The Americanization of Israeli Basketball (1978-1996) -
a Figurational Analysis

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

by

Yair Galily

Centre for Research into Sport and Society
University of Leicester

September 2000
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Yair Galily

Abstract

By adopting a developmental approach, this thesis studied the case of Israeli basketball and documented the process by which Israeli basketball, as part of Israeli culture, was Americanized.

Recognizing that Americanization needs to be viewed as part of broader globalization processes, this study examined how far developments in Israeli basketball can be explained as aspects of an Americanization process.

Using Israeli professional basketball as the prism to identify the Americanization process occurring within Israeli society as a whole, this thesis illustrates how basketball in Israel became involved in the network of overlapping social and global forces. The thesis discusses the power relations and balances among various groups and people involved in the development of Israeli basketball such as Israeli, American and naturalized players, coaches, Israel Basketball Association leaders and administrators, sponsors and entrepreneurs, mayors, lawyers, parliament members, reporters, journalists and commentators. All these actors were implicated to a greater or lesser extent in influencing the developmental trajectory of Israeli basketball and were caught up in, and helped contribute to, the process of Americanization.

Going beyond the search for a single cause for the process of Americanization, this thesis also discusses the power relations among various groups that constitute Israel society, based on the analysis of processes such as ‘professionalization’, ‘secularization’, ‘urbanization’, and ‘militarization’, that gathered momentum parallel to the Americanization process.

In the case of Israeli basketball, and in a much broader context, the suggestion is that Israel society is being ‘overshadowed’, maybe more than ever before, by the more powerful American state. However, as this thesis indicates and as process-sociologists would argue, assimilation, at least in any simple sense, is not a sufficient explanation for the observed events.

The findings of this study indicate that Israeli basketball underwent a significant shift toward Americanization. However, this shift is not entirely different in dimension and scope from similar processes in other areas in Israel such as economics, politics or communications.
Acknowledgments

It is almost impossible to acknowledge everyone who helped me during the process of writing this thesis. However, a number of people stand out.

First and foremost I would like to thank my tutor, Dr. Kenneth G. Sheard, for his guidance, thorough readings, attention to detail, and constant reminders to "work hard!" I doubt whether without his encouragement, commitment and enormous help this thesis would ever have come to an end. It is to Ken that I wish to extend my deepest gratitude.

My warmest thanks to the entire staff at the Centre for Research into Sport and Society at Leicester University. It was the work of Professor Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy and Dr. Ivan Waddington which initially inspired me to move in the direction I chose. In addition to their 'open door' policy, I am also thankful for their having contributed their expertise whenever needed. Still in Leicester, I would also like to thank Dominic Malcolm and Martin Roderick whose support enabled me to plant roots there. I would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Margaret Milsom, Dr. Eli Orr and Sarah Lewis for their help during the time this dissertation was being completed.

I take this opportunity to thank my friends at the Wingate Institute in Israel. To Uri Afek not only for his help and friendship but also for going the extra mile at every opportunity. To Dr. Gilad Weingarten and Dr. Naomi Fejgin to whom I have had the pleasure to be a colleague and a friend. I would like to express my appreciation to Mike Garmise for his help during the preparation of this work. I am grateful to Dr. Alina Berenstein for sharing her experience with me.

To Gili Swartzman, for his thoughtful comments during this work and general coolness as an office-mate. To Sarit for her inspirational commitment to education, and the many wise words she imparted to me (including her advice to focus on the research: "If you chase two rabbits, both will escape!").
To Gali, whose ever-present commitment, understanding, and love have made this time a joyful one.

To my brother, Amit, and to my parents whose encouragement and support have made this possible and for always being there for me. To my father, Shmulik, who introduced me to the world of sport and to my mother, Vicky, which all that I am or hope to be, I owe to her.

Finally, I would like to thank Rick Pitino, the basketball coach of the Kentucky ‘Wild Cats’ and one of the most successful coaches in the NCAA history. When he was asked the secret of his success, he answered that the secret is knowing how to choose your players. “You must remember”, Pitino continued, “that all of my players are Ph.D.’s”! But how is it possible, they asked him with surprise, your players never stepped foot in the university before you drafted them? “That may be so”, Pitino replied, “yet they are all Poor Hungry and Driven…”

I dedicate this story to everyone who ever asked me: When you are going to be a PhD?
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Introduction

As distances between cultures shrink and the political boundaries between them disappear, it is inescapable that cultures will increasingly influence each other. From the beginning of time, intercultural contacts have led to an exchange of values, know-how, thought, and performance patterns. In our time, advanced technology further accelerates interaction between cultures in all spheres, including the areas of politics and communications (Caspi, 1996:174).

According to Caspi, the phenomenon of reciprocal relations, the trend toward unification of lifestyles, and the creation of uniform organizational patterns is especially prominent in this era of “open boundaries” between peoples and cultures all over the globe.

The concept of ‘globalization’, often in a form that some scholars refer to as ‘Americanization’, ‘mundialization, or ‘modernization’, has aroused a great deal of interest in the last two decades. Whatever definition we accept, it is commonly agreed that globalization refers to interdependence among the world’s societies. Similar to the concept of interdependency, globalization is the recognition that what happens in any single society is influenced by its inter-actions with other societies on the globe (Horton, 1996:6).

By adopting a developmental approach, this thesis studied the case of Israeli basketball and documented the process by which Israeli basketball, as part of Israeli culture, was Americanized. The main aim of investigation was to ascertain whether an Americanization process, as part of a globalization process, can serve as an explanatory rationale for the American influence on basketball in Israel. In tracing broader globalization processes, emphasis in this thesis has been placed on the growing network of interdependencies that involve economic, political, cultural and technological dimensions (Maguire, 1999:128-129).
The theoretical framework

In seeking to comprehend this process and accomplish the task outlined above, this thesis is divided into four parts. Part 1, ‘the theoretical framework’, lays the foundation for the theoretical grounds on which the research process is based.

Chapter 1, *The research process: methodology and fieldwork design*, offers a detailed rationale of the research process and methodology used to examine the development of basketball in Israel and of the Americanization process in general. Furthermore, this chapter reviews, among other things, the researcher’s own experience prior to this research, the issues investigated, the assumptions made and the difficulties faced while carrying out the research.

While applying an Eliasian perspective, which stresses long-term processes, emphasis throughout this research is placed on the observably changeful and processual character of the Israeli society (Dunning, 1986:41). The theoretical framework utilized in this thesis is based upon the “Figurational” or “Process Sociology” developed by Norbert Elias. Elias’s sociology offers a useful approach to the study of the development of sport, and other processual aspects of culture such as globalization and, in particular “Americanization”. Process/figurational sociology underpins the arguments presented in this thesis.

Following Elias’s advice to his students, to look sociologically at something in which they were already involved, keenly interested, and knew a good deal about (Mennel, 1989:15), the decision was made to research the development of basketball in Israel and the Americanization process within Israeli society and Israeli basketball. This allowed a keen personal interest in sport and the knowledge gained from long-time involvement in playing basketball to be drawn upon. In addition, the pursuit of post-graduate studies in the United States helped in appreciating that there were ways of doing things and aspects of culture associated with life in Israel, which owed their origins to America. At the same time, however, difficulties arose in attempting to
achieve sufficient critical distance from activities with which there was so much personal involvement.

Thus, throughout this research an effort was made to maintain a balance between "involvement" and "detachment". These categories were coined by Elias (1956) in his essay "Problems of involvement and detachment" in which he rejects the static categories of "objective" and "subjective" as means of describing ways of thinking about the world. Elias suggests that it is more useful to think in terms of different attitudes or ways of thinking as being characterized by higher or lower degrees of involvement and detachment. Elias points out that it is not possible for us to obtain "ultimate truth" or complete detachment and indeed, he notes that certain kinds of involvement actually facilitate the research process (Waddington, 1994:vi).

Chapter 2, 'The globalization process and the diffusion of sports', discusses the ways in which theorizing about globalization has been used to illuminate the development of a specific cultural form – sport.

Featherstone (1990) characterized globalization as involving a trans-societal cultural process, which takes a variety of forms, such as the exchange and flow of goods, people, information, knowledge and images. All of these give rise to communication processes, which gain some autonomy on a global level, and can be identified in today's world. Robertson (1995) observes that much of the promotion of locality is in fact done from above or outside. Similarly, Giddens (1990) explains that globalization means the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Giddens, 1990:64). Looking at this phenomenon as a process, Elias (1987) explains that:

The distances between many states and groups of states before the social development which generated the automobile and air transport and for a good time afterwards, were very great. Telecommunications, radio and television were still in their infancy. Global tourism and goods traffic were relatively limited, and the same was true of the whole network of interdependence between the states of the world. The network has
become visibly more dense in the course of the twentieth century. People themselves, however, only perceived this in a very limited, inexact way. They were not used to thinking in terms of social processes. Hardly anyone spoke clearly about the rapidly increasing integration of humanity. It was seldom seen as a long-term, unplanned social process. Thus the shortening of distances, the increasing integration, happened, as it were, in secret. It did not obtrude itself on human experience as a global process of integration (Elias, 1987/1991:163).

Following Elias's (1986) argument that "knowledge about sport is knowledge about society", this thesis uses Israeli professional basketball as the prism to identify the "Americanization" process, as part of a broader globalization process involving Israeli society. However, as Allen (1999) alleges, despite its obvious significance for any exploration of popular culture, sport has not received the attention it deserves within culture and global studies. Similarly, Maguire (1999) asserts that:

Remarkably, very little attention has been paid to sport by those studying global cultural processes. Yet, investigations of this kind allow for a detailed exploration of the multidirectional interweaving of global cultural flows. There are, however, other reasons why this task needs to be conducted. More important than simply the global movement of cultural wares, this shift towards the competitive, regularized, rationalized and gendered bodily exertions of achievement sport involves changes at the level of personality, body deportment and social interaction. A more rationalized young, male and able-bodied habitus was and is evident that affects people and groups in different societies in fairly fundamental ways (Maguire, 1999:7).

Therefore, by using Appadurai’s (1990) typology, an attempt is made to map overlapping global cultural flows pertaining to basketball in general and basketball in Israel in particular. Appadurai's analysis of global cultural flow is based on a series of 'scapes' that interact with each other and his five dimensions of cultural flow ('ethnoscapes', 'technoscapes', 'mediascapes', 'financescapes', and 'ideoscapes') can be readily adapted to illustrate and explain the globalization of sport. The strength
of Appadurai’s model, as Horton (1996), among others, suggests, is that it does not preclude the adoption or incorporation of other theories of the global system, such as modernization, cultural imperialism, dependency or world system theories, but rather stresses concepts from all these theories.

Chapter 3, “The early development and the international diffusion of basketball” outlines the early development of basketball and sheds light on the process that led to the diffusion of the game around the world. In this chapter attention is given to the development of basketball in the United States – where the game was invented more than a century ago. The main objective of this chapter, however, is to focus on a whole network of social functions surrounding the game. Using Appadurai’s typology (1990) which structures globalization process into a complex of an overlapping, disjunctive order, this chapter also looks at the extent to which the circulation of universal American commodity-signs (Andrews, 1997) has resulted in the convergence of global markets, lifestyles and identities.

From the global to the local

As Harvey et al. (1996) assert, while globalization has reached a point where industrialized countries already live in a global world, the processes are at different developmental stages in these countries (Harvey et al. 1996:260). Thus, the second part of this thesis, from the global to the local, looks at the extent to which the state of Israel is ‘globalized’. In order to do so chapter 4, “The state of Israel - an overview”, utilizes a developmental approach, which Elias (1986) describes as “indispensable for advances in the study of human society”, to look at the history as well as the development of the state of Israel. As Dunning (1997) explains, Elias clearly distinguished between ‘history’ and ‘development’, using the former term for referring to the level of events and the latter for referring to more enduring figurations (Dunning, 1997:486).

As Elias (1986) explains, “every variety of sport ... has a relative autonomy in relation not only to the individuals who play at a given time, but also to the society where it developed” (Elias, 1986:39). Therefore, in order to understand Israel’s society, and more specifically Israeli basketball, one must look at Israel in a historical context as
well as at the diversity of individuals who make up Israel’s society and the relationships between them. Since these relations are all part of a process, the process of state-formation of Israel is a direct result of such dynamic relations. Furthermore, as chapter 4 demonstrates, the people who make up Israel’s society had relations not just among themselves, but with their neighbors, creating networks of relations. These networks can be conceived of as interdependency ties or power relations that tend to be unequal across a range of dimensions. Moreover, the variety of cultural patterns found in Israel reflects many of the country’s important characteristics, such as the diversity of lifestyles, beliefs and habits, and the combination of a unique and ancient heritage with centuries-old customs and a modern lifestyle.

Another major part of the fourth chapter is dedicated to the state of Israel’s relations with its neighboring countries, as well as the rest of the world. Israel’s strategic situation (which constrained Israel to fight five major wars in five decades), the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the rejection of Israel by most of the Arab states has had a major influence on Israeli foreign policy throughout the years. The special relationships Israel has with its biggest (and many times, its only) ally, the United States, can be seen from Israel’s early years to the present day. American-Israeli relations are in many ways unique. Both countries are nations of immigrants, places of refuge seen by many people as ‘promised lands’. Since the establishment of the state of Israel the United States has expressed its commitment to Israel’s security and well-being and has devoted a considerable share of its world-wide economic and security assistance to Israel. However, along with United States assistance to Israel, large parts of the grants provided to Israel are in the form of American credit to purchase American goods and military supplies. In addition, the free trade agreement signed in 1984 between the two nations not only makes American products relatively cheap and therefore worthwhile importing to Israel, but, more than ever before, it ties in the Israeli currency inextricably with the fate of the American dollar. This special relationship, therefore, might look at first glance like total support on the part of the United States for Israel, and total dependency on the part of the latter. However, as will be argued in chapter 4, no matter how vast the United States’ economic, as well as persuasive, powers are, in the overall ratio of power-balance between the two nations, the best way to describe United States-Israel relations is interdependence.
Yet, given this special relationship between the two nations, it is still important to look at the reference to Israel as the "51st state of the Union", made by some writers (Chabin, 1995; Kravitz, 1997; Podhoretz, 1998). Indeed, few will dispute that American influence has made a tremendous impact on daily life in Israel, from the increasing infusion of English words into the Hebrew language, the fashions worn by Israeli children, to the popularity of television programs. As Caspi (1996) observed, and as chapter 4 demonstrates, it would seem that, from the very beginning, Americanization was to a great extent a communication process which was imported to Israel and allowed the import of American ideals and values, much like other social and cultural fads and fashions. The process by which Israeli society was transformed during the late 1980's, almost overnight, from a single to a multi-channel media society, led to greatly increased exposure to international experiences. While scholars such as Tunstall (1977) and Ang (1985) believe that the Americans dominate the world media, it is argued that the penetration of American values, partly through the media, led, according to Schweid (1999:6), to "the assimilation of the basic concepts of American liberal democracy and, foremost, the adoption of the social concepts of this democracy".

Where sport is concerned, Maguire (1999, see also Donnelly, 1996; Coakley, 1997) believes that global media sport is clearly influenced by North American sports such as American football, basketball, baseball and ice hockey (Maguire, 1999:171). However, Maguire also claims that "non-American achievement sports such as association football and non-achievement sports such as the martial arts are also part of the pattern of global media consumption" thus the Americanization thesis arguably overstates the degree of uniformity achieved and underestimates how global media content is understood and (re)interpreted by people in different societies (Maguire, 1999:145). Therefore, Maguire suggest that:

Research concerning global media sport has to focus on both an analysis of cultural texts and the way that people in different societies interpret media artefacts and incorporate them into their worldview and lifestyles (Maguire, 1999:148).
Thus, when trying to carry out such a task, consideration must be devoted to the fact that other processes besides the transformation of Israel into a multi-channel media society intertwined with Israel's process of state-formation: the processes of secularization, population growth, urbanization, militarization and, most germane for present purposes, the development of sport. These processes are not isolated but rather interdependent processes and therefore of importance when discussing the development of sport in general and particularly of basketball. The fifth chapter, "the early development of basketball in Israel", traces conceptually and historically the multifaceted nature of those processes and, especially, the interactions that have taken place between politics and sport. Like so much in Israel, sport has historically been mixed with politics. As Reshef and Paltiel (1989) aver, Israel represents a unique case of an immigrant society formed on the basis of an ideological movement. This has had a profound impact on the development and organization of sport and has led to the institutionalization of sport within a highly politicized framework. The Hapoel organization, involved in all sports, is associated with the Labor party and the Histadrut Federation of Labor. Beitar sports clubs are associated with the right-wing Herut faction of the Likud party, while Elitzur, the religious sports movement, is associated with the National Religious Party. The largest sports association in Israel is the non-affiliated Maccabi, originally set up in tandem with the world Maccabi movement. The conclusions drawn from Chapter 5 are that the development of Israeli basketball in its early years has to be seen as interdependent with the broader political economy of Israel and in conjunction with the close relationship between the developing sport organizations and the Israeli state. Furthermore, it is argued that the process of the development of sport in Israel in general and especially of basketball, can be understood adequately only by presenting it in its historical context and by examining its interdependent processes. Using a process-sociological perspective, it is suggested that we pay particular attention to balances of power among individuals and groups. The struggle between the sport organizations in Israel is an example of such power balances that led to both intended and unintended consequences for the human beings involved in very complex and dynamic relational networks.

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1 See chapter 5 for the development of sport organizations in Israel.
Early stages in the Americanization of Israeli basketball

Israel's basketball achievements have been quite substantial: in 1977 and 1981 Maccabi Tel Aviv won the European Club Championship, while in 1979 the Israeli national team finished as runner-up to the Soviet Union in the European National Championship. However, Israeli basketball is a unique case: it is located geographically in Asia, competes in the European arena, and is dominated by imported American players. The success of Israeli basketball and the growing interest in the American basketball league in Israel are attributed mostly to the influx of American players who have dominated Israeli basketball almost since its establishment, and to greater exposure to American basketball (NBA) on television.

Using Israeli professional basketball as the prism to identify the Americanization process occurring within Israeli society as a whole, the third part of this thesis examines the influx of American basketball players to Israel since the 1960s. As chapter 6, *The early stages in the Americanization of Israeli basketball*, demonstrates, the influx of American players who came to ply their trade in Israel is an ongoing process that led to dependent relations between the Israeli teams and their American players. The growing numbers of Americans playing basketball in Israel (including Jewish-American players who came primarily for Zionist reasons) increased the number of players who made basketball their full-time occupation and emphasized the intertwined process of professionalization of basketball in Israel. At the same time however, questions were raised not only regarding the rising number of Americans, (which lowered the representation of local talents), but more acutely about the proliferation of illicit practices which were claimed to undermine ethical standards. Rumors were rife regarding the Jewishness of some of the American players, together with well-documented stories about "quickie" conversions to Judaism. These conversions, encouraged by team managers who seemed ready to do almost anything to qualify their new players as new Jewish immigrants, were
performed to take advantage of the "Law of Return\(^2\)" which allows those immigrants to compete in Israel.

Going beyond the search for a single cause for the process of Americanization, this chapter also discusses the power relations among various groups that constitute Israel society, based on the analysis of processes that gathered momentum parallel to the Americanization process. In order to comprehend fully the process of Americanization, processes such as 'professionalization', 'secularization', 'urbanization', and 'militarization', which are discussed in chapter 6, should be borne in mind.

Still, given these observations, several questions, adapted from Maguire (1999), regarding the Americanization thesis need to be addressed. What constitutes Americanization? Is it merely a question of the presence of a cultural product from a 'foreign' culture or does it involve a shift in the habitus and conscious make-up of people? How 'intended' is the process described? How complete does the process have to be for domination to be said to have occurred? What abilities do people have to understand, embrace and/or resist these processes? What constitutes the 'indigenous/authentic' culture that the foreign culture threatens? (Maguire, 1999:146).

Chapter 7, *The Americanization of Israeli basketball (1978-1996)* illustrates how basketball in Israel became involved in the network of overlapping social and global forces. The chapter discusses the power relations and balances among various groups and people involved in the development of Israeli basketball such as Israeli, American and naturalized players, coaches, Israel Basketball Association leaders and administrators, sponsors and entrepreneurs, mayors, lawyers, parliament members, reporters, journalists and commentators. All these actors were implicated to a greater or lesser extent in influencing the developmental trajectory of Israeli basketball and were caught up in, and helped contribute to, the process of Americanization.

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\(^2\) The "law of return" which makes Israel a Zionist state, i.e., the state of the entire Jewish people, guaranteed all Jews the right to immigrate to Israel. The law also extended immediate Israeli citizenship to Jewish immigrants.
Above all, it is suggested that the Americanization of Israeli basketball, and in the broader context, the Americanization of Israeli society, which involves a blending of intended and unintended practices, can not be understood without attempting to view that process as interdependent with other processes and global occurrences such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Gulf war which played a significant role in the changes that occurred in the period between 1978 to 1996. As chapter 7 indicates, in an age when distinctions among peoples and countries are increasingly blurred, there is evidence to suggest that these processes and occurrences are interrelated.

The fourth and last part of this thesis presents findings and draws conclusions from the research process. In addition, this chapter also tries to ascertain if, as this research is suggesting, basketball in Israel has undergone a significant shift toward Americanization and how this change is different in dimension and scope from similar processes which have taken place in other areas of social life in Israel.

Conclusion

Basketball in Israel has emerged as the cultural product of a rapidly industrialising society undergoing unprecedented levels of change. But that is not to say, as Horne et al. (1999) remind us, that sports simply reflects the characteristics of the society. Rather, they are a product of the social relationships within that changing society (Horne et al.,1999:22). Connecting these social relationships to the globalization process, Maguire (1999) argues:

Although sport migrants, officials and consumers are caught up in this unfolding globalization process, they do have the capacity to reinterpret cultural products and experiences into something distinct. Furthermore, the receptivity of national popular cultures to non-indigenous cultural wares can be both active and heterogeneous. These are areas in the study of global sport processes in which much more work needs to be done (Maguire,1999:125).

This study is intended to show the extent to which Israeli basketball has been shaped by America and Americans. It recognises, however, that this influence has not been
one-way in that the game in Israel owes its present characteristics and nature to the way in which Israel has developed as a nation-state under specific, and indeed hostile, conditions. The debt owed to America is huge and yet not everything about the game is explainable in terms of this influence. Israeli basketball has not been studied sociologically before. This makes the task encountered here both simpler and more difficult. It is to be hoped that, as Elias said in a different context, it might represent "One symptom of a beginning" (Elias, in Dunning 1992).
Part 1: Theoretical framework

Chapter 1: The Research Process: Methodology and Fieldwork Design

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the process that led to the writing of this thesis. By doing so, I hope to present a detailed document demonstrating my approach to the research process and providing a clear explanation of what I did and how, during the various stages of investigation of the development of basketball in Israel and especially of the Americanization process. Furthermore, this chapter will review, among other things, my own experience prior to this research, the issues investigated, the assumptions made and the difficulties I faced while carrying out the research.

Another part of this chapter will discuss the methodology used for this research. While reviewing some of the methodological choices available in this kind of research, I will also elaborate on the preferred methods I have used for this thesis.

1.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that has guided me throughout the process of writing this thesis grows out of the work of Norbert Elias (1897-1990). To my mind, "Figurational" or "Process Sociology" which is derived from the work of Elias, and which has been discussed in some depth in this thesis, offers a useful approach to the study of the development of sport, and processual aspects of culture such as globalization and, in particular, Americanization.

The concept of **figuration**, as coined by Elias, “serves as a simple conceptual tool to loosen the social constraint to speak and think as if the ‘individual’ and ‘society’ were antagonistic as well as different” (Elias,1978:130). Hence, Elias was involved in an effort to overcome the distinction between micro and macro sociology. To Elias, figurations are social processes involving the "interweaving" of people (Ritzer,1996).
"Figuration" in itself, is used to mean (in Van Benthem van den Bergh's phrase) "networks of interdependent human beings, with shifting asymmetrical power balances". The central concerns of the figurational perspective (using Van Krieken's words) might be succinctly described as the connections between power, behavior, emotions and knowledge in (to a greater or lesser extent) long-term perspective.

Risking oversimplification, Goudsblom (1977) draws four major points from Elias's work:

1. Sociology is about *people* in the plural - human beings who are interdependent with each other in a variety of ways, and whose lives evolve in and are significantly shaped by social figurations they form together.
2. These figurations are continually in flux, undergoing changes of many kinds - some rapid and ephemeral, others slower but perhaps more lasting.
3. The long-term developments taking place in human figurations have been and continue to be largely unplanned and unforeseen.
4. The development of human knowledge takes place within human figurations, and is one important aspect of their overall development.

Another central dimension of figurations or dynamic interdependency ties is power. According to Elias, power is always a question of relative balances, never of absolute possession or absolute deprivation, for no one is ever absolutely powerful or absolutely powerless. Neither is the balance of power between groups in a society permanent, for power balances are dynamic and continuously in flux (Murphy et al., 2000).

The most famous work of Norbert Elias is undoubtedly his two volume *The Civilizing Process* (1939, 1994), which is based on the examination of societies of Western Europe between the Middle ages and the early twentieth century. Since the Civilizing Process discusses the process of nation-state formation and the implications of that process it is of some relevance to the process which has been discussed in this thesis. It is there that Elias first raises questions about globalization processes and introduces ideas about established-outsider relations. Moreover, one aspect of this process which is of pivotal relevance to the study of the development of sport, and therefore
relevant to this thesis, has been the increasing social control of violence and aggression, together with a long-term decline in most peoples’ tendency to obtain pleasure from directly taking part in or watching violent acts which accompanied this process in European societies (Murphy et al., 2000). In general, as Murphy et al. (2000) explain, the basic principles of figurational sociology are potentially applicable to a range of social phenomena, and the way in which they have been applied to the sociology of sport, falls into four main categories:

1. Early sportization processes and the control of violence;
2. Increasing seriousness of involvement and the growth of ‘professional’ sport
3. The relationships between globalization processes and sport and
4. Football hooliganism

These categories, however, are artificial, given the emphasis figurational sociologists place on networks of interdependencies (Murphy et al., 2000). This study focus on the first three categories, as these are of greater relevance to my research. I have used earlier works of figurational sociologists, which also address some of the main themes of this work. A work such as Dunning and Sheard’s (1979) *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players*, pushes the work of Elias and Dunning regarding the development of football even further. Dunning and Sheard’s sociological study of the development of rugby football offers, among other insights, an explanation of the trend towards more intense competition, professionalization, greater achievement orientation, greater rewards and the growing seriousness of involvement observed in many, if not most, modern sports (Murphy et al., 2000). This study attempted to examine the applicability of Dunning and Sheard’s ideas to the development and professionalization of the game of basketball in Israel. According to Dunning and Sheard (1979), top level players in modern societies are not independent therefore not able to play solely for ‘fun’. The sheer numbers of people involved in modern sport

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3 According to Van Krieken (1998), a number of scholars (see for example Wilson (1992), Clarke (1992) and Stokvis (1992)) have remarked that Elias and Dunning’s analysis of sport and leisure leaves out a number of important considerations. They all point out that the problematic and ever-changing nature of relations between participants, producers, and consumers/spectators requires considerably more attention than it has received in Elias and Dunning’s own work on sport and leisure. The argument is that the changing management of violence is only one aspect of the historical development of sport and leisure, and equally important are the political economy of sport and leisure and the role played by particular groups and organizations, such as local, regional and national government, schools, and economic enterprises.
means that a well-developed desire to achieve is necessary if one is to stand a realistic chance of getting to the top. In order to do that, one must play seriously. Furthermore, top-level players can no longer play just for themselves but are representatives of wider communities such as cities, counties and nations (Murphy et al., 2000).

One of the fields to which Elias devoted most attention, as a corollary to his concern with civilizing processes, was the sociology of knowledge. Questions of objectivity and values, the position of the social scientist in society, and the relation between the natural and social sciences, were all central to his understanding of the role that knowledge plays in the historical development of humanity. The main features of Elias's sociology of knowledge are:

1. An emphasis on the historical development of human knowledge;
2. An argument for seeing science as a social and collective endeavour, consisting of sets of social institutions located within particular processes of social development, rather than springing from the mind of an idealised 'subject' of scientific activity;
3. A rejection of both the concept of 'truth' as absolutely distinct from 'falsity' and a relativistic conception of knowledge, in favour of the concept of a greater or lesser 'object adequacy' in human knowledge, lying somewhere between 'involvement' and 'detachment' (Van Krieken, 1998).

To Elias knowledge "is derived from, and is a continuation of, a long process of knowledge acquisition in the past" (Elias, 1971:158) and thus can be explained as "part of the wider development of the societies where knowledge develops and, ultimately, of that of mankind" (Elias, 1971:159).

Elias's work on involvement and detachment, which primarily contributes to the sociology of knowledge (Dunning & Rojek, 1992), provides some practical insights regarding the research process which was adopted in this study to increase its validity. First, it is suggested by Elias to avoid the 'retreat to the present'. By locating the object of one's study historically and in the wider system of social interdependencies in which it is embedded, it is conceivable to achieve greater detachment. Secondly, exploring connections and regularities, structures and processes for their own sake
will increase one’s chances of avoiding bias as a result of personal interests or because of one’s membership or identification with a particular group or groups. Thirdly, one is advised to see oneself as well as one’s work through the eyes of others, while relating one’s work to the existing body of knowledge in his/her field. Fourthly, Elias suggests that the researcher should always relate one’s observations to a body of theory and his/her theory to a body of observations. Finally, in order to maintain the appropriate balance between equally necessary involvement and detachment one should always work in areas in which one is personally interested and in which one has practical experience.

Another aspect which has been investigated recently by figurational sociologists, is the diffusion of modern sporting forms on a global scale. While this study investigates the Americanization of Israeli basketball as part of broader globalization process, I have also used the works of Maguire (1988, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1999) and Jarvie and Maguire (1994) to clarify some of the conceptual complexities (see for example, Donnelly, 1996; Guttmann, 1991; Kidd, 1991; Klein, 1991; Sabo, 1993 and Wagner, 1990) regarding the term ‘globalization’. Maguire’s work, especially that which relates to the role of the ‘media/sport production complex’ in 1993 (a term coined by Jhally, 1989) has also attempted to bring out the interconnections between globalization and national identity and is therefore of relevance to my study. Although Maguire’s work has been mildly criticized by his fellow figurationalists (see Murphy et al., 2000) for the occasional tendency to reify, it is usually agreed that Maguire’s contribution to research on the globalization of sport is immense. Maguire’s work on English basketball (1988), and his later works on American football and hockey (1990, 1993, 1996), which adapt the concept of global cultural flows (referred to by Appadurai, 1990 as ‘scapes’), to the sport sub-culture as well as the sport labor migration concept (Bale and Maguire, 1994), has served as the basic theoretical framework of my study.

Other ideas concerning globalization developed by figurational sociologists and also relevant to this research, are those which address the relations between Western societies (such as the United States) and non-Western societies (such as Israel),

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4 Some sociologists (mainly functionalists) write as though societies have “needs” and “purposes. Process sociologists would define such a tendency as ‘reification’.
particularly relating to the development and spread of sport (such as basketball). As
Murphy et al. (2000) point out, attention has been directed towards key insights which
include: the concept of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties (see for example
Maguire, 1993), the idea of commingling of Western and non-Western cultures, the
subsequent emergence of a new amalgam and the ongoing attempts by established
groups to integrate outsider people(s) as workers and/or consumers.

1.3 Purposes

"Experience is not what happens to you. It is what you do with what happens to you"
Aldous Huxley

In his book, Norbert Elias: an introduction, Stephen Mennel (1992) affirms that Elias,
in supervising many doctoral dissertations, has always

...encouraged students to look sociologically at something in which they
were already involved, keenly interested, and knew a good deal about.
Gisele Freund was already a keen amateur photographer when she went to
Frankfurt, and Elias suggested she write her doctorate on the social
development of photography in the nineteenth century. Though the thesis
was completed in exile and submitted to the Sorbonne (Freund, 1936), she
credits Elias with the beginnings of her career as an internationally known
photographer and scholar of photography (Mennel, 1989:15).

In the same manner, I chose to research the development of basketball in Israel and
the Americanization process within Israeli society and Israel basketball because of my
keen interest in sport and my long-time involvement in basketball.

I have been playing basketball since the age of 8. For most of my basketball career I
played for one of the two basketball clubs in my hometown, Petach Tikva, which is
located in the center of Israel. At the age of 17 I was promoted to the first team of
"Elizur" Petach Tikva and made my first ever appearance with the team, which
competed in the second league at the time. However, when I turned 18 years old I was
drafted, like all of my teammates, as well as all of the youngsters who turn 18 in Israel into the Israeli Defense Force for three years of compulsory service. As a fit young athlete I was assigned to serve in a combat unit which prevented me from pursuing my basketball career any further. Although I tried to play basketball whenever I had the opportunity, it would be accurate to say that army service deprived me, like many other keen basketball players, of the opportunity of further developing my skills for playing the game at a higher level. It should be noted that as far as basketball is concerned, the ages of 18-20 are considered to be crucial in any player's career development. Therefore being drafted into the armed forces, which interferes with practicing and playing basketball for such a long and crucial period of time, is adjudged by many to be an end-of-career development for most players. Nonetheless, my passion for the game did not halt even after two years of service. When I was offered the chance to attend an officers course I agreed assuming that as an officer I might be relocated closer to my home and would be able to go back to practicing basketball. The course required my enlisting for an additional year of service (making four instead of three years of army service), yet the passion for the game and my hope that I would play again convinced me that I should sign up. With great expectations I graduated from six intensive months of the officers course only to be caught up in the Gulf crisis early in 1991 that, as will be explained in chapter 8, paralyzed basketball activity in Israel at the time. At the end of the Gulf war, my requests to be assigned to a unit that would allow me to return to basketball were repeatedly denied, and so was my request for an early discharge to take advantage of an offer I received for a basketball scholarship in the United States.

Following my release from the army I tried to rejoin my team and found out that times had changed. It was not just readapting to the game I had left three and a half years earlier, it was also the team's make-up and the attitude of the players towards the game that were different.

The inclusion of one foreign player in each team in the second division, in addition to many young talented players who could not find places in their former upper division

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5 Since compulsory service consists of three years any extra time in the service is a full-paid term.
6 My younger and more talented brother, Amit, suffered the same fate as myself. As a young player he was invited to join and subsequently played for the Israeli under-19 team which won fifth place in the
teams due to the influx of the Americans, blocked my way back to my old team. Moreover, the process of professionalization divided the second league into two main groups of teams. The first was comprised of those who could adapt to the changes and had the resources to continue playing in the league, and the second was made up of those who had to pay the price of not being able to meet the growing financial demands of operating a professional team. Unfortunately for me, my former team, "Elizur" Petach Tikva, was part of the latter group of teams that were forced to shut down, and consequently I had to find another team in a lower division.

Therefore it was my personal experience, and the fact that I was personally acquainted with many influential people in Israeli basketball, which led me to choose Israeli basketball as the main focus of my research. The reason for electing to study the Americanization process (as part of a broader globalization process), as part of the research was not only my status as an Israeli citizen but also my experience as a graduate student in the United States. Following my graduation from Zinman College in Wingate Institute, I went to the United States to carry out my post-graduate studies at Clark University in Massachusetts. My time in the United States helped me to appreciate that there were ways of doing things and aspects of culture, which I associated with life in Israel, which owed their origins to America. The phenomenon of large numbers of Israeli people absorbing - some might say embracing - an 'American way of life' has long been accepted at a common sense level in my society, but the extent and nature of this influence has not yet been subjected to systematic academic scrutiny in Israel. Studying for my Masters degree in communications at an American university gave me some insight into this process, as well as some understanding of the influence of the American media in Israel and other societies of the world. Moreover I became aware of the fact that this media influence was but one dimension (referred to in this thesis, as part of five other 'scapes' as the 'mediascape') of many other overlapping processes involved in the 'Americanization' of Israeli culture. This combination of personal experience and my developing research interests has prompted my attempt to accomplish another goal that has engaged me since my days as a student at Wingate Institute, and that is to advance the sociology of the European championship held in Germany in 1990. Prior to his being drafted into the IDF he was offered places on first division teams in Israel. However his army service period deprived him of the opportunity of playing basketball for the entire three year period and consequently he went back to play in a second division team.
sport in Israel. The sociology of sport is still rather undeveloped in Israel, and the literature probing the relationship between “sport” and “society” is extremely sparse. It is my hope that my research will contribute to a growing understanding of this important field of study.

At the same time, however, it is important to point out that during my research I have tried to maintain a balance between “involvement” and “detachment”. These categories were coined by Elias (1956) in his essay “Problems of involvement and detachment” in which he rejects the static categories of “objective” and “subjective” as means of describing ways of thinking about the world. Elias suggests that it is more useful to think in terms of different attitudes or ways of thinking as being characterized by higher or lower degrees of involvement and detachment. Elias points out that it is not possible for us to obtain “ultimate truth” or complete detachment and indeed, he notes that certain kinds of involvement actually facilitate the research process (Waddington, 1994:vi). Furthermore, I have attempted to use my ‘insider’ status as a basketball player of more than average ability, as a qualified coach and as a native born Israeli, as a resource to hone my understanding of the development of Israeli basketball and to add to the insights emerging from my research. At the same time I have attempted to make use of my sociological training and firsthand knowledge of American society to temper that involvement with the required degree of detachment.

However, throughout the research process I was aware of some ‘gaps’ in Elias’s sociology of knowledge theory for which he was criticized. The main criticism of Elias’s sociology of knowledge concerns the clarity of his distinction between ‘involvement’ and ‘detachment’. Rojek (1986), argues that Elias never really told us exactly what constitutes either involvement or detachment, and provided ‘no

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7 Van Krieken (1998) criticized Elias for his attempt to present involvement and detachment as lying at opposite ends of a single axis. According to Van Krieken, Elias assumed a sort of hydraulic relationship between them, with one decreasing as the other increased, but they may, according to Van Krieken, actually lie on totally different axes, making it possible to be both highly detached and highly involved, for a science to be relatively ‘autonomous’ of its own producers and still be caught up in strong relations of involvement in its surrounding social context.

8 A number of critics, (see for example Rojek (1986), Layder (1986) and Pels (1991)), focus on Elias’s assumptions about the accessibility of ‘reality’ to human understanding, and accuse him of both ‘sophisticated empiricism’ and positivism – terms that are explained in this chapter on page 24.
guidelines, no mechanisms, no drill for attaining detachment'. Furthermore, Rojek claims that ‘...sociologists wishing to practise methodological detachment...must whistle in the dark’ (Rojek,1986:591). Dunning, Elias’s collaborator, agrees with Rojek’s comments on the lack of a connection between Elias’s concepts of involvement and detachment and the practicalities of social research, saying that Rojek ‘has correctly identified an area to which figurational sociologists need to devote a great deal more attention’ (Dunning,1992:254).

1.4 The research process

Numerous scholars (see for example Holsti, 1969, Hansen et al., 1998, Mills & Huberman, 1994 and Seale, 1998) offer step-by-step introductions to the research process. However, few of them noted that such a sequential approach is rarely implemented in full during the actual process of researching. As Murphy et al. (1994) noted, the research process tends to be much more untidy than is often conveyed by published research. Similarly, Becker et al. (1961), the authors of a qualitative study of medical students, begin their chapter titled “Design of the study” by stating:

In one sense, our study had no design. That is, we had no well-worked-out set of hypotheses to be tested, no data-gathering instruments purposely designed to secure information relevant to these hypotheses, no set of analytic procedures specified in advance. Insofar, as the term “design” implies these features of elaborate prior planning, our study had none. If we take the idea of design in a larger and looser sense, using it to identify those elements of order, system and consistency our procedures did exhibit, our study had a design. We can say what this was by describing our original view of the problem, our theoretical and methodological commitments, and the way these affected our research and were affected by it as we proceeded (Becker et al.,1961:17).

Thus, I believe, with Elias, that good research arises out of a dynamic interplay between empirical observation and theory with neither being subservient to the other. Many models presents a well-designed model of the research process as a logical
progression of stages or tasks, from problem formulation to the generation of conclusions or theory that are necessary in planning or carrying out a study. As I have found out during the research process, things tend to be different in reality. The activities of collecting and analyzing data, using and modifying theory, elaborating or refocusing the research questions, and identifying and dealing with the validity of the research, all influence one another, and tend to become part of an overlapping process that continues, more or less, simultaneously. Furthermore, during the process I had to reconsider, and sometimes modify, some pre-designed decisions in response to new developments or changes that occurred.

1.5 Research questions

Unlike most models of design research, that place the formulation of research questions at the beginning of the design process, I did not specify my research questions until the purposes and context were clear. Along the process, these questions remained sensitive and adaptable to the implications of other parts of my research design. It was only after a significant amount of work on my research (for example, the literature review) that it became clear to me which specific questions it made sense to try answering.

At the beginning of the process I entered the field with an 'open-mind' and have tried to look at all areas of interest worth investigating. As Maxwell (1998) asserts, every researcher begins with a substantial base of experience and theoretical knowledge, and these inevitably generate certain questions about the phenomena studied. These initial questions frame the study, influence decisions about methods, and are one basis for further focusing and the development of more specific questions. However, these specific questions are generally the result of an interactive design process, rather than the starting point for that process.

Hence, my research questions serve two main purposes: first, they have helped me to focus the study (the questions' relationship to my purposes and conceptual context) and second, they have given me guidance how it should conducted (their relationship to the method and validity). Qualitative researchers, as Maxwell (1998) explains, tend to generate two kinds of questions which are much better suited to process theory (as
in my research) than to variance theory\(^9\): questions concerning the *meaning* of events and activities to the people involved in them and questions on the influence of the physical and the social *context* of these events and activities.

Since both these types of questions involve situation-specific phenomena, they do not lend themselves to the kinds of comparison and control that the variance theory requires. Instead, they generally involve an open-ended, inductive approach, in order to discover what these meanings and influences are and how they are involved in these events and activities – an inherently processual orientation.

The main research question in my study is: how far can developments in Israeli basketball be explained as aspects of an Americanization process? Recognizing, of course, that Americanization needs to be looked at as part of broader globalization processes I also ask what constitutes Americanization? Is it simply a question of the presence of a cultural product from a ‘foreign’ culture or does it involve a shift in the habitus\(^{10}\) and conscious make-up of people? How ‘intended’ is the process? How complete does the process have to be for domination to be said to have occurred? What abilities do people possess to understand, embrace and/or resist these processes? What constitutes the ‘indigenous/authentic’ culture that the foreign culture threatens? In the formulation of the research questions\(^{11}\) I have followed Elias’ (1986) argument that ‘*knowledge about sport is knowledge about society*’. I have used Israeli professional basketball as the prism to identify just how far one can say that an Americanization process is occurring within Israeli society.

Using a figurational perspective I have argued that in order to understand individuals one must look at the social and historical contexts, as well as the network of relationships, in which they are involved. Hence, my main assumption was that in order to understand Israeli society, and basketball as part of that society, one must look at Israel in an historical context as well as at the diversity of individuals and

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9 Variance questions are often best answered by quantitative approaches, which are ways of determining *whether* a particular result is causally related to one or another variable, and to *what extent* they are related.

10 By using the term ‘habitus’, in its Eliasian sense, I mean ‘second nature’ or ‘embodied social learning’. A ‘social habitus’ is one shared with a group (Dunning, 1997:486).

groups which make up Israeli society, and the relationships between them. Since these relations are all part of a process, my aim was to gain a greater understanding of the process of the state-formation of Israel, as well as of other processes such as professionalization, secularization, and militarization which are a direct result of such dynamic relations.

1.6 Methods

Choosing the most appropriate method or methods for research is an important element when planning research. While reviewing the literature on social science research methods, one is aware of the on-going debate regarding the most appropriate philosophical doctrine from which methods 'should' be derived. This has typically been discussed in terms of phenomenology\(^\text{12}\) and positivism\(^\text{13}\) or qualitative and quantitative (Silverman, 1998). Nevertheless, according to Silverman, methodologies, like theories, can not be true or false, only more or less useful. Taking this argument further, Seale (1998) claims that:

Social and cultural research can be understood as proceeding as a series of genres. An analogy with a school of painting may help to explain this. Convention has it that impressionism, cubism, fauvism, post-impressionism and so on describe particular approaches to fine art around the early years of the twentieth century. No one now tries to claim that one of these is more 'true' than another. At most this is a matter of taste; beauty is a more dominant criterion than truth. Can we understand schools of social and cultural research in this way? Is a preference for numbers, for ethnography

\(^{12}\) Phenomenology, on the other hand, is a philosophical method of enquiry, involving the systematic investigation of consciousness, brought to the study of the social world by Alfred Schutz. The phenomenological approach is concerned with micro-social interaction – that is, interaction on a small scale, between individuals or within small groups. Schutz argued that, unlike the natural world, the social world is intrinsically meaningful. He disagrees with the positivist view that tends to treat consciousness as being determined by the natural processes of human neurophysiology (Filmer et al., 1998:30-31).

\(^{13}\) The term Positivism was coined by August Comte. Positivism, or 'the positive philosophy', has indicated the broad direction of his views. As a philosophy of science, positivism is identified with empiricism, which is a belief in the importance of observation and the collection of facts, assumed to exist prior to theories. Positivism is also a naturalist approach in that the methods of the social sciences are seen as appropriately modeled on that of the natural sciences. The aim was to discover 'laws' in society, that operate in a manner similar to the laws of nature, so that just as technology successfully manipulated the physical world, a social technology could engineer rational changes in the social world (Filmer et al., 1998:25).
or semiotic analysis simply a matter of taste? At one level it is so. Nobody is forced to ‘belong’ to a particular school of social research, and aesthetic taste certainly enters the picture in explaining why some individuals come to be committed to a particular approach (Seale, 1998:2).

According to Van Krieken (1998), rather than engaging in arguments about the ‘truth’ or ‘falsity’ of knowledge, Elias (1971) thought it was more appropriate to assess the relationship of any given idea or theory with its predecessors, with specific reference to its ‘object-adequacy’ or ‘reality-congruence, and its ‘survival value’. In Elias’ words:

...what practising scientists test if they examine the results of their enquiries, both on the empirical and the theoretical level, is not whether these results are the ultimate and final truth, but whether they are an advance in relation to the existing fund of knowledge in their field. In scientific, though not in moral matters, the concept of ‘truth’ is an anachronism; criteria of advance, though not yet highly conceptualized, are widely used in the practice of sciences. They form a central issue in any non-relativistic sociological study and theory of knowledge (Elias, 1971:353).

As one can see, there are many methodological choices available to researchers in their studies. In addition, there are many other approaches, which will not be discussed in this thesis, which are based on preliminary layouts regarding epistemology, ontology and human nature. Silverman (1998) reduced the various approaches to two main methodologies: quantitative methodology, which uses numbers to test hypotheses and, qualitative methodology, which tries to use first-hand familiarity with different settings to induce hypotheses.

In my research, I chose to embrace a more qualitative approach. While focussing on the development of basketball in Israel in addition to the Americanization process, I adopted a developmental approach, which Elias (1986) describes as “indispensable for advances in the study of human society” and is historically rooted. For that
reason, my data are derived from three main sources: ethnography\textsuperscript{14}, content analysis and interviews.

