with that of the Stade de France, is due to its location in the heart of the biggest urban centre in the country. On the other hand, the resident teams of the other cities have to be satisfied with reducing the financial losses of their stadiums.

Conclusion

The organisation of the 2002 World Cup was the occasion for Korean operators to pursue their strategies for developing professional football clubs, and several directions are now possible. The first is to continue to add new teams to the K-League and to locate them in cities with new and unoccupied stadiums. For the moment, this concerns only Incheon and Seoul, as Seogwipo is a specific case that has been discussed. Several projects to create a new team in the capital have been considered. The second direction is a change in the scale of competition. The plan of associating with neighbouring Japan and China to build a Northeast Asian championship is today under way. The potentially huge clientele, powerful operators, large modern stadiums and a population with a growing passion for football ensure that this dream will eventually come to pass. It will nevertheless require a reorganisation of the championship to the benefit of those teams located in the biggest cities, which is what can be seen today in Europe.

This project will inevitably run into the problem of club roots, however. The mobility of North American teams, noted by Quirk and Fort (1999: 215), has been the subject of sharp exchanges about the key factors for building loyal supporters – who are also ultimately customers: affection for the local team, the shared history of fans and their team, and the values that the team are seen to represent. Professional sport is a distinct economic sector, but despite its marked commercial character, today's operators cannot afford to ignore the space parameter. Even those particularly vulnerable to the local economic potential must also consider temporal factors and local fan loyalty. A completely artificial team location, without a basis in tradition, history, or culture, runs the risk of a commercial problem: the lack of passion. This problem has arisen in Europe recently, as well: the creation of a private league, closed and without the traditional promotion/relegation system, has become a topic of debate and controversy.

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