This study tried to present as comprehensive and complete a picture of a small social group in Israel as possible. More specifically, I tried to provide an 'object adequate' account of the development of basketball in Israel. While ethnographers assume a holistic outlook in research, they attempt to describe as much as possible about a culture or a social group. This description might include the group’s history, religion, politics, economy and environment. Hence, as illustrated in chapter 4, the State of Israel, the culture which is the basis of this research, is a home for a widely diverse population from many different ethnic, religious, cultural and social backgrounds. Therefore, looking at Israel’s society as a process, many of the relations and much of the dynamics surrounding these diverse groups in the society were revealed and analyzed, as they are important for grasping the fabric of Israel’s society. However, while ethnographers or symbolic interactionists conduct a microanalysis of the culture (see for example Denzin, 1989), I based my research on figurational theory, trying to view Israel and basketball developmentally and to examine the interdependence between the 'macro' and the 'micro' as advised by Elias. Furthermore, I used content analysis as well as interviews to outline the interrelated contexts within multi-layered research and the way in which broad social changes and processes impacted upon groups and individuals.

As Holsti (1969) notes, nearly all research in the social sciences and humanities depends in one way or another on careful reading of materials. Hence, content analysis is a basic research tool, which may be useful in various disciplines and for many classes of research problems. From its beginnings at the turn of the twentieth

\textsuperscript{14} Ethnography is the art and science of describing a group or culture: the description of a small tribal group in some exotic land or of a classroom in middle-class suburbia. The task is much like the one taken on by an investigative reporter, who interviews relevant people, reviews records, weighs the credibility of one person’s opinions against another’s, looks for ties to special interests and organizations, and writes the story for the concerned public as well as for professional colleagues. A key difference between the investigative reporter and the ethnographer, however, is that where the journalist seeks out the unusual – the murder, the plane crash, the bank robbery – the ethnographer writes about the routine, daily lives of people. The more predictable patterns of human thought and behavior are the focus of inquiry (Fetterman, 1998). In that sense, this study looked at a small group of people involved in Israeli basketball. I have started with developments at the level of the state and tried to understand how broader interdependencies and figurations affected face-to-face relationships among the basketball community.
century mainly as a means of keeping inventories of the contents of American newspapers and for journalistic studies, content analysis grew in the middle part of the century to become part of larger and theoretically much richer projects of social and political analysis. The method was increasingly integrated into larger research efforts involving not just the analysis of media content, but also other methods of inquiry and types of data (Hansen, 1998:93). Content analysis also grew to become an important component in the armoury of studies of international media flows, carried out within wider debates and concerns about a new world information and communication order and about cultural imperialism, development communication, globalization and transnational information and image flows (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1984 as cited in Hansen, 1998).

As Bernard (1988) notes, qualitative data analysis depends heavily on the presentation of selected anecdotes and comments from informants: quotes that lead the reader to understand quickly what took the researcher months or years to figure out. As Murphy et al. (1994) explain, content analysis requires that the researcher read the text with scrupulous care\textsuperscript{15}. The researcher must have a capacity to empathize with the period and/or culture in focus. At the same time the researcher must be on the look-out for any inconsistencies. However, the aim should not be to trip people up, to assign responsibility, identify moral turpitude or demonstrate mendacity. Rather, the aim should be to understand the period, the culture, the ideology or the individuals in question as adequately as possible. This task requires that the researcher bring to the text a combination of empathy and detachment. Furthermore, as Murphy (1994a) notes, the researcher should not read texts as if they exist in isolation. Since they are all products of human authorship, they are partial expressions of the values and standards of the author and are embedded in a given culture and in a particular historical era (Murphy, 1994a: xxx).

Very little has been published in Israel on the development or history of basketball. Thus, in my study of Israeli basketball I have gathered and analyzed texts mainly from the three daily newspapers published in Israel: *Ha'aretz*, *Yediot Aharonot* and *Ma'ariv*. *Ha'aretz*, founded in 1919, is Israel's oldest daily, enjoying prestige and a

\textsuperscript{15} See for example Murphy et al. 'Soccer crowd disorder and the press' in Murphy et al. (1990) *Football on Trial* for extensive discussion.
reputation for solid, high-level reporting. It is owned by the Shocken media conglomerate which also owns a publishing house and many local papers. Yediot Aharonot, founded in 1939, has the highest circulation - some two-thirds of all Hebrew newspaper readers. Such a circulation is without parallel in Western countries. It is the major component of the Moses family media conglomerate, which also owns a publishing house, produces magazines and local papers and is part owner of a music firm. Ma'ariv, founded in 1948, was for many years the paper with the largest circulation, but it has since lost ground to its rival, Yediot Aharonot. It is owned by the Nimrodi family which also owns a publishing company and a music firm and produces popular magazines as well as local newspapers (MFA,1998). Gathering so much information from these newspapers forced me, throughout my research, to establish the authenticity and accuracy of the information they conveyed. Given the rivalry between Israeli papers, and since part of the texts might be prejudiced opinion or contain a hidden agenda, I read the text with particular care. I was also aware of the fact that some papers might involve, as Murphy (1994a) notes, deliberate exaggeration to attract attention to or backing for a particular cause.

The search for relevant information in the papers was not an easy task. I first realized how difficult the search would be when I approached Israel’s largest library, the Beit Ariela library, in Tel-Aviv. I was disappointed, yet not surprised, to find out that although the library holds an immense archive of all three papers, the sport section was incomplete or missing from the archive. According to one of the librarians, the sport section was never systematically kept because of editorial considerations, namely, that demand for the sport section was low. However, my connections at Wingate Institute allowed me to use the Institute’s archives which contain many of the missing papers as well as rare documentary files which can not be found elsewhere. Yet, my biggest problem was to find the relevant data material from an archive which was not sorted by any regular system of sports class (or any other classes for that matter). Furthermore, the coverage of sport in general, and of basketball in particular, in the Israeli papers up until the mid 1980s was so limited that it was almost impossible to track any phenomena systematically. I was fortunate to be assisted by Israel Paz, a senior journalist, who worked for more than 50 years as a sports journalist, and was able to recall many of the issues I was investigating. His
ability to direct me to certain dates and papers helped me a great deal in finding proper material from the papers.

I faced similar problems when trying to track down discussions about significant developments in Israeli basketball in the parliamentary records. I was looking for information about the problems facing Israeli basketball in the early 1990's but the discussions were not coded or sorted in any way that would help me, or anyone else for that matter, to track them easily. Again, with the help of a friend who covers parliamentary issues for Israeli radio, I was able to trace the desired debate and use appropriate extracts from the texts.

Nevertheless, after collecting most of the required data I still needed to interpret it properly. As Hansen (1998) notes, perhaps the main problem with evaluative categories is that they generally require a considerable degree of interpretation by the researcher. This is, therefore, why, during the text evaluation and categorizing of the material, I tried to embrace a ‘detour via detachment’ as suggested by Elias. I also tried to interpret the ‘overall tone’ of the article and present it adequately in the text.

Notwithstanding, the main vehicle for data collection were interviews with key personnel. To my mind, there is no other method which allows access to so many different kinds of people and different types of information. As Ackroyd and Hughes (1981) put it:

Using as data what the respondent says about himself or herself potentially offers the social researcher access to vast storehouses of information. The social researcher is not limited to what he or she can immediately perceive or experience, but is able to cover as many dimensions and as many people as resources permit (quoted in Haralambos and Holborn, 1995:841).

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16 The process of evaluative categories required me not just to sort what is relevant sociologically to the research but, based on my 'inside' knowledge, to identify the main actors in the process.

17 These people were chosen because of their expertise as well as their intensive involvement in Israeli basketball. Nevertheless, another consideration in choosing these people was their availability for interview.
I conducted a total of 22 interviews with Israeli, American and naturalized players, basketball coaches, IBA leaders and administrators, lawyers, reporters, journalists, commentators and university professors. There is a continuum of interview situations based on the amount of control one tries to exercise over the responses of the interviewees. Usually, the interviews range from structured interviews to unstructured interviews (informal interviewing). If one divides the kinds of interviews even further, one would normally finds four kinds of interviews: structured interview, semi-structured interview, unstructured interview and informal interview. (Bernard, 1988).

I used all four types of interview in my interview process. However, only two of the interviews were fully structured and were conducted by electronic mail, via the Internet. In these two cases, I repeatedly sent the questions and later received the answers. Most of the other interviews were characterized by minimum control over the interviewees’ responses. The idea was to encourage people to “open up” and let them express themselves in their own way and pace. Since most, if not all, the interviewees came from different backgrounds (yet, were connected to sport and/or Americanization), it made no sense to utilize highly structured interviews that would fit all the interviewees. Therefore, I used semi-structured interviews which I found required particular interview skills which I acquired during the course of these interviews. With some interview experience in the past, I knew that I should have a written list of all questions and topics that needed to be covered in a particular order. However, I discovered that once I had overcome the obstacle of getting hold of the persons I wanted to interview, the real challenge was to maintain a certain power balance in the interaction process between myself and the interviewees, that would lead me to gain more information from the sources. Nonetheless, in retrospect, it took me several interviews to gain experience in the process. Therefore, the quality of the information obtained from the later interviews is probably higher than that gained from those conducted earlier.

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18 As detailed in figure 2 below  
19 the Internet — a vast global network connecting networks of computers from varied institutions, agencies, business industry etc (Hansen et al, 1998)  
20 As described in figure 1, looking at the interview as a process of social interaction between interviewer and interviewee leads to the desirable outcome.
Figure 1: The Interview as a Social Process

Social Situation

Respondent Attributes

Interviewer Attributes

Demographic Characteristics

Personality /Information Experience

Attitudes

Expectations

Motives

perceptions

BEHAVIOUR

BEHAVIOUR

INTERVIEW

PRODUCT

Perception of each other and the task
Figure 2: Names of interviewees and dates of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of interviewee</th>
<th>Title / Job</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ofer Shelach</td>
<td>Journalist (Maa'riv)/ basketball commentator (Sports Channel)</td>
<td>13/9/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel Paz</td>
<td>Senior journalist</td>
<td>26/10/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Klein</td>
<td>Ex-Coach of Mac and Hapoel Tel Aviv, Israel national team, Sturen Cologne (Germany), German national team</td>
<td>11/11/98, 22/2/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naftali Goshen</td>
<td>Secretary of Israel Basketball Association</td>
<td>3/1/99, 19/5/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eran Sela</td>
<td>Journalist – Head of basketball desk (Maa'riv)</td>
<td>1/9/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tal Brody</td>
<td>Ex- Maccabi Tel Aviv and Israeli player (Naturalized Jew)</td>
<td>15/3/99 (email ITV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willy Sims</td>
<td>Ex- Maccabi Tel Aviv and Hapoel Tel Aviv (naturalized American)</td>
<td>2/1/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Kennedy</td>
<td>American player (Hapoel Galil Elion)</td>
<td>4/6/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviv Lavy</td>
<td>Journalist / basketball commentator</td>
<td>16/5/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zvika Sheraf</td>
<td>Ex. Coach of Mac and Hapoel Tel Aviv, Israel national team, PAOK and Aris Saloniki (Greece)</td>
<td>14/1/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Kaplan</td>
<td>Ex-Hapoel Ramat Gan and Israel player (Naturalized Jew)</td>
<td>5/11/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomer Steinhower</td>
<td>Basketball Player – Mac.Raanana and Israel national team</td>
<td>3/1/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myelin Tenzer</td>
<td>CEO Sports channel</td>
<td>5/8/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avi Shiler</td>
<td>Ex. Mac Tel Aviv player</td>
<td>16/5/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momo Luzki</td>
<td>Manager and ex-player of Israel national team</td>
<td>15/1/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaby Wiemann</td>
<td>Prof. of communications University</td>
<td>15/9/98 (Email ITV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An excellent opportunity to gain more experience in the process of interviewing was given to me in late 1998 when I was already engaged in collecting my data. My superior commander in the army asked me whether, as part of my reserve duty that year, I would lead an orientation program for officers, who in the future would have to select candidates for our army unit (Galily, 1999). I was given a month to complete an orientation program that had to be focused, among other research subjects, on the various ways of interviewing candidates. For that purpose, I spent two weeks in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) Research Center for Behavioral Science (MMDA), where I was assisted by full-time researchers. Although I found the interviews in the army a little different from those I was conducting as part of my research (see for example Galily & Almog, 1999), some similarities were apparent in the dynamic relations, especially the use of probing question techniques and non-verbal communications, which I practiced and found very useful both inside and outside the army setting.

As previously stated, I found that one of the most important aspects of the interview process was to get the interviewees (all different types) to feel comfortable in answering my questions. The different types of people I was interviewing made it sometimes essential to made quick adjustments, as well as to be flexible.
By using open-ended questions I tried to focus on a topic yet encourage the interviewees to provide the information they thought was important. Yet, during this process, I tried to avoid several traps. For example, a few of the interviewees were people who could talk for hours without interruption, while others tried to lead me to issues they felt were important (though not concerned with my area of interest). Therefore, I found it useful to prepare a set of questions which I wanted to cover, and marked them as the interview progressed. If I felt a specific topic or issue was being neglected or not completely covered, I used probing techniques - that is, ways of stimulating the interviewee to produce more information (Bernard, 1988). The most common, yet difficult technique, is the ‘silent probe’ which consists of just remaining quiet and waiting for the interviewee to continue. I found also the silence may be accompanied by a nod, or by mumbling “uh-huh” while focusing in the notepad. However, I discovered that while some interviewees were more fluent than others, some were more reflective and took their time. Thus, I was very careful not to jump in with verbal probes immediately after the interviewee was silent since some of them were just gathering their thoughts and preparing to say something important. Another effective kind of probe was to repeat the last thing an interviewee had said and then ask him to continue. This also demonstrated to the interviewee that I was following and understood what he had just said. It was important for me to generate a high level of response, after all, most of my interviews represented a one-time-chance to talk with the interviewee. Indeed, I found that asking longer questions often led to longer answers. However, I tried to avoid ‘leading’ the interviewee in a way that Lofland (1976) warns against: “What do you think about…” and “Don’t you think that…?” Moreover, I tried to avoid using strongly polarized alternatives such as “Should Maccabi Tel Aviv administrators have signed American players or should they not have signed any at all?”

In some of my interviews I needed to use different probing techniques due to the ‘nature’ of certain interviewees. For example, while in some cases when the interviewee provide a general summary and I wanted the details or when I asked questions that he considered obvious, I had to use a probe like “This may seem obvious, but...”. At the same time I found it useful to use a technique that I learned from a journalist friend: using a piece of information gathered from a previous interview to elicit more information from my respondent. I realized that the more I
seemed to know about the subject, the more interviewees felt comfortable in sharing their ideas and the less they felt they were divulging sensitive information. During the interviewing process I learned the importance of building a trusting relationship. Thus, for example, in some cases I saved the controversial questions for the end of the interview, so that the interviewee would not feel defensive or hostile towards me from the outset of our meeting.

Perhaps the most important lesson I learned from the interview process was how to manage the time during the interview. Some of the people I was interviewing could not dedicate as much time as I hoped, hence, while preparing for the interview, I took into consideration the fact that the interview could last less time than I expected. Therefore I needed to make sure that the most important issues would be covered first.

I also found that the use of technology was much help during the process. My use of the tape recorder, as well as my laptop computer in some cases, helped me to organise the data I collected. I used the computer for processing the data and for making any adjustments for it to be used in the text. However, I was also aware whilst transcribing the interviews that some data would not necessarily be used in the text. Given the fact that I was using only selected quotes and comments, I was trying to avoid what Lofland (1995) called the “two great sins”. The first “sin”, is excessive analysis, which involves the all-too-familiar practice of jargon writing and the avoidance of plain English to say plain things. One ought to bear in mind that large parts of this thesis (interviews, as well as investigation into literature and papers written originally in Hebrew) have had to be translated, in order to be used in the text. Although not always straightforward, the translation tries always to maintain the intention of the source. The second “sin” I was trying to avoid was that of not doing any analysis at all. Assuming that my data does not speak for itself, I tried to develop my ideas about what was going on clearly, and to illustrate them with selected quotes from my interview material.

21 Yet, one interviewee was keen on remaining anonymous and asked me not to mention his name under any circumstances.
1.7 Validity

A 'valid' method is one which shows what it intends to show. Since I believe that what is happening today is influenced by developments in the past, a valid method is one which traces the impact of that past e.g. a developmental approach. Similarly, greater validity is obtained for my findings if more object-adequate knowledge is obtained by trying to use one's insider knowledge to get to the meaning of basketball to its participants, but also by tempering this with a necessary degree of detachment so that I try not to let my own desires, feelings and emotions interfere with my attempt to see what is there rather than what I want to be there. Moreover, realizing that no single method is completely free from all validity threats, I used three different sets of research methods (triangulation). By doing so, I reduced the risk of systematic distortions inherent in the use of only one method.

1.8 Ethical considerations

Throughout the research process I was aware of ethical standards\textsuperscript{22} which should be maintained. These standards included, among others, informed consent to the interview process. Such consent, which is a basic ethical tenet of scientific research, was essential especially while using recording devices during the process of interviewing. All of my interviewees but one were comfortable with my use of recording devices. The only person who was not easy with such devices (and, furthermore, wished to remain anonymous) was not tape recorded. Throughout the research process I always tried to provide acknowledgements of and reference to the use of others' work. I explicitly identified, credited, and referenced the author when I used data or material verbatim from another person's written work, whether published or unpublished.

1.9 Funding

Throughout the research process, I was struggling with the financial burden of the research as well as tuition fee loans which I have been carrying since my previous studies at Wingate Institute, Clark University (USA) and the Centre for Research into Sport and Society at Leicester University (UK). It should be borne in mind that the major part of the fieldwork for this study was carried out in Israel, and I also spent a great deal of money on travel expenses. The fact that I have been a full-time student since late 1991, a status which prevented me from working most of that period, was of great significance since one should bear in mind that this period followed four years of compulsory army service. Unfortunately, I was not able to find any substantial help for my study, mainly due to the competitive nature of grant-seeking and partly because research in the sociology of sport in Israel is still in its infancy, with no funds available for this specific field. This situation had a constraining effect on my choice of methods (for example, one reason I did not conduct a larger ethnographic study was lack of time and resources). At the same time however, I did not ask the Israeli Basketball Association (or other body with a vested interest) for funds because of the constraints such financing might have had on the study. When applying for other grants, in broader areas such as sport or sociology, I was faced with a policy followed by most research grant administrators, which favored researchers from Israeli-based universities.

Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the various stages of the research process. The chapter addresses my approach towards the study and gives a detailed explanation of what I did and how, during the various stages of the fieldwork. Moreover, this chapter reviews my own experience prior to the research, the issues investigated and the assumptions I made while reflecting on the difficulties I faced in the course of carrying out this research.

The theoretical framework that has guided me throughout the process of writing this thesis, grows out of the work of Norbert Elias. The argument here is that concepts and
ideas of figurational sociologists, which already indentified the complexity of the power relations and interwoven processes that are involved in the development and diffusion of sport, can significantly contribute to an examination of development of basketball. For example, Elias' work on involvement and detachment, which primarily contributes to the sociology of knowledge (Dunning, 1992), provides some practical insights regarding the research process which I adopted in my study. Process/figurational sociologists try to overcome one of the main problems of sociological thinking. The concepts of the "individual" and of "society" which have the same quality of seeming to refer to static and isolated objects are a special handicap when studying figurations of interdependent people. Therefore, figurational sociologists usually conceptualize research problems in processual terms while avoiding the distinctions between the "actor" and his activity, between structures and processes, between agency and structure and between objects and relationships (Van Krieken, 1998).

Therefore, I have adopted an historical/developmental approach because I believe (as figurationalists do) that I can only adequately begin to understand the present if I have some understanding of the past and how things 'have come to be as they are'. Nonetheless, while recognizing the importance of broad developmental processes, I am also interested in how people experience these processes and how they cope with the problems of human interdependency. However, unlike other theorists, I avoided using terms of macro/micro because I believe they represent the unhelpful dichotomies of which Elias was so critical.
Chapter 2: The globalization process and the diffusion of sports

2.1 Introduction

The second chapter of the thesis lays the foundation for the theoretical grounds on which the research process is based. The chapter discusses the theoretical considerations of globalization in light of a specific cultural form - sport.

The main argument in this chapter, and throughout the thesis, is that globalization refers to interdependence among the world’s societies. The chapter will discuss several definitions of the concept of globalization and will focus on various dimensions of cultural flows.

The main focus of this thesis is the development of basketball in Israel. However, in order to understand the development of basketball in general and basketball in Israel (as one of 202 members of the Fédération Internationalé de Basketball Association) in particular, it is necessary that we first have an understanding of globalization processes and the globalization of sport per se. Furthermore, in order to arrive at better understanding of interpersonal and international power relations in today’s world, one must look first at the process of globalization. Globalization of sport, as part of the broader globalization process, has some explanatory power in the case of Israeli basketball, which is located geographically in Asia, competes in the European arena, and is dominated by imported American players.

2.2 The concept of globalization

The concept of ‘globalization’, often in a form that some scholars refer to as ‘Americanization’, 'mundialization, or ‘modernization’ has aroused a great deal of interest in the last two decades.

As Sabo (1993) defines it, the term ‘globalization’ generally refers to the growing interdependence among the world’s societies. What happens in any single society is increasingly influenced by its interaction with the many other societies on the globe.

"Americanization" is a much more useful term than "globalization" in the Canadian context. The specific practices of commercial sport that have eroded local autonomy began as explicitly American practices, and state-subsidized American-based cartels flood the Canadian market with American-focused spectacles, images, and souvenirs. But the term oversimplify the complexity of social determinations and masks the increasing role the Canadian bourgeoisie plays in continentalist sports. "American capitalist hegemony" is therefore preferable (Kidd, 1991:178).

Wagner (1990) prefers to use the term 'mundialization'. In his work on the diffusion of sport in Asia and Africa, he argues that globalization of sport is a result of a process in which sport gained popularity on a global basis thanks to the western media coverage. Similarly, Guttmann (1991) rejects the term 'Americanization' and uses the term 'modernization' in his work:

While terms such as mundialization and globalization are a welcome reminder that the social transformations of the present century are something more than a matter of unidirectional American influence, the concept of modernization is preferable because it also implies something about the nature of the global transformation (Guttmann, 1991:188).

Whatever definition we accept, it is commonly agreed that, as Robertson (1995) asserts, globalization concerns "the intersection of presence and absence, the interlacing of social events and social relations 'at a distance' with local contextualities" (Robertson, 1995:26). By this he means that globalization, similar to the concept of interdependency, is the recognition that what happens in any single society is influenced by its inter-actions with other societies on the globe (Horton, 1996:6).
2.3 Theorizing globalization

For Giddens (1990), globalization means the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Giddens, 1990:64). The increasing prosperity of an urban area in Singapore might be causally related, according to Giddens, via a complicated network of global economic ties, to the impoverishment of a neighbourhood in Pittsburgh whose local products are uncompetitive in world markets (Giddens, 1990:64). In his book *The consequences of modernity* (1990), Giddens presents four elements, each of which has a globalizing thrust: the rise of the nation-state system, the international division of labor, the emergence of world military blocs and the development of world capitalist economy.

Harvey et al (1996) asserted that, although there is no doubt that globalization processes are present, the extent to which our world is now globalized is still open to debate. To Harvey et al, globalization has reached a point where industrialized countries already live in a global world but the processes are at different developmental stages in these countries (Harvey et al. 1996:260).

Pursuing a line of nation-state classification, Sklair (1995) classified the global system using different terms to those used traditionally by many scholars, i.e. of First, Second and Third Worlds. Sklair prefers to use five different classifications based on income/population, trade, resources, quality of life, and blocs. Although Sklair agrees that these terms are convenient and are, for many purposes, useful labels, he recognizes that they conceal as much as they reveal. Notwithstanding, Sklair himself admits that this kind of classification approach has difficulty in generating explanations of what is going on in the global system. For example, if one uses the term 'widening gap' between the rich and the poor, Sklair notes that there are underprivileged individuals and groups in the first world as well as in the third and the second world. To Sklair, it is not a geographical accident of birth that determines whether an individual or a group is going to be rich or poor, but a question of class location (Sklair, 1995:25).
Harvey and Houle (1994) suggest, that globalization does not simply reflect the progressive development of a homogenized global metaculture in which all individuals consume the same products. Globalization, at the cultural level, involves the emergence of certain elements of a common ethos and values shared by an increasing number of individuals with a sense of humanity’s shared destiny. The fact that the distant\(^{23}\) has become visible and immediate contributes to the emergence of global cultural phenomena and a global social reality.

Featherstone (1990) characterized globalization as involving a trans-societal cultural process, which takes a variety of forms, such as exchange and flow of goods, people, information, knowledge and images. All of these give rise to communication processes, which gain some autonomy on a global level, and can be identified, in today’s world. The process also involves, according to Rowe et al. (1994), erosion or obliteration of national political sovereignty; of economic independence and cultural distinctiveness.

In his attempt to map the global condition, Robertson (1992) points out that there is a general autonomy and 'logic' to the globalization process, which operates in interdependence with societal and other more conventionally studied sociocultural processes (Robertson,1992:59).

Robertson offers a temporal-historical path, using skeletal terms leading to the present circumstances of a very high degree of global density.

- The first phase of globalization, the *germinal* phase, took place in Europe from the early fifteenth until the mid-eighteenth centuries. It started with the growth of national communities and a downplaying of the medieval ‘transnational’ system; the spreading of the Catholic church, in addition to the dissemination of concepts

\(^{23}\) Trying to put the ‘distant becomes closer’ concept in context, Chandler (1988) reminded us that, in July 1929, Transcontinental Air Transport inaugurated a New York – Los Angeles air rail link that took a record of forty-eight hours. In June 1933, a United Airlines Boeing 247 established a coast-to-coast record of nineteen hours (but the aircraft could carry only ten passengers). By 1946, a Constellation airplane could get from one coast to another in eleven hours. It was not until 1958 that the ‘jet age’ starts, replacing older slower forms of propulsion (Chandler,1988:175). Breaking the sound barrier with the ‘Concorde’ jet at the beginning of the 1980s, making the trip from London to New-York approximately a two hour journey, is the latest example of this ‘shrinking world’ process.
and ideas about humanity; and the induction of modern geography during the expansion of the Gregorian calendar.

• The second phase, the incipient phase, lasted mainly in Europe, from the mid-eighteenth century until the 1870s. It is reflected by: a sharp increase of ideas of the homogeneous and unitary state; cohesion towards conceptions of formalized inter-national relations; international exhibitions, increased numbers of legal conventions and agencies dealing with international and transnational regulation and communication; and the thematization of nationalism-internationalism issues.

• The take off phase, the third phase, stretching from the 1870s until the mid-1920s, can be identified by: tendencies leading to a single-form ‘international society’ and an increasingly singular, but not unified, conception of humankind; inclusion of a number of non-European societies in ‘international society’; international formalization and attempted implementation of ideas about humanity; globalization of immigration restrictions which occurred with the increased number and speed of global forms of communication; development of global competitions such as the Olympic games and the Nobel prize; and implementation of world-time and near global adoption of the Georgian calendar. However, possibly the most important event in this phase was the outbreak of the First World War.

• The fourth phase, the struggle for hegemony, lasted from the mid 1920s until the late 1960s. This phase is characterized by a process, which continued from the end of the previous phase, marked by disputes and wars over the fragile terms of the dominant globalization process; the establishment of the League of Nations which later become the United Nations. The outbreak of the Second World War, including the Holocaust, the use of the atomic bomb, and the crystallization of the Third World alongside the cold war - conclude the fourth phase.

• The last phase, the uncertainty phase, commenced in the late 1960s, displaying crisis tendencies in the early 1990s; the heightening of global consciousness in the late 1960s; the landing on the moon; the end of the cold war together with a manifest rise of the problem of ‘rights’, and widespread access to nuclear weaponry. An acceleration occurred in means of global communication and the consolidation of global media system (including rivalries about such); Societies were increasingly faced by problems of multiculturality and polyethnicity,
accompanied by conceptions of individuals which were complicated by gender, sexual, ethnic and racial considerations. Civil rights become a global issue and worldwide environmental movements were established; there was an awakening of interest in world civil society and world citizenship (Robertson, 1992:58).

While Robertson describes the development of a global culture, he claims that globalization processes do not lead to homogeneity. For Robertson, global processes involve both the particularization of universalism and the universalization of particularism (Robertson, 1992:130). Using Robertson’s words, “globalization is best understood as indicating the problem of the form in terms of which the world becomes "united" but by no means integrated” (Robertson, 1992:51).

2.4 The dimensions of cultural flows

Trying to structure the process into a complex of an overlapping, disjunctive order, Appadurai (1990) has suggested that one should look at the relationship among five dimensions of global cultural flow which can be termed as ‘landscapes’: 'ethnoscapes', 'technoscapes', 'mediascapes', 'financescapes', and 'ideoscapes'.

By ‘ethnoscapes’, Appadurai means the large numbers of moving groups and persons, such as tourists, immigrants, refugees, and guest-workers, that affect the politics of and between nations to, up to this time, an unusual degree.

2.4.1 The ‘technoscapes’ and ‘financescapes’

On the ‘technoscape’ level, we can spot a movement of various technologies in different shapes and forms, that are increasingly driven by money flows, political possibilities and the availability of both low and highly-skilled labor rather than obvious economies of scale, political control or market rationality. However, these ‘landscapes’ cannot be understood according to Appadurai, without thinking talking in terms of fiscal and investment flows that link economies through a global network of currency and capital transfer. The term ‘financescape’ can be related to the rapid and hard-to follow flux of capital and how currency markets, national stock-exchanges and commodity speculations move mega-monies through national turnstiles at blinding
speed, with vast absolute implications for small differences in percentage points and
time units (Appadurai, 1990:298).

2.4.2 The ‘mediascapes’

‘Mediascapes’ refers to the distribution of electronic capabilities to produce and
disseminate information such as newspapers, magazines, television stations and film
production studios which are now available to large numbers of private and public
interests throughout the world.

McLuhan (1964) refers to the post-literate period as the beginning of the “global
village” epoch. Boyd-Barrett (1997) explains that traditionally, news agencies
reported news and sold news to other media as they were ‘wholesalers’. Major
agencies like Reuters (UK) and the Associated Press (AP) (USA) established
international reporting networks and distributed news to media and non-media clients
around the world. Clients included national agencies that traded, in unequal exchange,
their national news for the international coverage of the global agencies. National
agencies then compiled news wires, combining national and international news to
domestic clients, who also drew on the services of local agencies for news of
particular cities or specialist subjects. News agencies gave clients access to a wider
and more dependable range of global, political economic, and sport news through text,
news photography, video and electronic networks, than any single client could provide
unilaterally (Boyd-Barrett, 1997:131). Mediascapes also refers, according to
Appadurai, to the images of the world created by these media. Such images involve
many complicated inflections, depending on their mode: documentary or
entertainment; local, national, or transnational audiences, and the interest of those who
own and control them.

However, it is important to note at this point that these mediascapes (especially in
their broadcasting form) provide large and complex repertoires of images, narratives
and ideas to viewers around the world; that commodities, news, and politics are
profundely mixed. The result of such a mix, according to Appadurai, is that the line

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24 In “Understanding Media” (1964), Marshall McLuhan divided human history into three eras: The
pre-literate era, was based on traditional oral communications; the literate era began with the invention of
print; the new media used devices such as television and computers as part of the post-literate
period in human society.
between ‘realistic’ and ‘fictional’ landscapes is blurred, and as a consequence, the further people are from the direct experiences of metropolitan life, the more likely they are to construct ‘imagined worlds’ which are chimerical, aesthetic, even fantastic objects, particularly if assessed by the criteria of some other perspective, some other ‘imagined world’ (Appadurai, 1990:299). Therefore, ‘mediascapes’ are often used with a strong relation to ‘ideoscapes’, since both are related landscapes of images. Yet, ideoscapes images are often political, and are frequently concerned with the ideologies of states and the counter-ideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capturing state power or a piece of it. These ideoscapes are composed of elements of the enlightenment world-view, which consists of a concatenation of ideas, terms and images such as, ‘freedom’, ‘rights’, ‘representation’ and the super-term ‘democracy’ (Appadurai, 1990:300).

2.4.4 The ‘ideoscapes’

Following Robertson’s (1990) conclusion, that the three factors that influence the integration of the world into globalization process are capitalism, western imperialism and the development of global communications, one can argue that the term ‘globalization’ can be replaced by ‘Americanization’. The United States has been the most successful twentieth-century empire\(^2\), extending its ‘ideoscapes’ of military, economic, political and cultural power across the globe. Although it has been claimed that in the late 1980s America ceded (but gained it back—Y.G) its world economic ‘leadership’ to Japan (Rowe \textit{et al.} 1994), it is generally agreed that the American economy is the most important economy at the global level (Harvey and Houle 1994). Scholars such as Tunstall (1977) and Ang (1985) believe that the Americans dominate the world media. Donnelly (1996) showed that Americans watch fewer foreign-produced television programs (around 2% of the total) than any other country except China\(^2\). As Guttmann remarks, in 1974, 90 percent of the films shown in Thailand came from the United States. Moreover, there are still laws limiting the number of American films screened in Europe (Guttmann, 1994:8). It is pertinent to wonder

\(^2\) While arguing that globalization was (and is) an on-going process one cannot ignore the influence of the 19th century British empire that will be discussed later in the thesis.

\(^2\) An example of the American aggressive marketing of television series is the free supply of a series such as “Dallas” to one-channel African nations in exchange for the purchase of another American program (Donnelly 1996:242).
whether this economic and communication dominance can be seen as American-cultural imperialism. White (1983) in his observations about the Americanization of Australian culture explained that:

Americanization most usefully refers to the fundamental reference points of a culture and the extent to which they can be located in the United States rather than in the culture itself; not just cultural change, but what it has transmitted. Not just the measure of American content, but its impact (if any) on behavior and ways of thinking. In this sense the examination of Americanization should embrace not just the impact of Americanization on popular culture but also its effects on the culture as a whole (White 1983:110).

Ien Ang (1982,1985) discussed the problem of American dominance in his work on the television series 'Dallas'. The American story of a rich Texan oil family gained worldwide popularity in over ninety countries. Ang points out the concerns over the steadily growing influence of American consumer capitalism on popular culture. 'Dallas' was regarded as yet more evidence of the threat posed by American-style commercial culture on 'authentic' national culture and identities. To Ang:

(...) On the eve of a period in which the structure and organization of the world of mass communications are about to undergo drastic changes, through the advance of the so-called 'new technologies' (cable, satellite), national governments and media institutions find themselves compelled to reflect on the social, political and cultural consequences involved and on the policy measures taken at this level. If nothing is done, the assumption is, the dominance of the American culture industries will just grow and grow (Ang,1985:2).

Harvey and Houle (1994) define the term 'imperialism' as the domestic development of a peripheral nation, occurring as a function of the interests of the imperial power. The economic resources of a peripheral nation are exploited according to the needs of a more advanced nation (Harvey and Houle 1994:342). Since this kind of relationship involved nations, relations as such (especially as a one-way flow), are almost
impossible to assess on a global level and have to be studied on a more distinctive bases. Hence, it might be suitable to look at the process of Americanization as a form of 'cultural hegemony' rather than 'imperialism' as such. Moreover, Donnelly (1996) has noted that the process of cultural transfer is not just a one-way process. Those who are exposed to American culture also have some degree of freedom of choice when it comes to accepting or rejecting cultural products or ideas. However, Donnelly also recognizes that

...there are clear limits to such freedom, given that some individuals are not able to control or decisively influence the source and making of these products. For example, large American–based multinational corporations such as McDonald's, Disney, or the National Football league. Nor are they able to impose any equity on the mutual exchange of cultural products. Thus cultural hegemony may be seen as a two-way but imbalanced process of cultural exchange, interpenetration, and interpretation (Donnelly,1996:243).

As Donnelly concludes, each of these approaches (imperialism, hegemony, Americanization) interpreting the spread of popular cultural forms, and considering the reasons why certain specific cultural forms migrated from specific cultures and were adopted by other cultures, is reiterated in the social science of sport (Donnelly,1996:247). The occurrence of such processes is perhaps most clearly and spectacularly marked by the fact that three of the four largest international organizations in the world today, as measured by the number of member countries, are sports organizations, these being the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) with 184 members, the Fédération International de Football Association (FIFA) with 178 members (as stated above, FIBA now (2000) has 202 members (Y.G), and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) with 171 members. The only non-sporting organization amongst the largest four is the United Nations with 180 members (CRSS,1996:4).
2.5 Globalization of sport process

Maguire (1993), in his theorizing of sport as part of the global system, reviews several approaches to the process of globalization that can be detected in sports. The modernization approach, closely linked to functionalism, was the dominant paradigm in sociology until the early 1970s. The theory focused on the political, cultural, economic, and social aspects of the process. The theory's main ideas involve the development of political institutions that support participatory decision-making. The growth and development of secular and nationalist ideologies is examined. The emergence of a division of labor, the use of management techniques, and technological innovations and commercial activities are analyzed within the setting of the urbanization and decline of traditional authorities.

Studies of imperialism or neo-imperialism are usually associated, according to Maguire (1993,1999), with Marxist writings. The Marxist approach attempts to explain the colonialism of specific nation-states (especially western nation-states) in terms of the need for capitalist expansion. Three dimensions of colonial ventures have been evident: the search for new markets to sell products, the search for new sources of raw materials, and the search for new sources of cheap and skilled labor power. While formal possession of empires has largely disappeared, the rise of neo-imperialism as an economic form has developed in self-governing countries. Western countries are therefore able to maintain their position of ascendancy by ensuring control over the terms upon which world trade is conducted. Ironically, though cultural imperialist accounts stress issues of conflict and exploitation, they share an important feature in common with the modernization approach, that is, an emphasis on the alleged homogenizing impact of these processes. Equally, these approaches tend to stress the unidirectional character of these global developments - from the West to the 'rest' - and deploy a monocausal explanation, technological or economic, to explain these changes (Maguire,1999:16).

Dependency theory argues, with an obvious link to the neo-imperialism theory, that the global economy cannot be conceived as a system of equal trading partners and relations. The superior military, economic, and political power of the center imposes conditions of unequal exchange on the periphery. Moreover, Maguire identified three
different strands apropos this theory: dependent underdevelopment, dependent development and dependency reversal. Dependent underdevelopment means that the impoverishment of the third-world countries is a direct result of the global capitalist system. Although not exclusively, through multinational corporate activity, the wealth gained by the industrial countries is at the expense of the third world countries. Thus, no genuine development can be achieved. Nevertheless, the growth of some third-world countries, although limited, is evidence that the dependence of some countries can lead, in some cases, to the development of nations like Taiwan and South Korea as bases for manufacturers of sport goods. In another version of this theory, however, it is possible that the dependent country will reverse the previous disadvantageous relations.

Figurational/Process sociologists link the development of the global sporting culture with the process of ‘sportization’. Sportization processes arguably involve the multi-layered flow of sports, capital, personnel, technologies/landscapes and ideologies. According to Maguire (1994), the process can be illustrated parallel to the temporal-historical path of Robertson (1992). Maguire presents a preliminary model of ‘diminishing contrasts’ and ‘increasing varieties’\(^{27}\) in the global sportization process. Relying on Elias’s study of the European civilizing process (1939/1994), Maguire (1999) explains that if a short time-frame is used to examine the differences between the social personality and customs of people within Western societies, then those differences identified will appear great. Over a longer-term perspective, however, what can be observed is that the sharp contrasts between different strata are diminishing and at the same time, an increasing variety of cultures has emerged that fostered forms of cosmopolitan consciousness (Maguire, 1999:211). Using the work of Elias and Dunning (1986), who stressed the importance of history\(^ {28}\) regarding the process, Maguire’s model elucidates the initial phase of sportization as occurring in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when sports such as cricket, fox hunting, horse racing and boxing emerged as modern\(^ {29}\) sports. The second phase, in the

\(^{27}\) Originally Elias’s terms
\(^{28}\) The importance of linking sociological research to history will be discussed in chapter 5.
\(^{29}\) By modern sport I mean sport that first began to develop in the context of the 18\(^{th}\) century English society (as opposed to the ancient Olympic games, that as Elias (1986) for example argues, had little or nothing to do with the sport ethos as we know it). During the period between 1870 and 1914 (the world-wide diffusion of sport and the take-off phase of globalization), the distinctive characteristic of modern achievement sport reflected its English origins (Maguire, 1999:208).
nineteenth century, involves the emergence of modern forms of sports such as soccer, rugby, track and field, and tennis. In the third phase, lasting from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, the Europeanization of sport development occurred. This involved the diffusion of 'English' sport forms to the rest of Europe and around the British empire, but on the other hand, as Maguire (1994) noted, English sports were not alone; Danish and Swedish gymnastics, the German turnverein movement, and the spread of skiidrett from Norway to North America are all examples of the spread of European sports forms within and outside the European context. The establishment of international sports organizations, the growth of competition between national teams, the worldwide acceptance of rules governing specific sport forms, and the establishment of global competitions such as the Olympic games, are all part of globalization processes in the sports world (Maguire, 1994:407). The next phase, from the 1920s to 1960s, is considered by Maguire, among others, to be the era in which sport became a 'global idiom'. Although the direction of the flow was clear - from the west to the rest - that is not to say that the hegemony of the western world was absolute. The diffusion of sport forms was observed around the world, along with non-western people resisting and reinterpreting western sports forms while maintaining, fostering, and promoting, on a global scale, their native sport culture. Furthermore, resistance to the western sport hegemony (and to sport as a symbol of the west's culture) came in different shapes and forms such as the cold-war rivalry, which was also played out in sports. If the fourth phase was the beginning of slow decline of the modern sport founding nation, England, as it was beaten by fellow westerners at the very same games they launched, at the fifth phase the non-western nations began to beat their former-colonial masters, especially the English. In the late 1960s, this course was becoming clearer as African, Asian, and South American nations were (and still are) ahead in a range of sports including badminton, cricket, soccer, table tennis, and track and field (Maguire, 1994:408). Outside the sport fields, the exclusive control of global sport, such as the international sport organizations and the Olympic movement began, although slowly and unevenly, to slip out of the hands of the west. These trends are reinforced by the accelerating commingling process occurring among sport cultures.

As Guttmann (1988) notes, although the world-cup soccer tournament was established in 1930, the English were not represented until the world-cup of 1950 at which time their team failed to survive to the semi-final round.
Eastern martial arts (judo to name but one), as well as a range of folk games, are diffusing into and around the western core (Maguire, 1994:409).

Since a process-sociology perspective serves as the centrepiece of this thesis it is important at this point, to summarise and highlight several key themes of the perspective regarding globalization. To process sociologists, globalization processes involve multidirectional movements of people, practices, customs and ideas (Maguire, 1999).

However, although the globe can be understood as an interdependent whole, in different figurational fields established (core) and outsider (peripheral) groups and nation-states are constantly vying with each other for dominant positions. Global processes are multidirectional and involve a series of power-balances, yet have neither the hidden hand of progress nor some all-pervasive, overarching conspiracy guiding them. For process-sociologists, globalization processes have a blind, unplanned dimension to them and a relative autonomy from the intentions of specific groups of people (Maguire, 1999:40).

For process-sociologists, as Maguire explains, every aspect of social reality - people's living conditions, beliefs, knowledge and actions - is intertwined with unfolding globalization processes. These processes include the emergence of a global economy, a transnational cosmopolitan culture and a range of international social movements. The global development of sports organizations, such as the IOC, can be viewed in a similar light (Maguire, 1999:37).

Both the Olympic games and the soccer world cup can serve as examples of the globalization of sport process: Allen Guttmann (1988), stressed the efforts made by the members of the IOC (the International Olympic Committee) to spread the Olympic idea around the world by enlarging itself with the election of members to serve as delegates to their countries (rather from) who had not yet joined the Olympic movement. Despite a conscious effort to make the IOC truly international, all its six presidents have been from the ‘west’ (five former IOC presidents were 31 Central features of figurational/process-sociology is discussed in greater detail in chapters 1 & 5.
European while the sixth was American). In 1954, 56% of the members were European; in 1977, Europe still had 48% of the membership. However, the diminishing hegemony of Europe and America can be seen in figure 3.

**Figure 3: International Olympic Committee membership (1954-1990)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year / Continent</th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Guttmann, 1988:61).

The main question concerning the global sporting culture is, what are the measures by which such a global culture can be indicated? Does the number of nations/people involved in sport forms around the world, give such an indication? Or, are the numbers of people watching such sport forms both as spectators in the stadiums and through broadcasting agencies, such as radio and television an indication? In the case of the Olympic games, it can be shown that the numbers of both participants and spectators increased significantly along the years, reaching a worldwide popularity. If the London Olympic games (1908) hosted 22 competing nations, by 1972 no less than 121 nations participated at the Munich games. The Barcelona summer games (1992) drew 193 nations and 9,364 athletes. The Atlanta games held in 1996, with 197 nations and 10,750 athletes, was the largest ever Olympic games. For the first time, every invited nation came to the games. At the Atlanta games, ticket sales reached 8.6 million compared with 5.7 million for the Los Angeles games in 1984 and 3.5 million for those in Barcelona (1992) (Swift, 1996). The IOC reported that 2.3 billion people around the world watched the 1992 summer Olympics games around the world; 85% of those in possession of television sets. According to the ‘Economist’, 3.5 billion people watched some part of the Olympic games in Atlanta, two-thirds of humankind (the Economist, July 20th, 1996). Another event that has gained worldwide popularity over the years is the world
cup soccer tournament. The large number of nations (117) attempting to qualify for the final tournament in France 1998, forced FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), the governing body, to increase the number of teams from 24 to 32.

The globalization of sport process may also be illustrated by using the example of Rogenhagen’s (1995) film of the soccer world cup\(^\text{32}\). Rogenhagen demonstrated the global impact of the USA 1994 world cup by shooting a documentary film involving 40 directors from around the world. The film illustrated the situation during the Finals:

...Production lines were stopped in a Teheran car factory while workers moved to a space where a screening had been set up. In Cameroon, Mongo Faya’s harem was feasting, dancing and celebrating with him throughout the event. In Argentina, fans chanted their support for the Italian side, allies in their arch rivalry with Brazil. The vodka and orange was out for the game for the remote couple in Lapland. The street party in jubilant Rio moved into ecstasy and hysteria of triumph when Italian Roberto Baggio failed to score in the penalty shoot-out half a continent away in Pasadena, California, while the despondent Italian fans in Turin were speechless and drained. Monks in their monastery in Prague, myriad groups of people from Belorussia to Costa Rica, gathered around televisions, from giant public screenings in Beijing to small-scale viewings of black and white portable sets.

Choosing to let the global culture of football speak for itself, director Rogenhagen offered no commentary and no sub-titles, just name-labels for countries and cities, and for the players who featured most tellingly in the dramatic finale of the shoot-out (cited in Tomlinson,1996:584).

\(^{32}\) In 1985 Eran Ricklis made a similar film ("Cup final") to that of Rogenhagen. In his film, Ricklis depicted, using the Lebanon war as the background, a situation in which both an Israeli prisoner-soldier and his Palestinian guards are deeply rapt watching the world-cup finals in Italy 1982, forgetting, even if just for a while, the horrible war in which they were engaged.
2.6 The 'landscapes' of sport

Following Maguire's model (1990, 1994, 1999), all five dimensions of Appadurai's (1990) cultural flows can be detected in the late twentieth century development of sport: 'ethnoscape', 'technoscapes', 'mediascapes', 'financescapes', and 'ideoscapes'.

2.6.1 The 'ethnoscapes' of sport

According to Bale and Maguire (1994), the process of sports' labor migration in the global arena is speeding up. In the course of the 20th century, the process gathered pace and occurred over a more widespread geographical area and within a greater number of sport subcultures.

Linking this process to a broader globalization process, Bale and Maguire claim that the migration process accelerated since it was unfolding at least from the nineteenth century. The reasons for the momentum-gathering are: the increasing number of international agencies; the growth of increasingly global forms of communications; the development of global competitions and prizes; and the development of notions of rights and citizenship that are increasingly standardized internationally (Bale and Maguire, 1994:5).

Comparing athletes (also coaches, teachers and sport organizers) to workers, Bale and Maguire argue that like other sectors of the workforce, athletes have sometime to ply their trade in several national, continental or trans-national locations. On the bases of athletes migration within the nation-states, examples can be drawn from the United Kingdom case. Migration of sports-labor from Wales, Scotland and Northern-Ireland to England and vice versa, can be demonstrated when sport talents move from the soccer and rugby leagues around the UK. The emergence of such movement could also be seen in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, as athletes pursued their forte, first by transferring to the bigger and stronger teams (such as Dinamo Moscow and Cibona Zagreb football clubs, Y.G) within the state (Bale and Maguire, 1994:2). The existence of similar processes can be also identified in the United States. Free-will migration of athletes occurs on a large scale with the recruitment of students from around the states to university and college leagues. However, the formation of the 'draft' system (see discussion and explanation in the next chapter) in the professional sports is an example in which professional sport teams are allowed to pick talented players (mostly university
graduates) to play for their teams around the United States, sometimes even without the player’s consent (further discussion in chapter 3). With Canadian teams playing in the professional hockey, baseball and basketball leagues in the United States, the phenomenon can be explained on the continental level, although not without hegemony theory as Klein (1991) and Kidd (1991) suggest in their studies of the Dominican Republic and Canada, respectively. In Europe, this is most evident in the case of soccer. As noted by Bale and Maguire, the movement of football players around the European continent is not confined to the strong and wealthy leagues of Italy or Spain. A flow of players can be seen in the leagues of the UK, as well as Germany, Holland, the Balkans and Scandinavia. The collapse of the Iron Curtain and the opening up of the eastern borders of the former Soviet Union and Germany, for example, allowed an influx of eastern-Europe talents to central and western European leagues.

Restrictions have been introduced in some local (UK to name one), as well as global, sport federations to limit the number of foreign players playing in national leagues. Yet political trends such as the formation of the European Community (EC), and the associated attempts to establish common rules regarding trade and law among others, have had considerable effects on international sports in general and sports labor migration in particular.

The case of Jean-Marc Bosman will demonstrate these effects: Jean-Marc Bosman was a Belgian professional football player, who played for R.C. Liege, which was then a Belgian first division club. The Bosman case arose out of a dispute in 1990 between Bosman and his club. Bosman claimed that the Belgian Football Federation and UEFA (the European branch of FIFA) transfer rules had prevented his transfer to a French club, US Dunkerque. He brought an action against RC Liege and later against the Belgian Football Federation and UEFA. Bosman sought a declaration from the national court that the transfer rules and nationality clauses were not applicable to him on the grounds that they were incompatible with both the Treaty of Rome rules on competition and the

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33 According to Maguire (1999) in the context of sports labor migration, the activities of hegemonic states center on the search for new sources of 'skilled' labor whose early development was resourced by these former colonial countries. From this perspective, the global sports and leisure system can be seen to operate largely but not exclusively through multinationals or organizations dominated by first world nations. This system operates actively to underdevelop the third world by excluding third world countries from the center of the global political decision-making process and from the economic rewards derived from the world sports/leisure economy (Maguire, 1999, 19).
free movement of workers. The National Court referred the issue to the European Court of Justice.

The issues which were dealt with by the European Court, were:

1. Prohibiting a football club from requiring and receiving payment of a sum of money upon the engagement of one of its players who has come to the end of his contract by a new employing club.

2. Prohibiting the national and international sporting associations or federations from including in their respective regulations provisions restricting access of foreign players from the European Community to the competitions which they organize.

The exact wording of the Court's decision was:

...Article 48 of the EEC Treaty precludes the application of rules laid down by sporting associations, under which a professional football player who is a citizen of one Member State may not, on the expiry of his contract with a club, be employed by a club of another Member State unless the latter club has paid to the former club a transfer, training or development fee.

Article 48 of the EEC Treaty precludes the application of rules laid down by sporting associations under which, in matches in competitions which they organize, football clubs may field only a limited number of professional players who are citizens of other Member States. The direct effect of Article 48 of the EEC Treaty cannot be relied upon in support of claims relating to a fee in respect of transfer, training or development which has already been paid on, or is still payable under an obligation which arose before, the date of this judgment, except by those who have brought court proceedings or raised an equivalent claim under the applicable national law before that date (Sport Info Europe, 1995).

34 This rule concerns all 15 EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the EEA (European Economic Area), since the EEA-Agreement gives workers and self-employed people the right to move and establish themselves freely within the Community (freedom of persons). This freedom falls within the jurisdiction of the European Court.
Although it had other implications, this court ruling meant that:

1. If a professional football player's contract with his club expires and if that player is a citizen of one of the Member States of the European Union, his existing club cannot prevent the player from signing a new contract with another club in another Member State or make it more difficult for him to sign such a contract, by asking this new club to pay a transfer, training or development fee.

2. Limitations concerning the nationality of professional players who are citizens of a Member State of the European Union (within competitions between football clubs organized by sporting associations), are not allowed.

The reaction of the governing body of international football, FIFA, in November 24, 1995 gave some indication of the rest of the world's concern regarding the court's rule, and therefore is worth quoting in its entirety:

FIFA has been closely following the developments in the case of the Belgian player Jean-Marc Bosman and views with considerable concern the proposition that 18 of the 193 FIFA Member Associations might be obliged to disregard transfer regulations which are accepted and respected by all Member Associations world-wide. In FIFA's view, it is clear that a small group of countries cannot be granted an exemption from sports regulations which are effective in all parts of the world and which operate successfully and efficiently and for the benefit of football at all levels. FIFA feels that an international sports organisation simply cannot operate properly unless regulations are universally applied, and any other approach would lead to very serious problems. Such circumstances could even jeopardise the independent status of the 18 FIFA Member Associations concerned (FIFA communication department, Nov. 24th, 1995).
Similar concerns were raised by different international sport federations (such as FIBA) with the obvious affects of this ruling on global bases. The effect of the ruling in the Israeli context will be discussed in chapter 6.

Sport labor migration also occurs on a trans-continental level, and in specific sports such as basketball, this is more widespread than in other sports. In most cases, sports labor tends to be hired by a specific club or organization and is resident in the host country for a limited period of time. However, some athletes stay on and make the host country their home.

Highlighting other aspects of sport labor migration, Bale and Maguire note that in certain sports such as cricket and rugby (but also basketball), migration has a seasonal pattern. The weather patterns in the northern and southern hemispheres in effect offer certain sports two seasons of play per year. In the case of the world tennis tournaments (ATP tour) and golf (PGA tour), and also in the cases of cycling and motor sports (Formula 1), both seasonal and transitory migrations are evident. In these cases, with constantly shifting workplace and residence, sports labor migration involves all three levels of athletes' migrations stated above: national, continental and trans-national.

2.6.2 The ‘technoscapes’ and ‘financescapes’ of sport

According to Appadurai a technoscape is a movement of various technologies in different shapes and forms. On the technoscape level, we can take the manufacture of sports goods as an example of the global diffusion of technology. Largely composed of multinational firms, the sport manufacturers not only aim at growing shares of the world market but also adopt global strategies of production such as de-localization. Advanced products are manufactured in industrialized countries, while simple products are manufactured in south-eastern countries such as South Korea and Taiwan; both have become bases for sport goods manufacture such as tennis racquets and shoes. An example of the global diffusion of technology that, as explained before, is increasingly driven by money flows, political possibilities and the availability of both low and highly-skilled labor rather than obvious economies of scale, political control or market rational is precision hockey equipment: this is designed in Sweden,
financed in Canada, and assembled in Cleveland and Denmark for distribution in North America and Europe, respectively, out of alloys whose molecular structure was researched and patented in Delaware and fabricated in Japan (Donnelly, 1996; Harvey and Houle, 1994; Maguire, 1993; Reich, 1991).

Moreover, Harvey and Houle explain that corporations in sport industries (i.e. manufacturers of sporting goods, professional sport franchises, etc.) are often only small divisions of industrial or financial conglomerates integrated into the global market. The conglomerates are flourishing, regardless of national structures of accumulation. The fact that these firms are linked to American or Japanese capital is almost meaningless. The important point is that they participate in and respond to global, not regional, logic. Therefore, the association of sport with globalization has to be seen not only in the globalization of certain sports but also in the ownership structures of sport industries (Harvey and Houle, 1994:346).

In another example of the sports industry complex, Maguire (1999) asks us to consider the case of hockey:

The idea that modern sport is bound up in a global network of interdependency chains that are marked by uneven power relations can be illustrated with reference to the consumption of sports events and of leisure clothing. Consider the example of ice - hockey. Citizens of countries spread across the globe regularly view satellite broadcasts of National Hockey League (NHL) ice-hockey matches. In these games perform the best players drawn from North America, Europe and Asia. The players use equipment - sticks, skates, uniform etc. - that are designed in Sweden, financed in Canada, assembled in the USA and Denmark. This then is sold on to a mass market in North America and Europe. This equipment - skates - for example, is made out of alloys whose molecular structure was researched and patented in the USA and fabricated in Japan. Several transnational corporations are involved in the production and consumption phases of this global cultural product.
In that respect, the connection to sport 'financescape' should be clear: the flux of money in the sport industries worldwide, on and off the pitch, is becoming more and more evident. The process, in which professional sports have been heavily packaged, promoted, presented and played in recent years, is part of the broader commercialization of sport process\(^3\).\(^5\).

Although this process is not new, the extent to which it has grown in the last two decades indicates a shift of power balance, as Coakley (1997) avers:

...Throughout history, sports have been used as forms of public entertainment. However, sports never have been so heavily packaged, promoted, presented and played as commercial products as they are today. Never before have decisions about sports and the social relationship connected with them been so clearly influenced by economic factors. Never before have economic organizations and large corporate interest had so much power and control over how sports are defined and organized. Never before have the economic stakes been so high for athletes and sponsors. The bottom line has replaced the goal line for many people, and sports no longer exist simply for the interests of the athletes themselves (Coakley, 1997:326).

Since the prosperity of professional sports\(^3\)\(^6\) depends largely on the combination of gate receipts and the sale of broadcasting rights to the media (but also, as shown above, to other products connected to the sport industry-Y.G), Coakley (1994) indicated the conditions in which the process of commercialization of sports tends to exist:

- Market economies where material rewards are given priority over those people connected with sports (athletes, coaches, owners, sponsors and promoters).
- Societies with large populated areas so that revenues from attending and spectators are likely to be large.

\(^{35}\) See Dunning and Sheard (1979) for a comprehensive analysis of the process.
\(^{36}\) This is the case of professional sports and not so often the case of other sport forms such as membership clubs sports.
Communities with a standard of living high enough to afford spending time and money playing and watching sport.

Countries with large private investment in sport (motivated by private, public investors or a combination of both)

Therefore, wherever processes such as urbanization and industrialization, followed by wealth, which can be found in the late twentieth century in growing numbers of places, are enabling the commercialization of sport to prosper.

The reasons that commercial sports have gone global, are, according to Coakley, also connected to the fact that those who control, sponsor, and promote sports are constantly looking for new ways to make more money. For example, sport organizations such as the National Football League, the National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League and Major League Baseball are constantly seeking to expand their markets into as many countries as possible outside the United States. In addition, more and more businesses can use sports as vehicles for introducing products and services all around the world. Large corporations such as McDonalds and Coca-Cola use sport to capture the attention and the emotions of millions of people around the world (Coakley, 1994:308).

2.6.3 The ‘mediascapes’ of sport

Although the relations between the controllers of a particular sport and those of the mass media can be a basis for a separate thesis, it is important to understand the power relations, as well as the history of the relations between the two. This is necessary in order to have a better view of the concept of globalization of sport in general, and ‘mediascapes’ in particular:

Where sporting events were once localized affairs, news of which barely filtered through to neighbouring villages, as we approach the end of the twentieth century modern elite sports competitions are global media spectacles. Examples include the Olympic Games, the World Championships in track and field and soccer's World Cup. By the early
As Rowe (1996) puts it, a key role in the development of sport as an international culture form, is played by the mass communication forms (newspaper, radio but especially television).

Jhally (1989), treats the process of the increasing commercialization of sport as leading to 'massification' of sports, as the search is now for new mass audiences for advertisers, rather than seeking to appeal to the 'cultivated' minority who really understand what sports are about (Jhally, 1989:81).

Looking at the history of the coverage of sport by the mass media, the first ever sport story (a boxing prize fight) was described in the American London Daily and appeared simultaneously in the Boston Gazette on May 5th 1733. In 1819, the first American periodical on sport, The American Farmer was published. It featured the results of hunting, fishing, shooting and cycling matches as well as essays on philosophy of sport. In 1883, Joseph Polizer purchased The World and set up the first sport section. By 1892, most of the American papers had a sport department. Reports of baseball games, horse racing, pedestrian tournaments and other events were combined into a single article. In 1889 Joe Villa used the first play-by-play technique in covering football games. In 1923 the first radio broadcast, a baseball game between New York and Philadelphia, occurred. 1937 was the year when the BBC televised sport for the first time, broadcasting the Oxford-Cambridge boat race. In the 1960's, the communications satellite Telstar was launched, facilitating live international telecasts. By 1970 cables and satellite television increased the number and frequency of sport broadcasts available to the viewing public. At the beginning of the 1980’s, ESPN and TSN, 24-hour all-sport networks began in the USA and Canada, respectively (Greendorfer, 1981). As noted on p. 53 the IOC reported after the 1992 summer Olympics, that 2.3 billion people watched the games around the world - 85% of those in possession of television sets. As figure 4 shows, in many countries a large percentage of all television programs is devoted to sport events:

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37 Although the first televised sport event was the Nazi Olympics in 1936, the only viewers were those who were in the stadium in the first place (Guttmann, 1986).
Figure 4: The percentage of sport events broadcast on television (out of all programs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(USA Today, 1993, as cited in Coakely 1994:339)

The relations between controllers of sports and mass media personnel, as they have been described by the various scholars, stretched over the years from ‘...like bacon and eggs’ (Clays and Van Pelt, 1986), ‘the perfect match’ and ‘a match made in heaven’ (Goldlust, 1987), to ‘symbiotic’ (Lobmeyer and Weindinger, 1992) and ‘global love match’ (Rowe, 1996). Another definition to the relations between controllers of sports and mass media personnel is ‘interdependence relations’ made by Parante (1974).

As Jhally (1989) explains, the role of media persona is basically to act as publicity agents for sports, to get people into the stadiums. Over the years, the heads of professional sports have sold the rights to broadcast sport events to media personas. By doing so, sports become more and more dependent on media revenues for their functioning. The argument that sport has been transformed by the media (Altheide and Snow, 1978) is derived primarily from the fact that sports organizations have little or no control over the nature and form in which their sport is televised, reported, or covered (Goldlust, 1987).38

38 However, this is not the case, for example, with the Major League Baseball (MLB) contract with television networks in the US. Trying to avoid bad publicity (such as ‘bloopers’), the heads of the league have to some extent the right to decide what will be shown in television news highlights.
However, as Coakley rightly acknowledges, although much attention has been given to how sports have been influenced by the media, little attention has been given to how the media have been influenced by sports. But there actually is a reciprocal relationship between these two important spheres of life: each has influenced the other, and each has grown to depend on the other for its popularity and commercial success (Coakley, 1997:373).

The growing involvement of media personnel around the world with sport would appear to demonstrate that some sports, such as soccer, basketball, cricket and rugby, have become a worthwhile investment for some media tycoons. The cross-ownership of sport and media persons such as Berlosconi and (the late) Maxwell in Europe, Packer in Australia, Erisson in the US, and Murdoch in Asia, America and Europe are a few examples of this phenomenon.

**Figure 5: Amounts paid by television networks for the broadcasting rights of sport events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Amount (billion $)</th>
<th>Period (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBS (USA)</td>
<td>NCAA basketball</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1995-2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOX (USA)</td>
<td>American football</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>1994-1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC (USA)</td>
<td>Olympics</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1996-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIRCH (GERMANY)</td>
<td>World cup soccer</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2002-2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSKYB (UK)</td>
<td>UK football league</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>1994-2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Economist, July 20, 1996)*

The growing amount of money paid by the television networks for the broadcasting rights of sport events around the world has led sports league organizers to change the location, schedule, timing and the rules of the games in order to provide a better television package. Some examples of this might include:

- Clubs moving from one city to another- a decision not based upon stadium support but upon the television audience: in 1967 the American baseball team, the
Senators moved from Washington D.C to Minnesota; the Brooklyn Dodgers moved to Los Angeles while the Braves moved from Boston to Atlanta.39

- The flow and momentum of the game being interrupted when the game is stopped for time-outs which are called, so that television commercials can be shown.
- Changing the opening time of sport events so they will fit "prime time" viewing.

These changes and others (see also Sewart, 1987) such as increasing the number of days of the Olympics (to 16, having three week-ends) or moving the Wimbledon tennis men’s final from Saturday to Sunday (so as to attract more viewers on the official day of rest, when television rating is usually low), are attributed to the growing influence that television has gained over the years.

Yet, this is not to say that the power of the mass media is absolute: changes such as increasing the number of team in leagues or the growing salaries occurred even before television was introduced.40 As Maguire (1990, 1993) demonstrates, the relative power of the American National Football League in their negotiations with the media ensures that they have greater influence over the mediated sport product they help produce (Maguire, 1993:38). In the same manner, Coakely (1997) concludes:

Sports are social constructions; as such, they have been created gradually through interactions between athletes, facility directors, sport team owners, event promoters, media representatives, sponsors, advertisers, agents, and spectators all of whom have diverse interests and backgrounds. The dynamics of these interactions have been grounded in power relations and shaped by the resources held by different people at different times. Although admittedly, not everyone has equal influence over changes occurring in sports, media interests are not the only factors producing changes in sports or in the relationship between sports and the media (Coakley, 1997:373-374).

39 In the same respect, the NCAA division of leagues is based primarily on television market areas in the US.
40 The legendary baseball player, ‘Babe’ Ruth received $ 80,000 in the late 20’s even when the US economy was at that time in its biggest crisis (‘the great depression’).
Furthermore, one of the most important impacts of these synergic relations is the worldwide exposure that sports have gained from the media. Over the years, especially with the growth in media forms such as video, cable and satellite television (but also newspapers and radio), sport has become more of a global idiom. Television, for example, has enabled millions to adopt and care about teams and sports they could never see in person. Without getting into the debate about public and paid access to these various channels, debate that can not be mapped here, media such as television not only allow us to look for the best of sports as they arrive from around the world (Chandler, 1988), but they, like food, are less seasonal than they used to be in many part of the world because of (although not exclusively) the influence of television.

2.6.4 The ‘ideoscapes’ of sport

As explained earlier, ‘ideoscapes’ images are often political, and are frequently concerned with the ideologies of states and the counter-ideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capturing state power or a piece of it. Houlihan (1994) suggests that many of the states and cultural groups that use sport as a tool of cultural, and often explicitly political, resistance do so in terms that merely reinforce the dominate global culture. Thus, on the ‘ideoscapes’ level, the investment in sport in East Germany, Cuba, and the Soviet Union was partly justified in terms of demonstrating the superiority of the socialist way of life. Sport success was achieved by being more competitive than western teams or athletes, more determined to win medals, and more concerned with record times (Houlihan, 1994:363).

On that level, over the years there has been debate over the extent of the dominance of the Americans over the sports world (see for example Maguire, 1988, 1990, 1991; Kidd 1990; Klein 1991; McKay and Miller 1991; and McKay, Lawrence, Miller, and Rowe 1993. If this kind of dominance is not so clear in the case of films, television and music, the dominance of the Americans might be clearer in the case of world sport. Maguire claims that:

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41 In some cases this policy led to a conflict. Whannel (1984) argues that during the 1980 Moscow Olympics, while the aim of the Soviets was to show that the American boycott did not affect the games, British television (depending on television materials supplied by the Soviets) tried to show exactly the opposite.
Evidence to support such a position could be drawn from how American media concerns such as ABC and NBC influence the IOC's decision-making\textsuperscript{42}; American sports such as American football, basketball and baseball are packaged, marketed and franchised to and for a global audience, and American sporting heroes such as Michael Jordan become, through media marketing, global figures, promoting specific brands such as Nike (Maguire, 1999:145).

Looking at the amount of money paid by the American networks for the rights of the Olympic games compared with the rest of the world, as seen in Figure 6, might support the hypothesis of American dominance:

\textbf{Figure 6: Broadcasting rights (in millions \$) of the Olympic summer games (1992-2000)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year / Broadcasters</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA (NBC)</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBU (Europe)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICA</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH AMERICA</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data not available from the IOC

Donnelly claims that most of the conditions of corporate sport are either American in origin or have been more fully developed in the United States:

... it is possible to argue that on the international scene, sport is even more Americanized than music, film or television in that corporate sport itself, and its mediated forms, has become even more of a forum for the

\textsuperscript{42} Donnelly gives an example of this when he claims that IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch has threatened to withdraw baseball as an Olympic sport if American major league players are not permitted to participate in the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia
sale and promotion of products, services and ideas. Films and television are important transmitters of ideas about American lifestyle and “the American way”, and they are now beginning to exploit the potential for promoting particular products and services as props or as part of the particular plot line. In corporate/Americanized sport, the game has become somewhat less important than its capacity to be a vehicle presenting particular messages to a particular select and often massive audience, but the game itself also expresses ideas about competition, excellence, corporate efficiency, and what it is necessary to do to win ideas that have their origins in the United States but have now come to characterize global capitalism (Donnelly, 1996:246 italics added).

Furthermore, he claims that:

"What is important is that the American style of sport has become the international benchmark for corporate sport "showbiz", spectacular, high-scoring, or record-setting superstar athletes; the ability to attract sponsors by providing desired audiences; and having the characteristics necessary for good television coverage (Donnelly, 1996, 244)."

On these grounds it was not difficult (for some, more than others) to accept the selection made by FIFA, of the United States as the host nation of the World Cup soccer tournament in 1994\textsuperscript{43}. As Wagg (1995) remarks, the only major country in the world without a national football league (Major League Soccer was founded later in 1994 Y.G), had been awarded the World Cup because “its business was business, especially show business” (Wagg, 1995:179).

It might be important, however, to make a distinction at this point between the way sport has been played and the way it has been packaged, marketed, reported and televised to become a corporate sport.

\textsuperscript{43} The 1994 world cup tournament was the first one (out of 15) to be held outside Europe and Latin America (Wagg, 1995:179).
As Donnelly (1996) asserts, the product (sport) is not always so clearly American. When discussing cultural dominance it is important to remember that out of the four ‘American’ sports, football and baseball are not widely played or played at a high level, on a global basis. Basketball and volleyball are much more global in their distribution and have, as a consequence, lost a little of their national origin (just as soccer and tennis are not immediately thought of as British sports). Those who deny the Americanization of sport have pointed to the truly international basis of sports such as tennis, golf, cycling, boxing, soccer, and track and field; and the international sport spectacles such as the Olympics, Pan-American and Commonwealth Games. Sports such as rugby, cricket, Australian rules football, Sumo wrestling have little if any American participation (Donnelly, 1996:245). In the same vein, Maguire (1999) concludes:

> Global media sport is clearly influenced by North American sports such as American football, basketball, baseball and ice hockey, but non-American achievement sports such as association football and non-achievement sports such as the martial arts are also part of the pattern of global media consumption (Maguire, 1999:171).

While the debate over the extent of such American dominance remains open at this stage, process-sociologists (similar to Donnelly 1996) might be more comfortable with Antonio Gramsci’s hegemonic theory regarding the American dominance of sport, rather than that of pure imperialism (a term that is usually associated with a much broader cultural context). Guttmann (1994) using Gramsci’s work, for example, acknowledges that political relationships between the rulers and the ruled cannot be characterized as simply the result of absolute submission by the latter. The most stable form of rule is one in which “the strong (who are never all-powerful) have their way only after the weak (who are never completely powerless) have their say” (Guttmann, 1994:6).

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44 As Donnelly (1996) notes: “In identifying various conflicting global flows and resistances to cultural domination, process sociology shares much with the cultural hegemony approach” (Donnelly, 1996:245).

45 As Guttmann explains, Gramsci’s work was not concerned much about sport, but it can be used in explanation of sport dominance.
Conclusion

Throughout this chapter it has been argued that in order to have a better understanding of what is happening in the ‘local’ we must look first at the ‘global’. There is an acceptance of Robertson’s view (1995) that much of the promotion of locality is in fact done from above or outside. Robertson takes the debate one step further when he makes a blend of ‘localization’ and ‘globalization’ into ‘glocalization’. To Robertson we appear to live in a world in which the expectation of uniqueness has become increasingly institutionalized and globally widespread. He concludes that the debate about global homogenization versus heterogenization should be transcended. It is not a question of either homogenization or heterogenization, but rather the ways in which both of these two tendencies have become features of life across much of the late-twentieth-century world.

An array of globalization research was reviewed in this chapter46. In the course of this review several different traditions were identified. As Maguire (1999) rightly acknowledges, certain common ground with a process-sociological perspective can be identified. Dependency and world-systems approaches emphasize that, in examining globalization, we are dealing with long-term processes that have occurred unevenly across all areas of the planet. Nevertheless, as Maguire noted, the period in which such processes are said to have 'begun' is disputed. Other themes are also shared with research by Robertson (1992,1995) and Featherstone (1990). These long-term processes, involving an increasing intensification of global interconnectedness, are seen to be gathering momentum, and despite the 'unevenness' of these processes, it is more difficult to understand local or national experiences without reference to global flows (Maguire,1999:37).

Consequently, in order to examine basketball as part of a globally widespread sport culture, the origin of the global process and its cultural flows will be looking at before it is explored in local terms. This is why Appadurai’s model (1991) has been

46 Reviewing the literature on globalization, Harvey et al. (1996) stated that the literature on globalization is sometimes confusing, often contradictory, and always partial (Harvey et al,1996:259). While the main purpose of this chapter is to discuss theoretical consideration of globalization and to focus on the globalization of sport, it is beyond the scope of this review to address in any great detail the concepts of world-system, world-society, identity and other related terms, which often figure in the contemporary literature.
used as a framework for the research. Appadurai’s analysis of global cultural flow is based on a series of ‘scapes’ that interact with each other and his five dimensions of cultural flow (‘ethnoscape’, ‘technoscapes’, ‘mediascapes’, ‘financescapes’, and ‘ideoscapes’) can be readily adapted, as this chapter shows, to illustrate and explain the globalization of sport. The strength of Appadurai’s model is that it does not preclude the adoption or incorporation of other theories of the global system, such as modernization, cultural imperialism, dependency or world system theories, but rather stresses concepts from all these theories (Horton, 1996).
Chapter 3: The early development and the international diffusion of basketball

3.1 Introduction

The game of basketball is one of the most popular sports played by amateurs of all ages and at all levels, as well as by highly-skilled and highly-paid professionals all over the world (Andrews, 1997; Guttmann, 1994; Staffo 1997). Millions of people throughout the world crowd gymnasiums and huge arenas to watch basketball games while millions more world-wide watch basketball games on television.

The purpose of this third chapter is to characterize the early development of basketball and to shed light on the process that led to the diffusion of the game around the world. In doing so, attention will be devoted to the development of basketball in the United States – where the game was invented more than a century ago. The main objective of this chapter however, is to focus on a whole network of social functions surrounding the game. For this purpose, Appadurai’s (1990) typology, identified and illustrated in the previous chapter as various (yet overlapping) ‘landscapes’: ‘ethnoscrapes’, ‘technoscrapes’, ‘mediascrapes’, ‘financescrapes’, and ‘ideascrapes’, will be used. While trailing these landscapes, which structure globalization processes into a complex of an overlapping, disjunctive order, this chapter will also look at the extent to which the circulation of universal American commodity-signs (Andrews, 1997) has resulted in the convergence of global markets, lifestyles and identities.

3.2 The early development of basketball

Unlike games such as soccer, baseball and cricket, basketball did not develop from a traditional game. Basketball was invented by a young (Canadian immigrant) physical educator named James Naismith, at the school for Christian workers (that later become the International Young Men’s Christian Association training school) in 1891 in Springfield, Massachusetts. As Allen Guttmann (1994) asserts, the game was invented following a request made by Luther Gulick. Gulick (who was at that time superintendent of the school), encouraged Naismith to ‘find a game complicated enough to maintain the interest of adults and spatially confined enough to be played
indoors when New England winters daunted faint-hearted Christians' (Guttmann, 1994:98). Naismith accepted the challenge, as he later recalls:

I concluded that the most interesting game at that time was American Rugby. I asked myself why this game could not be used as an indoor sport. The answer to this was easy. It was because tackling was necessary in Rugby. But why was tackling necessary? Again the answer was easy. It was because the men were allowed to run with the ball, and it was necessary to stop them. With these facts in mind, I sat erect at my desk and said aloud: "If he can't run with the ball, we don't have to tackle; and if we don't have to tackle, the roughness will be eliminated." (Naismith, 1996:25).

However, it was not an easy task. He continues:

...(American, Y.G) Football was the first game that I modified. In eliminating the roughness, I tried to substitute the tackling of English Rugby for that of the American game. In Rugby, the tackle must be made above the hips, and the endeavor is to stop the runner rather than to throw him. The changing of the tackle did not appeal to the members of the class, who had been taught to throw the runner with as much force as possible, so that if he were able to get up at all, he would at least be in a dazed condition. To ask these men to handle their opponents gently was to make their favorite sport a laughing stock, and they would have none of it (Naismith, 1996:27).

After several unsuccessful attempts to develop such a game, which failed to meet both the first and second criteria, Naismith invented a winter game that not only met those criteria, but also had lower injury potential than the other popular games. By elevating the goal above the player's head and designing it so that its aperture was to be horizontal and narrow, Naismith's goal (a peach basket at first) avoided the potential injuries likely to be made by balls hurled forcefully at ground level as in other games.
The attempt made by Naismith is consistent with Elias and Dunning's (1986) studies of sport and leisure which observed that some games (mainly various kinds of football) are subject to the same types of 'civilizing processes' as other kinds of activities. Elias noted a consistent decline in the level of violence permitted and enjoyed in contests and games. Actual physical injury and even death became decreasingly acceptable in the history of all forms of contests and games, the rules governing them became gradually stricter and more efficiently enforced. One can thus speak of a process of the 'sportization' of games, especially in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which ‘game-contests involving muscular exertion attained a level of orderliness and self-discipline on the part of participants not attained before’ (Elias, 1986:151).

For an understanding of towhom the game of basketball appealed and why it spread so rapidly, an in-depth examination of the rules of the game is in order. In the process of planning the game, Naismith decided that certain fundamental principles were necessary. These principles were five in number:

1. There must be a ball; it should be large, light, and handled with the hands.
2. There shall be no running with the ball.
3. No man on either team shall be restricted from getting the ball at any time that it is in play.
4. Both teams are to occupy the same area, yet there is to be no personal contact.
5. The goal shall be horizontal and elevated (Naismith, 1996:56).

From these principles, Naismith devised a set of thirteen rules of basketball:

1. The ball (an ordinary Association football) may be thrown in any direction with one or both hands.

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47 The Civilizing Process (1939, 1994), is based of the examination of societies of Western Europe between the Middle ages and the early twentieth century. Elias' work and 'Process'/'Figurational' theory is discussed in general throughout this thesis and especially in chapter 1. However, one aspect of this process—which is of pivotal relevance to the study of the development of sport and therefore relevant to this chapter, has been the increasing social control of violence and aggression, together with a long-term decline in most peoples' tendency for obtaining pleasure from directly taking part in or watching violent acts (Murphy et al. 2000).
2. The ball may be batted in any direction with one or both hands, but never with the fist.

3. A player cannot run with the ball. The player must throw it from the spot on which he catches it, allowance to be made for a man running at good speed.

4. The ball must be held in or between the hands. The arms or body must not be used for holding it.

5. No shouldering, holding, pushing, striking or tripping in any way of an opponent. The first infringement of this rule by any person shall count as a foul; the second shall disqualify him until the next goal is made or, if there was evident intent to injure the person, for the whole of the game. No substitution shall be allowed.

6. A foul is striking at the ball with the fist, violations of Rules 3 and 4 and such as described in Rule 5.

7. If either side makes three consecutive fouls it shall count as a goal for the opponents (consecutive means without the opponents in the meantime making a foul).

8. Goal shall be made when the ball is thrown or batted from the ground into the basket and stays there, providing those defending the goal do not touch or disturb the goal. If the ball rests on the edge and the opponents move the basket, it shall count as a goal.

9. When the ball goes out of bounds, it shall be thrown into the field and played by the first person touching it. In case of dispute the umpire shall throw it straight into the field. The thrower-in is allowed five seconds. If he holds it longer, it shall go to the opponent. If any side persists in delaying the game, the umpire shall call a foul on them.

10. The umpire shall be judge of the men and shall note the fouls and notify the referee when three consecutive fouls have been made. He shall have the power to disqualify men according to Rule 5.

11. The referee shall be the judge of the ball and decide when it is in play in bounds, to which side it belongs, and shall keep the time. He shall decide when a

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48 As Naismith (1996) explains, at first there were two officials, a referee and an umpire. The referee had control of the ball and made all decisions in connection with this part of the play, but called no fouls. The umpire had control of the men and called all fouls. It was found that the umpire as well as the referee followed the ball and caught only the fouls that were made around it. Under these conditions, the players in the back court could do as they pleased. A second umpire was introduced, whose duty it was to watch the backcourt, although he had the privilege of calling any fouls that he saw.
goal has been made and keep account of the goals with any other duties that are usually performed by a referee.

12. The time shall be two 15-minute halves with five minutes' rest between.
13. The side making the most goals in that time shall be declared the winners.

(Dickey, 1982:16)

The aim of the new game was to pass a ball through the center of the basket. However, with equipment and an objective in mind, Naismith’s problem was still how to start it:

...I found that the intent of starting any game was to give each side an equal chance to obtain the ball. I thought of water polo, where the teams were lined up at the ends of the pool and at a signal the ball was thrown into the center. There was always a mad scramble to gain possession of the ball, and it took only an instant for me to reject this plan. I could see nine men at each end of the gym, all making a rush for the ball as it was thrown into the center of the floor; and I winced as I thought of the results of that collision. I then turned to the game of English Rugby. When the ball went out of bounds on the side line, it was taken by the umpire and thrown in between two lines of forward players. This was somewhat like polo, but the players had no chance to run at each other. As I thought of this method of starting the game, I remembered one incident that happened to me. In a game with Queen’s College, the ball was thrown between the two lines of players. I took one step and went high in the air. I got the ball all right, but as I came down I landed on a shoulder that was shoved into my midriff. I decided that this method would not do. I did feel, though, that if the roughness could be eliminated, that tossing up the ball between two teams was the fairest way of starting a game. I reasoned that if I picked only one player from each team and threw the ball up between them, there would be little chance for roughness (Naismith, 1996:34).
Laying the foundations for a new, rationally designed game, Naismith’s basketball eventually gained young men’s interest as football had in the fall and baseball in the spring (Guttmann:1994:98).

3.2.1 Changes within the new game

The game rapidly spread, as members of Naismith’s class went home for vacation and taught the game to friends and relatives who passed it on to other schools and clubs. Since the game was new, it changed in many ways, and what developed was considerably different49 from what Naismith originally invented. By 1892, the equipment used for the game had changed: cylindrical baskets made of heavy woven wire replaced the peach baskets (Guttmann, 1994:100). A bigger ball was introduced in 1894 replacing an ordinary football that had commonly been used. A larger ball was needed so that it could be easily handled and so that almost anyone could catch and throw it with very little practice. Naismith decided that the ball should be large and light, “one that could be easily handled and yet could not be concealed”. Backboards made of wood or iron were used in 1895 primarily to prevent fans from hanging out over the opposing team’s basket. By 1920, these boards become official.

The rules of the original game were also modified as, in 1896 the dribble became ‘legal’. The dribble was originally a defensive measure: when a player had possession of the ball and was so closely guarded that he could not pass it to one of his team mates, the only thing that he could do was to lose possession of the ball voluntarily in a way that he might possibly recover it by rolling or bouncing the ball. It took only a short time for players to realize that by bouncing the ball on the floor and catching it, they could control it to some extent. The spread and development of the dribble was very fast. Very early, the double dribble was recognized. It was not known by that name, but in 1898 a clause in the rules stated that, “during the dribble, a player could not touch the ball with both hands more than once”. There was no limitation on the number of times that he might bounce it with one hand, however. The following year it was recognized that the dribbler could use alternate hands in bouncing the ball. In

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49 Plays are also different today from what they were then, but that difference comes from the skill with which they are executed rather than from any change in principle.
1901 a rule stated that the player could not dribble the ball and then shoot for goal. This rule was in force at the collegiate level until 1908, when the dribbler was again allowed to shoot for the basket.

Another type of dribble that has been little used in the game is the overhead dribble. At first there was no limitation as to the number of times that the ball could be batted in the air, and as Naismith explains, it was not uncommon to see a player running down the floor, juggling the ball a few inches above his hand. This so closely approached running with the ball that a rule was inserted saying that the ball must be batted higher than the player's head. Over the years, the dribble became one of the most spectacular and exciting maneuvers - one which many spectators especially came to games to watch.

In 1897, the number of players was reduced from nine-aside (Naismith’s original class of students) to five. When the game was first started, it was with the idea that it should accommodate a number of people; it was the practice, especially when the game was used for recreation after a class, to divide the class into two groups, regardless of the number, and allow them to play. However, the result was that when the ball went to one end of the gym, all of the players would rush after it. Someone would get his hands on the ball and would return it to the other end of the gym, and back across the floor would dash those (too) many students. Thus, in 1893, the first step toward setting a definite number of players was taken. It was agreed that when the game was played for sport, any number might take part, but for match games there should be a definite number of men. Five men were suggested for small gymnasiums, and nine men for larger ones. In 1894, the rules set the number of men on a team at five when the playing space was less than eighteen hundred square feet, at seven for between eighteen hundred and thirty six hundred square feet, and at nine when the floor was larger. In 1895, the number was fixed at five, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon. It was definitely settled in 1897 that a basketball team should consist of five men (Naismith, 1996:31).

The development of penalties is interesting and distinctly demonstrates how the various difficulties have been met throughout the years. Moreover, it specifically
shows, as indicated by Elias and Dunning (1986), the consistent decline in the level of violence permitted in the game.

At first there were only two penalties. The first time a player committed a personal foul he was warned by the referee and the violation was marked against him. The second personal foul disqualified the man until the next basket had been made. As there were nine men on a side, this penalty was not so serious as it would be today. After a basket had been made, the penalized man could re-enter the game and was entitled to two more fouls before again being disqualified.

One clause was inserted in the rules in an effort to protect a clean team from another that used rough tactics. The clause read that if three fouls were committed by one team without the other team having committed a foul, the team that was fouled should receive one point. This was rather a serious penalty, as a field goal at that time only counted for one point.

However, when it was realized that this penalty was too severe, the value of a field goal was changed from one to three points, and each foul committed against a team counted one point. Whether these fouls were technical or personal, they carried the same penalty. The next change allowed the team that had been fouled to try for the basket from a line twenty feet from the goal. If this try was successful, the goal counted the same as one made from the field. At the same time, any person who committed two personal fouls in the same game was disqualified for the remainder of that game. If this player was disqualified from two games, he was ineligible to play for the remainder of the season. In 1895, the free-throw line was moved up to fifteen feet, and goals from the free-throw line were counted the same as goals from the field. In the following year, the points were changed to two for a field goal and one for a foul. The distance of the free-throw line and the value of the baskets have remained the same up to the present time.

A quotation from the rules for 1897 shows the extreme penalties meted out to the players in the early stages of the game.
"The referee may for the first offense, and shall for the second, disqualify the offender for that game and for such further period as the committee in charge of that league shall determine; except that disqualification for striking, hacking, or kicking shall be for one year without appeal." (Book of rules, 1897 as cited in Naismith, 1996).

Until 1908, the referee had the power to disqualify a man for repeated fouls. In that year, the rules stated that the player who committed five personal fouls should be disqualified for the remainder of that game. Two years later, the disqualifying number of fouls was reduced to four.

When the free throw was introduced, it was with the idea that many of the shots would be missed and the value of a foul would depend on the skill of the team at throwing goals; accordingly, some member of the team was designated to make the free throw. This player soon became so expert that he could throw the ball into the basket a large percentage of the time; this meant that a foul was practically as good as a goal, and led to the rule that the free throw should be made by the player against whom the foul had been committed. This change also contributed to the players' skills, as each member of the team developed skill in free-throws.

When nets were added to the rims in 1906, arguments among players, coaches and officials over loose balls were still going on since the boundaries of the court were not clear (Dickey, 1982). An early rule allowed the ball to be thrown in by the player first holding it. As the rule failed to designate just what was meant by holding, many of the players felt that if they could take the ball away from someone who already had it, they would be entitled to throw it in. During that year there were so many fights that the rules committee returned to the original wording of the rule: that the ball belonged to the player first touching it. Not until 1913 was the rule changed to state that when the ball went out of bounds, an opponent of the player who caused it to go out should put it in play. This practice led to some delay, and the next year the rule was changed to give the ball to the nearest opponent. There is little doubt that the change made at that time eliminated one of the really rough spots of the game. Today there is little confusion when the ball goes out of bounds, and it is usually returned without delay.
Given the fact that basketball's early development was influenced, as Naismith himself admits, by English rugby and soccer, it is hardly surprising to find in basketball's rules and principles elements of British 'fair-play' or, in Naismith's words, sportsmanship. He defined sportsmanship as being:

... the player's insistence on his own rights and his observance of the rights of others. It is playing the game vigorously, observing the rules definitely, accepting defeat gracefully, and winning courteously. Basketball is peculiarly adapted to the development of this trait because the players, officials, coaches, and spectators are in such close proximity that an action of one is observed by the others.

Both of the contesting teams occupy the same space on the floor, and often the teams are so intermingled that it is hard to distinguish one from the other. To obey the rules that have been set down, and to recognize the rights of the opposing players under these conditions, demands the highest type of sportsmanship.

And as for the referee:

The official is often no closer to some of the plays than the spectators, and it is evident that he must practice the strictest impartiality. He must be competent to judge reflexly and have the courage to disregard any personal feelings that he might have (Naismith, 1996:58).

Furthermore, following the idea that modern sport is bound up with a transformation towards greater civilization (Dunning, 1986), several indices, similar to those detected by Dunning and Sheard (1979) concerning rugby and soccer, of a process of 'civilizing' can be detected in basketball as well. These indices involve:

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50 Those indices, six in number, which exist in modern soccer and rugby and which make them more civilised, are lacking in folk-antecedents and pre-modern forms of games such as calcio.
1. Strict limitations on the numbers of participants and numerical equality between the contending sides;
2. Specialization around the practices of throwing, dribbling and handling the ball, together with the elimination of any violent act for the purpose of harming other players;
3. A centralized rule-making and administrative body;
4. A set of written rules which demand from players the exercise of strict self-control over physical contact and the use of physical force;
5. Clearly defined sanctions such as ‘free-throw’ and penalties which can be brought to bear on those who break the rules.
6. Closely connected to these, the institutionalization of specific roles, which have the task of controlling the game, that is, the role of referee.

Thus, basketball followed a similar developmental path to sports such as boxing, fox-hunting, soccer and rugby, which over a period of two centuries eliminated some forms of the physical violence that had originally characterized them (Dunning, 1995:137). To this end, basketball’s rules demanded that participants exercise stricter self-control over violent and aggressive impulses. Moreover, as part of this development, basketball came to be subject to the control of match officials who used as sanctions various sport-specific penalties which adversely affected the chances in the contest of erring participants and/or their team. Thus, it can be argued, as Elias and Dunning (1986) suggest, that the development of modern sports, basketball included, is an exemplification of the civilizing process.

3.2.2 The role of the YMCA

The role of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in spreading basketball around the United States (and later around the world) was indispensable. However, the unbridled enthusiasm of the young men and boys for basketball presented the leadership of the YMCA with a trying dilemma: on the one hand, basketball games obviously increased interest, prowess and participants; on the other hand, interest by members in basketball threatened to convert the YMCA into a full-fledged athletic club. Looking briefly at the history of the YMCA one can appreciate the problem the YMCA leader faced.
The YMCA was founded by George Williams in London, England in 1844. The idea then was to save the clothing store clerks, who had come in from the countryside, from the “wicked” life on the streets of big industrial cities. His simple and strong concept was to replace evil with good, immorality with Christian values. The concept spread to the United States in 1851 when a lay missionary, Thomas Sullivan, read about the YMCA in a Baptist weekly newspaper. The first YMCA in the United States was established in Boston. It consisted of prayer meetings, Bible classes, lectures and help in finding jobs. It was not until the late 1850's that YMCAs began to introduce "healthy sports and exercise" into their program. The building of gymnasiums occurred shortly after the Civil War and the first swimming pools appeared in the 1880's.

Consistent with the YMCA mission “to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all”, Naismith and the YMCA officials regarded the game as a palatable form of exercise for gymnastic classes; however, it soon developed into much more than that. As Rader (1990) and Dickey (1982) have noted, by the mid-1890s, in one local YMCA after another, basketball imperilled all other forms of physical activity on the gymnasium floor. Some YMCA teams were even holding regional tournaments. Nevertheless, as early as 1892, Gullick warned the association of a spectator-centered orientation. He reported in 1895 that “in several places, the game was played with such fierceness last year, the crowds who looked on became so boisterous and rowdyish, and the bad feelings developed between teams was so extreme that the game has been abolished in toto” (Gulick, 1897 as cited in Rader, 1990). The YMCA leaders simply could not reconcile the form the sport was taking; the all-out effort to win, the roughness of the game, the fan abuse – with the overall YMCA program. And so, the YMCA moved to de-emphasize the sport it had created, by discouraging the formation of teams and the holding of tournaments. In 1911, the YMCA changed the entire focus of its athletic program from “healthy body” to more “healthy spirit and mind”.

It was, however, too late, since teams and clubs played the increasingly popular game under other sponsorship. In fact, the game was popular not just among men but among women too. As Rader (1990) explains, no sport exceeded the importance of basketball
in defining the special character of women’s sport in the schools. Soon after Naismith invented the game in 1891, it became the most popular sport among college women; women apparently loved the freedom of movement and the vigorous competition it offered. In most cases women played in class teams or in physical education classes, but a substantial number of colleges at one time or another had college teams. While upper-class women played tennis and golf within the confines of private clubs, basketball, with help from people such as Senda Berenson, director of physical education at Smith College, gained nation-wide popularity (Rader, 1990:229). In 1898 Berenson developed a modified set of rules for women. The rules of the men’s game, she decided, encouraged too much roughness and physical and emotional exertion. Therefore, modifications to the boys’ rules were made:

1. The ball could not be taken away from the player who was holding it.
2. The player in possession of the ball could not hold it longer than three seconds.\(^{51}\)
3. The floor was divided into three sections, and a player could not cross these lines under penalty of a foul.
4. A defending player could not reach over another player who was in possession of the ball. The arms must be kept in a vertico-lateral plane, and a violation of this rule by a defensive player was called over-guarding.\(^{52}\)

In its earliest years the game was played mostly by YMCAs and later by high schools and colleges. But even before 1900 devoted players rented armories and dance halls to play basketball. Since the rental of these buildings often exceeded whatever players could afford to pay, crowds were admitted for an admission fee. After the rent was paid any money left over was split up among the players. Thus the first "professionals" did not play the game so much to make money, but more for an opportunity to play (Staffo, 1998:10).

\(^{51}\) The three-second interval was introduced since the tendency was for the girls to follow the ball, and the constant running up and down the floor exhausted the players quickly. Another factor was the belief that girls were not developed reflexly in sports as the boys were, and it was difficult for them to make their judgments and to act quickly.

\(^{52}\) The overguarding clause was put in because of the three-second interval. If a girl were allowed three seconds in which to play the ball, it was necessary that she have at least an opportunity to pass in these three seconds.
Although the first game was played in New York in 1893, most historians acknowledge that the first "professional" game was played in Trenton, New Jersey in 1896. There was enough money from gate receipts that night to pay each player 15 dollars, a significant sum in those days. Soon, promoters came into the game, hiring players on a game-to-game basis, usually to play against a local team which had some drawing power in the area. The next step as Dickey (1982) points out, was the formation of professional leagues. The first one, the National Basketball League, was organized in 1898, disbanding after the 1902-3 season. Other leagues quickly followed. The Philadelphia League began in 1903, becoming the Eastern League in 1909. The Central League started in Western Pennsylvania in 1906. The Hudson River League started in 1909, the New York State League in 1911, the Western Pennsylvania League in 1912, the Pennsylvania State League in 1914, the Inter-State League in 1915, the Metropolitan Basketball League in 1921 and finally, the American Basketball League in 1925 (Dickey, 1982:18).

3.3 College basketball

The middle chain, and probably most important link, between high school and professional basketball was, and still is, basketball games in colleges and universities. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was founded in 1906 in response to violence on football fields during the 1905 season. American football's rugged nature, typified by mass formations and gang tackling, resulted in numerous injuries and deaths and prompted many colleges to discontinue the sport. Others urged that football be reformed or abolished from intercollegiate athletics.

The President of the United States at the time, Theodore Roosevelt, summoned college athletics leaders to two White House conferences to encourage such reforms. In early December 1905, Chancellor Henry MacCracken of New York University convened a meeting of 13 institutions to initiate changes in football playing rules. At a subsequent meeting on December 28 in New York City, the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS) was founded by 62 members.

Although it was called "National" it was, like every other league at the time, a regional league.
The IAAUS was officially constituted in March 31, 1906, and took its present name (NCAA) in 1910. For several years, the NCAA was a discussion group and rule-making body; but in 1921, the first NCAA national championship was held: the National Collegiate Track and Field Championships. Gradually, more rules committees were formed and more championships were held.

A series of crises brought the NCAA to a crossroads after World War II. The "Sanity Code", adopted to establish guidelines for recruiting and financial aid, failed to curb abuses involving student-athletes. Post-season football games were multiplying rapidly. Member institutions were increasingly concerned about the effects of unrestricted television on football attendance.

The complexity and scope of these problems and the growth in membership and championships demonstrated the increasing need for full-time professional leadership. In 1951, Walter Byers, who previously had served as part-time executive assistant, was named executive director. A national headquarters was established in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1952. A program to control live television of football games was approved, the annual Convention delegated enforcement powers to the Association's Council and legislation was adopted governing post-season bowl games. The Association's membership was divided into three legislative and competitive divisions in 1973 at the first special Convention ever held. Five years later, Division I members voted to create subdivisions I-A and I-AA in the sport of football.

Women joined the NCAA's activities in 1980 when Divisions II and III established 10 championships for 1981-82. A year later, the historic 75th Convention adopted an extensive governance plan to include women's athletics programs, services and representation. The delegates expanded the women's championships program with the addition of 19 events.

Until the mid-1930s, basketball was primarily a local or regional, player-centered sport. From its invention it had attracted participants from diverse social groups and both genders. They played in organized teams, and in YMCAs, churches, city recreation programs, high schools, colleges and industrial leagues; many more played informally in driveways, playgrounds, school yards and gymnasiums. In a few places
in the 1920s, such as Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois, high school and college basketball caught on as a popular spectator sport. Yet in most places, football dominated campus sports. The 'inferior' image of basketball at that time was primarily due to the fact that it was played in short pants, indoors and by girls. As Rader notes, college basketball became a major sport, and attained national attention due to modern architecture. Entrepreneurs in about a dozen cities built large arenas which seated several thousand spectators, to capitalize upon the boxing craze of the 1920s. With the Great Depression and the decline in the popularity of boxing (which can be seen as another indication of increasing 'civilization' (Sheard, 1997)) in the 1930s, the owners desperately sought other ways to make their arenas profitable. College basketball games displayed potential in 1931 when Mayor Jimmy Walker of New York asked a group of sportswriters to organize a tournament in Madison Square Garden for the benefit of the city's relief fund. Despite the depression, the "Relief Games" of 1931, 1932, and 1933 drew full houses. One particular sportswriter, named Edward ("Ned") Irish, made a profit after staging his own college games in 1934. Renting Madison Square Garden and paying both teams, Irish still made a profit from the 16,000 spectators that attended each game. The Garden games, promoted by Irish, which matched local college teams with powerful rivals from around the nation, served as a catalyst for the transformation of college basketball into a full-fledged spectator sport.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s (including during the Second World War), New York was the core of big-time college basketball. In 1938 the Metropolitan Basketball Writers' Association of New York organized the National Invitational Tournament (NIT), designed to determine the national championship team at the end of each season. The National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) leaders, particularly those in the mid-west, thought a national tournament should not be sponsored by "eastern" writers, but by a collegiate organization. In 1939 the NABC sponsored the first tournament, which drew only 15,000 people and lost money. With no funds, the NABC leaders asked the NCAA organization's heads to take over the new tournament. The following year, the NCAA founded its own post-season invitational tournament, though until 1951 the NIT remained the premier college tournament. After World War II, Irish extended his promotion beyond New York City to Philadelphia and Buffalo
while increasing the number of games per season. By 1950, the Garden college program drew over 600,000 spectators annually (Rader, 1990:284).

Yet all college basketball experienced serious trouble at the beginning of the 1950’s. Roberts and Olson (1989) cite a scandal in college basketball in the 1950s that threatened to destroy basketball programs in universities and colleges. In 1951, the New York district attorney revealed that thirty-two players from a variety of colleges had been involved in 'fixing' the score differences in their college games. This scandal, followed by a much bigger one, led to a thorough investigation into recruitment and subsidization norms at big-city colleges, which uncovered illegal actions. 500 college players were proved to be receiving forbidden money and other benefits for their services as players. One has to recognize that a clear distinction between an 'amateur' and a 'professional' was one of the most important basics of college eligibility. Warnings against professionalism were issued and spread all over campuses in the United States. Part of such forewarnings deserve to be quoted:

Don't lose your college eligibility by becoming a professional. You are a "professional" if you:

1. Are paid (in any form) or accept the promise of pay for playing in an athletics contest;
2. Sign a contract or verbally commit with an agent or a professional sports organization;
3. Ask that your name be placed on a draft list [Note: In basketball, once you become a student-athlete at an NCAA school, you may enter a professional league's draft one time without jeopardizing your eligibility provided you are not drafted by any team in that league and you declare your intention in writing to return to college within 30 days after the draft];
4. Use your athletics skill for pay in any form (for example, TV commercials, demonstrations);
5. Play on a professional athletics team; or
6. Participate on an amateur sports team and receive any salary, incentive payment, award, gratuity, educational expenses or expense allowances
(other than playing apparel, equipment and actual and necessary travel, and room and board expenses).

Before enrolling in college, you may:

7. Try out (practice with but not participate against outside competition) with a professional sports team at your expense;
8. Receive actual and necessary expenses from any professional sports organizations for one visit per professional organization not in excess of 48 hours; and
9. Receive a fee for teaching a lesson in a particular sport.
(Adapted from NCAA book of rules, 1996).

But as Rader (1990) points out, the scandals of the 1950s did not stop the rapid development of basketball. For sport's fans, the basketball season perfectly bridged the gap between football in the fall and baseball in the spring. Basketball appealed to members of all different types of communities, large or small. High school and college basketball often furnished a source of common pride in small towns as well as in big cities. Basketball also flourished in the ethnic and 'racial' enclaves of the sprawling metropolises. City basketball reflected the ascent of ethnic and racial groups from the ghettos. Irish, Jewish and Italian athletes dominated the rosters of metropolitan schools and colleges. By the late 1950s, blacks began to replace these ethnic groups.

With the introduction of television cameras to college sports, college basketball soon followed the college football enterprise. Although basketball did not generate as much revenue from spectators watching television as football, at the beginning, it cost less to establish a team. Modest costs convinced more and more colleges to invest in large basketball programs. Playing in the NIT or NCAA tournament promised huge publicity for the college, followed by big contracts with television stations and promoters. By the late 1970s, NCAA basketball became a major television spectacle, second only to professional football. To increase the size of the television audience, the NCAA spread out tournaments over several weekends and increased the number of participating teams. Thus, in 1980, with an average sum of one million dollars from
television revenues being paid to each member of the NCAA final-four tournament, it was not difficult to foresee the crisis that occurred in the mid-1980s. College teams faced allegations of fraud concerning the system by which players were recruited. A low percentage of graduates in all college sports at that time did not add much to the image of college sports in general, and basketball in particular. In spite of the fact that a reform plan was embarked on, college basketball as the middle chain, and as shown, probably most important link between high school and professional basketball, was still affected by the next and most important phase: professional basketball.

3.4 Professional basketball

In order to trace the origins of professional basketball one must examine the first league organized by the YMCA athletic program around the United States. By 1905, YMCA teams regularly played over 2000 games with outside competitors. Competing with other collegians and athletic clubs, the YMCA teams proved to be very successful not only in basketball but also in other sports. During the first decade of the twentieth century for example, the Buffalo German YMCA totally dominated championship basketball. The team even won the gold medal at the 1904 Olympic Games in St. Louis. As Ball (1911, cited in Rader, 1990) asserts, the spirit of rivalry, athletic specialization, and even professional tendencies of the YMCA athletics equalled those of athletic clubs and colleges. Local YMCAs started to provide star athletes with special privileges such as free membership, room and board, and generous traveling allowances to compete away from home. Although many of the local secretaries and physical education directors tried to resist this “excessive” athleticism, others capitulated to the demands of their membership.

The withdrawing of the YMCA’s support for the sport teams (a process that was completed in 1911) led to the rise of the professional game. Teams such as the Buffalo Germans became independent clubs although at that time there were no contracts binding players to their ‘employers’, and players moved freely from one team to the other. As Dickey (1982) argues, the fact that players sometimes turned out for two teams in the same league, led to lack of confidence in professional teams among fans who were constantly suspicious about ‘fixed’ games.
Some of the teams of that era preferred to travel and play exhibition games. One such team was the New York Celtics organized in 1914 by Frank McCormack. As the United States entered the First World War in 1917, the team was broken up, but was reunited under new ownership and title. The “Original Celtics” drew many spectators to their games, allowing their promoter Jim Furey to pay them a significant amount of money. At that time there were many professional basketball teams, but all were poorly organized. Team owners would sign players to individual game contracts, with a wage which varied in relationship to the size of the crowd expected. At the beginning of 1922, however, Furey changed this by signing players to a year-long contract.

The first truly nationwide league was founded in 1925. The American Basketball League began with teams from Brooklyn, Washington, Cleveland, Rochester, Fort Wayne, Boston, Chicago, Detroit and Buffalo. When the Boston team dropped out during the middle of the season, the league was left with just eight teams. The organizers of the league were disappointed when the Celtics did not join the league, reasoning that could make more money on their own. In exhibition games, playing the league teams, the Celtics won easily and on a regular basis. Eventually, the Celtics had no choice but to join the league as the ABL officials prohibited exhibition games between the Celtics and league teams. By 1926, the Celtics were part of the league, and dominated it as they had done before (NBA, 1997).

Two other teams, the New York Renaissance and the Harlem Globetrotters, were also playing basketball of a high standard at that time, but did not gain much recognition. These teams never really acquired the fame of the Celtics because, it is assumed, all their players were black. Newspaper sports pages of that time reported mainly on white sports, and the Renaissance received little publicity. Unlike the situation in other sports, black teams could compete with white teams in basketball. It has been suggested (by Dickey, 1982) that the most accomplished basketball played during that era, was in fact when the Celtics played the Renaissance in one of their many matches. Abe Saperstein founded the second team, the Harlem Globetrotters, in 1926 and decided to make it strictly a road team, playing wherever he could schedule a game. The Great Depression in the late 1920s affected basketball as much as any
other business in the United States. The league was re-formed in 1934 but as a regional eastern league. The main attractions as far as basketball was concerned, were still college basketball games that were played in New York's Madison Square Garden (Dickey, 1982:33-34).

The next professional basketball league was established in the late 1930s. The National Basketball League (NBL) was founded in 1937, with almost all of its teams drawn from the Midwest, the area where, just like today, the enthusiasm for basketball was, as Dickey asserts, greater than in any other part of the U.S. As Dickey explains, the League was formed when two corporations, 'Firestone' and 'Goodyear', along with 'General Electric' of Fort Wayne, decided to join professional basketball and be represented by basketball players. The first year of the new league was characterized by great administrative problems as the commissioner, Hubert Johnson, left scheduling of the games and other decisions such as playing rules (that still varied at that time from one place to another), to the managers of the teams. Players at that time earned little money and had to work elsewhere to complete their income. Teams recruited players from their area, yet failed to attract young college graduates to play for the new league. Given that, and the fact that relatively few fans came to watch professional basketball, it would not appear to have been a sensible decision to found another league at that time. The founders of the new league thought differently. Most of the men behind the new league had control over their own arenas, and it apparently seemed reasonable to them that basketball could bridge the gap between hockey games and ice shows, the most popular indoor sports at that time. The message was spread among the owners of the National Hockey League around the state but nothing was done until the end of the Second World War. By 1946 Maurice Podoloff, the president of the American Hockey League and a person with proven administrative experience, was chosen to be commissioner of the Basketball Association of America (BAA). Each team paid a $10,000 franchise fee, the money going for league operating expenses including a salary for Podoloff. The first season of the new league hosted 11 teams from Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Providence, St. Louis, Toronto and Washington (Official NBA Guide, 1996-97). One of the assets of the new league was the fact that the BAA owners all had promotional experience and apparently knew what the spectators wanted. It was a booming time in the entertainment world in 1946 and professional sports were a big part of that.
However, the owners of the new league seemed to be reluctant to invest more money in basketball, as it was one among many other sports franchises they owned. Also the fact that at that time college graduates preferred to join the NBL, did not make the situation any better. On the other hand, the stronger NBL league could not translate their strength into money primarily because they played in small towns and small arenas. Merger between the NBL and the BAA seemed to be inevitable in 1948, when teams left the NBL to join the BAA. BAA Commissioner Podoloff pursued ways of getting the two leagues together, which eventually occurred in 1948. 17 teams formed the new league which was re-titled the National Basketball Association (NBA), combining the names of the two former rival leagues (Dickey, 1982:35).

With only five months to get ready for the targeted Nov. 1st season opener, the playing rules and style of operation were based as closely as possible on the successful college game. However, rather than play 40 minutes divided into two halves, the BAA game was eight minutes longer and played in four 12-minute quarters so as to bring an evening's entertainment up to the two-hour period owners felt the ticket buyers expected. Also, although 'zone' defenses were permitted in college play, it was agreed during that first season that no 'zones' be permitted, since they tended to slow the game down.

The merger of the two leagues, with the emergence of new teams such as the Minneapolis Lakers led by George Mikan, the tallest player in the league, strengthened the NBA's claim that the league featured what Rader (1990) calls the "best of basketball". The recruitment of black players, as well as players from the Amateur Athletic Union made the new league even stronger. Ironically, the scandals that college basketball were involved in at that time helped the NBA, as college teams cancelled their games in the big cities, and basketball fans had to forgo their hunger for basketball or attend professional games (Rader, 1990:270).

Geography figured heavily in the makeup of the 11 franchises. The Providence Steamrollers relied heavily on former Rhode Island College players, while Pittsburgh chose its team-mates from within a 100-mile radius. The New York Knickerbockers players came primarily from New York area colleges. Even Neil Cohalan, the first Knickerbockers coach, was brought from Manhattan College. But all of Toronto's
players were American, with the exception of Hank Biasatti, a forward, who was a native Canadian. With the controversy that surrounded Jackie Robinson's breaking Major League Baseball's colour line with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, on October 31, 1950 the Washington Capitals' Earl Lloyd became the first African-American to play in an NBA game (Staffo, 1997). Chuck Cooper with the Boston Celtics and Nat Clifton with the New York Knickerbockers followed him later that year (NBA Heritage, 1996).

Yet, at the beginning of the 1950s, professional basketball faced problems that made it difficult to compete with football, baseball and hockey. Salaries were modest, mostly around $5,000 for the season. As a result, players had to rely on off-season jobs for supplementary income. Another problem was the emergence of televised sports, which produced only modest revenues, since the pace of the game at that time was slow. Another problem was the low scoring (one of the consequences of the slow game). On November 1950, the Fort Wayne Pistons edged the Minneapolis Lakers 19-18, in the lowest scoring game ever in the NBA. Danny Biasone, the owner of the NBA's Syracuse Nationals recalled that:

> The game had become a stalling game⁵⁴. A team would get ahead even in the first half, and it would go into stall. The other team would keep fouling, and it got to be a constant parade to the foul line. ...In 1952 we played a game in which neither team took a shot in the last 8 minutes. It was a parade between foul lines, and boy, was it dull! ... Coaches will take advantage of anything to win, if they can win a game 3-2, that's OK with them. And you can not blame them that’s why they are getting paid. But if you are a promoter, that won’t do. You have got to have offense because offense excites people (NBA official publication, 1994).

As evident from the quote, it seems that the game needed a change in the time element in order to stop the stalling and fouling. On October 30 1954, the 24-second

⁵⁴ As early as the 1930's complaints started to be heard regarding the stalling game in which one team refused to make an attempt to get the ball. As Naismith explains, some teams, when on defense, clustered around the basket and remained in this position for nineteen minutes, making no advance toward the ball. Under these conditions, the people were forced to sit in their seats and watch ten men on the floor doing nothing. A great many people did not care to pay to see two teams at opposite ends of the floor looking at each other.
The shot was introduced after pressure from fans and television. A team had to take a shot at the basket within 24 seconds or relinquish the ball to the other team. The new rule affected the game immediately. During the first season of the new rule, NBA teams averaged 93.1 points per game, an increase of 13.6 points over the year before, and 10.5 of the extra points came from the field, with only 3.1 from the foul line. In the 1954-55 season, the Boston Celtics became the first team in the NBA to average more than 100 points per game.

The game developed rapidly as the style of play changed sharply. The jump shot replaced the common set (static, from the spot without jumping) shot in the late 1950s. Jump shots allowed players to shoot the ball over a defensive player as well as in motion. Quicker players made the game faster. Such changes, along with rules that ensured that the game was pleasurable to the spectators, turned professional basketball into more than a sporting game – it became an entertainment experience.

As Rader notes, professional basketball shared in the largesse of the sports boom of the 1960s, though by no means as spectacularly as professional football. Attendance increased from less than 2 million in 1960, to 10 million in the late 1970s. Network television producers at that time remained unenthusiastic towards the NBA. The attitude of these producers changed in the late 1960s as another league emerged and the popularity of basketball grew. However, the American Basketball Association (ABA) which was founded in 1967 with the hope of capitalizing on television, failed to land a major network television contract, as the NBA had, and collapsed in 1976.

In the 1970s, the NBA enjoyed a temporary era of competitive balance; eight different teams won the championship – a phenomenon that increased interest in the league. Later that decade however, the NBA was struggling through some of its darkest days. By this time the league consisted mostly of African-American players and most of its top stars were black. Whereas the influx of black athletes added excitement to the NBA in the late 1950s and early 1960s, now ironically many critics said the league

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55 See Appendix i for basketball rules and diagram of court.
56 In 1932 rules were adopted to prohibit offensive players from staying for more than three seconds in the “key” or lane, and to force the offensive team to get the ball past mid-court in ten seconds. Man-to-man defense became compulsory in the NBA. Zone defenses of various kinds were illegal, allowing players to demonstrate their talent in one-on-one situations.
was "too black," and that it had become a league of individual stars but with a lack of teamwork (NBA Heritage, 1996). Others ascribed it to the long regular season that eliminated only a few teams from the post season playoff series. Still others maintained that it was the much-publicized drug abuse scandals among players of that time which damaged the public's perception of the game (Staffo, 1997).

David Stern, a young lawyer who had represented the league in a number of high-profile cases, such as the merger of the ABA and NBA, joined the league as an administrator in 1978. Since his promotion to executive vice-president in 1980, Stern has overseen a remaking of the league’s image, using NBA stars and a shrewd marketing strategy in an attempt to attract more fans from more population segments. Stern became only the fourth NBA commissioner in February 1984 (Broadcasting & Cable, 1993).

The foundation for the NBA’s future success was laid in the early 1980s. A landmark collective bargaining agreement which featured a cap on salaries while assuring players a percentage of escalating revenues, and a forceful, anti-drug agreement that contained elements of prevention, enforcement and rehabilitation, were two prime examples of the innovative program developed under Stern's leadership. Other goal was to turn the N.B.A. into one of the popular commodity-signs. As Andrews (1997) explains:

Stern's goal was to turn the N.B.A. into one of the popular commodity-signs which had usurped the material economic commodity as the dynamic force and structuring principle of everyday American existence. This was achieved by an aggressive restructuring of the N.B.A. from an archaic professional sport industry focusing solely on the league's properties and administration, to a multifaceted marketing and entertainment conglomerate incorporating over 20

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57 As Andres (1997) suggests, the most influential and damaging statement relating to the problems of the N.B.A. came within Chris Cobb's article "NBA and Cocaine: Nothing to Snort At", which appeared in the Los Angeles Times of August 19, 1980. Cobbs engaged in a shameless and none-too-subtle piece of reactionary scaremongering which used the much publicized drug problems of exclusively African-American players (Bernard King, Terry Furlow, and Eddie Johnson) as irrefutable evidence of the problems of endemic drug-abuse being directly related to the problem of having a league in which 70% of the players were African-American.
divisions, including N.B.A. Properties, N.B.A. Entertainment, N.B.A. International, and N.B.A. Ventures.... by securing prime time television exposure on the major networks, regular billing on the expanding cable networks, and by developing in-house promotional programs, commercials, and pre-recorded videocassettes. ...Thus during the 1980s the N.B.A. experienced an epic journey from the commodity to the terminal, as television transformed this aberrant sporting product into a ubiquitous commodity-sign system. ....the televvisual armatures of the promotion industries re-framed the meaning of the N.B.A. in order to add positive meaning to this commodity-sign. ...in doing so, the N.B.A. became a hyperreal circus whose simulated, and hence self-perpetuating, popularity seduced the American masses, and resulted in the league inalienably becoming a site of positive investment within the popular consciousness (Andrews, 1997:77).

Thanks to Stern's marketing strategies and with the help of national television broadcasting rights, the NBA became one of the most popular sports in the United States, if not the most popular (Andrews, 1997; Staffo, 1997). The prosperity of the league led to an expansion of the number of teams in 1995, when two Canadian teams, the Toronto Raptors and the Vancouver Grizzlies, joined the other 27 franchise teams from around the United States.

3.5 The international diffusion of basketball

According to Guttmann (1994), basketball reached Asia before Europe because Naismith's first team included future missionaries to China, India and Japan. As early as 1895, Dr. Willard Lyon established the first YMCA in China and a year later introduced the game of basketball to the Chinese. By 1910 the YMCA organized China's first athletic meeting, in which 140 teams would compete. Basketball was part of the program as the officials of the game were Americans. One of the main promoters of the new game in China was Dr. Max Exner who arrived in Shanghai in 1908, as the Chinese YMCA's first National Physical Education Director. Elwood Brown was another promoter, who held a similar position at the YMCA in the
The Philippines between 1910-1918. Brown organized the first Far East Games in Manila in 1913 hosting teams from China and Japan. However, neither the Japanese nor the Chinese team could match the qualified American-ruled people of the Philippines. The next Far East Games in Shanghai in 1915, achieved the same results.

An unsuccessful attempt to establish a college in Shanghai was the first sign of anti-American policy in the new Republic of China. In 1927 the last YMCA missionary, JGray, left China, bringing to an end the role of physical education in the service of the church. The Civil war in China did not end basketball, since both the Nationalists and later the Communists, who came to power in 1949, actively promoted the game.

Basketball was slow in making an impact in Europe in its early days. An attempt made by the German Ernest Heberman, a director of physical therapy from Massachusetts, to introduce the game in his homeland was not successful. The Germans saw basketball as a game more suitable for girls than for boys. The rules were published in 1901, and were based upon those Berenson had devised at Smith college. Different modifications in the game were introduced by Martina Bergman-Osterberg, the founder of a Physical Education College in Hempstead, England. The girl’s version of the game was called Netball but as Guttmann asserts, neither version of the game was much of a success (Guttmann, 1994:104). The situation was very much the same in France. Even the presence of the inventor of the game, James Naismith, who served in France as a YMCA advisor, did not make much of a difference. As Bottenburg (1978) argues, the Inter-Allied games of 1919 were probably the most significant contribution to the diffusion of the game. YMCA officials who joined the American troops to the First World War were among the organizers of a large tournament which gathered soldiers from 18 different nations at the end of the fighting. Although no team came even close to the Americans in basketball, the important outcome of the Inter-Allied games was the fact that basketball was being played, and most importantly, many people, who could then pass it on, had watched it. The game did not spread evenly. According to Guttmann (1994), the Italians and Swiss seemed somehow more eager than the rest of the European soldiers. Therefore, it is not surprising that the eight founding members of the Fédération Internationalé Basketball Association (FIBA), in 1932, included Italians and Swiss (the other members coming from Argentina, Czechoslovakia, Greece,
Latvia, Portugal and Romania). The inclusion of basketball in the “Nazi Olympics” in 1936 affected the growing popularity of the game. 45 years after he invented the game James Naismith had the honor of awarding the medals to the team captains of the United States, Canada and Mexico. By that time, basketball was being played throughout Europe but it was not until the end of the Second World War, when American popular culture started to influence the continent, that basketball experienced rapid growth (Guttmann, 1994:107).

One important influence was Abe Saperstein’s Harlem Globetrotters team. Combining basketball with comedy, the Trotters went truly global as they played in 90 different countries, and acted as ambassadors for the game worldwide. Their version of the game filled the Olympic stadium in Berlin, where 75,000 spectators came to watch the basketball players handle the ball perfectly. Since then, basketball has become truly global.

Figure 7 gives a perspective on the popularity of the game around Europe:

**Figure 7: The popularity of basketball in Europe (by spectators)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>League</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 The cultural flow of modern basketball

Any attempt to map the spread of the game of basketball on an international level must start by focusing on the American basketball league, the NBA. Much of what happens today around the world, concerning basketball, connects directly and indirectly to one of the largest corporations in the world of sport. Unlike the situation in any other sport, America’s role regarding basketball did not end by inventing and introducing the game around the world, since the Americans, via the NBA, still dominate the game in almost every aspect. Again, unlike any other sport, the Americans have never been beaten at their own game on a professional level, and in other cases (such as college teams) when they were beaten, defeats were few or controversial.

From its humble beginnings playing in dingy arenas in small cities in the eastern part of the United States, a half century later the NBA became international in scope with the 1992 United States Olympic “Dream Team” helping to increase popularity around the world (NBA Heritage, 1996). NBA games have already been played in Germany, Spain, Mexico and Japan. They have been televised in 180 countries in 44 languages. Furthermore, as Staffo (1997) notes, although Wat Musaka from China played briefly for the Knicks in 1947 and there have been other foreign players periodically here and there on NBA rosters throughout the league’s history, most of the players are American. In 1985-86 Georgi Glouchkov from Bulgaria led what has been called “the foreign invasion.” There are currently (1997) 32 foreign players in the league, with the NBA holding the rights to seven others.

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58 By ‘modern’ I mean after the new NBA league was established in the United States (1946).
59 Such a controversy occurred in the final of the Olympic basketball tournament in 1972 in Munich. The last 3 seconds of the game between the United States and the Soviets (which was won by the Americans) had to be replayed because of clock problems. A successful basket by the Soviet team with the buzzer resulted in what some people regards as one of the most shameful incidents in Olympic history when the Americans never claimed their medals from the game.
Similar to Maguire (1988), it is argued here that in order to trace, describe and analyse the developments of the game of basketball, one must look at the development of a whole network of social functions. Using Appadurai's (1990) landscapes typology to structure the process into a complex of an overlapping, disjunctive order, I will demonstrate the cultural flows surrounding the game.

3.6.1 The ‘ethnoscapes’

‘Ethnoscapes’ refer to the large numbers of moving groups and persons, such as tourists, immigrants, refugees, players and guest-workers, that up to now, have affected the politics of and between nations to an unusual degree (Appadurai, 1990). Where sport is concerned, Bale and Maguire (1994) assert, such a process gathered pace and occurred over a more widespread geographical area and within a greater number of sport subcultures than at any time in the past.

In order to trace the flow of basketball players around the world one must look at the grass roots of basketball in America. Every year, thousands of young basketball players finish their high-school education. The brilliant players among them are spotted well in advance and offered a place in one of the top college basketball programs. The less fortunate can still find basketball scholarships, in one of the other colleges or universities. Many of these players have the same goal: to be a player in what is considered to be the best basketball league around the world – the NBA. Since its early years, the NBA has established a system of recruiting the best players from the collegiate teams (and from around the world as well) to their forces. According to Shelach (1991) the ‘Draft’ system was introduced as early as the 1960s. This selection system had two aims: first, to ensure that the games played by the league were of sufficiently high quality, by making the teams as equal as possible. The ‘Draft’ system therefore, allows the team with the worst balance (winning and losing) to pick first and therefore, to have the best college player; second, to prevent a hegemonic situation developing where the wealthy team buys all the good players since they can obviously give a better offer to those players. However, according to the NBA players, the draft system contravenes constitutional employment rights by not allowing players to negotiate with more than one team and try to obtain higher
salaries. Thus, the draft system favors the team owners (Shelach, 1991:161). Furthermore, as Meliniak (1991) notes, the number of rounds (in every round each team picks a player) has declined from 20 rounds (where the entire league had the rights for 230 players) to 10 rounds in 1974 and 7 rounds in 1985. With ongoing negotiations between the league administration and the players' union, the number of rounds was down to only two in 1990, limiting the number of eligible players to only 54. This was revised in 1991, after some cases in which teams that had not succeeded during the season did not make an effort at the end of the season since they knew that it would pay off at the end for the future draft. To prevent such scenarios, in the revised addition of the draft, only those teams who did not make the play-off (11 out of 27), could participate in a draw: 11 balls with the name of the worst balance team of the season, 10 balls for the next team and so on, and were randomly picked from a revolving lottery machine. These teams are allowed the draft rights for places 1-11 in the first round and 27-38 in the second round. The teams that played in the play-off were placed in the draft according to their rank (the NBA champions therefore get to pick numbers 27 and 54).

The NBA teams can pick any player they wish from around the world, even if the player does not wish to play (or simply cannot61) for the NBA at that time. By picking the player in the draft, the team ensures that if he ever joins the league, it will be to their team. Various NBA teams, for example, now hold the rights to 15 players from 10 different countries. As mentioned earlier, many players around the world wish to play in the league, which is a conglomeration of the best players from around the world who are rewarded accordingly. All 29 of the NBA teams have developed year-long scouting systems allowing them to find basketball talents everywhere in the world.

However, this process is not unidirectional. Since only a few college graduates fulfil their dream of playing in the NBA, thousands of them have to look for an alternative league to present their skills. It will be argued that the migration of basketball players

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60 At the end of each season, 16 teams with the best winning-losing records enter the 'play-offs'—where the NBA championship title is decided.
61 The former Soviet Union's player, Arvidas Sabonis was picked at the beginning of the 1980s by Portland Trail Blazers. Due to the political condition at that time, and injury problems, he joined the NBA only in 1993.
from the United States to the rest of the world (but mainly to the European leagues), is probably the largest flow of professional players from one nation, in all the professional sports today. Some of these players are just not good enough to play in the NBA. Others are sent to other leagues (mainly to European leagues) by the NBA teams to gain experience before coming back to the NBA. On the other hand however, there are some players, such as veterans players, who prefer to play for a lower amount of money in Europe and play fewer games in the season. While every team in the NBA plays 82 games during the regular season, the teams that make the play off (16 of them) will play an additional 5-26 games. In Europe, on the other hand, the teams usually play considerably fewer games. Unlike Guttman's (1994) suggestion that the NBA competes with the European teams for players, the argument here is that the NBA looks at the other leagues as a 'foster home' for future talents.

Some of the players take advantage of the season differential around the globe, and are able to play in more than one league. There are, for example, players who play in one of the European leagues, as well as in Australia or the Philippines. One way or the other, most of the foreign players, playing around the world's basketball leagues are Americans. According to Bale and Maguire (1994) more than 400 Americans are playing for the European leagues. Given the fact that there are only five starter-players in each team, this number is highly significant.

The Greek, Italian and Spanish League are among the strongest Leagues outside the NBA. This is, therefore, the primary reason why many Americans try to get well-paid contracts in those leagues. On the next European level, the Turkish, French as well as the Israeli league (the main area of investigation in this thesis) also have large percentages of American players. The work of Olin (1984) and Maguire (1988), reveals the same flux in the lower levels of European basketball. The case of English basketball for example, illustrates a situation in which players designated as 'dual

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62 The teams in the NBA could not know for sure how good the player that had been chosen would be at the professional level. Over the years they developed and operated scouting systems allowing them to track improving players as well as promising college graduates who did not get picked earlier in the draft.
national' or 'English acquired\(^6^3\) are combined with 'Americans' to reach 30% foreign basketball players, who grew up and learnt their basketball in North America.

The case of English basketball might also illustrate a situation in which the percentage number of Americans might be misleading. The dominance of Americans in the league in every aspect of the game, proves to be much higher and therefore crucial. As Maguire (1988) puts it:

> Offensively, Americans have dominated the top 10 ranking positions throughout the period under consideration (1982-1986 Y.G). They are key performers in terms of ‘assists’ (passes towards a successful score, Y.G), scoring and rebounding.

This evidence indicates both the extent of American involvement and their domination of teams in terms of ‘starting-fives’ and court time (Maguire, 1988:310).

The consequences of implementing the ‘Bosman rule’ in European Basketball have varied from one country to another. Where in some European countries the governing bodies limit the number of ‘Bosman players’, in others such limits do not exist. Moreover, since not all the European countries are part of the European community (EC), the Bosman rule does not apply in these countries\(^6^4\). In September 1996, the "ranking" of European countries with the most EU players in their First Division Leagues was as follows: Greece: 30; Germany: 15; France: 14; Portugal: 14; Italy: 13; Spain: 6.

In addition, all those championships (except Spain with 3 per team) allow 2 additional foreign players per club thus enabling, for example, the current European champions, Panathinaikos Athens (Greece), to have a total of 7 non-Greek players (2 US players + 5 EU players). The top European Basketball countries have also taken advantage of

\(^6^3\) In order to narrow as much as possible the ‘citizenship acquired’ status, FIBA formed a 3-year waiting period for naturalization of players. The Bosman rule, however, eliminated this rule.

\(^6^4\) As will be argued in chapter 7, the Israeli case is even more complicated: while locating geographically in Asia, the Israeli basketball team competes in Europe yet not confined to the EC rules such as Bosman.
the elimination of the 3-year waiting period for naturalization (FIBA Official publication, 1997).

3.6.2 The ‘financescapes’

Trying to examine the financescapes flows surrounding basketball world wide, one must look at the network of interdependencies in which the game is embedded. Inter-related processes such as the commercialization and commodification of sport affected the game of basketball in particular, as it affected sport in general. Leonard Shecter (1972), claims that:

Around the simplicity which most of us want out of sports has grown a monster, a sprawling five-billion-dollar industry which pretends to cater to our love of games but instead has evolved into that one great American institution: big business. Winning, losing, playing the game, all count far less than counting the money (quoted in Hoch, 1972:67).

Just as with similar cultural flows, one must look at the core (America) in order to detect the flows to the periphery. Even without fully subscribing to Hoch’s (1972) ideas, regarding the sport industry, his views might help explain the power relations involved in the world of (mostly American) sport:

So throughout the sport industry, as in every other industry under capitalism, control is exercised, not by the consumers (fans), nor by the producers (players) but by the owners of capital. It is they who decide whether or not to stage their spectacles and then, where, and how to do so. Ownership gives them the power to dictate the complete development or non-development of the industry, the very life and working condition of those (players) whose labor they buy, and the nature of the product they produce. And the basis of their decisions is, first and foremost, personal profit (Hoch, 1972:46).

Basketball, like other major sports in America, over the years has become part of the entertainment business. As Rader claims, professional basketball in America shared in
the largesse of the sport's boom of the 1960's. According to Halberstem (1988), that which has happened to professional basketball since the mid-1960s is no different to that which has happened to many other products. When the product was introduced and marketed by those who were directly involved in it (i.e. players, coaches and game promoters) the product became popular. Ever since it became successful, people with less interest in sport per se but more in the business side became involved, and the 'product' became less of a sport and more of a product, and the domain of the people who wanted to gain tax revenues and improve the value of their shares. Almost overnight sportsmen's salaries started to be competitive, not just with their colleagues but also with other entertainment stars (Halberstem, 1988:17). The sports industry in the United States became part of the entertainment business and basketball as part of the sport industry, was no different.

However, even when sport becomes a product and players become a means of production, they are part of a much bigger production. As figurational sociologists would assert (see for example Dunning and Sheard, 1979), the power relations among the players, owners, coaches, player's agents, player's unions and sponsors are the result of much broader interdependence relations and power balances and therefore cannot be explained simply in terms of their exploitation by capitalists.

Professional basketball in the United States is interwoven in a system that in part was adopted on a broader base by many basketball federations world-wide. This system, as a result of an ongoing process, contains a network of interdependencies that includes the owner of the franchise, the players, coaches, agents, sponsors, as well as other related personnel that are connected to what has become a profitable corporate business.

According to Andrews (1997) within a decade the N.B.A. league turned a racially stigmatized and struggling sports league into an energetic, expansive, and most significantly, profitable popular American entertainment industry. Using the well

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65 The system in the U.S. allows investors to own a professional sports team simply by buying a franchise. When in 1995, 2 new franchises joined the NBA, 40 million dollars from each new franchise was spread among the other teams.
established and successful Disney corporation as a comparison, commissioner Stern explains:

They have theme parks...and we have theme parks. Only we call them arenas. They have characters: Mickey Mouse, Goofy. Our characters are named Magic and Michael [Jordan]. Disney sells apparel; we sell apparel. They make home videos; we make home videos. (Swift, 1991:84 quoted in Andrews, 1997)

The growth of basketball in the United States resulted, throughout the years, in enormous profits for team-owners. As profits grew and players unionized, basketball players’ salaries have soared. The average salary of professional players can serve as a measure of the game’s growth in popularity in absolute terms and in comparison to other professional sports in the United States:

**Figure 8: Salary averages of professional players (1967-1988)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>$19,000</td>
<td>$46,000</td>
<td>$135,000</td>
<td>$433,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$107,000</td>
<td>$185,000</td>
<td>$535,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>$227,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Rader, 1990:335)

Looking at the individual player may give us a better perspective on the numbers involved. According to Time magazine (1997), the highest paid basketball player in 1977, Kareem Abdul Jabar, earned $625,000 per season. A decade later, in 1987, Patrick Ewing got $3,500,000 for the same period. In 1997, the highest paid player in the NBA, Michael Jordan, was paid 30 million dollars for one season. Even taking inflation into consideration, such immense growth is possible only if owners are gaining at least the same, if not a greater amount of money.
However, the growing salaries of professional players, cannot be understood simply in terms of the owner-employee (player) relations. Players' agents, the league commissioner, the sponsors, television producers and game promoters also affect basketball's growth process as a business.

The process of sport becoming a profitable business has gathered pace on an international level, though by no means to the same extent as its growth in the United States. The development of professional basketball into a large corporate business in America was undoubtedly a model for other basketball leagues, with local variations to accommodate different kinds of economies.

3.6.3 The 'mediascapes'

Closely connected to these dimensions has been a development at the level of the media. The media-sport production complex (Jhaly, 1989; Maguire, 1994) projects images of individual sports labor migrants, leisure forms and specific cultural messages to large global audiences (Maguire, 1998).

This thesis argues, as have many others, that the process by which sport (and particularly basketball) has become a multi-billion-dollar industry (per year), is primarily due to the relationships established over the years between sport entrepreneurs and the media in general, and between sport and television in particular. Although interwoven with other relations, it is mainly the connection between basketball and television that allows 600 million people to enjoy the performances of the NBA players today in 192 countries on 116 telecasters (NBA official publication, 1998). Moreover, Andrews (1997) suggests that:

Basketball, perhaps more than any other of America's major sports, was in a position to benefit from technological and creative advance made within the television industry. This was because the game possesses a fast paced telegenic quality which "fits into today's remote-control, MTV world, with its fast-forward, hip-hop pace."
There are no lulls between pitches, no game stopping huddles”  

However, basketball has not always had the unconditional support of television. In 1962, the NBC television network even stopped its coverage of regular season games. In 1964 the ABC network paid only $650,000 (which was then regarded as an insufficient sum) for a package of Sunday afternoon regular season telecasts. Rights payments increased slowly, reaching $535,000 per team when the CBS network won the package in 1974 (Rader, 1990:272). As Meliniak (1990) claims, television made the difference in the growing popularity of the NBA, not just in the United States but around the world as well. When the image of the league improved in the middle of the 1980s, so did the awareness of the league among national networks in the United States, as well as in other parts of the world. The importance of coverage by the media, especially by television, was nothing new. After all, since the beginning of the 1960s, the governing bodies of professional sport in the United States have shown a willingness to bend the rules so as to attract television and sponsors. Basketball was no different in that regard. For example, the 24-second rule was introduced partly because of the spectators’ and television’s demands to make the game faster. Yet the new rule allowed special television time-outs for advertisement which were called during the games causing artificial breaks. In 1982, a new rule was introduced which was intended to make the game more exciting. A three-point arch was added to the court, allowing 3 points to be gained when shooting from beyond the arch. The new rule added suspense to the game, for example when tied games were won from distance shots. The power balance between the television networks and the league seemed to shift. The days when the league had to be postponed at the beginning of the season, so CBS could broadcast play-off games during low-rating periods in the summer, disappeared. Unlike in 1974 when executives in CBS panicked when one of the major sponsors of the NBA, Chevrolet, dropped its support, the success of the NBA in the late 1980s, caused a battle between CBS and NBC over the broadcasting rights to the league. The battle between the networks, led to a contract being signed by NBC and the NBA ensuring that the league was not just covered coast-to-coast, but

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66 Bill Russell, the former coach and player of Boston Celtics, was fined by the league authorities in the mid-1960s for refusing to call television time out during the game. In his defense he claimed that his team had built up a momentum and he did not wish to stop the game (Parente, 1974).

67 See Appendix 1 for diagram of the court.
it also received a bonus of 650 million dollars (Meliniak, 1990:5). By not allowing
exclusive coverage, David Stern could sell the rights to other cable networks as well
shifting the ever-changing power balance towards his side. Figure 9 gives some
indication of the range of exposure as well as the revenue of such broadcasting:

**Figure 9: The broadcasting rights of the NBA 1989-2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period / Broadcaster</th>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Cable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989-1993</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>$ 650 Millions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1997</td>
<td>NBC $750 Millions</td>
<td>TBS $350 Millions</td>
<td>$1.1 Billions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-2001</td>
<td>NBC $1.35 Billion</td>
<td>TBS $600 Millions</td>
<td>$1.9 Billions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the amounts stated above, which are shared equally with all 29 teams in the
NBA, one must also add the revenues received from local television and radio
networks that engage in different contracts with each of the NBA teams. Completing
the coverage, there are 28 local papers (Los Angeles have 2 NBA teams) as well as
one national paper (USA today). The NBA has an internet site on the world wide
web which is updated hourly. Indeed, the NBA was the first league to provide on-line
statistics for each game which are transmitted through cable all over the world. As
Meliniak (1990) explains, as early as the end of the first quarter of the game, the score
as well as personal statistics are sent to reporters after being compared to the last
game, last season and sometimes the last decade (Meliniak: 1990:212).

The financial success of the NBA became a model for other leagues around the world.
The NBA’s rules, standards and marketing systems have been adopted around the
world not only by basketball federations but many other sport federations as well,
although on a smaller scale.
3.6.4 The ‘technoscapes’

By technoscapes Appadurai referred to the movement of various technologies in different shapes and forms, that are increasingly driven by money flows, political possibilities and the availability of both low and highly-skilled labor rather than obvious economies of scale, political control or market rationality. Here, the term is used to denote the various products surrounding basketball. These products, apparel as well as non-apparel, have been marketed by the NBA world-wide, with growing success, since the late 1980s, as part of the NBA’s executives’ desire to ‘go global’ and expand to new markets.

The sport / leisure wear industry can ... be used to highlight how people's consumption of cultural goods is bound up with global processes. As a fashion item, the wearing of sports footwear has become an integral feature of consumer culture. One premier brand is Nike. The purchase and display of this footwear are but the final stages in a 'dynamic network' involving designers, producers, suppliers, distributors and the parent or broker company, in this case, Nike. Though its headquarters is located in Oregon, the range of subcontractors involved straddles the globe. Its suppliers and production companies are located in different south-east Asian countries, Thailand, Singapore, Korea and China. Its designers attempt to provide shoes with a world - wide demand that will also appeal to local tastes. Local franchise operations ensure appropriate distribution backed by global marketing strategies (Maguire,1998).

One of the NBA’s objectives is to expand the NBA brand, in partnership with a limited number of licensees, focusing on the categories of sporting goods and high-status department stores. The NBA licensed different products, including the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apparel</th>
<th>Non-Apparel and accessories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On court-apparel</td>
<td>Basketballs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replicas</td>
<td>Blackboards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm-ups</td>
<td>Trading cards &amp; stickers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-shirts</td>
<td>Videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headwear</td>
<td>Electronic games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outerwear</td>
<td>School supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweaters / polos</td>
<td>Novelties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socks</td>
<td>Bags &amp; backpacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editorial products and posters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The marketing strategy chosen was intended to strengthen relationships with key retail partners, establish and differentiate the NBA brand and to implement integrated promotions leveraging television and marketing partners. As figure 10 indicates, the sales of NBA products (internationally) grew from 10 million dollars in 1987, to 490 million dollars in 1995:

**Figure 10: International and Domestic consumer products sales (in $)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic (USA)</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>10M</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>10M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>300M</td>
<td>10M</td>
<td>310M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1.0B</td>
<td>56M</td>
<td>1.056B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1.4B</td>
<td>128M</td>
<td>1.528B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2.1B</td>
<td>250M</td>
<td>2.350B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2.5B</td>
<td>300M</td>
<td>2.8B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>2.5B</td>
<td>400M</td>
<td>3B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2.6B</td>
<td>490M</td>
<td>3.09B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through international sponsors the NBA is getting worldwide exposure. A variety of products are associated with the NBA league, even when some have nothing in common with sports or basketball.
As Andrews (1997) explains, a number of America’s corporate icons have sought to enhance and refine their localized American identities within the global market by joining forces with the N.B.A. On a basic level such associations have been built around global, regional, and national corporate sponsorships. Top companies, such as Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, Kellogg’s, IBM, American Express are examples of such corporates. On the other scale, world leading sports good manufacturers such as Nike, Reebok, Adidas and Converse actively promote basketball around the world, not just by its products, but via international tournaments. The NBA 3-on-3 tour, supported by Converse, has attracted over 185,000 active players and more than a million spectators, since its establishment in 1993. According to the NBA marketing group in Europe (1998), in the 1995 3-on-3 tournament, which took place in Madrid, 1565 teams were formed from over 6200 players (including subs) and all participated. In the same year the parallel Paris tournament attracted 1104 teams and 4228 players. This trend grew as in 1997, the NBA tour visited 20 cities in seven different countries. A different tournament (2 on 2), with the same purpose, was launched in 1997, with a different sponsor (Adidas). In the United Kingdom, as in France, regional tournaments were held in over 800 schools. In Germany, the home of the new sponsor, regional tournaments were held in 3000 schools.

These figures show the effort made by the NBA to promote basketball around the world, as well as the co-operation with other corporation’s products. Taking this point to its extreme, Williams (1994) argues that:

The growth of the sports clothing business and the interpenetration of the worlds of fashion and sport have made images of sport part of the currency of everyday life, more central than ever before. Casual fashion and streetwear are largely dominated by sport-derived styles. Surface appearances and the secondary circulation of images have became central to the image of sport. These effects are complex and far-reaching. For example, although few people play American sports in Europe (American football, baseball etc.) and television audiences for these sports are small and declining, the merchandizing of their products is booming. (Williams, 1994:391).
Even without subscribing to Williams’ argument, one can appreciate the technoscapes associated with basketball in particular, and sport in general. The question raised is whether promoting and marketing games such as basketball around the world, is another stage of spreading American ideoscapes.

3.6.5 The ‘ideoscapes’

According to Appadurai (1990:295), a major feature of the globalization process is the flow of ideas that are concerned with both state and counter-state movements as well as ideological trends. In connection with sport, Horton (1996) explains that:

The cultural flow of ideoscapes embraces sport, recreation and leisure just as it involves more apparently 'ideological' phenomena. The necessity for involvement in physical activity in terms of health and productivity is now almost totally accepted throughout the world. Governments have almost universally accepted the political value of a healthy and physically active populace, whilst elite sport, sport for all and healthy lifestyle campaigns are pillars of government policy from Singapore to the United Kingdom. Throughout the history of sport, cultural and ideological shifts in attitude have changed the face and even the very philosophical nature of sporting activity. The philosophy of muscular Christianity and Olympism have both had pivotal roles in the development of sport. In more recent years the cult of the body, driven by both narcissism and healthism, has resulted in the global trend of health-based exercise adherence. An analysis of this trend demonstrates the extent to which many features of the global processes converge to a particular effect; the ideological messages are proliferated successfully not because of their intrinsic worth but because of political and or economic rationales (Horton,1996:9).

At the level of ideology, and similar to global sports festivals such as soccer's world cup and the Olympics, basketball has come to serve as a vehicle for the expression of
ideologies that are transnational in character and, at times, lie outside the scope of the 'state' (Maguire, 1998).

Until 1989, American basketball in its professional version was confined to the United States. The Fédération Internationalé Basketball Association (FIBA), and the International Olympic committee, did not approve of so-called professional players participating in their various programs. Players competing in games organized by both of these bodies, were considered as amateurs. With the recognition of the IOC that the status of ‘amateurs’ does not accurately reflect the reality, a decision was made in 1989, to allow professional players to participate in the world championships as well as the Olympic games.

Up until that time, the NBA athletes were recognized as the most talented basketball players in the world (at least by their colleagues if not the spectators) but could not justify the claim to be the “best league in the world”, as well as the “world basketball championship” – the title of their play-off games.

During the summer of 1992, the world’s attention focused on Barcelona, Spain, where NBA players were eligible to participate for the first time in the Olympic games. NBA stars made up the majority of the United States basketball team, which became widely known as the ‘Dream team’, and which was coached by Chuck Daly, and led by players such as Michael Jordan, Larry Bird and “Magic” Johnson. The Americans lived up to their billing, winning the Olympic gold medal easily. Several foreign-born NBA players competed for their native countries as well. Each medal winning team in the Barcelona Olympics had at least one NBA player in its squad. In a way, America’s victory can also be seen as a victory for the “American way” i.e. the dominance of ‘winning’ over ‘taking part’ and, in broader terms, the shift towards greater professionalism and the abandonment of amateurism.

Fourteen additional NBA stars comprised the next ‘Dream team’, which captured the gold medal for the United States in the 1994 World Championship of basketball in Toronto, Canada. Another NBA team (‘Dream team III’) won the gold medal in the

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68 As Al McGuire (1989) puts it “… I see our children of the 21st century going to the library to look up the word “amateur”. They will find it the same area as “dinosaur” and “trolley car”.
Atlanta Olympic games in 1996. Again, several foreign-born NBA players competed for their native countries (NBA official publication, 1997).

Over the years, the league’s pre-season schedule has been highlighted by many international events featuring many different teams. The McDonald’s Championship, staged by the NBA in conjunction with FIBA, began in 1987. A process of political change in the Soviet Union brought the Russian army team, CSKA Moscow to compete in the first McDonald’s in Milwaukee, USA. Tracer Milan from Italy was the third team in the tournament. The McDonald’s tournament hosted one NBA team with other international clubs and since 1987 it has been staged in Madrid (1988 with the Boston Celtics); Rome (Denver Nuggets, 1989); Barcelona (New York Knicks, 1990); Paris (Los Angeles Lakers, 1991). In 1993, the tournament became a biennial. The games in Munich hosted 5 international teams including the Phoenix Suns. In 1995, the McDonald’s Open took place in London when the NBA champions, Houston Rockets, took another title. The games returned to Paris in December 1997, when the Chicago Bulls beat teams from Greece, Argentina, and France (NBA web site).

The effort made by the NBA executives to ‘go global’ can be seen as another attempt to spread the “American way” all over the world. Placing opening games of the NBA League in Japan and Mexico, is an example of such an attempt. Carlson (1990) gives another example from the former Soviet Union:

... the latest proof for this (relation between sport and commercial television, Y.G) was given in April 28, when Soviet television aired a National Basketball Association playoff game between the Phoenix Suns and the Denver Nuggets during the afternoon break of the also televised debate in the Congress of peoples’ deputies. During timeouts of the game, soft drinks commercials featuring rock music and dancers and highlights from other NBA games were shown. One graphic in English told Soviets, they were watching ‘America’s game’ – thanks to perestrojka and Glasnost. (Carlson, 1990:54).
The latter example would appear to indicate that American basketball can penetrate places that are considered to be the opposite of what the American capitalist represents. The appeal of professional basketball, with the help of the NBA, extends beyond the United States. Professional leagues are growing in countries ranging from Spain to Australia. NBA games currently are shown on television in more than 180 countries around the world; NBA-licensed merchandise can be found world-wide and NBA teams have played exhibition games in Europe, Mexico, Canada and Puerto Rico while opening season games were played in Japan. Aside from events on the court, the NBA is involved in various international activities. Such activities have allowed the NBA to help the growth of the sport of basketball (and closely connected - the American ideology) internationally, and also to expand their markets all over the world.

Conclusion

One aim of this chapter was to characterize the early development of basketball and to shed light on the process that led to the diffusion of the game around the world. Another objective was to trace and analyze the network of social functions surrounding the game. By using Appadurai's (1990) 'landscapes': 'ethnoscapes', 'technoscapes', 'mediascapes', 'financescapes', and 'ideoscapes' this chapter also looked at the extent to which the circulation of universal American commodity-signs (Andrews, 1997) has resulted in the convergence of global markets, lifestyles and identities. Combining these series of interconnections, Maguire (1999) explicates the globalization of basketball process:

...Citizens of countries spread across the globe regularly tune in by satellite broadcasts to National Basketball Association (NBA) games. In these games perform the best male players drawn from North America and Europe. The players use equipment – balls, shoes, uniform, etc. – that is designed in a range of European and North American locations, financed in the USA and assembled in the Pacific Rim. This equipment is then sold on to a mass market across the globe. This equipment, basketball boots for example, is made out of raw materials from 'developing countries', the molecular structure of
which was researched and patented, the case of Nike, in Washington State (USA) and fabricated in Taiwan. Several other transnational corporations are also involved in the production and consumption phases of this global cultural product. The product is itself provided by a global media sport production complex and is viewed on a television that was itself manufactured as part of a global telecommunications network (Maguire, 1999:14).

However, given the fact that both America and its transnational corporate emissaries (such as the NBA) has and will continue to mean different things in different cultural and historical contexts (Andrews et al. 1996:453), the aim of this thesis is to look at the influence of the American game and the circulation of its attached commodity signs in the state of Israel.

While looking at the development of the state of Israel from its early years and by using Elias' framework, the intention is to use the development of power relations in Israel to illustrate and explain the development of basketball.
Part 2: From the global to the local

Chapter 4: Israel

4.1 Introduction:

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel, Yoel Marcus, one of Israel’s senior journalists, wrote the following:

Israel is the only country on earth that has been involved in at least one war for every decade of its existence. Israel is the only country on earth that, 50 years after it was created, is still not truly independent and does not have permanent borders. Israel is the only country on earth that is in a state of war with 50 percent of its neighbours. Israel is the only country on earth whose male citizens contribute a total of at least five years in active military service, including reserve duty. Israel is the only country on earth whose birth coincides with the renaissance of an ancient language and whose children teach the mother tongue to their own mothers. Israel is the only country on earth whose population increased by 500 percent through the mass immigration that poured through its gates when it was established. Israel is the only country on earth two-thirds of whose nation lives beyond its borders. Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has not been tempted, even for a brief moment, to shift from a democratic regime to a military junta, despite the centrality of security issues in our daily lives.

...Israel is a bona fide member of an exclusive club that includes the top five armies in the world. Israel is a bona fide member of an exclusive club that includes the seven nations in the world that possess nuclear weapons. Israel is a bona fide member of an exclusive club that includes the eight nations in the world that have a space satellite. Throughout its existence, Israel has been one of the 10 countries in the 185-member United Nations that head the list of international interest. As a state that has had to fight for its physical survival nearly every day of its life, Israel can pride itself
on a number of impressive achievements... (Marcus, 8 of May 1998).

Although a piece of ideology, Marcus’s view of the state of Israel corresponds well with the relatively short history of the state of Israel. The state of Israel is a home for a widely diverse population from many different ethnic, religious, cultural and social backgrounds; a new society with ancient roots, which is still coalescing and developing today. Throughout this chapter, a developmental approach, one that Elias (Elias and Dunning 1986:22) describes as “indispensable for advances in the study of human society” has been used to describe the process in which the state of Israel was instituted. By taking ‘a detour via detachment’69 as Elias advised, Israel’s society is pictured from its early days to present day. The developmental approach is a fundamental part of figurational sociology. Figurational sociologists suggest that, in order to understand a society at a particular time, one must understand its development. Sociology, as Murphy (1994) among others explains, is the study of human relationships. Figurational sociology asserts that in order to understand individuals, one must look at the social and historical context, as well as the network of relationships, in which they are involved. Therefore, in order to understand Israel’s society, and more specifically Israeli basketball, one must look at Israel in a historical context as well as at the diversity of individuals who make up Israel’s society and the relationships between them. Since these relations are all part of a process, the process of state-formation of Israel is a direct result of such dynamic relations. Furthermore, as this chapter will show, the people who make up Israel’s society had relations not just among themselves, but with their neighbours, creating networks of relations. These networks can be conceived of as interdependency ties or power relations that tend to be unequal across a range of dimensions. It is the intention of this chapter therefore, to explore these dimensions as Elias (1972) has noted:

...any long-term enquiry into state formation and nation building processes can show that every spurt towards greater interdependence, towards closer integration of human groups which were previously independent, or less dependent, or less reciprocally dependent, on each

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69 Throughout my research I, as native Israeli, have tried to maintain a balance between “involvement” and “detachment”. These categories were coined by Elias (1956) in his essay “Problems of involvement and detachment” and were discussed in chapter 1.
other, runs through a series of specific integration tensions and conflicts, of balance of power struggles which are not accidental, but structural concomitants of these spurts towards greater functional interdependence of 'parts' within a 'whole'. For if two groups become more, or more reciprocally, interdependent than they were before, each of them has reason to fear that it may be dominated, or even annihilated, by the other. The struggle may result after many tests of strength in a fusion. It may result in the complete disappearance of one of them in the new unit emerging from their struggles. There are many more possibilities. The complexity of these integrations need not concern us here. It is enough to point out that every move towards greater functional interdependence between human groups engenders structural tensions, conflicts and struggles, which may or may not remain unmanageable (Elias, 1972:275).

Located in the Middle East, bordering the eastern Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, Israel was established in 1948 after, what was then Palestine, being ruled by Britain for more than 30 years. However, in order to understand how basketball developed in Israel and its relationship with the globalization process, one must look at the early history of Israel in particular and the history of the region in general. Such a perspective will help to understand the initial British influence in Israeli affairs, its decline and its 'replacement' by American influence. The decision to present an overview of the time span prior to the establishment of the state of Israel is intended to shed some light on the relationship between the community living in Palestine and the occupiers of the land before Israel was formed, as well as with relationships with their Arab neighbours. The starting point of this review is in the late 19th century, since the dominance of the Ottoman Empire (1517-1917) followed by the British mandate (1917-1947) over the country, were of great significance to the foundation of Israel. Furthermore, it is argued here that the interdependent relations Israel has had over the years with the super-power countries – Great Britain, France and the United States – are better understood by looking at the background to the dominance of Israel by foreign rulers over the years.
Much of this chapter deals with the special relations Israel has developed with the United States, as well as the special role the United States plays in the region, since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Moreover, the main purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the nature of the multi-dimensional power relations that exist between the two nations.

To bind this chapter with the overall thesis, it will be useful to elaborate on the unique fabric of Israel’s society. Bearing in mind that processes (and the creation of the state of Israel is one of such) exist in and through the actions of people (as figurational sociology claims), these inter-dynamics within Israel’s society are a vital part to the understanding of sport in general and basketball in Israel in particular.

4.2 The early history of Israel

The creation of the state of Israel in 1948 was preceded by more than 50 years of efforts by Zionist leaders to establish a sovereign nation as a homeland for Jews. It is claimed that the desire of Jews to return to what they consider their rightful homeland was first expressed during the Babylonian exile and become a universal Jewish theme after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D and the dispersal that followed (Sachar, 1996:x).

Looking back even further, the birthplace of the Jewish people is the land of Israel. As one can track the first thousand years of Jewish presence in the bible, physical presence has been maintained unbroken through the centuries, even after the majority was forced to exile. The ingathering of the exiles to their ancestral homeland is the raison d'être of the State of Israel.

Looking at the historical events which occurred in Israel from the 17th century before the Common Era, might give a better perspective of the historical dimension.

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70 I have used the term ‘history’ although I want to stress the significance of long term processes such as the development of Israel society. Elias distinguished clearly between ‘history’ and ‘development’, using the former term for referring to the level of events and the latter for referring to more enduring figurations (Dunning, 1997:486).

71 For a broader perspective on Israel ancient history see appendix ii which includes historical events from 17th century B.C.E – until the establishment of the state of Israel.
Jewish history began about 4,000 years ago (17th century B.C.E.) with the patriarchs-
Abraham, his son Isaac and grandson Jacob. Documents unearthed in Mesopotamia,
dating back to 2000-1500 B.C.E., corroborate aspects of their nomadic way of life as
described in the Bible. When a famine spread through Canaan, Jacob and his twelve sons
and their families settled in Egypt, where their descendants were reduced to slavery
and pressed into forced labor. After 400 years of bondage, the Israelites were led to
freedom by Moses who, according to the biblical narrative, was chosen by God to
take his people out of Egypt and back to the Land of Israel promised to their
forefathers (c. 13th-12th centuries B.C.E.). They wandered for 40 years in the Sinai
desert, where they were forged into a nation and received the Torah (Pentateuch),
which included the Ten Commandments and gave form and content to their
monotheistic faith. During the next two centuries, the Israelites conquered most of the
Land of Israel and relinquished their nomadic ways to become farmers and craftsmen
followed by a degree of economic and social consolidation. Periods of relative peace
alternated with times of war during which the people rallied behind leaders known as
'judges,' chosen for their political and military skills as well as for their leadership
qualities. The first king, Saul (1020 B.C.E.), bridged the period between loose tribal
organization and the setting up of a full monarchy under his successor, David. King
David (1004-965 B.C.E.) established Israel as a major power in the region by
successful military expeditions. After King Solomon's (David's son) death (930
B.C.E.), open insurrection led to the breaking away of the ten northern tribes and
division of the country into a northern kingdom, Israel, and a southern kingdom,
Judah, on the territory of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The Kingdom of Israel
was crushed by the Assyrians (722 B.C.E.) and its people carried off into exile and
oblivion (MFA, 1997). More than a hundred years later, Babylonia conquered the
Kingdom of Judah, exiling most of its inhabitants as well as destroying Jerusalem
and the Temple (586 B.C.E.). The exile to Babylonia, which followed the destruction
of the First Temple (586 B.C.E.), marked the beginning of the Jewish Diaspora.
There, Judaism began to develop a religious framework and way of life outside the
Land. From 597 onwards, there were three distinct groups of Hebrews: a group in
Babylon and other parts of the Middle East, a group in Judaea, and another group in
Egypt. In 63 BC, Judaea became a protectorate of Rome. Judeans revolted in 70 AD,
a desperate revolt that ended when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, annexed Judaea
as a Roman province, and systematically drove the Jews from Palestine.
AD, Hebrew history would only be the history of the Diaspora as the Jews and their world view spread over Africa, Asia, and Europe (Hooker, 1998). Over the years, foreign rulers dominated the land of Israel: The Byzantine rule (313-636); the Arab rule (636-1099); the crusader domination (1099-1291); the Mamluk rule (1291-1516) and the Ottoman (Turkish) rule (1517-1917).

4.2.1 The Zionist idea

The first practical steps taken to bring back large numbers of Jews from around the world to what was then Palestine, occurred in the first Zionist congress convened by Theodor Herzl in Basel, Switzerland in 1897. Herzl’s speech in Basel which addressed the perceived need to establish a homeland for Jews ended in the words: “...in Basel I have founded the land of Jews” and gave hope for Jews redemption (see footnote) in the land of Israel.

Herzl considered the Jewish problem a political one that should be solved by overt action in the international arena. Political Zionism stressed the importance of political action and deemed the attainment of political rights in Palestine a prerequisite for the fulfillment of the Zionist enterprise. Herzl’s aim was to obtain a charter, recognized by the world leadership, granting the Jews sovereignty in a Jewish-owned territory. The Basel Program, drawn up in accordance with these principles, states that Zionism aims to establish “a secure haven, under public law, for the Jewish people in the Land of Israel”. Organizational and economic mechanisms (the Zionist Organization (ZO), the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet L’Israel), the Jewish Colonial Trust and so on) were established to carry out this program.

Notes:
72 Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, derives its name from the word ‘Zion’ the traditional synonym for Jerusalem and the Land of Israel. The idea of Zionism (the redemption of the Jewish people in its ancestral homeland) is rooted in the continuous longing for and deep attachment to the Land of Israel, which have been an inherent part of Jewish existence in the Diaspora through the centuries. According to Elgazi (2000), Norbert Elias, during his studies in Breslau, was a member of the ‘Blue Weiss’ – an elitist Zionist organization.
73 The Zionist movement aimed to solve the "Jewish problem," the problem of a perennial minority, a people subjected to repeated pogroms and persecution, a homeless community whose alienism was underscored by discrimination wherever Jews settled. Zionism aspired to deal with this situation by effecting a return to the historical homeland of the Jews – Land of Israel (Neuberger, 1998)
However, consideration must also be devoted, in this context, to the fact that there were others, among the Zionists, who saw things differently. Ahad Ha'am, a central figure in the movement for Cultural Zionism was such a person. It was his attempt to find a synthesis between Judaism and European philosophy. His visits to Eretz-Israel in 1891 and 1892 convinced him that the Zionist movement would face an uphill struggle in its attempt to create a Jewish National Home. In particular he warned of the difficulties associated with land purchase and cultivation, the problems with the Turkish authorities and the impending conflict with the Arabs. He criticized Herzl and his political version of Zionism for his quasi-messianic schemes and warned of the disillusionment that would follow Herzl's failure. Ahad Ha'am believed that the creation in Eretz-Israel of a Jewish cultural center would act to reinforce Jewish life in the Diaspora. His hope was that in this center a new Jewish national identity based on Jewish ethics and values might resolve the crisis of Judaism (Jewish agency, 1998).

Ahad Ha'am considered it the task of Zionism to confront the "question of Judaism", not the "question of the Jews" – and the "question of Judaism" was assimilation. Assimilation originated in the phenomenal attractive power of the new, modern culture, into which Jews wanted to blend. In other words, assimilation was caused by the very positiveness of the modern world. Ahad Ha'am assumed that if the Jews wished to continue existing as a culturally distinct people, they would have to fashion a new culture that would maintain continuity with its identity and affinity with its origins, but that would be receptive to everything positive in modern culture and would assimilate its scientific, technological and humanistic achievements in full. This, however, made statehood in the Land of Israel necessary, because such a culture could not be created in the Diaspora. To Ahad Ha'am, every people needs a homeland and an autonomous framework within which it may develop a complete, full-fledged, self-standing culture that meets the needs of life. From this kernel, Ahad Ha'am developed his Zionist doctrine, which championed the establishment of a "spiritual center" for the Jewish people in Eretz-Israel (Schweid, 1999:5)

74 Ahad Ha'am was a pen name of Asher Ginsberg (1856 - 1927), a Jewish writer and philosopher.
4.2.2 Immigration to Palestine

The first Alyia (large-scale immigration) had started already in 1882 from Russia, due to pogroms\(^5\) occurring in Russia in 1881-1882. Jews came mainly from Eastern Europe, but from Yemen as well. In all, nearly 35,000 Jews came to Palestine during the First Aliya. While almost half of them left the country within several years of their arrival due to the rough conditions in the area, some 15,000 established new rural settlements, and the rest moved to the towns.

Similar political conditions\(^6\) and growing anti-Semitism\(^7\) in Eastern Europe enhanced the second Alyia (1904-1914). Inspired by socialist ideals, most of its members were young people. Many models and components of the rural settlement started at this time, such as "national farms" where rural settlers were trained; the first kibbutz, 'Degania' (1909); and 'Hashomer', the first Jewish self-defence organization in Palestine. The 'Ahuzat Bayit' neighborhood, established as a suburb of Jaffa, developed into Tel Aviv, the first modern Jewish city. The Hebrew language was revived as a spoken tongue, and Hebrew literature and Hebrew newspapers were published. Political parties were founded and workers' agricultural organizations began to form. These pioneers laid the foundations that were to put the 'Yishuv' (the Jewish community) on its course towards an independent state. In all, 40,000 Jews immigrated during this period, but absorption difficulties and the absence of a stable economic base caused nearly half of them to leave.

During the First World War, British policy makers became gradually committed to the idea of establishing a Jewish home in Palestine (Eretz Yisrael). After discussions

\(^5\) By pogroms I mean not only the insults and humiliations that the Jews suffered in Central and Western Europe, but the distress and economic antisemitism in Eastern Europe. The main motivating force there was the hostility that propelled multitudes of Jews to emigrate (Schweid, 1999).

\(^6\) Economic duress subjected the Jewish people to a process of proletarization since they were denied any source of livelihood in their countries of residence. This reduced the Jews to utter destitution. The Russian government's policy aimed to rid the country of the Jews, thus prompting massive waves of emigration, mostly to America.

\(^7\) According to Neuberger (1998), Jews of Europe were persecuted and massacrered, sometimes on religious grounds, sometimes for economic reasons, sometimes on social pretexts, and sometimes for national and "racial" rationales. Jews were slaughtered by the Crusaders when the latter made their way across Europe to the Holy Land (11th-12th centuries), massacred during the Black Death for allegedly poisoning wells (14th century), burned at the stake in the Spanish Inquisition (15th century) and murdered by Chmelnicki's Cossacks in the Ukraine (17th century). Hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed by the armies of Danikin and Petlura in the Russian civil war which followed World War I (Neuberger, 1998:3).
in the British Cabinet, and consultation with Zionist leaders, the decision was made known in the form of a letter by Arthur James Lord Balfour to Lord Rothschild president of the British Zionist Federation. The letter represents the first political recognition of Zionist aims by a Great Power (the United Kingdom):

**Foreign Office**

November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,

Arthur James Balfour

(Sachar, 1996:109)

Ending 400 years (1517-1917) of Ottoman (Turkish) rule, the British forces led by general Allenby took over the land of Israel in December 1917. The British forces were helped by the Jewish Legion comprising three battalions of Jewish volunteers.

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78 The Zionist cause was furthered during the first World War by Chaim Weizmann, a British Jewish scientist, skilled in diplomacy, who recognized that Britain would play a major role in the post-war settlement of the Middle East. At that time Britain was seeking the wartime support of the Arabs, and in the October 1915 correspondence between Sheriff Husayn of Mecca and Sir Henry McMahon, British high commissioner in Egypt, Britain endorsed Arab post-war independence in an imprecisely defined area that apparently included Palestine. In November 1917, however, Britain committed itself...
The League of Nations (later the United Nations) entrusted Britain with the mandate for Palestine in July 1922. The League of Nations formally accepted "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine" and Britain was called in to help the Jews to establish their national home.

With the help of the British mandate, the Jews and the Arabs who lived in Palestine ran their own internal affairs. The economy as well as cultural and educational life prospered at the time. In fact, most of the political, economic and cultural basis of Israel's contemporary Jewish society was formed during the period of British rule. For instance, the game of football, which was spread across the globe through British's cultural imperialism, was played in Palestine by Jewish, Arab, and British Army teams. According to Ben-Porat (1998), both Jewish and Arab teams occasionally played against British army teams. Moreover, the Palestine Football Association (composed of both Jewish and Arab clubs) was established in 1928 and was immediately accepted as a member of Fédération Internationale de Football Association (Ben-Poart, 1998:270).

A large influx of Jewish people (around 60,000) arrived, mainly from Poland, between 1924 to 1932 and helped to develop urban life by settling in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem. A massive influx at the beginning of the 1930's (165,000) driven by the growing power of the Nazis in Germany, helped the communities broaden the Jewish settlement in Palestine. However, the effort made by the Jewish settlers to rebuild the country was strongly opposed by Arab nationalists. The tense relationship led to violent clashes in 1920, 1921, 1929, 1936 and 1939.

Furthermore, with growing Arab pressure on the mandatory government, the British seemed to retreat from their initial commitment. The British restricted immigration and land acquisition by publishing the "white papers" in 1930 and 1939 limiting the Zionist cause by the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, which stated that the British government viewed with favor "the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People," while the "civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine" were not to suffer. These two concurrent commitments ultimately proved irreconcilable (Metz, 1988).

The Mandate system was instituted by the League of Nations in the early 20th century to administer non-self-governing territories. The mandatory power, appointed by an international body, was to considerate mandated territory a temporary trust and to see to the well-being and advancement of its population.
number of immigrants to 18,000 a year. In 1940, the British severely restricted land acquisition by Jews by publishing the ‘Land Transfer Regulations’. The British restrictions led to disappointment and anger among the Jewish settlers. With the news about Jewish massacres around Europe, and the growing power of the Nazi regime in Germany, the Jewish hoped that the survivors would be able to join their families in Palestine.

A growing need for protection, along with developing anger with the British, led to establishment of three Jewish underground movements. The largest movement was the Haganah, founded in 1920 by the Jewish community, as a defense militia to help safeguard the security of the Jewish population. From the mid-1930s, it also retaliated following Arab attacks and responded to British restrictions on Jewish immigration with mass demonstrations and sabotage. The Etzel, organised in 1931, rejected the self-restraint of the Haganah and initiated independent actions against both Arab and British targets. The smallest and most militant group, the Lehi, founded in 1940, was motivated mainly by its anti-British attitude. The three organizations were disbanded after the establishment of the Israel Defence Force in 1948.

Identifying the opposing aims of the two nationalities, the British recommended in 1937 to divide Palestine into two different states - Jewish and Arab. While the Jewish leadership approved the idea and even started to negotiate a few aspects, the Arabs were against any partition plan. Large-scale Arab-Jewish riots led the British to issue in May 1939 drastic restrictions on Jewish immigration, known as the 1939 white paper. The outbreak of the second World War later that year, caused David Ben-Gurion, later Israel’s first prime minister, to state: “We will fight the war as if there were no white paper, and the white paper as if there were no war.” In April 1947, Britain’s efforts\(^8\) to resolve the conflict between the Jewish and Arab communities led the British government to place the ‘Question of Palestine’ on the agenda of the United Nation’s General Assembly. A special committee was constituted to draft a proposal regarding Palestine’s future. On 29\(^{th}\) November, 1947, the General Assembly adopted the committee’s recommendation to divide the land into two states, one Jewish and one Arab.

\(^8\) Britain’s efforts can be better understood after reading the ‘Statement on Palestine’ by British Foreign Secretary Bevin (13 Nov. 1945) as cited in Appendix iii
All the events that occurred and the perception among the Jewish population that the British were not being “fair” to them left strong residues of resentment against the British and, among many, all things British. Thus, the physical departure of the British mandate authority from Palestine in 1948 might also have symbolized the beginning of the departure of British influence in everyday life.

4.3 The establishment of the new state

Following the United Nation’s vote establishing the new state (33 nations were in favour, 13 against and 10 abstained), local Arab militants, helped by volunteers from Arab countries, launched violent attacks on the Jewish community in order to prevent the establishment of the Jewish state. On 15 May, 1948, the state of Israel was proclaimed. Violence between armies from neighbouring Arab nations and Jewish communities that gathered to organise military forces erupted immediately. David Ben-Gurion, now Prime Minister, founded the Israel Defence Force (IDF) on 28 May 1948 and prohibited the maintenance of any other armed forces. The war for Israel’s independence was the most costly war Israel has fought to date; more than 6,000 Jewish fighters and civilians died (1 percent of the total population at that time). Although no official peace agreement ended the war of independence, four armistice agreements were negotiated and signed in Rhodes, Greece in 1949 between Israel and its Arab neighbours: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The end of the fighting resulted in a 50 percent increase in Israeli territory, including western Jerusalem.

4.3.1 Immigration to the new nation

In 1939 the British mandate estimated the number of Jews living in Palestine to be 445,000 people (out of 1.5 million population). Israel officials estimated that in 1947, 650,000 Jews (90 percent of them from Europe), lived in the area scheduled to become Israel under the United Nations partition plan. Between May 1948 and December 1951, about 685,000 Jewish immigrants entered the new state thus providing a Jewish majority in Israel for the first time in the modern era. The mass immigration to Israel followed the proclamation of the establishment of the state of Israel. The main theme of the proclamation of independence statement was that:
"...The state of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and the ingathering of the exiles; it will foster the development of the country for all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex" (MFA,1997).

On July 1950 the state of Israel legislated the *Law of Return*\(^1\), which granted every Jew the automatic right to immigrate to Israel and become a citizen of the state. However, this decision, along with the question "who is a Jew" allows everyone claiming to be Jewish to gain Israeli citizenship. In the case of Israel basketball this is a crucial point which will be discussed further later. Survivors of the Holocaust from camps in Germany, Austria and Italy; a majority of the Jewish communities of Bulgaria and Poland and one third of the Jews of Romania; and nearly all of the Jewish communities of Libya, Yemen and Iraq, took advantage of this right to claim Israeli citizenship until late 1951.

Much effort at that time was devoted towards absorbing the immigrants. The state had just recovered from the war for independence and found it difficult to provide hundreds of thousands of immigrants with housing and food. Employment opportunities were created along with Hebrew language lessons. The education system was extended and adjusted to meet the needs of children from many different backgrounds. These efforts was a conscious step toward the actualization of the goal to build a nation-state.

\(^1\) See appendix iv for the full version of the law.
4.3.2 Social grouping

In the late 1950s, a new flood of 400,000 new immigrants entered Israel. Undereducated Moroccans, Algerians, Tunisians and Egyptians made up the 1.2 million Jews entering Israel in its first dozen years of independence. By 1961, the Sepharadic (Jews who trace their origin to Spain, Portugal, and North Africa; and Eastern or Oriental Jews, who descend from ancient communities in Islamic lands) portion of the Jewish population was about 45 percent (approximately 800,000). In the early 1960’s, 80 percent of them lived in large development towns and cities where they become workers in the economy dominated by Ashkenazim (Jews who came to Israel mainly from Europe, North and South America, South Africa, and Australia).

The resultant social grouping was composed of two main elements: a majority comprised mainly of veteran settlers and Holocaust survivors from post-war Europe; and a large minority of recent Jewish immigrants from the Islamic countries of North Africa and the Middle East. While most of the pre-state population was committed to strong ideological convictions, a pioneering spirit and a democratic way of life, many of the Jews who had lived for centuries in Arab lands adhered to a patriarchal social organization, were less familiar with the democratic process and the demands of a modern society, and as a result, found it more difficult to integrate into Israel's rapidly developing economy.

In the late 1950s, the two groups coexisted virtually without social and cultural interaction, with the Jews of North African and Middle Eastern backgrounds expressing their frustration and alienation in anti-government protests, which, in the 1960s and 1970s, became demands for greater political participation, compensatory allocations of resources and affirmative action to help close the gap between them and mainstream Israelis. In addition to the tensions generated by the diversity of its population during these years, Israelis were also called upon to struggle for economic independence and to defend itself against belligerent actions by Arabs across the border. Still, the common denominators of religion, historical memory and national

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82 This background is important for understanding processes that are discussed in chapter 7.
cohesion helped members of the developing Jewish state to face up to the challenges facing them. By the 1980s, the protest movements which had once commanded headlines became marginal, previously stigmatised groups advanced on all levels and a large percentage of all marriages were inter-ethnic. Nevertheless, ethnic diversity is very much a part of Israeli society, affecting all aspects of its cultural, religious and political life. The social tensions which were once thought to threaten the integrity and cohesion of the society, today contribute to its pluralistic nature.

Table eleven shows the mosaic of Israel's society by the number of immigrants and their origin:

**Figure 11: Immigration to Israel (1948-1996)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>America &amp; Oceania</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948-1951</td>
<td>237,000</td>
<td>94,000</td>
<td>327,000</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>687,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-1960</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>146,000</td>
<td>103,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>294,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1970</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>151,000</td>
<td>139,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>384,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1980</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>213,000</td>
<td>73,000</td>
<td>330,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1989</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>23,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>133,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1996</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>686,000</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>757,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>366,000</td>
<td>466,000</td>
<td>1,528,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,585,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1948-1951 includes 24,000 immigrants whose last continent of residence is unknown; in later years this table includes a smaller number of such immigrants.

(MFA, 1997)

Over the years Israel continued to absorb immigrants. The most recent wave of mass immigration comprises of members of the large Jewish community of the former Soviet Union which struggled for years for the right to emigrate to Israel. While some 100,000 managed to get to Israel in the 1970s, since 1989 over 700,000 have settled in the country. Among the newcomers are many highly educated professionals, well-known scientists and acclaimed artists and musicians, whose expertise and talents
have contributed significantly to Israel's economic, scientific, academic and cultural life.

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the arrival of two massive airlifts of the ancient Jewish community of Ethiopia, believed to have been there since the time of King Solomon. (MFA, 1997).

4.3.3 State and religion

Since there is no clear separation of religion and the state, a central inter-community issue since the establishment of the state has been the extent to which Israel should manifest its Jewish religious identity. In order to understand the issue fully, we must familiarise ourselves with the inter-society dynamics and the relations between the different Jewish groups. Furthermore, examining these relationships will help us to understand the relationship between Israeli citizenship and the adherence to the Jewish religion, which is important in understanding how foreign basketball players are able to claim Israeli citizenship. This issue will be dealt with in more detail in chapter 5.

Israel was founded as a Jewish state, the Sabbath (Saturday) and all Jewish festivals and holy days have been instituted as national holidays and are celebrated by the entire Jewish population and observed by all, to a greater or lesser extent. Jewish society in Israel today is made up of observant and non-observant Jews, comprising a spectrum from the ultra-orthodox to those who regard themselves as secular. However, the differences between them are not clear-cut. If orthodoxy is determined by the degree of adherence to Jewish religious laws and practices, then 20 percent of Israeli Jews fulfil all religious precepts, 60 percent follow some combination of the laws according to personal choices and ethnic traditions, and 20 percent are essentially non-observant. The majority may be characterised as secular Jews who manifest modern lifestyles, with varied degrees of respect for and practice of religious precepts. Within this majority are many that follow a modified traditional way of life, with some choosing to affiliate with one of the liberal religious streams. Within the observant minority are many that adhere to a religious way of life, regulated by Jewish religious law, while participating in the country's national life. They regard the
modern Jewish state as the first step towards the coming of the Messiah and redemption of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel. In contrast, the Haredim (ultra-orthodox Jews) believe that Jewish sovereignty in the Land can be re-established only after the coming of the Messiah. Maintaining strict adherence to Jewish religious law, they reside in separate neighbourhoods, run their own schools, dress in traditional clothing, maintain distinct roles for men and women and are bound by a closely circumscribed lifestyle. Their community consists of two subgroups: a small but volatile element which does not recognise the existence of the state and isolates itself from it; and a pragmatic majority which participates in Israeli politics with the aim of strengthening the Jewish religious character of the state. While the Orthodox establishment seeks to augment religious legislation beyond the scope of personal status, over which it has exclusive jurisdiction, the non-observant sector regards this as religious coercion and an infringement on the democratic nature of the state (MFA, 1997).

One of the fundamental and most controversial issues relevant for this thesis focuses on the elements required defining a person as a Jew. The Orthodox sector advocates determining a Jew as one born of a Jewish mother, in strict accordance with Jewish law, while secular Jews generally support a definition based on the civil criterion of an individual's identification with Judaism. One of the reasons for the ongoing debate is that in most cases, according to the ‘law of return’ being a Jew advantages the person with automatic citizenship. In the case of Israeli basketball, team administrators (as chapter 5 explains) took advantage of the law and helped American basketball players to acquire Israeli citizenship and become ‘legitimate’ players. These conflicts of interest have given rise to a search for legal means to define the demarcation between religion and state. Since a solution is not yet found, authority lies in an unwritten agreement, reached on the eve of Israel's independence and known as ‘the status quo’, which stipulates that no fundamental changes would be made in the status of religion.
4.3.4 Minorities within the Jewish state

According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, almost 19 percent of Israel's population (over one million people), are non-Jews. Although defined collectively as Arab citizens of Israel, they include a number of different, primarily Arabic-speaking, groups, each with distinct characteristics. Muslim Arabs, numbering some 843,000, most of whom are Sunni, constitute 75 percent of the non-Jewish population. They reside mainly in small towns and villages, over half of them in the north of the country. Bedouin Arabs, comprising nearly 10 percent of the Muslim population, belong to some 30 tribes, most of them scattered over a wide area in the south. Formerly nomadic shepherds, the Bedouin are currently in transition from a tribal social framework to a permanently settled society and are gradually entering Israel's labor force. Christian Arabs, who constitute Israel's second largest minority group of some 180,000, live mainly in urban areas, including Nazareth, Shfar'am and Haifa. Although many denominations are nominally represented, the majority are affiliated with the Greek Catholic (42 percent), Greek Orthodox (32 percent) and Roman Catholic (16 percent) churches. The Druze, some 96,000 Arabic-speakers living in 22 villages in northern Israel, constitute a separate cultural, social and religious community. While the Druze religion is not accessible to outsiders, one known aspect of its philosophy is the concept of taqiyya, which calls for complete loyalty by its adherents to the government of the country in which they reside. The Circassians, comprising some 3,000 people concentrated in two northern villages, are Sunni Muslims, although they share neither the Arab origin nor the cultural background of the larger Islamic community. While maintaining a distinct ethnic identity, they participate in Israel's economic and national affairs without assimilating either into Jewish society or into the general Muslim community.

Israel's Arab citizens, exist on the margins of the conflicting worlds of Jews and Palestinians (who are not citizens of the state of Israel). However, while remaining a segment of the Palestinian people in culture and identity and disputing Israel's identification as a Jewish state, they see their future tied to Israel. In the process, they
have adopted Hebrew as a second language and Israeli culture as an extra layer in their lives. At the same time, they strive to attain a higher degree of participation in national life, greater integration into the economy and more benefits for their own towns and villages.

4.3.5 The struggle for Israel existence

Being the only non-Muslim state in the region, surrounded by 21 Arab (mainly) hostile countries in the Middle East, Israel has always had (and still has) to struggle for existence. Fighting to protect its border, Israel has fought five major wars in 50 years of existence.

In October 1956, taking advantage of the operation by French and British troops against Egypt at the Suez Canal area, Israel invaded the Gaza strip and the Sinai peninsula. Britain and France moved in on the canal to help protect western shipping from combat after Egypt president Nasser’s decision to block the canal passage for foreign ships. Intense pressure from the American (Eisenhower) administration, which was worried about the threat of soviet military involvement, forced Britain and France to accede to a cease-fire. The growing American pressure might strengthen one of the main arguments of this thesis and mark a point at which the rapid development of American military and political involvement in the region was at the expense of waning British influence. In March 1957, Israeli forces withdrew from Sinai but the Israelis deemed the war a success, mainly because the raids from Gaza ceased and the United Nation’s peacekeeping forces separated Egypt and Israel. Maybe the most important effect of all, was the greater co-operation with France which led to more arms sales to Israel and the building of a nuclear reactor helping to maintain the power balance between Israel and its neighbours.

After tension had developed between Syria and Israel in May 1967, Egyptian President Nasser moved armaments and about 80,000 troops into the Sinai and ordered a withdrawal of UNEF troops from the armistice line and Sharm El Sheikh. Nasser then closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli ships, blockading the Israeli port of

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83 This is not to say that the Israeli army has never been the aggressor, rather to stress the fact that Israel has to defend itself constantly.
Eilat at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba. On 30 May, Jordan and Egypt signed a mutual defence treaty. In response to these events, Israeli forces struck targets in Egypt, Jordan, and Syria on June 5. After six days of fighting, and by the time all parties had accepted the cease-fire called for by UN Security Council Resolutions 235 and 236, Israel controlled the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the formerly Jordanian-controlled West Bank of the Jordan River (since referred to by many as 'the occupied territories'), including East Jerusalem. On 22 November, 1967, the Security Council adopted Resolution 242, the "land for peace" formula, which called for the establishment of a just and lasting peace based on Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967, in return for the end of all states of belligerency, respect for the sovereignty of all states in the area, and the right to live in peace within secure, recognised boundaries.

In the 1969-70 war of attrition, Israeli planes made deep strikes into Egypt in retaliation for repeated Egyptian bombing of Israeli positions along the Suez Canal. In early 1969, fighting broke out between Egypt and Israel along the Suez Canal. The United States helped end these hostilities in August 1970, but subsequent U.S. efforts to negotiate an interim agreement to open the Suez Canal and achieve disengagement of forces were unsuccessful.

On 6 October 1973, Yom Kippur (the Jewish Day of Atonement), Syrian and Egyptian forces attacked Israeli positions in the Golan and along the Suez Canal. Initially, Syria and Egypt made significant advances against Israeli forces. However, Israel recovered on both fronts, pushed the Syrians back beyond the 1967 cease-fire lines, and re-crossed the Suez Canal to take up a salient position on its west bank, isolating Egyptian troops, who eventually surrendered.

The United States and the Soviet Union helped bring about a cease-fire between the combatants. In the United States Security Council, the United States supported Resolution 338, which reaffirmed Resolution 242 as the framework for peace and called for peace negotiations between the parties.

The cease-fire did not end the occasional clashes along the cease-fire lines nor did it dissipate military tensions. The United States tried to help the parties reach agreement.
on cease-fire stabilisation and military disengagement. On 5 March 1974, Israeli forces withdrew from the canal, and Egypt assumed control. Syria and Israel signed a disengagement agreement on 31 May, 1974, and the UN Disengagement and Observer Force (UNDOF) was established as a peacekeeping force in the Golan.

In November 1977, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat broke 30 years of hostility with Israel by visiting Jerusalem at the invitation of the Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. During a two-day visit, which included a speech before the Knesset (Israel’s parliament), the Egyptian leader created a new psychological climate in the Middle East in which peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours seemed a realistic possibility. Sadat recognised Israel’s right to exist and established the basis for direct negotiations between Egypt and Israel.

In September 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter invited President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin to meet with him at Camp David, where they agreed on a framework for peace between Israel and Egypt and a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It set out broad principles to guide negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. It also established guidelines for a West Bank-Gaza transitional regime of full autonomy for the Palestinians residing in the occupied territories and for a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

The treaty was signed on March 26, 1979, by Begin and Sadat, with President Carter signing as witness. Under the treaty, Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt in April 1982. In 1989, the Governments of Israel and Egypt concluded an agreement that resolved the status of Taba, a resort area on the Gulf of Aqaba.

In the years following the 1948 war, Israel’s border with Lebanon was quiet, compared to its borders with its other neighbours. However, after the expulsion of the Palestinian fedayeen (fighters) from Jordan in 1970 - and their influx into southern Lebanon - hostilities on Israel’s northern border increased. In March 1978, after a series of clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon, Israeli forces crossed into Lebanon. After the passage of Security Council Resolution 425, calling for Israeli withdrawal and the creation of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon peacekeeping force (UNIFIL), Israel withdrew its troops.
In July 1981, after further fighting between Israel and the Palestinians in Lebanon, President Reagan’s special envoy, Philip Habib, helped secure a cease-fire between the parties. However, in June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to fight the forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The war in Lebanon in June 1982 was a controversial one. The military defeat the Palestinians suffered, put an end to the PLO ability to conduct an effective armed struggle against Israel. The result was a strategic decision by the PLO leaders to abandon the armed struggle and to seek a political solution to the conflict. However as Gazit (1998) claims, this was not at all the aim of some in Israel who had planned the Lebanon War (Shlom Hagalil, ‘secure the Galilee’ as it was called in Hebrew). They aimed to achieve much more than the limited tactical objective of driving the Palestinians out of the 40-kilometre strip north of the international border. But their main strategic objective was to drive the Syrian military from Lebanon and so enable the local Christian-Maronite leadership to take over and make order in the country. A second objective was to cause most, if not all, of the 300,000 Palestinians in Lebanon to leave for a new exile, to return perhaps to the eastern bank of the Jordan River (Gazit,1998:85).

With U.S. assistance, Israel and Lebanon reached an accord in May 1983 that set the stage to withdraw Israeli forces from Lebanon. The instruments of ratification were never exchanged, however, and in March 1984, under pressure from Syria, Lebanon cancelled the agreement. In June 1985, Israel withdrew most of its troops from Lebanon, leaving a small residual Israeli force and an Israeli-supported militia in southern Lebanon in a "security zone," which Israel considers a necessary buffer against attacks on its northern territory.

By the late 1980s, the spread of non-conventional weaponry (including missile technology) in the Middle East began to pose security problems for Israel from further afield. This was evident during the Gulf crisis that began with Iraq’s August 1990

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84 Major General Ariel Sharon was the chief architect of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and was criticized for allowing Lebanese Christian forces into Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut and the massacre of civilians that resulted.
invasion of Kuwait. When allied coalition forces moved to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait in January 1991, Iraq launched a series of missile attacks against Israel. Despite the provocation, Israel refrained from entering the Gulf war directly, accepting U.S. assistance to deflect continued Iraqi missile attacks.

4.3.6 The peace route

The coalition's victory in the Gulf war opened new possibilities for regional peace, and in October 1991, the Presidents of the United States and the Soviet Union jointly convened an historic meeting in Madrid of Israeli, Lebanese, Jordanian, Syrian, and Palestinian leaders which became the foundation for ongoing bilateral and multilateral negotiations which it was hoped would bring lasting peace and economic development to the region.

On 13 September 1993, Israel and the PLO signed a Declaration of Principles on the South Lawn of the White House. The declaration was a major conceptual breakthrough achieved under the Madrid framework. It established an ambitious set of objectives relating to a transfer of authority from Israel to an interim Palestinian authority. Final status talks are to begin by the third year of the interim regime. Implementation is contingent upon the details of the declaration. These negotiations are continuing today (2000).

Israel signed a non-belligerency agreement with Jordan (the Washington Declaration) in Washington, on July 25, 1994. Jordan and Israel signed a historic peace treaty at a border post between the two countries on October 26, 1994, witnessed and supported by American President Bill Clinton.

4.4 Israel foreign relations

Israel's strategic situation, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the rejection of Israel by most of the Arab states, chiefly influence Israeli foreign policy. The goals of Israeli policy are therefore to overcome diplomatic isolation and to achieve recognition and friendly relations with as many nations as possible, both in the Middle East and beyond. Like many other states, throughout its history Israel has simultaneously practised open and
secret diplomacy to further its main national goals. For example, it has engaged in military procurement, the export of arms and military assistance, intelligence cooperation with its allies, commercial trade, the importation of strategic raw materials, and prisoner-of-war exchanges and other arrangements for hostage releases. It has also sought to foster increased Jewish immigration to Israel and to protect vulnerable Jewish communities in the Diaspora.

Along the years Israel has given high priority to gaining wide acceptance as a sovereign state with an important international role. Before 1967, it had established diplomatic relations with the majority of the world's nations, except for the Arab states and most other Muslim countries. While the Soviet Union and the communist states of Eastern Europe (except Romania) broke off diplomatic relations with Israel in the 1967 war, those relations had been restored by 1991. Israel has also successfully established relations with most of the republics of the former Soviet Union except Turkmenistan. Currently, 125 countries (nearly 70 percent of all UN members) have established formal diplomatic relations with Israel. Since 1987, 42 countries have formalised ties with Israel - 31 of these since the beginning of 1991. Both China and India established relations with Israel in early 1992 (American Army Yearbook, 1994). However, although Israel has established interdependent relations with many of the world's nations probably the most important alliance since the 1950's has been with the United States. It is this link, which has proved so important for the development of basketball within Israel, which has to be examined more closely.

4.4.1 Israel-United States relations

While according to the American Army Yearbook (1994) Israel has been dependent, almost totally, upon the United States for security and diplomatic support, in this chapter it will be argued that the relationship between the two allies should be understood as mutual interdependence rather than dependent relations. The gradual replacement of British influence by that of United States has resulted in American commitment to Israel security and well-being as the United States devoted a

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85 Where sport is concerned, there still exists much British (and European) influence in Israel as, despite the emphasis in this thesis, soccer is the number one spectator sport in Israel.
considerable share of its world-wide economic and security assistance to Israel. In this context, it is important to understand the development of Israel-United States relations as a background to the discussion on the Americanization of Israel.

Two years after Lord Balfour sent his letter to Lord Rothschild (see page 128), the President of the United States, W. Wilson, expressed his support for the Balfour declaration when he stated on 3rd March 1919 that:

...The allied nations with the fullest concurrence of our government and people are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth.

His successor, Warren Harding, expressed similar support for the Zionist enterprise when he stated:

...It is impossible for one who has studied at all the services of the Hebrew people to avoid the faith that they will one day be restored to their historic national home and there enter on a new and yet greater phase of their contribution to the advance of humanity (Brad,1992:2).

Minutes after the proclamation of the state of Israel on 14 May 1948, the Americans, led by President Harry Truman, extended recognition to the new state. The act of being the first state to recognise Israel symbolised, maybe more than anything else, the nature of the future relationship between the two countries. Notwithstanding, it is important to note that the USSR, seeking a foothold in the region, was the first major power officially to provide Israel with de jure recognition while the US initially granted de facto recognition. As Podhoretz (1998) asserts, it was not because Stalin relished the idea of a Jewish state that he was so quick to help it survive a difficult birth, but because he saw in it a means of expelling British influence from the area. Similarly, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had died by then indicated in some of his statements in his last years, that he regarded the moribund empire of the British as a greater threat to the post-war order he envisaged than did the expanding empire of the Soviets. Harry Truman reportedly shared this view when he first became President after Roosevelt's death in 1945 (Podhoretz,1998:29).
Over the years, the United States' government has been the first to stand by Israel's side in international forums, staving off attempts from different bodies (the United Nations among others) to push through anti-Israel resolutions. Nevertheless, during the War of Independence (1948) it was the Soviet bloc weaponry (mainly via Czechoslovakia) which enabled Israel to withstand the initial assault, while the US imposed an arms embargo in the region. Weapons did reach Israel from the U.S. during the War of Independence, but they had to be smuggled in by private parties in defiance of an American embargo.

Moreover, when differences have arisen between the states they generally stem from the conflict between the United States' position as a superpower with complex global interests (for example opposing the USSR interests in the region) and Israel's primary concern, as a small state in a volatile region, with preserving its sovereignty and security. The main area of friction between the United States and Israel has concerned Washington's efforts to balance its special ties to Jerusalem with its overall Middle Eastern interests and the need to negotiate an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, in which the United States has played a major mediating role.

Therefore, it is important to examine, whether this relationship between Israel and the United States is not a result of the tension between the power blocs as suggested by Elias (1978):

...On close examination, aid from the great powers proves to be a mere palliative. Basically it is meant not so much to assist the development of the countries concerned as to gain supporters for one side or the other (Elias, 1978:171).

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86 Support of Israel served as an irritant in American relations with those countries in the Arab world (most notably Saudi Arabia) that were friendlier to Washington than to Moscow, and could potentially jeopardize the flow of cheap oil from the Middle East. A second issue was the Soviet influence in the region. The Soviets had by now switched from helping Israel as a way of expelling the British from the region to opposing Israel as a way of winning out over the U.S. in competing for the favor of the Arab states. With these two circumstances in mind, many people in the U.S., and especially in official Washington, and most especially within the State Department, thought it a species of political and strategic insanity to care as much about the approximately two million Jews living in one tiny country as about the 80 or so million Arabs living in more than twenty countries, some of which, moreover, were sitting atop the world's greatest and most reliable reserves of oil (Podhoretz, 1998:30).
This was the case at the beginning of the 1950s when the United States government joined other Western countries in an arms embargo to the Middle East, believing that by doing so regional tensions would be significantly eased. After 1952, the Eisenhower administration's pursuit of Arab support for a Middle East security pact foreshadowed a radical departure from the Truman administration's partiality towards Israel. Yet, in 1957, the United States announced the Eisenhower doctrine, in which it undertook to protect the independence of all of the countries in the region from Soviet aggression. Accepting the plan that suited its security needs, Israel became at that time an important strategic ally with the United States, playing a major role in the years to come in the cold war with the Soviet Union. Encouraged by Israel's support policy the United States broke, in 1962, its 14-year arms embargo. By selling United State's war-planes in 1965, the American administration, led by President Lyndon Johnson, helped Israel to maintain its military superiority in the Middle East.

However, the events that followed the six-day war in 1967 marked a turning point in American-Israeli relations and are highly significant in understanding the power-balance in the United States-Israel relations. American Jewish public opinion solidified around Israel as a central expression of Jewish values and ideals. This trend was exemplified in the increase of American Jewish volunteerism, the dramatic boost in American Jewish fund-raising efforts for the State of Israel and consistent expressions of public support. While most Jews feel a strong kinship between themselves and the state of Israel for obvious religious and cultural reasons, lobbies are a means by which Jews can express their support for Israel to their elected officials. Since, in many instances, political power in the United States is delegated from the federal to the state level, minorities can have an influence on national policy which is out of proportion to their numbers. While this is arguably the case with Jews in the United States, who are both concentrated geographically and organized, it might be important to explain the role lobbies play in the American political system.

In the United States lobbies are used to gain greater access to elected officials. The larger the lobby the greater the potential influence, because the members of a lobby represent votes in the next election. Organization is also a key element to a lobby's strength. Jewish lobbies in the United States rely heavily on organization in order to
have their voices heard. The Jewish population in the US is relatively small, only about one percent, yet Jewish lobbies are considered to be among the most powerful lobbies in the country (Greenberg, 1998). Jewish lobbies in the US have various policy agendas, but the main focus of their efforts concerns the relationship between the United States and Israel.

One such group was AIPAC (The American Israel Public Affairs Committee) a Washington-based lobby founded by Si Kenen in the 1950s. AIPAC is a national citizen's advocacy group recognised as one of the most influential foreign policy organizations in the United States. The American government, clarifying its position on Israel, outlined a five-point peace plan, stressing the right of all countries in the Middle East to security and recognised boundaries. Following the work of his predecessor and strengthening ties with newly appointed Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, President Richard Nixon's administration carried out plans to buttress economic and military assistance to Israel.

The United States was the only country to support Israel during the Yom Kipur war in October 1973. The United States provided Israel with an airlift of war material that helped Israel to recovered from initial Arab success at the beginning of the fighting. United States aid came in a different shape at the end of the fighting when diplomatic support in the United Nations Security Council helped Israel to face daily attacks by its Arab neighbours.

87 The activities of the lobbies involve far more than simply talking to Congressmen. Organizations spend a great deal of time and money keeping their members updated on current issues. A monthly update will usually be sent out detailing such possible legislation as an arms deal with the Saudi Arabians, or that funding for youth exchange between Israel and the West Bank is going to be cut. Often times with the newsletter comes a reminder that their members of Congress should be contacted. When a member of Congress receives a ton of mail and phone calls insisting that he or she vote a certain way on an issue, that Congressman or Congresswoman is bound to take notice. Perhaps equally important, however, is by keeping the members involved and informed a feeling is spread amongst the membership that their money and time is helping, and that they are truly a part of the organization. Such an image is attractive to others and can make the lobby grow in size.

88 AIPAC, America's Pro-Israel lobby, is the only American organization whose sole mission is to lobby Congress about legislation that strengthens the relationship between the United States and Israel. AIPAC was ranked by Fortune magazine as the second most influential interest group in Washington for the second consecutive year (1999), and labelled by The New York Times as the most important organization affecting America's relationship with Israel (1998).

89 Thanks in part to the American airlift, the Israelis quickly had the Egyptian Third Army surrounded and could have crushed it. But they were prevented from doing so by Nixon and Kissinger, both of whom believed that only if Egypt emerged from the war with its honor intact could a reasonable postwar political settlement be negotiated (Podhoretz, 1998:33).
Over the last two decades, the special relationship between Israel and the United States has deepened dramatically. As previously mentioned, the United States mediated the first-ever peace agreement signed by Israel and an Arab country (Egypt) in 1979. During the administration of President Ronald Reagan (1980-1988), the United States-Israeli relationship was significantly upgraded, with Israel becoming a strategic partner and de facto ally. A number of bilateral arrangements solidified this special relationship. In November 1983, the United States and Israel established a Joint Political-Military Group to co-ordinate military exercises and security planning between the two countries, as well as to position United States military equipment in Israel for use by American forces in the event of a crisis. In 1984 Israel and the United States concluded the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Agreement to provide tariff-free access to American and Israeli goods. In 1985 the two countries established a Joint Economic Development Group to help Israel solve its economic problems; in 1986 they created a Joint Security Assistance Group to discuss aid issues. Also in 1986, Israel began participating in research and development programs relating to the United States Strategic Defence Initiative. In January 1987, the United States designated Israel a major non-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty) ally, with status similar to that of Australia and Japan. Two months later, Israel agreed to the construction of a Voice of America relay transmitter on its soil to broadcast programs to the Soviet Union. In December 1987, Israel signed a memorandum of understanding allowing it to bid on United States defence contracts on the same basis as NATO countries. Finally, the two countries signed a memorandum of agreement in April 1988 formalising existing arrangements for mutually beneficial United States-Israel technology transfers (MFA, 1997).

From 1948 through to 1985, the United States provided Israel with US$10 billion in economic assistance and US$21 billion in military assistance, 60 percent of which was in the form of grants. From 1986 through 1988, total United States economic and military assistance to Israel averaged more than US$3 billion a year, making Israel the largest recipient of United States aid. Of the annual total, about US$1.8 billion was in

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90 According to Garfinkle (1996), Israeli exports to the United States have risen sharply as a percentage of the total since the free-trade agreement. Exports to the United States now comprise almost half of Israeli exports (Garfinkle, 1996:565).
foreign military sales credits, and about US$1.2 billion was in economic assistance. However, the massive financial aid to Israel by the United States makes the Israel economy dependent upon American support. A large part of the grants provided to Israel is in the form of American credit to purchase American goods and military supplies. In other words, to a large extent, the Israel government does not have freedom of choice since they are constrained to buy mostly American products from the grants provided. In addition, the free trade agreement signed in 1984 makes American products relatively cheap and therefore worthwhile importing. Garfinkle (1996) stresses the importance of the American currency in Israel when he claims that:

...Even the Israeli currency is more closely bound up with the fate of the dollar than ever before. When the dollar suddenly weakens, as it did in the spring of 1995, it either makes Israeli products more expensive or, if products are sold for the same dollar amount, reduces profits. That in turn leads Israeli manufacturers to lobby for depreciating the Sheqel against the dollar, thereby fuelling inflation, which stood at about 13 percent in 1995. Relatedly, a strong dollar tends to raise housing prices in Israel, which are still generally denominated in dollars (Garfinkle, 1996:565).

However, it would be inaccurate to look at Israel as totally dependent upon the United States and totally influenced by America. As mentioned earlier, any relations, and this includes relations between the United States and Israel, tend to be unequal across a range of dimensions. Although one can not deny the economic or persuasive power of the United States government, we must remember that the Israelis have their own input into this power-balance.

One such element is the nuclear power Israel possesses. According to Cohen (1995) the most potent nuclear arsenal outside the "declared" nuclear powers - the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China - belongs to Israel. Although Israel has never admitted that it has nuclear weapons, its weapons are taken as a fact of life in

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91 Avner Cohen is co-director of the Nuclear Arms Control in the Middle East Project and a fellow at the Center for International Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
the Middle East. While the United States and other industrialized nations have developed an arsenal of export controls and sanctions to discourage proliferation, not all proliferation is equally ominous in the eyes of the United States.

When J. F. Kennedy took office in January 1961 as president of the United States, he was strongly committed to the goal of non-proliferation of nuclear weaponry. However, the case of Israel was an exception, not only because of Israel's geopolitical situation, but also because of the 'burden' of history. Kennedy's non-proliferation ideal was compromised.

No better example of that high-level compromise exists than the 1961 meeting between Kennedy and Ben-Gurion in New York. Although Kennedy paid lip-service to non-proliferation, when it came to Israel, he simply didn't want to press the matter too hard. That set the pattern for the next 30-plus years (Cohen, 1995:44).

The example of the military co-operation between the two nations can illustrate the latter point: over the years, Israel co-operated with the United States on a number of clandestine operations. For example, it co-operated with the United States in its efforts to free American hostages held by Iranian-backed Shia extremists in Lebanon at the beginning of the 1980s. In 1985 and 1986 it acted as a secret channel for United States arms sales to Iran, and during the same period it co-operated with the United States in Central America.

Another example would be the fluctuations in relations over the years: Despite the special relationship between the United States and Israel and the many areas of mutual agreement and shared geopolitical strategic interests (that were strengthened with Israel obtaining a nuclear ability), substantial differences continued to exist between the United States and certain segments of the Israeli government, mainly the right wing parties. In some cases, due to conflict of interests between the nations, the

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92 In a letter to Kennedy dated June 24, 1962 (declassified only in June 1993), Ben Gurion drew a direct connection between the Holocaust and Israel's need for "deterrent strength." He wrote: "What was done to six million of our brethren twenty years ago . . . could be done to the two million Jews of Israel if, God forbid, the Israeli Defense forces are defeated." Ben Gurion was determined that Israel should have a "nuclear option." In his opinion only a nuclear weapon could counter the numerical superiority of the Arabs (Cohen, 1995:45).
relations have become tense. Such was the case in the Pollard affair (1985). The United States expressed indignation with Israel over an espionage operation involving Jonathan Pollard, a United States Navy employee who was sentenced to life imprisonment for selling hundreds of vital intelligence documents\(^3\) to Israel. During the affair, Israeli government and diplomatic personnel in Washington served as Pollard's control officers.

The Pollard affair epitomizes the way Israel regards its relations with the United States: respect on one hand, and reserving the right to act on its own, on the other. Nevertheless, United States government agencies continue to maintain a close relationship with Israel in sensitive areas such as military co-operation, intelligence sharing, and joint weapons research.

**Summary**

Throughout this chapter a developmental approach based on a figurational perspective was used to give a better understanding of the state of Israel. By taking into account the roots of the Jewish people, and the efforts of Jewish people from all over the world to build the state of Israel, an attempt was made to untangle the network of interdependencies and power relations lying behind the establishment and continued existence of the Jewish state.

The material in this chapter contributes to an understanding of the importance of Jewish identity in the fledgling state, together with the importance of British influences and the development of anti-British feelings. It also illustrates the growing attractiveness of America.

A major part of this chapter was dedicated to Israel’s relations with its neighboring countries, as well as the rest of the world. Israel’s foreign policy over the years has been influenced chiefly by its strategic situation (which constrained it to fight five

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\(^3\) The documents Pollard sold were raw intelligence material, rather than analyzed data. The information was classified not only for its subject matter, but also because it revealed many sources and methods used for U.S. intelligence collection. By analyzing these sources, the Israeli government could learn specifics about the capabilities of the American intelligence infrastructure, including the locations of facilities and identities of agents (Powell and Rosenberg, 1987).
major wars in five decades), the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the rejection of Israel by
most of the Arab states. Israel's special relationships with its largest ally, the United
States, were detailed from Israel's early years to present day. This special relationship
however, might at first glance seem to involve total support for the United States in
Israel, and the total dependency of Israel upon the United States. Yet, relations
between the nations have been alternately tense and co-operative, depending on the
issues involved, suggesting that the relations between Israel and the United States are
not unequivocally those of vassal-lord. No matter how vast the United States' 
epicmic and persuasive powers are, in the overall ratio of power-balance with Israel, 
and asymmetrical as they might be, United States-Israel power relations should be 
viewed as interdependent.
Chapter 5: The early development of basketball in Israel

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the different sport organizations that play such a significant role in Israeli sport. The aim is to demonstrate how the different sport organizations have affected the development of sport in Israel in general, and especially basketball, in its early years. Using a figurational (process) perspective, the chapter will illustrate how these organizations are intertwined with Israel's political development and other processes as well.

Figurational sociology asserts that in order to understand individuals, one must look at the social and historical contexts as well as the network of relationships, in which they are embedded. Hence, in order to understand Israel’s society, and basketball as part of that society, one must look at Israel in a historical context as well as at the diversity of individuals and groups making up Israel’s society, and the relationships between them.

As Reshef and Paltiel (1989) aver, Israel represents a unique case of an immigrant society formed on the basis of an ideological movement. This has had a profound impact on the development and organization of sport and has led to the institutionalisation of sport within a highly politicised framework.

Sport in Israel was first assimilated into the ideological framework of Zionism when Zionist parties appropriated sport clubs as tools for partisan competition. Since the early 1920’s football clubs started being incorporated into nation-wide sport associations that were affiliated with a specific political organization: Hapoel was an organ of the General Federation of Labor (Histadrut), Maccabi was affiliated with bourgeois political parties, Betar was associated with the right-wing ‘Revisionists’ and Elizur was related to the religious-Zionist party (Ben-Poart, 1998:271). According to Reshef and Paltiel (1989:305), sport eventually became a metaphor for

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94 According to Webster (1979), politics is "the art or science concerned with guiding or influencing governmental policy. The total complex of relations between man in society"
politics, and marginalized groups used sport loyalties to demonstrate disaffection with the political establishment:

From their inception, sport organizations have been an indispensable organ of the parties by providing concrete expressions of the respective political ideologies. The parties have used sport as a powerful weapon to increase their political influence. With the foundation of Israel, when Zionism was transformed from a vision into an institution, these organizations rather than losing their political coloration have been reinforced in the comparative arena of Israel politics (Reshef and Paltiel, 1989:317).

Nevertheless, other processes were also intertwined with Israel's process of state-formation: the processes of secularization, population growth, urbanization, militarization and, most germane for present purposes, the development of sport. These are not isolated but rather interdependent processes and therefore of importance when discussing the development of sport in general and particularly of basketball.

It should be borne in mind that historically, sport and Judaism did not always 'mix'. According to Griver (1999), this aversion can be traced back to the third century BCE, when the Greeks ruled in the Land of Israel. Then, the Jews viewed sport as an alien Greek concept, and Jewish contingents rarely took part in the classical Olympic games because participants were required to offer gifts to the Greek god Hercules – a gesture which contradicted basic Jewish belief. During the Roman period, sports were associated with the cruelty and violence of gladiatorial combat. Nevertheless, the ruler of the land of Israel at the time, King Herod, built stadia throughout the country and encouraged contests in boxing, archery, racing and gladiatorial disciplines. This didn't change opinions, though, and for many centuries Jews saw sports as a "Hellenistic" evil to be rejected.

95 Such opinions regarding sport still persist among some ultra-orthodox Jews today.
Since the Middle Ages, however, Jewish attitudes toward sports have to some extent paralleled those of the non-Jewish world. The medieval Jewish philosopher Rabbi Moses Maimonides (Rambam), who was also a physician, stressed the importance of a healthy body to host a healthy mind and soul. According to Griver (1999), historical records from the Middle Ages reveal the rise in popularity of ball games and some rabbinical discussions revolved around whether such games may be played on the Sabbath (Saturday). The tone for the modern era was set in the first half of the 20th century by Chief Rabbi Kook, who emphasized the importance of sports and insisted that the body serves the soul and that only a healthy body can ensure a healthy soul (Grifer, 1999:8).

In order to find the first public discussion about the establishment of Jewish sport organizations, one must look to the second political World Zionist Congress in 1897 where Dr. Max Nordau, one of the Jewish leaders, introduced the idea of “muscular Jewry”.

In using this term, Nordau was referring to the need to change the image of the weak diaspora Jew and at the same time he was criticising contemporary Jewish ideas about physical and mental activity. He also wanted to rebut arguments about inherent Jewish biological inferiority, as was claimed by racial theories. Condemning what he called “the Shtetl mentality”, Nordau suggested that the Jews should develop military skills and use sporting activities to strengthen the national character.

5.2 The sport organizations

5.2.1 Maccabi

In 1902, the first Jewish sport organization, Maccabi, was founded in Germany. According to Reshef and Palatial (1989), it was modelled on a similar Slavic nationalist sport organization of East Europe, the Sokol. By creating a separate Jewish sport organization, the Zionists were at once tapping the frustrations of secularised Jews who were excluded from participation in Gentile sport organizations in Germany and who were therefore denied participation in vital aspects of leisure activity. Oren

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96 “Shtetl”- An east European Jewish township, similar to a ghetto.
(1973) mentions that as early as 1287 a royal command in Austria precluded Jews from bathing and swimming with Christians. Although Jews were allowed to participate in the ‘sport’ festivals in Rome in the 15th century, in the 17th century, the hegemon of Manitoba forbade Christians from playing with Jews. In the 18th century, Jews were able to compete in certain parts of Europe and Daniel Mendoza, a Jewish boxer, became England's champion. In Germany, however, sport club members were asked in 1888 to eat pork and potatoes, thus preventing Jews, who are not allowed to eat pork, from joining. In the United States the situation was very similar as Jews were not accepted as members of the YMCA clubs.

Alouf (1973) has pointed out that the name “Maccabi” is associated with the historical hero, Judah the Maccabi, who fought against the imposition of Hellenic customs on Jews in Israel in 165 BCE. The name thus connotes power, pride, and self-esteem.

According to Griver (1999), there were over 100 Maccabi and other clubs across Europe by 1914. The largest of these clubs – Hakoah of Vienna, Bar Kochba of Berlin, M.T.K. of Budapest and Hagibor of Prague – produced some of the continent’s most outstanding teams, including soccer sides that played in their country’s top divisions.

However, it was not until 1921 that the Zionist leaders recognised the Maccabi organization. Stringent nationalist requirements were imposed on Maccabi members. For example, they were to speak only Hebrew and believed in Jewish labor - that Jews could do manual work. The Maccabi organization is considered the least partisan sport organization in that it opens its doors to everyone regardless of political affiliation, however, according to Yadlin (1974, as cited in Reshef and Palitiel, 1989), over the years it became sympathetic to a small middle-class party, the Liberals, who were absorbed by the right-wing party – the Likud.

5.2.2 Hapoel

The Zionist settlers in Palestine (the Yishuv) who settled in what was to become Israel took with them the ideological allegiances of their origins. Since most of them came from the East of Europe, many of the settlers were inspired by socialism. In order to
enforce their concept of Zionist colonisation, labor Zionists who fought for “Hebrew Labor” and founded the General Federation of Workers in Israel – the Histadrut Trade Union. Over the years the Histadrut grew into a multifaceted and highly articulated set of institutions creating enterprises, providing health insurance, as well as setting up trades union for the workers. Parallel to the growing importance of the Histadrut, the political power of the labor Zionists also grew. By the 1930s, labor Zionists achieved a dominant political position in the Yishuv. When immigration restrictions were enforced in the late 1920s and early 1930s by the British authorities, the Jewish agency for Palestine (an arm of the Zionist movement) allocated immigration permits to representative Jewish parties in proportion to their strength in the Yishuv. Therefore, political parties and their associated institutions became more than agents of political representation. They became directly involved in the selection of the absorption of potential immigrants as well as operating as a cartel in managing the institutions of the protostate.

In 1927, the Histadrut, along with the labor bloc, created a new sport organization called “Hapoel” (the worker). One of the purposes of the establishment of the new organization was to counteract the perceived political effect of Maccabi. Hapoel members believed in the synthesis of Jewish nationalism with a socialist blueprint for a better society. Seeking to create a mass movement, Hapoel leaders recruited both women and men as well as European (Ashkenazim) and Afro-Asian (Sephardic) Jews. Giving these various groups and individuals a sense of belonging to one movement, Hapoel leaders encouraged its members to take part in mass political events, such as (the first of) May Day, which the Hapoel movement celebrated with sport festivals and red-flag rallies.

Given the hegemony established by the Histadrut and the labor bloc and given that it had preferential access to new immigrants and was therefore able to recruit members, Hapoel became the largest sport organization in the Yishuv and was able to build up its facilities and infrastructure. On the other hand, Maccabi, though older and more established both inside and outside Palestine, was handicapped and marginalized by its lack of association with any large political bloc within the Yishuv. It survived because of its tradition and the great influx of middle-class supporters and
professionals from Germany and Austria who escaped from Hitler in the 1930s (Reshef and Paltiel, 1989:309).

5.2.3 Beitar

A different and much smaller sport organization than Hapoel and Maccabi was the Beitar organization. It was founded in 1923 as a youth movement in Eastern Europe by a militant nationalist, Ze’ev Jabotinsky, the leader of the Revisionists. The Revisionists were a group of Zionist leaders who strongly believed that the Zionist idea could be implemented only by Jews who had undergone military training and that the people would be redeemed only through “blood and fire”. Beitar (an acronym that stands for “Covenant of Joseph Trumpeldor” - a Jewish national hero) maintained a close relationship with its founding party, Herut (freedom) – the core of the right wing Likud. One sign of the ideological difference between Beitar and Hapoel was that Beitar promoted boxing as a sport whereas Hapoel rejected it as inhumane. As a minority stream in the Yishuv, Beitar lacked the facilities or institutional support from which its rivals benefited. In spite of that, it did establish itself as a credible force in the most popular spectator force in Israel, soccer, mainly in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

5.2.4 Elizur

The Elizur sport organization was founded in 1939 as a reaction to the militant youth movements of its secular rivals. Attached to the Orthodox Zionist movement, the Mizrachi (“the oriental”), Elizur was handicapped by ambivalent purposes and the limited support it received within the religious community. Orthodox Zionists were a minority not only among Zionists but also among the religious, who were largely traditionalist, anti-political and anti-Zionist prior to the formation of Israel. In addition, the restriction on physical culture and sports imposed by the Jewish religious code gave little scope for expansion by the Elizur movement.

With the establishment of the state of Israel, the close relationship between sport and politics led to tight control of sport by politicians. From 1948 until the early 1970s, all sport branches were dominated by several political bodies: the government; the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport; the Israel Sport Authority; and the Israel
Sport Federation. The number of representatives on the Israel Sport Federation from each of the four sport organizations, Maccabi, Hapoel, Beitar and Elizur, was proportionate to the size of the party’s parliament seats. The dominance of the Labor party, which was in power for the first 29 years of Israel’s statehood, gave Hapoel, the largest sport organization, control over the most popular branches including soccer and basketball.

According to Nevo (1997), the party framework which characterized the structure of sport in Israel provided many benefits to the stronger movements. The relationship between the different clubs was affected primarily by political identification, and clubs belonging to the “right” federation received priority. This priority was expressed in a number of ways: a closed market of athletes with no movement between federations; and various types of assistance, sport-related and not sport-related, such as clubs helping sister organizations when necessary in league standings. This condition favoured the larger federations and thus constituted a vested interest in maintaining a status quo. As a result Israeli sport was characterized by the hegemony of only a relatively few teams in the different sporting fields and the appearance of new teams at the upper levels was limited.

Over the years, sport clubs obtained their financial support from four main sources: the Israel Sport Authority, the sport Lottery, local municipalities and membership fees. Since these sources were insufficient, the clubs went to their sport

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97 From the founding of Israel in 1948 until the election of May 1977, Israel was ruled by a coalition government led by the Labor alignment or its constituent parties. From 1967-70, the coalition government included all of Israel's parties except the communist party. After the 1977 election, the Likud bloc, then composed of Herut, the Liberals, and the smaller La'am Party, came to power, forming a coalition with the National Religious Party, Agudat Israel, and others.

98 The Hapoel movement, supported by the Histadrut and Labor party, flourished in comparison to the other sporting bodies. By 1970 Hapoel had 300 branches with 85,000 members, while Maccabi had 75 branches and 18,000 members, Elitzur had 80 branches and 10,000 members and Beitar had 74 branches and 5,000 members. The apolitical Academic Sports Association (ASA), founded in 1953, had nine branches and 5,000 members (Griver, 1999:3).

99 Government allocations to sports through the Ministry of Education and Culture amounted to $25.7 million (1997). Of this figure, $5.7 million was used for policing sports events, mainly soccer matches. Of the remaining $20 million some 50% was allocated to municipalities and local authorities which use the funds to maintain and operate existing facilities, support local sports teams and arrange tournaments between schools and community centers. The remaining 50% was disbursed to other bodies and institutions, including the sports organizations (Hapoel, Maccabi Beitar and Elizur), the sports associations, the Israel Olympic Committee, the Wingate Institute, and the Council for Excellence in Sports. These funds are also used for major events such as the Maccabiah and the various sports championships. More significant funding is channelled into sports from the Toto – Israel Council for Sports Gambling – which, in a manner similar to the British football pools, requires pundits to guess
organizations and their political parties for additional funding. The latter increased club dependency on political patrons who now had the power to decide which teams should be given more money and which athletes would be allocated to a particular team.

Nevo (1997) attributed the reasons for maintaining the existing political structures to the benefits that the sport organizations derived from it. The framework provided many opportunities for politicians, who used sport as a stepping stone in politics and public life. Moreover, in periods of economic hardships, it was difficult for the organizations to remain financially stable, and the federations provided economic and financial security (Nevo, 1997:4)

5.3 The early days of Israeli basketball (1935-1956)

According to Simri (1968), the early days of Israeli basketball in the 1930s and early 1940s, was characterised by disunity between the two major sport organizations in Palestine at that time, Hapoel and Maccabi. The battle for hegemony between these organizations in many of the sport branches, but mainly in basketball, delayed the establishment of national leagues and a national team.

The first ever formal basketball game to be played in Israel took place in 1935. The second “Maccabiah” games (the first was held in 1932)\(^{100}\), the “Jewish Olympic games” organised by the world Maccabi organization, hosted Jewish delegations from around the world. In the basketball tournament, four Jewish teams from Syria, Egypt, Turkey and Palestine participated in the games. Aside from the men’s tournament, a women’s tournament also took place, where delegations from France, Poland and Palestine played official women’s basketball for the first time.

\(^{100}\) In 1932 the first Maccabiah, the international Jewish Olympics, sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee, were held in what was then Palestine. They attracted 500 Jewish athletes from 23 countries. The second Maccabiah took place in 1935 with similar participation; many athletes stayed in the country, preferring not to return to a Europe threatened by the Nazis (Griver, 1999:10).
According to Paz and Jacobson (1982) the game of basketball was not popular at the beginning of the 1930s. Handball, for example, was one of the most popular games, alongside soccer. A group of immigrants from the United States introduced the new game of basketball to the local inhabitants and helped the game to gain popularity slowly in neighbourhoods of Tel Aviv.

The first basketball club, Maccabi Tel Aviv, was founded in 1935 and an outdoor basketball court was built in the center of the new city of Tel Aviv. A new immigrant from Poland, Dov Prosek, founded the second basketball team, a rival team in town: Hapoel Tel Aviv. The first basketball games at that time were derby games between Maccabi Tel Aviv and Hapoel Tel Aviv. In the first derby, in 1936, Maccabi won 37:5. The first official basketball game where tickets were sold was held in February 1938 and there, too, Maccabi Tel Aviv won, 34:33.

Many basketball courts were built as the new nation grew and the game of basketball gained popularity. Basketball quickly became popular partly because the court was cheap and simple to build and required no special equipment aside from rims and a basketball. The game spread to the north of the country, which was sparsely populated at the time, where another immigrant from Poland, Dolk Ouimshuf, promoted the game in the recently built kibbutzim.

The first Israeli basketball tournament took place in 1939 and was organised by Dov Prosek. The games were, in fact, a Hapoel championship, since only Hapoel teams were able to participate. A total of 14 Hapoel teams from around the country took part in the tournament. The absence of Maccabi teams was another sign of the antagonism between the sport organizations in these early years. However, it was the Maccabi Tel Aviv team that first represented Israeli basketball overseas, because of its ties with other Maccabi branches overseas. Maccabi Tel Aviv was invited in 1939 to Egypt 101

101 The relation between nation-building and sports infrastructure will be discussed in the next chapter. See also Wilson (1992).
102 A unique social and economic framework based on egalitarian and communal principles, the kibbutz grew out of the country’s pioneering society of the early 20th century and developed into a permanent rural way of life. Over the years, it established a prosperous economy, at first primarily agricultural, later augmented by industrial and service enterprises, and it distinguished itself through its members’ contributions to the establishment and building of the state.
and five years later, in 1944, the same team played in Lebanon becoming the first basketball team to play outside Palestine.

5.3.1 The fifty-fifty system

In 1947, the struggle between the members of the various sport organizations reached its peak. It was the Maccabi organization which dominated the Amateur Sport Organization in Palestine, but the Hapoel organization established his own programs for basketball and volleyball while trying to gain international recognition. It was the Hapoel organization which eventually received an invitation to the youth sport festival in Prague in 1947. The appearance in the festival was of immense significance, not only at the sport level but at the political level as well. During the same period, the declaration of the establishment of the new state of Israel was about to be made (this was to occur on 29 May 1947) and the team’s appearance in the sport festival along with 67 other countries was of great propaganda importance to the state-to-be.

The bitter negotiations between representatives of Hapoel and Maccabi regarding the composition of the team, specifically, how many players from each sport organization would take part in the festival, indicates the kind of relationship that existed between the two sport organizations. The solution, later dubbed “the fifty-fifty system”, marked the nature of Israeli national teams in the early days of the new state. Fourteen players were chosen to go to Prague: seven from Maccabi and seven from Hapoel. Two basketball coaches were nominated to the team: Joshua Rosin from Maccabi, and Dolk Oimshuf from Hapoel.

The war of independence (1948-1949), which was dealt with at length in the previous chapter, brought sport activities in Israel to a halt. The athletes, like the rest of the population (both men and women), were drafted into the recently assembled army and helped to protect the country from the invasion of the Arab forces. Surrounded by enemies and faced with the task of integrating thousands of immigrants into the new state, David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first Prime Minister, attempted to make the IDF

103 A key element of Ben-Gurion’s policy was the integration of Israel’s independent military forces into a unified military structure. On 28 May, 1948, Ben-Gurion’s provisional government created the Israel
the new unifying symbol of the fledgling state. He realised that the socialist ideas of
the Histadrut were not adequate to solve the problems facing the new state. Above all,
Israel needed a unity of purpose, which in Ben-Gurion's thinking could only be
provided by a strong army that would defend the country against its enemies and help
assimilate its culturally diverse immigrants. Consequently, Ben-Gurion added to the
socialist ethos of the Histadrut and kibbutz movements an aggressive Israeli
nationalism spearheaded by the IDF. Two of the 14 players who were members the
first Israeli basketball team in Prague, Eliezer Shevet and Joshua Weisman, were
killed in the War of Independence.

The state sport institutions established in the 1950s continued to enhance party
affiliations established during the British Mandate period. This was reflected in the
attempt to preserve a consensus regarding representation of the federations in the
sport organizations. At first, this consensus was characterized by the equal
representation of the Hapoel and Maccabi federations, though during the 1950s this
consensus became based on the proportional size of the federations.

This system created a clear advantage for Hapoel. Not only was it the sport federation
of the ruling party, but it also sought to establish a foothold in as many communities
as possible. This policy was one part of a larger world view of the Labor Movement,
i.e., sport for the masses as opposed to achievement-oriented sport. Another
ideological aspect expressed through policy was the emphasis placed by the Labor
movement on pioneering and on a move from the urban centers to the peripheries.
During the 1950's a status quo was reached, by which Maccabi would be the lesser of
the two federations, but would take part in the management and organization of sport.
The co-operation between the two major federations reflected the balance of power
and coalition politics between the patron parties within the political system proper
(Nevo,1999:5).

Defense Forces (IDF), the Hebrew name of which, Zvah Haganah Le Yisrael, is commonly abbreviated
to Zahal, and prohibited maintenance of any other armed force.
The “ascending” to Israel of Nat Holman, member of the first Boston Celtics basketball team and a senior basketball coach in the United States, gave the game of basketball in Israel a “Booster”. Holman, a proud Zionist, was the one who actually established an institutional framework for Israeli basketball. By teaching basketball in Tel Aviv and forming a basketball school, Holman laid the foundation for the development of Israeli basketball. Holman brought with him from the United States modern coaching techniques and taught those techniques to people who were to become future coaches of Israeli teams. It will be argued later that Nat Holman’s operations laid the foundation for the process of Americanization of Israeli basketball.

Due to the geo-political situation at the time, which prevented Israeli basketball teams from competing in their geographical area, the secretary of the FIBA sent an invitation to the Israeli Sport Association in 1950 to take part in the European Women’s basketball championship in Budapest, Hungary. Dolk Ouimshuf from Hapoel and Baruch Shpeling from Maccabi were chosen to set up a women’s team, that according to the status quo, would be comprised of equal numbers of players from Hapoel and Maccabi. This, however, prevented the Israeli team from sending its strongest team which would have enabled it to use basketball to establish its credentials as a sporting nation.

According to Paz (1968) 1952 was the first year in which Israel’s men’s basketball team competed in the international arena. The International Olympic Committee invited the Israeli Sport Federation to send a team to the pre-Olympic basketball tournament. Israel’s Prime Minister at that time, David Ben-Gurion, hosted the players in his chamber and explained to them the importance of representing the young state in the international arena. Ben-Gurion’s act is illustrative of Elias’ (1986) observation that:

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104 Immigrating to Israel is called “aliya”, literally “ascension” since many newcomers consider coming to the Holy Land to be an “ascension”. In effect, it is a translation of the Biblical phrase “ascending” to my House” – what is called in English a pilgrimage.

105 The American phrase ‘boost’ which means ‘a push’ is a common term in Israel and can serve as an example of penetration of American phrases into the Hebrew language.
...Contemporary forms of regulated sport have come to serve as symbolic representations of a non-violent, non-military form of competition between states (Elias, 1986:23).

Similarly, Stoddart (1986) explains that:

Sport is a form of cultural capital, a resource which can be exchanged for honour and respect on the world stage. Sport is a weapon in the “Culture Wars” that take place as nations compete, not in the market for goods and materials, but in the market for prestige. A scarce resource, prestige is highly sought after by nation-states, for gaining recognition and respect on the world stage is one of the most crucial means for states to legitimate their sovereign powers. Being admitted to compete in the prestige economy, and competing successfully within it, is thus very important for national elites, and of considerable popular appeal to a nation’s citizens. Culture wars are no substitute for real wars, or for economic competition, but they are by no means insignificant. In all likelihood, informal cultural ties such as those forged by sporting competition, become more important where formal, political ties have atrophied it (Stoddart, 1986:125).

The nomination of the American, Maurice Raskin, to the coaching position in the new women’s team raises two major points. First, it indicates a temporary ‘cease-fire’ between the Hapoel and Maccabi organizations, at least as far as coaching is concerned, but second and more importantly, the nomination of an American coach indicates another phase in the process of Americanization of Israeli basketball.

The influx of new Jewish immigrants from the neighbouring Arab countries at the beginning of the 1950s brought thousands of members to the Zionist youth movement that spread all over the new state. Among those immigrants were a number of basketball players from Egypt, where basketball was well rooted by that time. One of the immigrants, Eliah Amiel, had even played for the Egyptian national team. The Hapoel organization, with the help of the ruling labor party, fighting for
hegemony in basketball with the Maccabi organization, allocated these players to Hapoel teams around Israel.

In May 1953, a second invitation (and the first addressed to a men’s team) to take part in the European championship in Moscow, Russia, was sent to the Israeli Sport Federation by FIBA. Still committed to the principle of 50/50 in team selection, the Israeli team left for the championship in Moscow with equal representation from Hapoel and Maccabi. The tournament in Moscow was much more than just a basketball tournament. The geo-political situation in the Middle-East, where the Soviet Union sided with nations hostile to Israel, along with a situation in which hundreds of thousands of Russian Jews were not allowed to leave the Soviet Union and emigrate to Israel, made the basketball tournament something more than a sport competition. Sixty thousand people, among them thousands of Jews, crowded into ‘Dynamo Moscow’s’ stadium in Moscow to watch the opening game of the championship between the national teams of Finland and Israel. According to Klein,\(^{106}\) the victory of the Israeli team, 60:36, was a memorable moment in the history of Israeli basketball, not only because of the victory but also because the Israeli flag was raised over the stadium and the Israeli national anthem was played in Russia for the first time. Thousands of Russian Jews stood in the pouring rain in the stadium (an outdoor stadium at that time) and sang the ‘HaTikva’ (the hope) the Israeli national anthem. At the end of the championship the Israeli team was ranked in fifth place with the same number of wins and losses as the Hungarian team who took second place. This achievement in the European championship is considered by many basketball figures to be one of the most significant achievements in the history of Israeli sport. The Israeli basketball team beat the teams from Yugoslavia, Italy, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, all considered much stronger teams prior to the tournament. During the championship, two basketball teams from Egypt and Lebanon\(^{107}\) refused to play the Israeli team, preferring to forfeit the games on technical grounds. While memories from the war in 1948-9, and the tense situation in the Middle-East were the official reasons for not facing the Israeli team, Paz (1968)

\(^{106}\) Personal communication with Ralph Klein, a basketball player on the Israeli team at that time.

\(^{107}\) The teams from Egypt and Lebanon were also invited to the European championship completing a total of 17 teams.
claims that the fear of being beaten and humiliated was the actual reason for not playing.

Fifth place in the European championship guaranteed the Israeli team a place in the World Championship that was held a year later, 1954, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Twelve players, six from Hapoel teams and six from Maccabi teams, represented Israel in the games. The team won two games (including one game in the preliminary round) and lost seven. The Israel team reached a respectable eighth place, ahead of the national teams from Yugoslavia, Chile, Paraguay and Peru. One of the most important outcomes of this world championship was the world-wide recognition that Israeli basketball achieved.

5.3.2 The first Israeli basketball league

The popularity of the game of basketball, partly prompted by these successes at the international level, convinced those who still doubted the necessity of setting up a local basketball league. According to basketball players and coaches at the time, setting up a basketball league would further promote the game, improve playing standards, intensify competition and hopefully attract more spectators to the game. Although attempts to establish such a league had been made before, the animosity between the two major sport organizations, Hapoel and Maccabi, frustrated every effort. Eventually an eight-team test league was founded in 1954, with four teams from Hapoel and four from Maccabi. In 1955, the number of teams in the league grew to twelve, evenly divided with six teams from each sport organization. With the establishment of another league, a second division, teams could for the first time be relegated to a lower division or promoted to a higher one, thus challenging continued equal representation of Hapoel and Maccabi teams.

In October 1956, Israel invaded the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula at the same time as operations by French and British forces against Egypt were taking place in the Suez Canal area. Israeli forces withdrew in March 1957, after the United Nations instituted the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) in the Gaza Strip and Sinai. Due to the Sinai operation, the 1956 basketball season was cancelled and basketball games were not played again until 1957 when the athletes came back from the conflict zone.
The Sinai operation might be seen as part of a process of state-formation and provides an example of how this process was intertwined with the process of basketball development in Israel. Other processes, such as population growth and urbanization, provide examples of overlapping interdependent processes that also affected the development of Israeli basketball. The small numbers of players in growing kibbutzim constrained teams to unite in order to survive as a team in the league. The mandatory draft to the army in the age of 18 till the age of 20 (and later until the age of 21) forced teams which based their recruitment on such players, to unite or to vanish. Financial problems facing some of the teams in the early years forced them to come up with practical solutions. Small teams, mainly the ones from the far north and the kibbutzim, would make only one trip to a city and play two games in a row over the weekend: one on Friday and another on Saturday. The arrangement not only saved some travel expenses but, and most importantly, allowed players who also worked during the week, not to miss out on either work or games.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter the different sport organizations that play a large part in Israeli sport have been identified. The intention was to demonstrate how the different sport organizations have affected the development of sport in Israel in general, and basketball in particular, in its early years.

These examples also demonstrated that the process of the development of sport in Israel in general and basketball in particular, can only be understood adequately by presenting it in its historical context and by examining its interdependent influential processes. Using a process-sociological perspective, we must pay particular attention to balances of power among individuals and groups. The struggle between the sport organizations in Israel is an example of such power balances that led to both intended and unintended consequences of human interactions within complex and dynamic relational networks.

Contrary to Wilson’s (1992) contention that Elias and Dunning’s analysis as figural sociologists (1986) of sport and leisure leaves out a number of important
considerations, particularly "the interplay of economic and political forces in the construction of modern leisure ideas and practices" (Wilson 1992:79), it has been demonstrated here that the development of Israeli basketball in its early years was interdependent with the broader political economy of Israel and with the close relationship between the developing sport organizations and the Israeli state.
Part III: The Americanization process

Chapter 6: The early stages in the Americanization of Israeli basketball

6.1 Introduction

One of the main arguments in this thesis is that sport in Israel, and basketball in particular, cannot be understood without taking into account the social and historical context, as well as the network of relationships in which individuals are involved. Elias (1986), in discussing the approach taken by himself and his collaborator Dunning, has suggested that:

Sociological enquiries into sport have the task of bringing to light aspects of sport which were not known before or which, if known, were known only vaguely. In such cases, the task is to give knowledge greater certainty. We were very conscious that knowledge about sport was knowledge about society (Elias, 1986:19).

And as Dunning (1971) puts it:

Sport is something people tend to take for granted. They may like it or dislike it but they do not usually question it or see it as posing problems, which require an explanation. In particular, they rarely ask questions concerning its development or its role in society as a whole. ...It [Sociology of sport] seeks to understand the part played by sports in society and to unravel the complex social forces which have helped to shape and which are currently leading to transformations in their character (Dunning, 1971:xv).

Correspondingly, in order to have a better understanding of Israeli basketball one must bear in mind the changing structure of Israeli society and the many processes and circumstances. Israel inherited some institutions and customs from the Ottomans and some from the British mandatory rule over Palestine. Zionists who strove to build the Yishuv under Ottoman and British rule also wielded influence. Immigration patterns have altered the social structure.
interdependent and dynamic processes involved in the shaping of particular sport. Israeli professional basketball will be used as the prism to identify the Americanization process occurring within Israeli society as a whole. Furthermore, Elias’ basic assumptions that human societies are structured and change over time will be build upon.

In the preface of their book, ‘Barbarians, Gentleman and Players’ – a sociological study of the development of rugby football in England, Dunning and Sheard (1979) used the term ‘social configuration’ to refer to the structures and patterns formed by interdependent human beings. Moreover, they stressed that they would be using terms ending in the suffix ‘-ization’ to refer to the processual aspect of these configurations and to emphasize that such configurations change over time (Dunning and Sheard, 1979:ix). Similarly, the use here of terms such as ‘professionalization’, ‘secularization’, ‘urbanization’, and ‘militarization’ is intended to emphasize the processual nature of the development of basketball in Israel. For that reason, the process of Americanization of Israeli basketball which forms the centerpiece of this thesis, must be understood within the network of such, and other, processes that are not isolated from one another but are, in fact, interdependent.

6.2 The battle for dominance

From its establishment, the Israeli basketball league (like most other sports in Israel) was characterized by power struggles for the control over the game. As demonstrated earlier, the battle was mainly between the Hapoel and Maccabi sport organizations. Yet, putting it more specifically, the struggle for dominance was, as far as basketball was concerned, between the two crown-jewels of the two sport organizations, Maccabi and Hapoel Tel Aviv.

radically at different times. From 1882 to 1948, Israel received many immigrants from Eastern Europe and Central Europe. Following independence, huge numbers of Middle Eastern, North African, and Asian Jews came to the new state and altered its dominant Ashkenazi cast. Another shaping force was the presence of non-Jews in the Jewish state—a growing Arab minority within the pre-1967 borders of Israel and an absolute majority in the territories held under military occupation since the June 1967 War. Finally, among the most important forces shaping contemporary Israeli society is religion.
Table 12 demonstrates the dominance of the Tel-Aviv teams in the Israeli basketball league in its first decade:

Figure 12: The final standing at the end of the basketball seasons (1955-1965)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Maccabi Tel-Aviv</th>
<th>Hapoel Tel-Aviv</th>
<th>Number of teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sinai Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
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</table>

Consequently, talented players from around the country joined either one of the two top teams. Joining the European cup tournaments at the beginning of the 1960s, both Hapoel and Maccabi needed to recruit adequate players who would be able, at best, to help them advance in the early rounds of the tournament, or at least perform respectably. However, the rivalry between the Hapoel organization and the Maccabi organization at the time prevented players moving from a Hapoel team to a Maccabi team and vice versa. Hence, top players were divided between the two sides and as a result Israeli teams did poorly in the European-cup tournaments and rarely won more than one game. Furthermore, joining the European-cup tournaments and the division of players in the league broadened the existing gap among the league teams in the early days of the league.
6.3 The first Americans

According to Karnon (1982), a journalist at that time (1960's) and Israel Basketball Association (IBA) spokesman today, the Israeli teams were not the only teams who did not prevail in the European cup tournaments. At the beginning of the 1960's the superiority of the teams from Eastern Europe, and specifically teams from what were then the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, caused a lack of meaningful competition. The general secretary of the FIBA, Dr. William Jones, was therefore constrained to gather FIBA's general assembly to discuss the problem. The solution found by the FIBA legislature was destined to change radically the face of European basketball.

FIBA's representatives allowed European teams to acquire players from outside the continent in order to make the game more competitive at European top-level. FIBA's decision was made after taking into consideration the changing face of European sport in general and basketball in particular. The significance of sport was growing generally, especially the importance of sporting competitions between nations involved one way or another in the 'Cold War'. Dunning (1986), for example, in his essay about the dynamics of modern sport, refers to "the growing achievement striving" and the "social significant of sport". He describes a trend occurring

... at all levels of participation but most conspicuously in top-level sport, towards growing competitiveness, seriousness of involvement and achievement-orientation. Expressed differently, the trend ... involves the gradual but seemingly inexorable erosion of 'amateur' attitudes, values and structures, and their correlative replacement by attitudes, values and structures that are 'professional' in one sense or another of that term. Viewed from yet another angle, it is a trend in which, in countries all over the world, sport is being transformed from a marginal, lowly valued institution into one that is central and much more highly valued, an institution which, for many people, seems to have religious or quasi-religious significance in the sense that it has become one of the central, if not the central, sources of identification, meaning and gratification in their lives (Dunning, 1986:205).
The first team to take advantage of the new dispensation was ‘Real’ Madrid of Spain. The Spanish team was the first to ‘import’ players from basketball’s homeland, the United States. 1964 was the first year when neither the Soviet nor the Czechoslovakian team won the European Cup. ‘Real’ Madrid beat CSKA Moscow to claim the European title for the first time. It was generally accepted that the Spanish could not have done so without the help of their American players. Other European teams followed the example of the Spanish club and recruited American players. The Milanese basketball club, ‘Zimental’, went one step further. When former NBA player Bill Bradley came from the United States to study at Oxford university in Britain, the Milanese club hired his services for their games around Europe and paid his travel expenses around Europe on top of his salary.

The Israeli teams, mainly Maccabi and Hapoel Tel Aviv, did not lag behind the other European basketball clubs. The seventh ‘Maccabiah Games’ that took place in Israel in 1965 hosted the top Jewish athletes from around the world. The American-Jewish basketball team was the target of Maccabi Tel Aviv administrators who tried to recruit an American-Jewish player to their squad. Tal Brody, a Jewish-American player, was persuaded to stay in Israel after the games and join the Maccabi Tel Aviv team. Brody explains that:

At the beginning of the 1960s I was ranked as one of the ten best players in the United States. I was well known in the Jewish community and when they organized a team for the Maccabiah games in Israel, I was invited to join. I was born and raised in a Jewish family and it was a great opportunity to visit a country I had only heard about. I was sure that Israel was a primitive country and transportation meant horses and camels. Therefore I was surprised to find a civilized country with a fair standard of living. When Maccabi Tel Aviv administrators talked to me about being a pioneer I accepted the challenge and stayed in Israel after the games (Brody, 1999 ITV).

Since most of this chapter, as well as extensive parts of this thesis, includes interviews (referenced as ITV) as well as investigation of literature and papers written originally in Hebrew, they have been translated for use in the text. Although not always verbatim, the attempt has been made to ensure that the translations accurately reflect the original intent of the Hebrew authors or sources.
At the same time, Hapoel Tel Aviv administrators asked Bill Wald, an American physical educator who came to teach in Israel, to join their team. Wald eventually joined Hapoel Tel Aviv and was the first ever American to play for the Israeli national team as a ‘newcomer’.

The 1966/67 season was the first in which American players participated regularly. Tal Brody of Maccabi proved to be the most dominant player in the league. Maccabi’s coach at the time, Joshua Rozin, had to change Maccabi’s game style in order to let Brody perform at peak efficiency. As Brody explains:

Joshua (Rozin, Y.G) had to change the pace of the game. Up until that time Maccabi’s game was based on their tall man, Cohen-Mintz and therefore was very slow. I introduced a whole new approach to the game. Maccabi’s game style changed from a slow game to a motion game based on ‘fast breaks’ (Brody, 1999:ITV).

Maccabi Tel Aviv did very well in that season, not only at the level of the local league, where Maccabi Tel Aviv won the championship, but at the European level as well. With the help of Tal Brody, Maccabi could compete, for the first time, as an equal with the top European teams. Maccabi Tel Aviv reached the final of the European cup winners cup and the game of basketball gathered pace and become very popular. Indeed, basketball became the most successful game in terms of international competition. Maccabi Tel Aviv’s success occurred in the same year as one of the turning points in Israel’s history – its victory in the Six Day War\textsuperscript{110}. Maccabi’s success in basketball added to Israel’s high and generally positive profile in Europe, and the team may have served as an unofficial ambassador of the country. This was important because Israel, as an emerging and peripheral nation at the time, had to not only protect its borders but also preserve its standing among the world nations. Success in the basketball international arena can very well help on the international arena as Elias (1986) elucidates:

\textsuperscript{110} See pp. 138-139
...In the course of the twentieth century, the competitive bodily exertions of people in the highly regulated form that we call 'sport' have come to serve as symbolic representations of a non-violent, non-military form of competition between states. ...It is indicative of the growing significance of achievements in sport as a status symbol of nations (Elias, 1986:23).

To keep up with the developing popularity of the game, more and more indoor basketball courts were built and basketball started to flourish. However, in 1967 Israel signalled her intention of doing more than just keeping up with the growing demand for opportunities to play and watch basketball by building one of the biggest sport stadia in Europe at that time, the 'Yad Eliahu' basketball stadium. As Wilson (1992) points out:

Besides pitting their athletes against athletes from other countries, nations can also bid for prestige by hosting sport events. Nations, especially those in the process of building an identity, are encouraged to divert national resources to large and highly visible projects, such as airports, dams, government buildings and the like. Sports stadia and complexes are often included on this list (Wilson, 1992:258).

The popularity of basketball grew in direct relation to the success of the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team in Europe. Thus, in the summer of 1967, when Tal Brody announced that he was leaving Israel and returning to the United States to fulfill his army duty, basketball administrators were afraid of the impact this might have on Israeli basketball. Even though Brody promised that he would be back, prominent individuals involved in basketball in Israel were frightened his absence might devastate Maccabi Tel Aviv, in particular, and basketball in Israel in general. After all, according to Klein, Tal Brody was much more than just a good basketball player:

Tal’s contribution to the game was above and beyond the basketball court. His attitude towards the game, his seriousness and his commitment inspired everyone who played with him. He introduced a whole new perception and we just followed him. You have to understand that basketball, for us at that time, was a fun game but not
more than that, a game. In just one year Tal changed that. Up until that time we only heard about the American perception of the game and Tal showed us that basketball is more than a game – it’s a way of life (Klein, 1998: ITV).

It did not take Maccabi Tel Aviv administrators long to respond to Brody’s absence. Later that year they returned to the United States in search of a replacement for the influential player. At the same time, Hapoel Tel Aviv administrators were faced with a similar problem, and promptly adopted the same solution, but while Maccabi Tel Aviv administrators came back from America with two Jewish-American players, Hapoel brought four.

Many people have suggested that these recruitment missions changed the face of Israeli basketball. For example, according to Goshen\textsuperscript{111}, the Israel Basketball Association secretary, ‘if one should put his finger on the beginning of the American massive influence on Israeli basketball, the 1968 season would probably be a good point to start looking...’.

Mark Torenstein, Larry Zolot, Allen Zuckerman and Ivan Linshisky were the four Jewish Americans that Hapoel Tel Aviv brought in order to attempt to challenge the dominance of Maccabi Tel Aviv. Linshisky invited his American friend Barry Leibovich to visit him in Israel. Apparently, Leibovich astonished Hapoel’s coach with his performance on the basketball court and was asked to join the team as well. Maccabi Tel Aviv signed Barry Eisenman and Bob Podhurst and the battle between the two Tel Aviv teams was expected to be the best show in town, according to the Yediot Aharonot paper (Yediot Aharonot, 22 Sept. 1968) The other league games could not equal the attractiveness of those in which the Americans played. According to Paz and Jacobson (1982), every basketball fan in Israel waited for the fourth round of the league, the derby game between Hapoel and Maccabi Tel Aviv. While the two teams were preparing for the big game, it was suggested that Maccabi Tel Aviv administrators tried to win the game outside the basketball court. Realizing that their team had no match for Leibovich, the Maccabi Tel Aviv chairman, Noah Kliger,

\textsuperscript{111} Personal communication with Naftali Goshen (1998).
appealed to FIBA and demanded that they disqualify Barry Leibovich from playing for Hapoel because of his past as a professional player in the United States. According to Paz and Jacobson (1982), Kliger’s argument was that ‘it wouldn’t be right for a professional player to take part in an amateur league’. FIBA’s general secretary, Dr. William Jones, communicated FIBA’s decision disqualifying Leibovich, via a telex that arrived eight hours before the opening of the derby game. It was another blow in the ongoing off-court power struggle between the two rival teams, and Maccabi Tel Aviv won that round. Yet on the basketball court itself it was Hapoel Tel Aviv that won. Hapoel did not just defeat Maccabi Tel Aviv in that derby game, it also won the championship later that year.

The Leibovich affair raised an issue that until that time had never really been discussed. According to FIBA rules, basketball players should be amateurs. Examining the Israel Basketball Association rule book, which was written when the IBA was established in 1962, proves without a doubt that the IBA followed the FIBA ruling on the matter. Chapter 5 clearly states:

1st. Sport teams will be accepted to the IBA only if their players are amateurs.

2nd. ‘Amateur’… is a sportsman that engages in sport only out of passion for the game without pay or remuneration of any kind except for payment for loss of working hours or days as will be decided by the IBA (IBA rule book, 1962, 12).

Notwithstanding this rule, it was clear that the notion of ‘amateur’ as scholars define it ‘..One who participates in sport because of love for the sport’ (Eitzen, 1988; see also Sewart, 1987) applied only partly to the case of Israeli basketball in the 1960s. While some teams at the beginning of the 1960s were amateur, others, particularly those who participated in the European cups (Maccabi and Hapoel Tel Aviv) could no longer be considered amateurs. As Eitzen explains:

Societal forces have transformed sport into something unrecognizable from the amateur ideal. Elite or top-level sport has become corporate sport. To call it ‘amateur’ is a fiction with potentially damaging consequences for athletes.
What Eitzen calls “societal forces” can, in the case of Israeli basketball, be seen as the influence of increasing numbers of American players in the Israeli game from the end of the 1960s. Furthermore, another question posed by Eitzen may also apply partly to Israeli society. Eitzen asks: ‘If sport is a microcosm of society, then is true amateurism possible in a capitalist society?’ The answer in the case of Israeli basketball is not simple. One may argue that the Israeli economic system at that time was not a “pure” capitalist system, at least not when compared to the American system, but it was in the process of becoming more capitalistic, as Ben-Porat (1998) notes:

...In order to comprehend these changes, we need to turn to the general context of Israeli society in the 1960s. ...Some important changes occurred in Israeli economics and politics during this decade. One important development was a state-led program of industrialisation, which caused some significant changes in the labor market, including a substantial increase in the number of engineers, technicians and managers. This also was accompanied by a growing imbalance of incomes among people in the labor force. Most importantly, capitalists began to be less subjected to state control (Ben-Porat, 1998:273).

However, in some parts of Israeli society, especially on kibbutzim and other rural settlements, the economic system was still very much a socialist one. Since teams from both rural and urban areas were participating in the same Israeli basketball league, one can understand the increasing gap that developed between the values of players representing different social figurations. In a report that was issued by members of the IBA presidency in 1970, committee members, referring to the urban teams, admitted that:

‘the rule book no longer faces up to the test of reality’ as far as ‘amateurism’ is concern. The IBA is no longer supervising the payments that are being given to athletes and the teams are paying their players whatever market conditions dictate.
On the other hand, the teams from the ‘working settlements’ (mostly the kibbutzim) were:

...acting according to the inter-kibbutz codes and not only did not pay their players but had to release their players from 4 hours of work on the day of a contest...! (IBA committee report, 1970).

This conflict almost led to the same process of disbanding teams and forming different leagues, amateur and professional, similar to what happened in the case of British rugby as described by Dunning and Sheard (1979), but eventually it did not. The influx of American players in the late 1960s and early 1970s forced the teams from the kibbutzim to join forces\textsuperscript{112} and sign players not only from outside the kibbutz but Americans as well. For the kibbutz administrators, being represented in top-level basketball was very important. Although the total population of kibbutzim was only 4 percent of the Israeli population, the number of teams participating in the various basketball leagues (including women) reached 40 percent.

\textsuperscript{112} Some of the teams from the kibbutzim had to unite in order to be able to pay the imported players
6.4 The American influx and Jewish nationality

The dominance of the American players on the Israeli teams (which consisted in the 1960s of 12 teams) put pressure on team managers to sign more American players if they hoped to carry on playing at the same level. Consequently, the number of Americans playing in the Israeli basketball league rose from 2 players in 1966/67 season, to 8 in the 1968/69 season, and 10 in 1972. In 1974 24(!) American players (40 percent of 'the starting fives') were playing basketball in Israel. The growing number of American players and their growing dominance in the league, constrained the IBA to call a meeting to discuss the ongoing process of ‘Americanization’ and its consequences. The report of the IBA committee in 1976 concludes with the following findings:

...If in the past, new Jewish Americans played basketball on a few teams and even on the National team, in the last five years we have been witnessing a phenomenon where American players are joining top basketball clubs and their primary target is to play basketball. These players – 25 to date – came after being drafted in the U.S by Israeli team representatives. They do not have other jobs and their major source of income is basketball. When it comes to their civic duties as new citizens, only two of them have been drafted into the army. In the past, we [the IBA] tried to restrict the participation of American players by legislation that would postpone their eligibility to play to one year from their immigration to Israel. However, we met with strong opposition, especially from the Jewish agency, which claimed that we might be violating these newcomers’ rights as far as ‘Law of return’ is concerned (IBA committee report, 1976).

The perceived problem with the American players was exacerbated when some team managers seemed ready to do almost anything to qualify their new players as new Jewish immigrants. In order to understand the issue adequately, one must examine some of the processes intertwined in the Americanization of Israeli basketball. One
Figure 13: "Fishing for Americans"
major issue is the question: ‘Who is a Jew?’ which has been of great relevance to the
development of Israel as a nation and also to the development of sport and basketball.

6.4.1 The problem of defining a “Jew”

The predominance of halakhah (the Jewish religious code) and religious courts in
adjudicating matters of personal status, and the privileged position of the Orthodox
minority in Israeli society, date back to arrangements worked out between the
Orthodox and Labor Zionists on the eve of statehood (Nyrop, 1988). In June 1947, the
executive committee of Agudat Israel113 received a letter from Ben-Gurion, then
chairman of the executive committee of the Jewish Agency, who was the predominant
political leader of the Yishuv. In his desire to ensure the support of all sectors of the
Yishuv in the struggle which he knew was soon to come, Ben-Gurion asked Agudat
Israel to join the coalition that would constitute the first government of the State of
Israel. In return for Agudat Israel's support, Ben-Gurion offered a set of guarantees
relating to traditional Judaism's place in the new society. These guarantees formalised
the customary arrangements that had developed in Ottoman times and continued
through the British Mandate; hence they came to be known as agreements for the
"preservation of the status quo" (Metz, 1988, see also Liebman, 1986).

6.4.2 The religious status quo

The core of the status quo agreements focused on the following areas: the Jewish
Sabbath, Saturday, would be the official day of rest for all Jews. Public transportation
would not operate nation-wide on Sabbath and religious holidays, although localities
would remain free to run local transportation systems; kashrut (proper manner of
eating certain foods) would be maintained in all public institutions; the existing
religious school system would remain separate from the secular one but would receive
funding from the state; and rabbinical courts applying halakhah would decide on
matters of personal status. Both Agudat Israel and the Zionist Orthodox party, Mizrahi

113 Agudat Israel (Society of Israel) is a clericalist political party of ultra-Orthodox Jews, founded in
Poland in 1912 and established in Palestine in the early 1920s. In 1949 it formed part of the United
Religious Front. In 1955 and 1959 it joined Poalei Agudat Israel to form the Torah Religious Front.
Originally anti-Zionist and messianic, in the 1980s this non-Zionist party, together with its Council of
Torah Sages, still favoured a theocracy and increased state financial support for its religious
institutions.
(later the National Religious Party), accepted the agreements and joined the first elected government of Israel in 1949.

According to Abramov (1976), Ben-Gurion's concern that a more-or-less united Israel confront its enemies was assuaged by the status quo arrangement. But this arrangement—particularly the educational and judicial aspects—also set the stage for conflict between Orthodox and secular Jewish Israelis. This conflict quickly became apparent in the wake of the first flood of Jewish immigration to the new state and a direct result was one of the first laws passed by the new Knesset (Israel parliament), the Law of Return.

6.4.3 The Law of Return

The Law of Return\textsuperscript{114}, passed in 1950, guaranteed all Jews the right to immigrate to Israel. Along with the Nationality Law (1952), which granted Israeli citizenship to people (including non-Jews) who lived in the country prior to 1948, the Law of Return also extended to Jewish immigrants (unless they specifically deferred citizenship or renounced it) immediate Israeli citizenship. Non-Jewish immigrants could acquire citizenship through a slower process of naturalization (Nyrop, 1988).

The problem of what constituted Jewish "nationality" (\textit{leom} in Hebrew) was essentially new. Before the modern era, one was a Jew (in the eyes of Jews and Gentiles alike) by religious criteria; to renounce the religion meant renouncing one's membership in the community. In modern nation-states membership (citizenship) and religion were formally and conceptually independent: one could be a British, French, or American citizen of the "Jewish persuasion." But the modern State of Israel presented special opportunities for Jews—the right to both settle in the country and to claim automatic Israeli citizenship. In Ben-Gurion's words, Israeli citizenship was therefore "\textit{inherent in being a Jew.}" With these opportunities came problems, both formal and conceptual, about the definition of, and about a person's right to claim to be, "a Jew."

\textsuperscript{114} See appendix iv for the complete version of the law
A halakhic definition is available: a Jew is one born of a Jewish mother or who converts according to halakah. The traditional criteria thus consist of biology (descent) and religion. In a sense, biology dominates religion because, according to halakah, someone remains a Jew if born of a Jewish mother, even if he or she converts to another religion, although such a person is referred to as "one who has destroyed himself."

Another problem is that of defining "nationality". Such an issue is of concern in a modern state and particularly to its Minister of Interior. Moreover, in a modern state interest is taken in the nationality question as part of the determination of citizenship, with all its associated rights and duties. The Orthodox, however, are less concerned with nationality as a guide to citizenship and more concerned with nationality as it determines "proper" marriage partners, with the attendant legitimacy of children. In Orthodox Judaism an illegitimate child (mamzer; in plural, mamzerim) is severely limited in the range of permissible marriage partners; the children of mamzerim are ("even to the tenth generation," according to Deuteronomy 23:2) themselves illegitimate.

Furthermore, a woman who has not been divorced according to halakah will have mamzerim as the children of subsequent marriages. Rabbis would never knowingly sanctify the marriage of improper or forbidden partners, nor would such improper unions hold up in rabbinical courts. For the Orthodox, therefore, to know, as assuredly as one can, the status of a potential marriage partner as a "full and proper" Jew is crucial. Any doubts, even in principle, would have the effect of dividing the Jewish community into endogamous groups, that is, groups that would marry only within the confines of assurance against bastardy (mamzerut). This threat of sundering the "whole Jewish community" into mutually non-intermarrying segments has been used by the Orthodox to great effect (Nyrop, 1978).

6.4.4 Between nationality and religion

Against this background one can understand much of the "Who is a Jew?" question and the vehemence with which positions have been taken. In 1958 the Bureau of the Registration of Inhabitants, under the Minister of Interior (from a left-of-center party),
was directed to register individuals and issue identity cards that had separate categories under nationality and religion, according to the "good faith" declaration of the individual.

Thus a non-Jewish mother could declare herself or her children to be Jewish and would be so registered. The rabbinate and the members of the religious political parties were incensed, especially after they were told that population registry and identity cards were civil matters and need never affect marriages and divorces, which, under the status quo arrangements, would continue to fall under the jurisdiction of rabbinical courts. Orthodox Jews reasoned that if they had to deal with questions of Jewish nationality in a modern society, they could not allow nationality to be separated from religion in the Jewish state. The National Religious Party precipitated a cabinet crisis, and Prime Minister Ben-Gurion responded by forming a committee of Jewish "sages" (including non-Orthodox Diaspora scholars) to study the question (Nyrop, 1988; Metz, 1988).

The response of the scholars – even the non-Orthodox ones – was that it was premature to define who was a Jew in such a way that religion and nationality were separate. If not born of a Jewish mother, then a person must undergo a conversion to the Jewish faith to become a Jew. On the basis of this agreement, as well as Ben-Gurion’s own political considerations, a new Minister of Interior from the National Religious Party, which rejoined the government, was appointed. In 1960 the new minister redirected the Bureau of the Registration of Inhabitants to define a Jew by administrative fiat as "a person born of a Jewish mother who does not belong to another religion, or one who has converted in accordance with religious law." This definition, advanced by an Orthodox minister, is not strictly halakhic, since an apostate is still a Jew according to halakhah but not according to this definition. Such was the criterion used to deny automatic Israeli citizenship to Brother Daniel, a Carmelite monk who was born Oswald Rufeisen, a Jew, but who converted to Christianity and then tried to claim citizenship under the Law of Return. The Supreme Court in 1962 upheld the ministry's definition, since according to the "common-sense" definition of who is a Jew of the "average" Israeli, "a Christian cannot be a Jew." (Brother Daniel later acquired Israeli citizenship through naturalization.)
The "Who is a Jew?" question still agitates the Knesset and the Supreme Court, and it has brought Orthodox and secular Israelis into sharp conflict. Sometimes, as in the Brother Daniel case, the issue has arisen as individuals tested the directives in terms of their own predicament. In 1968 Benjamin Shalit, an officer in the Israeli navy who was married to a non-Jewish naturalized Israeli citizen, sought to register his children as "Jewish" under the nationality category, but to leave the category under religion blank. This would have the effect of separating religion from nationality but not violate the "common sense" notion that one cannot be an adherent of another religion (as was Brother Daniel) and still be Jewish. Shalit was claiming no religion for his children. The citizenship of the children was never in question: they were Israelis. What was at stake was their nationality (Metz, 1988).

The court's first response was to ask the government to drop the nationality category from registration lists; the government declined, ostensibly for security reasons. Finally, after the 1969 national elections, the court ruled by a five-to-four majority in 1970 that Shalit could register his children as "Jews" by nationality with no religion, invalidating the directives of 1960. Orthodox Jews rose up in defiance; Prime Minister Golda Meir backed down, and in 1970, after fierce debate, the Knesset passed an amendment to the Law of Return that revalidated and legalised the 1960 administrative directive; thus: a Jew is one "born to a Jewish mother, or who has become converted to Judaism, and who is not a member of another religion." What the Orthodox did not win, at this time, was the proviso that the conversion to Judaism must have been carried out in conformance with halakhah. Thus the status of conversions carried out by Reform or Conservative rabbis in the Diaspora remained in question in the eyes of the religious minority in Israel.

Another way in which the "Who is a Jew?" issue arose involved the status of entire communities. Among these were the Karaites (a schismatic Jewish sect of the eighth century that rejected the legitimacy of rabbinical law), the Bene Yisrael (Jews from near Bombay, India, who immigrated in large numbers in the 1950s), and from the 1970s onward, Jews from Ethiopia – the Falashas. The controversy arose over the eligibility of these Jews, according to halakhic criteria, for intermarriage with other Jews – not over whether they were Jews. The question was whether, because of their isolation (Bene Israel or Falashas) or schismatic deviance (the Karaites), their
ignorance or improper observance of halakhic rules had not rendered them essentially communities of mamzerim, fit only to marry each other or (according to halakhah) Jewish proselytes.

These community-level disputes have had different outcomes: the Orthodox Jewish authorities have not relented on the Karaites, who were doctrinal opponents of rabbinic law, despite pleas to bring them fully into the fold. The Karaites thus remained, according to halakhah, a separate community for purposes of marriage. Young Karaites sometimes concealed their affiliation to make their way in the larger Jewish Israeli society, where they were in all ways indistinguishable. In the mid-1960s, the Orthodox backed down on the Bene Yisrael, changing the rabbinate's special caution against them in the registration of marriages between Jewish ethnic groups to a general caution. The Ethiopian Falashas, among the newest additions to the Israeli Jewish mix, still faced some uncertainty in the 1980s, again, not so much in terms of their Jewishness, which was accepted, but with respect to marriage to other Jews (Metz, 1988).

Halakhah provides many other stipulations and constraints on proper marriages and divorces. Among others these include the biblical levirate, whereby a childless widow must first obtain the ritual release of her brother-in-law before she may remarry; laws restricting the marriage of Cohens, the priestly caste of Israelites, who today have few corporate functions but whose putative individual members are recognised; and laws governing the status of agunot, married women "abandoned" by their husbands whose remarriage is disallowed until the man files a proper bill of divorce or until his death can be halakhically established. This last law has made it difficult for women married to soldiers listed as "missing in action" to remarry within halakhah, because the requisite two witnesses to their husband’s death (or other admissible evidence) are not always forthcoming. People involved in such hardship cases can get married outside Israel, but then the status of their children, in the eyes of halakhah, is tainted. Although such cases arouse the sympathy of Orthodox Jews, the principle followed is that halakhah, being divine and eternal, cannot be modified.

It is in regard to the principles of the divinity and immutability of halakhah that Orthodoxy opposes Conservative and Reform Judaism. Conservative Judaism affirms
the divinity of halakhah, but questions its immutability. Reform Judaism denies the authority of both principles. Because of these views and their control over the religious establishment, Orthodox Jews have been able to keep rabbis of either persuasion from establishing full legitimacy in Israel. But because the majority of Jews in the Western democracies, if they are affiliated at all, are affiliated with Reform or Conservative congregations, and because of the high intermarriage rates, as of 1988 Orthodox Jews have been unable publicly to invalidate Reform or Conservative conversions to Judaism under the Law of Return by amending the law again to stipulate specific conformance with halakhah as the sole mode of conversion. Yet many new immigrants (and some long-time residents) whose status is in doubt have undergone Orthodox conversions – often added on to their previous Reform or Conservative ones – once resident in Israel (Metz, 1988. See also Nyrop, 1978; Sachar, 1986).

The problem of defining a “Jew” is still one of the most controversial issues in Israel today (2000). The growing importance of sport in general and the increasing popularity of basketball in particular, led to a process in which many groups of people, among them basketball managers, tried to take advantage of this complex situation.

According to the rules set up by the IBA, a ‘foreigner’ (who is not Jewish and therefore cannot claim citizenship) had to wait 365 days before he could register in the Israeli league. With such conflicts and disputes among the different religious groups one can understand why different teams attempted to take advantage of the situation and tried in every possible way to qualify Americans as ‘Jewish’ in order to play in the Israeli basketball league as Israeli citizens.
The growing competitiveness in the European-cup tournaments forced the IBA in the late 1970s to allow ‘one foreign player for each team, that would not be allowed to play in the local league’. The new rule allowed Maccabi and Hapoel Tel Aviv (who were in fact the only teams competing at the European level) to import foreign players able to play only in the European tournaments. According to Klein, the circumstances led to a situation in which ‘Maccabi Tel Aviv scrimmages were more interesting than the league games’.

6.5 Israeli basketball’s ‘golden age’

What has become known as Israeli basketball’s ‘golden age’ coincided with one of the most difficult eras in the history of the state. Certainly, many of the processes unfolding in the mid and late 1970s, the third decade of Israeli statehood, were very much interdependent with those experienced by Israeli basketball. The processes – the struggle for existence, maneuverings as part of the ‘Cold War’ between the United States and the Soviet Union, political upheavals resulting from post-war trauma, and class struggles – constituted the setting for what became Israel’s most glorious era in European basketball.

According to Ralph Klein (1998:1TV), Maccabi Tel Aviv and Israeli national team coach in the mid 1970s, the golden age of Israeli basketball in general but of Maccabi Tel Aviv in particular started in Zadar, a former Yugoslavian town. Zadar hosted the 1972 European youth basketball championship and the Israeli team, which consisted almost entirely of Maccabi Tel Aviv players, did very well. In fact they did so well (gaining 2nd place) that an American basketball scout offered Miki Berkowitz, Israel’s and Maccabi Tel Aviv’s most talented player, a basketball scholarship at one of the most distinguished of American colleges (for basketball), the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The offer had to be postponed because Berkowitz, like every other 18 year old Israeli (no matter how good an athlete), had to be drafted into the Israel Defence Force (IDF). Berkowitz had to wait until he had finished his army duty at

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116 As explained before, Israel’s ground, air, and naval forces, known as the Israel Defence Force (IDF), fall under the command of a single general staff. Conscription is obligatory for Jewish men (3 years) and women (2 years) over the age of 18, although exemptions may be made on religious grounds (as part of the ‘status quo’ agreement mentioned earlier). The Druze, members of a small Islamic sect
the age of 21. During Berkowitz’s service, the Yom Kippur war broke out. The second war within 6 years involved not only Israel and its surrounding countries, but the two-superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. The two nations played a major role in the war as both supplied equipment and ammunition to the opposing sides, and, on a few occasions went above and beyond this, as we shall see.

The following part of this chapter will not just elaborate on a most difficult period in Israel’s history but when connected with the overall thesis, will shed light on the growing bond between Israel and the United States. In addition, this section will serve as a background to the important role Israel played in the ‘cold-war’ as the United States’ ally. In order to understand the developing relationship between European basketball and Israeli basketball one must fully comprehend this background.

On Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, October 6, 1973, Syria and Egypt launched a surprise attack against Israel. In the south, waves of Egyptian infantrymen crossed the Suez Canal and overran the defense of the much-touted Bar-Lev Line. In the north, Syrian forces outnumbering the Israeli defenders (1,100 Syrian tanks against 157 Israeli tanks) reached the outer perimeter of the Golan Heights overlooking the Hula Basin. In the first few days of the war, Israeli counterattacks failed; Israel suffered hundreds of casualties, and lost nearly 150 planes. Finally, on October 10 the tide of the war turned; the Syrians were driven out of all territories conquered at the beginning of the war and on the following day Israeli forces advanced into Syria proper, about twenty kilometers from the outskirts of Damascus. The Soviet Union responded by making massive airlifts to Damascus and Cairo, which were matched by equally large United States airlifts to Israel. In the south, an Egyptian offensive into Sinai was repelled, and Israeli forces led by General Ariel Sharon crossed the canal to surround the Egyptian Third Army. At the urgent request of the Soviet Union, United States Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger went to Moscow to negotiate a cease-fire arrangement. This arrangement found expression in UN Security Council Resolution 338\textsuperscript{117}, which called for a cease-fire to be in place

\textsuperscript{117} On 22 October, 1973 the Security Council resolution (#338) was: 1. Calls upon all parties presently fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions after the moment of the adoption of this

living in Israel’s mountains, also serve in the IDF. Arab-Israelis, with very few exceptions, do not serve.
within twelve hours, for the implementation of Resolution 242, and for "negotiations between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East." Following Kissinger's return to Washington, the Soviets announced that Israel had broken the terms of the cease-fire and was threatening to destroy the besieged Egyptian Third Army. Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev informed US president Nixon that if the siege was not lifted the Soviet Union would take unilateral steps. The United States pressured Israel to hold their fire, and the final cease-fire took effect on October 25. On 5 of March 1974, Israeli forces withdrew from the canal and the Egyptian army was granted control over the canal. Syria and Israel signed a disengagement agreement on 31 May 1974, and the UN Disengagement and Observer Force (UNDOF) was established as a peacekeeping force in the Golan.

The October 1973 war had a devastating effect on Israel. More than 6,000 troops were killed or wounded in eighteen days of fighting. The loss of equipment and the decline in production and exports as a consequence of mobilization came to nearly 7 billion US dollars, the equivalent of Israel's gross national product for an entire year. Most important, the image of an invincible Israel that had prevailed since the June 1967 War was destroyed. Whereas the June 1967 War had given Israel in general and the declining Labor Party in particular a badly needed morale booster, the events of October 1973 shook the self-confidence of the country's populace and cast a shadow over the competence of the Labor elite.

Israel's vulnerability during the war led to another important development of great importance to this thesis: its increasing dependence on United States military, economic, and diplomatic aid. The war set off a spiralling regional arms race in which Israel was hard pressed to match the Arab states, which were being enriched by rocketing world oil prices. The vastly improved Arab arsenals forced Israel to spend increasingly on defense, straining its already strapped economy. The emergence of Arab oil as a political weapon further isolated Israel in the world community. The
Arab oil boycott that accompanied the war and the subsequent quadrupling of world oil prices dramatized the West’s dependence on Arab oil production. Evidence of this dependence was reflected, for example, in the denial of permission during the fighting for United States transport planes carrying weapons to Israel to land anywhere in Europe except Portugal (MFA, 1996).

This, then, is the background against which one has to view the increasing dependence of the IBA on American basketball players and the lessening influence of European culture and sporting forms.

Following Berkowitz’s release from the army in 1975, he joined the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and became the first ever Israeli to play college basketball in the United States. The career of Miki Berkowitz may be used as just one example of this deepening relationship. A year later, at the beginning of 1976/7 season, Maccabi Tel Aviv’s team consisted of five American players (four of them were in the starting five) who were eligible to play for Maccabi Tel Aviv on different grounds. Tal Brody (who had returned to Israel in 1971), Bob Griffin and Lou Silver were Jewish-Americans who claimed Israeli citizenship under the law of return; Jim Boatright, a Christian-American who took advantage of the opportunity given by Israeli law and converted to Judaism in 1975, thus became an Israeli citizen, and Aulci Perry, a ‘foreigner’ who played only in the European cup. The fifth, Miki Berkowitz came back from the United States and joined the team of his youth.

Berkovitz returned from the United States to find a different country. The Labor Party, in power since the establishment of the state, was hampered by internal dissension, persistent allegations of corruption, ambiguities and contradictions in its political platform, and by the disaffection of Oriental Jews (MFA, 1998). Labor’s perceived failure to prepare the country for the war further alienated a large segment of the electorate. The post-1973 Labor Party’s estrangement from the Israeli public intensified throughout 1976 as the party was hit with a barrage of corruption charges that struck at the highest echelons. Prime-Minister Rabin’s Minister of Housing, Avraham Ofer, who was under investigation for alleged abuses during his time as Director General of the Histadrut Housing Authority, committed suicide in January 1977. At the same time, the governor of the Bank of Israel, Aharon Yadlin, who had
been nominated by Rabin, was sentenced to jail for taking bribes and evading taxes, and the director general of the Ministry of Housing was apprehended for various extortion schemes. Finally, Rabin himself was caught lying about money illegally kept in a bank account in the United States. Israel's growing defense budget (about 35 to 40 percent of gross national product), along with rising world oil prices, also created chaos in the Israeli economy. Inflation was running at 40 to 50 percent annually, wages were falling, and citizen accumulation of so-called black money (unreported income) was rampant. The worsening economic situation led to greater income disparities between the Ashkenazim, who dominated the higher echelons of government, the military, and business, and the majority Oriental population, which was primarily employed in low paying blue-collar jobs (MFA, 1998 see also Aronoff, 1979).

Nevertheless, at the same time, basketball in Israel started to flourish. The composition of Maccabi Tel Aviv's team in the mid-1970s, containing as it did 5 Americans, had an immediate impact on Israeli basketball and for the team that went on to become Israeli league champion for seven consecutive years (1970-1977). In the 1976/7 season, Maccabi Tel Aviv reached the final tournament of the European Championship Cup for champions' teams. Steve Kaplan, a Jewish-American player who came to Israel at the beginning of the 1970s explains how the composition of Maccabi Tel Aviv's team affected basketball in Israel at the time:

The first impact that the Americans had on basketball in Israel was in the work ethic. When I came to Israel teams would practice three times a week and play one game a week. No one would put in extra practice time, and working out with weights was almost unheard of. The Americans, for the most part, came over with work habits, which they had learned in college, and this filtered through the system. The best example of this would be Miki Berkowitz, who was a star from his teen years, but only

\[118\] In "Soldier of Peace: The Life of Yitzhak Rabin," author Dan Kurzman (1994) claims that Rabin's problems with his bank account apparently stemmed from his lack of concern with money. His wife, Leah, was in charge of family funds and paying the bills. He knew of the account but thought she had closed it when his tour as ambassador to the United States was up. When he was ambassador, Rabin would accept payment for speeches, a highly unusual practice Kurzman says, but only to have money to help his wife keep up with her wealthy Washington-area friends.
when he went to play at UNLV and saw what was going on, i.e. investment of time and effort, and self discipline, he returned a different player in terms of self improvement. Gradually, other Israeli players, on an individual basis, also began copying Miki, in the mid '70s. Up until this time the only Americans playing in the leagues were Jewish Americans, and their impact was as mentioned above (Kaplan, 1998:ITV).

Maccabi Tel Aviv reached the final tournament of the European Champions Cup, as did the champions from Italy, Spain, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Every team had to face the other champions in two games: one in its own country ('home') and the other in the opponent's country ('away'). Maccabi Tel Aviv did very well in the early stages of the tournament and in January 1977 beat the Italian team, 'Sinudine' Bologna 103-77. Due to the political situation at the time, both the Czechoslovakian team, 'Zabriobraska' Berno and the Soviet team, 'TSKA' Moscow, refused to face Maccabi Tel Aviv in Israel or to grant visas to the Israeli players and host Maccabi Tel Aviv in their country. Maccabi Tel Aviv chairman, Shimon Mizrachi, demanded that FIBA award Maccabi automatic victories on technical grounds. According to Mizrachi, Maccabi Tel Aviv was willing to host both teams and play them wherever they wished. FIBA ruled that Maccabi Tel Aviv would be granted two technical victories for the games it should have hosted: one over the Soviets and the other over the Czechoslovakians, however, the games that the two 'Eastern' teams had to host would be played on neutral ground. The two games were scheduled for the 15th and 17th of February, 1977. On 15 February 1977 Maccabi Tel Aviv faced 'Zabriobzka' Berno in Wilbord, a small Belgian town, and beat the Czechoslovakian team 97:67 for the first time. Alexander Gomelsky, the Soviet coach came to watch the game, as he was preparing his tactics for the next game in two days time.

Two days later, on 17 February 1977, Maccabi Tel Aviv faced 'TSKA' Moscow. The game was much more than another basketball game. The Soviet team was in fact a Soviet army team and in the days of the 'cold war' the team represented the entire Soviet bloc. As Riordan explains:
The world communist sport system has always been dominated by clubs of the security forces and the army. Most sports heroes, therefore were officially soldiers or police officers, guardians of public order and role models for a disciplined, obedient and patriotic citizenry (Riordan, 1995:254).

Furthermore, the connection between sports and the army had a special role in the life of the state in the case of the former Soviet Union as Riordan further explains:

Sport, or rather physical culture has evidently had particular social and political significance in the development of communist societies. This is all the more so because the place of sport has been more central in their social systems and controlled and directed by the state (Riordan, 1995:234).

However, this game also had a particular significance for Israelis. The media build-up for the game versus the Soviets reached its peak on the day of the game. The headlines in the daily papers were all about the “battle” between the “East and West” (Yediot Aharonot) and more specifically talked about a fight between “David and Goliath” (Maariv). After all, it was not every day that one of the smallest countries in the world (Israel) represented the West against the USSR, a multinational federation of over 290 million people containing more than a hundred nationalities. The fact that the Israeli team contained American players added to the charged atmosphere. It was well known that the Soviets, the leaders of the Eastern bloc, used sport to glorify the communist system over the capitalist system, as well as to foster national integration, as Riordan clarified:

What better than sport to help the regimes in such societies (communist - Y.G) promote the building of strong nation states? After all, sport, with its broad relevance to education, health, culture and politics and its capacity to mobilise people (predispose them towards change), may uniquely serve the purpose of nation-building and help foster national integration. It extends to and unites wider sections of the population than probably any other social activity. It is easily understood and enjoyed, cutting across
social, economic, educational, ethnic, religious and language barriers. It permits some emotional release (reasonably) safely, it can be relatively cheap and it is easily adapted to support education, health and social welfare objectives (Riordan, 1995:234).

It is reported (Maariv, 17 February, 1997) that Maccabi Tel Aviv coach, Ralph Klein, told his players prior to the game, that ‘we are fighting for our country as well as for thousands of Jews who can not immigrate to Israel because of Soviet policy. Let’s beat the Soviet bear’. According to Lou Silver, an American-born Jew and Maccabi Tel Aviv player, Klein did not have to say any more. ‘We were all (the Americans on Maccabi Tel Aviv) raised in the United States,’ he said ‘where fighting the ‘Reds’ (communists) was something you didn’t have to explain at all’ (Maariv, 20 Feb. 1977). 650 people crowded into a sport stadium, officially designed to contain only 500, in Virton, another small Belgian town, to watch the historic match between Maccabi Tel Aviv and TSKA Moscow, Reds versus Blue and White - East versus West. According to both Maariv and Yediot papers, most of Israel’s population, even those who knew nothing about basketball, watched the game on the only television channel at the time. Maccabi Tel Aviv’s starting five was comprised of four players who were born in the United States but apparently had listened to Klein’s speech (‘do it for the country’) carefully. Maccabi Tel Aviv beat the soviet team 91-79 in a game that became recognized as a key event in the short history of sport in Israel. According to ‘Maariv’ correspondent Eyal Na’am, the victory was anything but just another victory. He wrote in a ‘Maariv’ special edition of 1997, 20 years later, that:

Up until 17 February 1977, Israeli sport in general and basketball in particular was still innocent. Then it became a winner. Every child wanted to be Berkovitz, every mother wanted to raise one. Tel Aviv’s mayor prepared a celebration the likes of which no one had ever seen before. Five bands were specially invited to celebrate with the crowd who gathered in the city center. The last minutes of the game were repeatedly broadcast in schools around the state on the next day. The pool in the city center filled with people splashing in water and champagne. Maccabi Tel Aviv stayed in London for a few more days
after the game. The assistant coach, Arie Davidesko, went to the Soviet hotel and asked the Soviet players to sign the ball used in the game as a souvenir. The team knew that the whole country was in ecstasy. Prime Minister Rabin, and the leader of the opposition, Begin, sent their greetings and the players’ wives, who had stayed in Israel, read the newspaper headlines to their partners that said ‘Maccabi Tel Aviv did it!’ (Haaretz, 18 February 1977), ‘it is really a dream’ (Maariv, 18 February 1977) and ‘the night when all of Israel danced in front of the unbelievable vision’ (Yediot Aharonot, 18 February 1977). El Al pilots fought among themselves for the right to fly Maccabi Tel Aviv back to Israel and the senior pilots won the honour. Other pilots worked as flight attendants just to be on Maccabi Tel Aviv plane returning from London. At Ben-Gurion airport workers worked double shifts to join 15,000 people who waited for Maccabi Tel Aviv’s players. 500 police officers could not stop the celebrating crowd that kidnapped the players to celebrate in the center of Tel Aviv, where 100,000 people waited with signs welcoming the ‘hunters of the Russian bear’ (Na’aman, 1997).

Maccabi Tel Aviv’s victory over the Soviets guaranteed them a place in the finals against the Italian champions, Mobilgirgi Varese. For the first time, an Israeli team reached the final of a championship in Europe, not just in basketball but in any sport. The 7th April 1977 proved to be one of the most memorable dates in Israel’s history. Not just because of Maccabi Tel Aviv’s victory over the Italians and their becoming European champions but also because of the fact that on the very same day, two hours after Maccabi Tel Aviv’s victory, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin resigned, ending 29 years of Labor rule in Israel.

On 8 April 1977, the ‘Haaretz’ editorial discussed Maccabi Tel Aviv victory in these words:

The achievement of the Israeli champion played a major role not just on the sport stage but in the political arena as well. Millions who saw
Maccabi Tel Aviv’s victory on television all over Europe could not deny what we wanted to prove: we belong to the elite group in sport as well.

The ‘Haaretz’ editorial was a follow-up of Tal Brody’s words,119 after receiving the European cup from FIBA’s Secretary General, Bora Stankovich when he declared: “We are on the map. Not just in sport but in everything!”

Jarvie (1995), among others, supports this latter view by claiming that:

The idea that sport itself transcends and integrates local, regional, national and European communities is an argument that has appeared in many disguises and forms. The notion that sport has some inherent property that rises above and displaces whatever major or minor social divisions there may be has often been perceived as one of the major rationales behind staging global sporting productions such as the Olympic Games, and World Rugby, Football and Athletic Championships. In the late 1970s Nigeria’s Minister of Sport, Sylvanus Williams, suggested that sporting achievements not only help to integrate the people but are also a measure of the nation’s greatness. Similar sentiments have been echoed by a number of liberal historians who have argued that international sport and the success of the international athletes have been among the most important symbols of integration for many emerging African nations. The victorious athletes not only tended to legitimise the nation within the international arena but also incarnated a positive image of the nation. The underlying assumption behind this argument has been that cultural heroes/heroines, along with political leaders such as Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, helped to bridge the gap between national and global recognition. African citizens, argued Wallerstein, could feel an affection for the athlete and the nation, a feeling which might not have existed in the first instance. Needless to say, such a process depends upon the

119 Tal Brody’s statement was an immediate response to a journalist’s inquiry regarding his feelings on holding the European cup. His statement became a symbol in Israel of becoming a member of the world’s community.
athletes not only accepting the respective politics of the nation, but also working in tandem with the respective party structures (Jarvie: 1995: 292).

Pursuing the same line as Jarvie's, it is argued here that it is not just that Macabbi Tel Aviv's victory in the European Champions Cup incarnated the positive image of the nation but, and perhaps more important, that it provided the legitimacy that Israel, especially as an emerging nation, gained within the international arena.

Furthermore, the victory at basketball in 1977 had another important repercussion, at least as far as national identity was concerned. The importance of sporting achievement takes on an added resonance in states like Israel, which embody large numbers of immigrants from many different parts of the world. In a like manner, Wilson (1995) suggests that:

The function of sport as a national identifier is especially important in countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States that for long periods of time have been the destination point for large numbers of immigrants from many different points of origin, and in countries like Canada or many African countries which, through their pattern of settlement, or the way in which national boundaries were drawn by colonial powers, embrace regions or peoples with quite different cultures. As the "first new nation", the United States faced acute problems of assimilating waves of immigrants into a single "melting pot" (Wilson, 1995: 211).

This argument about Israel's national identity is especially important and takes on greater validity in light of an article that appeared in another paper, 'Maariv', linking Maccabi Tel Aviv's victory to the resignation of Prime Minister Rabin. 'Maariv' drew attention to the fact that 'thousands of people gathered in the city center and after cheering for Maccabi Tel Aviv, started shouting: Begin, Begin...'.

In order to understand the linkage between the two events one must familiarize oneself with Israel's socio-ethnic fabric, which has had such an effect upon the political process since the mid-1960's.
6.6 Ethnic diversity

According to Smooha (1978), the division of Jewish Israelis into ethnic groups is primarily a legacy of the cultural diversity and far-flung nature of the Jewish Diaspora: it is said that Jews have come to modern Israel from 103 countries and speak more than 70 different languages. As in the United States, the immigrants of yesterday have become the ethnic groups of today. But Jewish ethnicity troubles many Israelis, and since the late 1950s it has sometimes been viewed as Israel's major social problem.

There are two principal sources of concern. First, in a rather utopian way, Zionism was supposed to bring about the dissolution of the Diaspora and the reconstitution of world Jewry into a single, unified Jewish people. The persistence of cultural diversity, Jewish ethnicity in a Jewish state, was simply inconceivable to those who took this position. Second, the socialist Labor Zionists assumed that the Jewish society of Israel would be egalitarian and free of the class divisions that plagued Europe. Instead, along with the growing, industrialising economy came the usual divisions of class, stratification, and socioeconomic inequality characteristic of other capitalist societies. These class divisions seemed to coincide with ethnic divisions: certain kinds of ethnic groups were overrepresented in the lowest classes. For utopian thinkers, the persistence of Jewish ethnic groups was troubling enough; their stratification into a class structure was unthinkable.

The two dominant Jewish ethnic groups in Israel are the Ashkenazim (the term comes from the old Hebrew word for Germany), which now includes Jews from northern and eastern Europe (and, later, their descendants from America); and Sephardim (the term comes from the old Hebrew word for Spain), which now includes Jews of Mediterranean, Balkan, Aegean, and Middle Eastern lands. There are differences in ritual and liturgy between these two groups, but both sides have always recognised the validity and authority of the other's rabbinical courts and rulings (Smooha, 1978). Nor were scholars or notables from either branch totally isolated from the other throughout the centuries. In some countries, Italy for example, communities representing both groups lived together. Originally, Ashkenazi meant one who spoke Yiddish, a dialect
of German, in everyday life, and Sephardi meant one who spoke Ladino, a dialect of Castilian Spanish. Although this narrow understanding of Sephardim is still retained at times, in Israeli colloquial usage, Sephardim includes Jews who speak (or whose parents or grandparents spoke) dialects of Arabic, Berber, or Persian as well. In this extended sense of Sephardim, they are now also referred to as the Edot Mizrah, "the communities of the East," or in English as "Oriental Jews." Whereas the Ashkenazi-Sephardi division is a very old one, the Ashkenazi-Oriental division is new to Israel. The term "Oriental" refers specifically to Israelis of African or Asian origin. This geographical distinction has developed over the years into a euphemism for talking about the poor, underprivileged, or educationally disadvantaged (those "in need of fostering," in the Hebrew phrase). Some social scientists as well as some Sephardi activists have seen a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy in this classification. Many Sephardim will not refer to themselves as Orientals (Metz, 1988).

The heterogenous nature of the Oriental segment of Israeli Jewry is sometimes lost when someone speaks of "the" Oriental community, or collects census data (as does the Central Bureau of Statistics) on the basis of the "continent of origin" ("Europe-America versus Africa-Asia") of its citizens and residents. The category "Oriental" includes Jews from Moroccan and Yemeni backgrounds, to take only two examples that span the range of the Arabic-speaking world. These two communities see themselves, and are seen by other Israelis, particularly Ashkenazim, very differently. Yemenis enjoy a positive self-image, and they are likewise viewed positively by other Israelis; the Moroccans' self-image has been more ambivalent, and they are often viewed by others as instigators of violence and crime. (Although this image has become something of a stereotype, Moroccan Jews did instigate acts of violence against the Labor Party in the 1981 elections (see Peretz and Smooha, 1981), and statistically their communities have tended to have a high crime rate). In a similar way, Iraqi, Iranian, and Kurdish Jewish ethnic groups all differ from one another in matters of self-perception and perception by other Israelis. They differ also according to such indices as income (for example, Iraqis are more concentrated in the middle class, Kurds in the lower classes), orientation to tradition (Yemenis are probably the most religious of all non-Ashkenazi groups; Iranians are relatively secular), and so on. These differences are likely to continue, moreover, as marriage statistics in the 1980s indicate a higher rate of endogamy among members of Oriental ethnic groups, as
compared to the Ashkenazim. As an ethnic group in the 1980s, Ashkenazim have become much more culturally homogeneous than the Orientals. Before 1882 Sephardim or Oriental Jews were the majority, about 60 percent, of the Jewish population in Palestine. Although Oriental Jews did immigrate between this period and that of the British Mandate, more than 15,000 came from Yemen and Aden Protectorate between 1919 and 1948, they were a minority, about 10 percent of all immigrants. Thus, by 1948 Ashkenazim accounted for 77 percent of the population of the new State of Israel. But this was to change quickly in the period of mass migration that followed the establishment of the state. Between 1948 and 1951 Oriental immigrants accounted for 49 percent of all immigrants; in the Jewish calendar year 1952-53 they comprised 70 percent, and from 1954 to 1957 (following the Sinai Campaign and turbulence in North Africa), African-born Jews, the majority from Morocco, constituted 63 percent of all immigrants. By 1958 almost the entire Jewish populations of Yemen, Aden, Libya, and Iraq had immigrated (Metz, 1988).

The new state was barely equipped, and had few of the resources needed, to handle this influx. The immigrants were housed in tented "transition camps" (maabarot) and then directed, often without their approval, to some co-operative settlement (immigrants' moshav) or to one of the new development towns. In both cases, the authorities wanted to disperse the Jewish population from the coast and place the immigrants in economically productive (especially agricultural or light industrial) settings. The results were village or town settlements that were peripherally located, ethnically homogeneous or nearly homogeneous, and the poorest settlements in the nation.

The lack of resources, however, was not the only obstacle to the successful integration of the Oriental immigrants. Although their intentions were probably honourable, in practice the Ashkenazim viewed their Oriental brethren as primitive, if not quite savage, representatives of "stone age Judaism". Paternalism and arrogance went hand in hand; the socialist Labor Zionists, in particular, had little use for the Orientals' reverence for the traditional Jewish criteria of accomplishment and rectitude: learnedness and religious piety. In the transition camps and the new settlements, the old elite of the Oriental communities lost their status and with it, often, their self-respect. The wealthy among them had been obliged to leave most of their wealth
behind; besides, more often than not, they had been merchants or engaged in some "bourgeois" profession held in low esteem by the Labor Zionists. The rabbis and learned men among them fared no better with the secular Zionists but they were often patronised as well by representatives of the Ashkenazi religious parties, who respected their piety but evinced little respect for the scholarly accomplishments of rabbinical authorities who did not discourse in Yiddish. The religious and secular political parties knew, however, that the immigrants represented votes, and so, despite their patronising attitudes, at times they courted them for support. In the early years, the leftist predecessor parties to the Labor Party even tried adding religious education to their transition camp schools as a way of enrolling Orientals (Smooha, 1978).

According to Cohen (1972), the transition camps were largely eliminated within a decade; a few became development towns. But the stresses and strains of immigrant absorption had taken their toll, and in July 1959 rioting broke out in Wadi Salib, a slum area in Haifa inhabited mostly by Moroccan Jews. The rioting spread to Haifa's commercial area, damaging stores and automobiles. It was the first violence of its kind in Israel, and it led to disturbances in other towns as the summer progressed. Israelis were now acutely aware of the ethnic problem, and soon afterward many began to speak of Israel Shniya, the "Second Israel," in discussing the socioeconomic gaps that separated the two segments of society. In the early 1970s, violent protests again erupted, as second-generation Orientals (mostly Moroccans), organised as the "Black Panthers" (named to great effect after the American Black protest group of the same period) confronted the Ashkenazi "establishment," demanding equality of opportunity in housing, education, and employment. Prime Minister Golda Meir infuriated them even more by calling them "not nice boys" (Cohen, 1972).

This remark underscored the perception of many Orientals that when they protested against Israel's establishment they were largely protesting against the Labor Party and its leaders. Many Orientals came to see the Labor Party as being unresponsive to their needs, and many also blamed Labor for the indignities of the transition camps. These were legacies that contributed to Labor's fall from power in 1977; but, in fact, Oriental voters were turning away from Labor and toward Herut, Menachem Begin's right wing party, as early as the 1965 national elections. The close correlation between ethnicity and socio-economic class in Israel remains the main axis along which the
Ashkenazi-Oriental cleavage is drawn. The "hardening" of ethnicity into social class—what some analysts (see for example Peretz and Smooha, 1981) have referred to as the formation of Israeli "ethno-classes", represents, with the Orthodox-secular division, the most serious cleavage that divides the Jewish society of Israel from within. Those Sephardim, however, who do rise to the middle class are unlikely to think of themselves as Orientals. They identify more with Ashkenazi patterns, in family size, age at termination of child-bearing, nature of leisure activities, and the like. Upwardly mobile Orientals loosen their ties with their own ethnic groups, and for them the term "Oriental" is reserved for the poor or underprivileged. This phenomenon has been seen by some as a sort of co-optation of upwardly mobile Orientals by Ashkenazi Israelis. Oriental upward mobility has strengthened the correlation for those who do not rise in class between Oriental ethnicity and low class standing. This correlation has led some analysts to speak of Oriental cultural patterns as essentially the culture of a particular stratum of society, the "Israeli working class."

To some extent, too, Oriental culture patterns mitigate the integrationist effect of Ashkenazi-Oriental "intermarriage," estimated at nearly 30 percent for women of Oriental heritage who have nine or more years of schooling (Metz, 1988)

The social manifestations of this rift, however, have been more evident in the political arena than in the economic. Since the mid-1970s, Orientals have comprised a numerical majority of the Jewish population. Thus far, the beneficiaries of this majority have been political parties, often religious ones and typically right-of-center, that have ranged themselves in opposition to Labor. The height of Ashkenazi-Oriental ethnic tensions occurred in the national elections of the 1980s, especially 1981 in which anti-Labor sentiment was expressed, sometimes with violence, as anti-Ashkenazi sentiment. That Orientals supported in those elections the Likud Bloc led by Menachem Begin, himself an Ashkenazi from Poland, whose ultra-nationalist oratory served to inflame the violence, was a paradox that troubled few in Israel at the time (Peretz and Smooha, 1981).

The Orientals' electoral rejection of Labor and embracing of Likud in 1977 can thus be seen as the political part of a larger attempt to try to lessen the socioeconomic gaps that have separated these two broad segments of Israel's Jewry. The gaps are reflected in the close correlation between Israel's class structure and its ethnic divisions along
several critical dimensions, among them educational achievement, occupational structure, housing, and income (Metz, 1988).

As indicated earlier, the Maccabi organization is considered the least partisan sport organization (unlike Hapoel that is identified with the Labor Party) that opens its doors to everyone regardless of political affiliation. However, according to Yadlin (1974), over the years it became sympathetic to a small middle-class party, the Liberals, which was absorbed within the right-wing party, the Likud. After it won the European cup and after the Likud party came to power, Maccabi Tel Aviv adopted the practice of having Moshe Dayan, a former Israeli general and a minister in Begin’s government, shake hands with the players prior to every game in the European cup games hosted in Tel Aviv.

One can therefore bond the process that Israel society underwent from the mid-1970s to the success of Maccabi Tel Aviv. Furthermore, the fall of the Hapoel teams, especially Hapoel Tel Aviv, can be linked to the sinking fortunes of their political benefactors¹²⁰, the Labor party, which lost its electoral seats and financial power within the government.

At the same time, basketball in the late 1970s became much more than just a game. It became a source of pride and a symbol of the ability of Israeli sports people to compete at levels previously unknown. The fact that the victories (of the Israeli teams) were mostly achieved with the help of players not born as Israelis did not seem to bother Israeli sport fans.

On the national level, basketball in the late 1970s seemed to follow the success of Maccabi Tel Aviv in the European arena. In 1977, three months after Maccabi Tel Aviv won the European Champions Cup, the Israeli national team equalled its greatest achievement in the European arena when it ranked fifth, just like in Moscow 1958, in the European national championship in Leis, Belgium. One must remember that the Israeli national team consisted of Israeli citizens and according to FIBA rules, new

¹²⁰ Hapoel organization, especially Hapoel Tel Aviv, suffered considerably. Tied to the Labor movement, it was prone to the same damage as its patron party. Even more so, the policy of the federation to fund and support varied fields of sport and to establish as many clubs as possible did not survive under the new conditions of the political map (Nevo, 1997).
immigrants including naturalized players had to wait three years to be eligible to play on the national team.

Two years later, in June 1979, the Israeli national team was preparing for the European national championship in Italy. Prior to the games Israel coach, Ralph Klein, remembers saying: “Fifth place (in 1977 Y.G) is quite an accomplishment. I can not see us ranking the same this time. Yet, I trust my players” (ITV, 1998).

The European championship in Italy however, proved to be the peak of Israeli team-sport performance. In the qualifying round Israel’s basketball team beat the Polish team and lost to France. In the next game Israel faced basketball world champions at the time, Yugoslavia. Under the circumstances, beating the Yugoslavians would have elevated the Israeli team to competing in the top 1-4 group, while losing would have sent the Israeli team to play in the 9-12 ranking (that is, the less successful teams). According to Klein (1998, ITV), no basketball person in the championship expected the Israeli team to even come close to the world champions from Yugoslavia. Paz, an Israeli journalist (1998, ITV) covering the European championship for “Hadashot Hasport”, remembered preparing an article discussing the chances of the Israeli team in the 9-12 group. Paz was not the only journalist who didn’t believe that the Israeli team could win the game: 3 Italian newspapers, “Stadio” from Bologna, “Coriera De La Sport” from Rome and “TotoSport” from Torino, went even further by not waiting for the end of the game (that was running late that night) and therefore published false results. The day after the match the three Italian papers declared a Yugoslavian win over Israel (for which they were criticised worldwide) and the advance of the Italian team to the Final round which was evidently not true. The “Gazette De La Sport” remained the only Italian paper to report the big sensation: Israel had beaten Yugoslavia on the way to the final, which would be against the Soviet Union. Even the eventual defeat, 98-76, in the final did not detract from the celebrations in Israel. Winning the silver medal was considered by many in Israel to be the greatest-ever achievement in Israel’s sporting history. According to Klein’s prophecy, quoted in all Israeli papers the day after the championship ended, “Even in 30 years an Israeli team will never repeat such a success”.
Conclusion

The achievement in 1979 was, in many ways, the end of an era. In retrospect, this "glorious" era, as far as basketball was concerned, was interlocked with the process of Americanization of Israeli basketball as part of a broader Americanization process of Israeli culture, together with other processes that, as this chapter has illustrated, had both intended and unintended consequences. Yet, these processes were significant, not just to the development of basketball in Israel but even more so, to the process of recognition of Israel as a state among the nations of the world.

Thus, it can be seen that, in keeping with Jarvie's (1995) views, sport and nationalism are closely linked in the Israeli context. As an emerging nation, Israel uses sport, and basketball in particular, as an instrument of national unity and integration. The success of Maccabi Tel Aviv over the years helped to reinforce national consciousness and cultural nationalism. Moreover, it helped the new state, via success on the basketball court, to gain international recognition and at the same time contributed to the quest for (cultural) identity, as Jarvie puts it, on the local level. The role of American basketball players in this process cannot be overestimated. In addition, as this chapter indicates, sport in Israel has, perhaps more than anything else, contributed to the political struggles closely connected to nationalist politics and popular nationalist struggles among sport organizations, mainly Hapoel and Maccabi.

7.1 Introduction:

In his essay “The myths of America in Israel, or the Promised Land in the Promised Land”, Bennett Kravitz (1997) claims that it is possible to make certain assumptions about one’s geographical and cultural whereabouts just by hearing people’s names and the names of the shops on the street:

If we were to overhear the following, among people named Tom, Dean, Shirley, Shaun or Ben, we might reasonably make certain assumptions about our geographical and cultural locations. "Walk straight ahead until you reach the neighbourhood which has a TV soap opera named after it. On your right you'll see a McDonald's. Turn left at the McDonald's until you reach Burger King. There you can take the number 13 bus into the city. Get off at the corner where you see 'Dunkin' Donuts,' just a half a block up the street from 'Ben and Jerry's.' That's where you'll find the mall you are looking for." The city where all this takes place, we may imagine quite reasonably, is any one of thousands in America, but in fact, this imaginary exchange took place in the Ramat Aviv neighbourhood of Tel-Aviv, Israel (Kravitz, 1997:56).

According to Kravitz, during the first 40 years of Israeli statehood, most people chose biblical names for their children. Since the 1980s, however, the Americanization of children's names has become a popular trend.

While children's names are arguably a symptom of a larger trend, the intent of this chapter is to examine the process of Americanization of Israel society from the late 1970's-early 1980s by focusing on Israeli basketball.

Taking a figurational perspective, the chapter will trace a network of interdependencies among various social groups that create complex figurations. Going beyond the search for a single cause for the process, the chapter will discuss
not only the power relations between various groups but will be based on the analysis of processes that gathered momentum interdependent with the Americanization process. In order to fully comprehend the process of Americanization, processes such as 'professionalization', 'secularization', 'urbanization', and 'militarization' that have been discussed earlier, should be borne in mind. Another process that should be noted is United States-Israel relations. During these two decades, the special relationship between the Israel and the United States governments deepened dramatically\(^{121}\), based on what were regarded as the shared values of freedom and democracy.

The focus of the chapter will be on "key" players (such as the Israeli and foreign basketball players, administrators, managers, fans, media personnel and sponsors), together with "distinct" players (such as politicians, mayors) that at first glance might not seem to be directly linked to sport in general or, specifically, to basketball.

7.2 The second phase: the Americanization of Israeli basketball (1978-1996)

In the course of the first influx of American players to the Israeli basketball league, which lasted from 1967 to 1977, most of the newcomers were Jewish-American. The American players were 'hunted' by Israeli managers across the United States and the primary reason for their immigrating to Israel (at least according to their managers) was that they were Zionists. During the second phase, which started immediately after Maccabi Tel Aviv won the European Cup in 1977, the characteristics of the players, as well as their reasons for coming to Israel, started to change.

The success of Maccabi Tel Aviv in the European arena, along with growing rivalry in the Israel basketball league, especially between the Hapoel and Maccabi teams, led

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\(^{121}\) The United States government served as a mediator when Israel's government signed the Camp David Peace Accords with Egypt in 1979, laying the foundation for all future peace agreements between Israel and Arab countries. Israel stood side by side with the United States against Soviet expansionist efforts in the Middle East, and the two countries developed a joint effort to combat international terrorism. In 1983, Israel and the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding for strategic co-operation, and in 1988, Israel became a major non-NATO ally of the United States. The two countries are involved in joint research and development efforts on high-technology projects. A generous program of American economic and financial aid eases Israel's defence burden and has allowed Israel to invest in its economic and social infrastructure, as well as to fulfil one of its prime missions - that of absorbing Jewish immigrants. Additional co-operation between Israel and the United States took the form of a Free Trade Agreement (1985) and the establishment of the U.S.-Israel Science and Technology Commission (1993) (Israel MFA, 1998).
to what most basketball analysts and journalists at the time described as ‘worrisome phenomena’ (Rosenblum 1978). Along with the growing number of American-born players coming to Israel, voices were heard that questioned not only the rising number of Americans but more acutely, the legality of the process. Rumors regarding the Jewishness of some of the players, together with well documented stories about “quickie” conversions to Judaism performed in small communities in the United States, led to what Rosenblum (1978) among others called “the conspiracy of silence in Israel”.

...It seems that some team managers in the national league looked for different and unorthodox (my emphasis Y.G) methods of strengthening their team. When the first wave came to Israel, it was comprised of ‘real Jews’ who excelled in basketball, some of whom regarded coming to Israel as a Zionist mission. In contrast, some of the Americans playing today come to make money and go back to the United States after completing their job (Rosenblum, 1978:23).

While describing the American players as mercenaries, Rosenblum's distinction between players who came for Zionist reasons and those who came primarily to play basketball emphasizes the ongoing process of professionalization of basketball in Israel. The growing numbers of Americans playing basketball in Israel increased the number of players who made basketball their full-time occupation.

Growing salaries paid to American players raised an issue that started to worry managers of all basketball teams in the country. While the managers, especially the financial personnel, were mostly concerned about finding sources to pay the foreign players, the professional staff (coaches and trainers) faced a situation where the Americans were being paid five-to-six times more than local players. Gershon Dekel, coach of Hapoel Tel-Aviv at the beginning of the 1980s, explains that the growing disparities sometimes led to uncomfortable situations going far beyond financial considerations:

122 In Hebrew it is called the agreed-upon lie.
...You can not really treat all players alike in this kind of team. Even if it is hard to admit, you realize after a period of time that you treat them differently. It is not just that they are better players with different standards. ...In a way, they are not expendable, as most players are. If a local player behaved inappropriately, I would have punished him without blinking. However, if an American player acted the same way I was in serious trouble. Even if I wanted to act according to my standards, I knew that the team was very much dependent on the player and therefore I had to think twice before acting hastily. It is definitely not healthy for the team... you can almost talk of two classes of players on your team, after all, they got paid much more than all the local players (Dekel, 1998: ITV).

But it was not only the local Israeli players who were considered inferior to the Americans. Dekel continues and talks about himself:

...As a coach you knew how much the American player was getting and it was always more, sometimes twice as much as what any other coach, including me, got in the league. You are afraid of making hasty decisions because in the back of your mind you know that it is more cost effective to fire you than the player... (Dekel: 1998: ITV).

Thus, money was a big issue in this new era of professional basketball, and not just so far as the Americans were concerned. The relatively small amounts of money paid to local players ("pocket money" as Dekel puts it) by team managers, prior to the era of the Americans, was no longer enough. Israeli players demanded salaries that would bring their status up to that of the American players. As Dekel puts it, throughout the ranks you could feel the bitterness of some top Israeli players who felt that they had been discriminated against.
However, the financial problem with the American players was much more complicated than the discrepancy in salaries. Another cause that can serve as an example of how Israeli basketball is influenced by a network of interdependencies concerns an alleged bureaucratic conflict that arose between teams competing in both Europe and the Israeli league, and the IBA. While FIBA allowed one foreign player to play on each team participating in one of the European cup competitions, the IBA did not allow any foreigners at all. It should be kept in mind that although the IBA is a member of FIBA, each of FIBA's 202 members could decide on certain issues as it saw fit and the inclusion of foreign players was such an issue. Since half of the Israeli league's 12 teams were participating in three different European cup competitions (Champion's Cup, Cup-holders Cup and Koratz Cup), all had signed on American players to help them to compete in the European arena. However, since these players could not participate in the Israeli league, the team managers contended that there was no economic justification for contracting with American players that were only able to play in Europe especially if the team lost in the early rounds. Under intensifying pressure from the teams, the IBA's professional committee had to decide whether these American players would be allowed to play in the Israeli league as well as in Europe. Such a decision was not at all simple. Any such decision had to take into account the vested interests of several power groups as well as the power struggles that arose at the time between these groups. The groups were the sport centers: Hapoel and Maccabi; the teams' chairmen; the Israeli players; the American players; the Israeli national team staff; the Israeli public; the media and FIBA.

According to Shlomo Luzki (1999:ITV), a member of the IBA professional committee at the time and today the manager of Israel's national team, even within the groups there were some conflicts of interests. For instance, both within the Hapoel and Maccabi centers, not everyone saw things eye to eye. While the formal decision in both centers was to support the inclusion of one foreign player, some of the 'smaller' teams that did not participate in any European cup felt that the inclusion of Americans, and giving in to the impending 'decree', would devastate their team. One should bear
in mind that the teams were committed by the centers' decisions and had to act in accordance with them because (among other things) of the funding system that channelled funds to the centers first and then to the teams. However, the voices of policy makers from bigger and more established teams such as Hapoel Tel-Aviv and Hapoel Ramat-Gan were much more influential than those of Hapoel Afula, for instance, and the Hapoel center decided to support the inclusion of Americans. In the Maccabi center, the same arguments were raised by the small teams that did not compete in Europe. However, the conversion to Judaism of Maccabi Tel Aviv’s two top American players, Aulsey Perry and Jim Boatright, who until then had played only in Europe, gave the team an advantage in case the decision was to include another American player. At the same time, Maccabi Tel Aviv managers had to defend themselves from criticism from the media and from the general public regarding the growing percentage of foreigners in the team. Moreover, religious groups were concerned that Judaism was being sold cheap and articles and cartoons (such as one showing three rabbis climbing on top of one another to bless and convert a black American player) started to appear in local papers.

The professional committee had a few more factors to take into consideration, such as the potential damage to the status of Israeli players when American players replaced them. At the same time the committee had to consider the teams competing in Europe and the reputation of Israeli basketball as a whole. Continuing not to allow American players to play in the league would impinge upon the American players’ ability to perform at their best since they could only play a few games a season.

Figurationalists conceive of organizations as networks of differentially interdependent human beings who are also involved in broader networks of interdependency. According to this view, “organizations are, to varying degrees, seen by insiders and outsiders as constituting entities. This formulation in no way pre-empts the question of the extent to which the insiders are united and/or divided and the nature of relationships with various outsider groups. These of course, are empirical questions”

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123 For a much more comprehensive explanation regarding the centers-affiliation see chapters five and six.
124 As can be seen at figure 14.
Figure 14: “From Now on your name is Son of Abraham”
Therefore, in order to understand how the decision was made at the professional committee level, one must be familiar with the composition of the IBA organization. The IBA is comprised of 33 members who represent the teams in the top national league. The Hapoel, Maccabi, Beitar and Elizur centers are represented proportionally to the number of their team in the highest division. Traditionally, both Beitar and Elizur, with only one team (out of a dozen) in the league, joined the Maccabi center to serve as a balancing bloc versus the Hapoel center, which was the center with the greatest representation.

Hence, decisions reached by the professional committee reflect power struggles between the teams and individuals involved and do not reflect a simple process. In fact, it took the committee a long time to decide on a matter that redefined the sport's boundaries and became an important social issue with serious potential consequences. It was only during the next season, the 1979/80 season, that the professional committee decided "after hearing all sides and considering the possible outcomes" as one member put it, that for the first time, non-Israeli players would be allowed to take part in the Israeli league. (IBA committee report, 1979)

In fact, the committee decided that not only would one foreign player be allowed to participate on each team playing in European competition but, more significantly, each team would be able to include on its roster one additional player in the process of becoming a naturalized Israeli. Following its decision, the IBA declared that the status of the Israeli players "would be maintained as the leading players in the league". However, the argument throughout this thesis will be that by deciding in favour of the inclusion of one foreign player the professional committee reached a turning point where Israeli basketball 'lost its innocence' and took an important step in an ongoing process of Americanization.

Thus, the decision made by the professional committee favoured the interests of the teams competing in Europe since it helped them to cope better with the growing demands in the European arena. Although at first glance it might seem that the IBA

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125 This figurational position stresses that all members of an organization are not necessarily (in fact are highly unlikely to be) agreed about its goals. According to this view, there will be internal power struggles and conflicts.
was only toeing the line with the rest of the FIBA members, the argument here is that it was an important phase in the process of universalization or, as was discussed earlier (see page 41), of globalization.

Nevertheless, the decision reached by the IBA in 1979 wasn’t enough for the teams that competed in Europe. Managers of these teams, through their representatives in the IBA, continued to demand that their foreign players be allowed to play in the local league. As pressure mounted, it took the IBA exactly one season to approve the teams’ demand. Consequently, the 1980/81 season opened with four different types of player status: an Israeli player; a Jewish player immigrating to Israel and undergoing naturalization processes; a non-Jewish naturalized player and a foreigner. By 1981, every team could include one foreign and one naturalized player in addition to their Israeli squad (which could accommodate Israeli players who had completed the naturalization process and had thereby changed their status to Israeli).

The immediate result of the decision was the importing of another dozen foreign players to join the American players already in Israel. However, this process can not be adequately comprehended without understanding other processes that Israel went through at the beginning of the 1980s.

Another sequence of events providing background for the Americanization process was the ongoing military skirmishes along Israel’s Northern border. In March 1978, after a series of clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon, Israeli forces crossed into Lebanon. After the passage of Security Council Resolution 425, calling for Israeli withdrawal and the creation of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peace-keeping force, Israel withdrew its troops. In July 1981, after further fighting between Israel and the Palestinians in Lebanon, American President Reagan's special envoy, Philip Habib, helped secure a cease-fire between the parties. However, in June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to fight the forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The war in Lebanon was the fifth war Israel was involved in since its establishment in 1948. In August 1982, the PLO withdrew its forces from Lebanon. With U.S. assistance, Israel and Lebanon reached an accord in May 1983 that set the stage for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. The instruments of ratification were never exchanged, however, and in March 1984, under pressure
from Syria, Lebanon cancelled the agreement. In June 1985, Israel withdrew most of its troops from Lebanon, leaving a small residual Israeli force and an Israeli-supported militia in southern Lebanon in a "security zone," which Israel considers a necessary buffer against attacks on its northern territory (Metz, 1998). The years of fighting on Israel's northern border demanded an increasing number of Israel soldiers to protect their homeland. As explained in previous chapters, due to their military service many local basketball players aged 18-21 could not practice basketball at this crucial stage in their sporting careers. Furthermore, many other Israeli players were called up for reserve duty during these years in order to relieve the pressure on other units serving on Israel's northern border.

Other processes also intertwined with the process of Americanization and affected Israeli basketball directly and indirectly. Economically, for example, the shares of almost all of the banks on the stock market collapsed, resulting in tremendous financial losses throughout the country. The grave financial state of the local authorities also came up for debate. Towards the end of the term of the tenth Knesset (Israeli parliament), in 1980, the rate of inflation reached three figures and the "dollarization plan" of Minister of Finance Yoram Aridor was proposed. The dollarization plan recommended fixing the Israeli currency rate to the American Dollar based to a great extent on the American economy. The plan indicates not only how fragile the economic situation was, but also how Israeli policy makers regarded the alliance with the US. The argument of those who favored the dollarization plan can serve to illustrate public belief at the time regarding Israel's economy but more importantly it shows the sovereignty (at least as far as the economy was concerned) of the Israel state. Their argument was that since most transactions in real estate and other major commodities since the late 1970s had been made in dollars, the only thing the Israeli market needed was a stamp of approval to stop speculators in the currency markets. Opponents of the plan said that 'we might just as well become the 51st state at the same time...(!)' The dollarization plan was another element in the Americanization of Israeli society. This was in addition to the wave of American commodities beginning to inundate Israeli stores. An increasing proportion of the annual American aid to Israel was being given in the form of American products. In fact, at the beginning of the 1980s, American products sold at lower prices than similar Israeli products. The phenomenon was so worrisome that the Ministry of
Trade launched a massive campaign explaining the importance of buying 'blue and white' (the colors of the Israeli flag) products for both Israel’s economy and Israel's industry.

The economic crisis did not fail to make an impact on basketball in Israel. Under what was to be prove the false contention that adding more American players would attract more spectators, team managers assembled rosters based on these expectations. However, since teams had to pay American players in American dollars, most of them could not balance their budgets, in great part because the crowds simply did not come to watch their games. Even the few teams that attracted more spectators had to convert their income from Israeli shekels to American dollars to pay their players and with rampant inflation there just was not enough money.

Several elements combined to cause the economic crisis in basketball. Together with the overall crisis Israel’s economy was facing, some basketball fans had difficulty identifying with the unknown heroes dominating their beloved teams. American players came one season and left the next. Other fans just could not generate interest in a league where most of the scores were foregone conclusions. The hegemony of Maccabi Tel Aviv in the league created a situation in which all the other teams were left fighting for second place.

7.3 The ascendency of Maccabi Tel Aviv

Maccabi Tel-Aviv was the first club to be established and the most successful basketball club in Israel if not in Europe. The Maccabi Tel-Aviv Sports Club was established in 1906, but basketball activity started in 1932, on an open court near the soccer field in the Shapira neighbourhood of Tel-Aviv. Some time later, the baskets were transferred to the court on Maccabi Street in Tel-Aviv, near King George street, which remained the team's home court until the seventies, when it moved to Israel's first built-to-order national basketball arena in Israel: Yad Eliyahu.

Maccabi became Israel's first champion when the national league started in 1954. Since then, it has won the championship 38 times, including a run of 23 consecutive titles (1999). Maccabi Tel-Aviv was also the first team to win the State Cup in 1956.
Overall, it has won the Cup 28 times. A glance at the list of Maccabi’s achievements will show that the team has scored a "double" - championship and Cup in the same season - 24 times so far (1999) – a record unmatched by any other club in Europe, or in any other place in the world for that matter.

Maccabi Tel-Aviv was also the first Israeli team to represent Israel in the European Champions' Cup. In autumn 1958, it played in Bucharest against CCA Bucharest, and lost 65:84. Overall, Maccabi Tel Aviv has taken part in 427 games in the various European Cups, and boasts 257 wins against 170 losses. Maccabi Tel Aviv has participated in eight European finals to date (1999), and has won the Champions' Cup twice. As mentioned earlier, in 1967 Maccabi took part in the European Cup-Winners' Cup final for the first time, facing Ignis Varese. This was a double final (home and away). In Italy, Varese won 77-67, and at Yad-Eliyahu, Maccabi won 'only' 68-67 thus, by winning more than they lost, the Italians won the Cup.

Ten years later, on April 7th, 1977, these two teams met again (Varese was now under the sponsorship of Mobilgirgi) for the European Champions' Cup final, at the Pioneer Stadium in Belgrade. Maccabi won the game 78:77 and won the European Champions Cup for the first time. Three year later, in 1980, Maccabi was beaten 89-85 in the Champions' Cup final in Berlin by Real Madrid.

The 1980/81 season was the finest Maccabi has ever known: Maccabi Tel Aviv started the season by winning the Intercontinental Cup at Sarajevo, where they defeated Bosna Sarajevo from Yugoslavia, Francana Sao-Paulo from Brazil and Kansas State University from the USA, while losing to Real Madrid of Spain. The team went on to win the Israeli double, and on March 26, at the Rennice stadium of Strasbourg, France, it won its second European Cup, beating Sinudyne Bologna of Italy 80-79.

This same team, with minor changes, was beaten in the 1982 final in Köln, Germany by Squibb Cantu of Italy, 86-80. After a respite of 5 years, Maccabi returned to the

126 Maccabi Tel Aviv was Israel basketball champion in the following years: 1954, 55, 57, 58, 59, 62, 63, 64, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98 and won the Israeli cup in: 1956, 58, 59, 61, 63, 64, 65, 66, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, 91, 94, 98
final on April 2nd in Lausanne, Switzerland, where it lost 69-71 to Tracer Milano of Italy. In 1988 in Ghent, Belgium, the first European ‘Final Four’ took place. In the semi-final, Maccabi beat Partizan Belgrade of Yugoslavia 87-82, and in the final it lost to Tracer Milano of Italy, 84-90.

In 1989, in Munich, Maccabi was victorious over Aris Salonika of Greece, in the semi-final, 99-86, and lost in the final to Yugoplastika Split of Yugoslavia 69-75. Despite the Gulf War, Maccabi made it to the 1991 Final Four in Paris, France. After losing 101-69 to Barcelona of Spain in the semi-final, the team came in third after defeating Scavolini Pesaro of Italy, 83-81.

Moreover, Maccabi Tel-Aviv players have always formed the core of Israel's National Team. The chairman of the Maccabi Elite Tel-Aviv Basketball Club since 1969 has been Shimon Mizrachi, an advocate who has devoted his life to the team. The most senior member of the Maccabi Tel Aviv management is Shmuel Machrovski ('Shamluk'), who has been Maccabi team manager since 1960. Since 1970 Maccabi has enjoyed the sponsorship of Elite, the number one food manufacturer in Israel (1997).

From a perusal of the list of Maccabi Tel Aviv's achievements one can appreciate why many basketball experts, commentators and fans in Israel believe that there is no genuine competition in Israeli basketball. According to Aviv Lavy (1999,ITV), a journalist and basketball analyst, many reasons explain Maccabi Tel Aviv's dominance of the Israeli basketball scene for so many years. The primary one according to Lavy, is financial. Maccabi Tel Aviv was the first club in Israel to become commercialized. By imitating successful American models, Maccabi Tel Aviv executives, mainly chairman Shimon Mizrahi, grasped the importance of sponsorship. In the years when many Israeli basketball teams could not afford to pay their players, Maccabi Tel Aviv signed an agreement with the number one food manufacture in Israel – “Elite”. The Elite deal provided Maccabi Tel Aviv with both long-term financial security and the bedrock on which its hegemony was built.

127 The European League Final Four first took place in 1988, at Ghent (Belgium). The Final Four System substituted the old Final Single Game System, which had been used since the beginning of the competition, in 1958.
money from the deal was first used to ensure Maccabi Tel Aviv's domination of the Israeli league by providing the resources to sign top Israeli players, in addition to the Americans mentioned above. No other Israeli basketball club could match Maccabi Tel Aviv's financial offers to the local talents, a fact that affected and still affects the Israeli basketball league.

Hanan Keren, an ex-Maccabi Tel Aviv player and by all accounts one of the biggest talents ever to play in Israel, admits that he transferred to Maccabi Tel Aviv from Hapoel Ramat-Gan in his prime mainly because Ramat Gan could not offer even half of what Maccabi Tel Aviv was willing to pay. Keren told me that:

Personally and professionally, moving to Maccabi Tel Aviv was as bad for me as for the whole league. In retrospect, the main reason why Maccabi Tel Aviv signed me was because they thought I was a threat while playing for Ramat-Gan. They had the best players, even in my position on the basketball court, but still they insisted that I join them (Keren, 1998, ITV).

Keren was the first, but not the last, player Maccabi Tel Aviv signed in order to try to safeguard its hegemony of the Israeli league. By winning the Israel championship year after year, Maccabi Tel Aviv ensured its appearance in the European arena. According to Lavy (1999 ITV), most of Maccabi Tel Aviv's income derived either directly or indirectly from its appearances on the European circuit. Winning the Israeli championship was the 'bread and butter', but undoubtedly playing in the European league was considered the 'crème de la crème'. Since Maccabi Tel Aviv was the only representative in the European cup winners tournament, and since the basketball league in Israel did not provide the competition basketball fans hoped it would, Maccabi Tel Aviv's games in Europe were 'the best show in town'. Maccabi Tel Aviv home games, hosted in Yad Eliyau stadium, attracted 10,000 fans every other Thursday night (during the season) by offering them the opportunity to watch the best basketball teams from the continent. In a league where the average number of spectators at a game numbered 250, Maccabi Tel Aviv European games were very significant so far as ticket sales were concerned. However, according to Ofer Shelach (1998, ITV), a senior basketball journalist, Maccabi Tel Aviv's attendance
advantage was "peanuts" compared to their advantage from the revenues coming from the only television channel in Israel. Maccabi Tel Aviv has enjoyed a guaranteed revenue from television every year since 1976 (Maccabi Tel Aviv's first European final in Israel's television era) irrespective of its success. Shelach claims that the television revenues created a gap that grew larger with every success Maccabi Tel Aviv scored in Europe:

...It is like a charmed cycle. Maccabi Tel Aviv enjoyed a permanent income every year from Elite and from Israel Television and got enormous sums of money that no other club in Israel could even dream about. It came to a point where television executives, like everyone else in Israel, realized that no other team could match Maccabi Tel Aviv in the Israeli league. So they signed the contract for the next year with Maccabi Tel Aviv's managers at the beginning of every financial year (January, Y.G) even though the basketball league finished four months later... (in May Y.G). It's no wonder that they (Maccabi Tel Aviv, Y.G) won so many consecutive championships (Shelach, 1998, ITV).

The support of Elite and of Israel television lent Maccabi Tel Aviv a status enjoyed by no other team in Israel. To many, Maccabi Tel Aviv was the 'State Team.' To others, Maccabi Tel Aviv was the state. When Rudi D'Amico, an American coach, first came to Israel in 1980 to join Maccabi Tel Aviv as the new head coach he said that people tried to explain to him how deep the bond was between Maccabi Tel Aviv and the State of Israel. However, according to D'Amico, he did not really understand the depth of this bond until he won the European championship with Maccabi Tel Aviv in 1981:

Nothing I had experienced or seen until then was even close to what I saw in Israel in 1981. Today, I realize that the 1980/81 season was the best year of my life. Since that year I have seen and been part of champion teams, I have seen states standing behind their team but never have I seen such total enslavement to basketball as I saw in Israel in 1981. From Eilat (the Southern point in Israel, Y.G) to Kiriat Shmona (Israel's northern border town, Y.G) everybody was infected with
Maccabi-fever. I think that Maccabi Tel Aviv players, Mizrahi, Shamluk and myself, were more popular than the elected prime-minister, Menahem Begin. Our star, Micky Berkowitz, was so popular that he could easily have run for office. I have never faced such a flood of love (Dvir, 1998).

In order to understand how Maccabi Tel Aviv reached such a standing one must take into account the personality, and role played in the club's fortunes, of Shimon Mizrahi, Maccabi Tel Aviv chairman since 1970 and, to many (including himself), the person who more than anyone is the symbol of Maccabi Tel Aviv. However, Mizrahi is also considered by many basketball personnel to be one of the most controversial figures in Israeli basketball. His status varies from "the person who contributed more than anyone else to sport in general and basketball in particular in Israel" to "the man who ruined every good part of Israeli basketball except Maccabi Tel Aviv" (Dvir, 1998:35). The controversy was provoked in late 1997 when a special committee was formed to discuss Mizrahi's nomination to receive what is considered the most distinguished award in Israel, the 'Israel Prize'. Nomination for such an award in Israel's 50th anniversary year was, according to Shilon (1998), exceptional. In his essay "Maccabi is me and I am Maccabi," Shilon tried to predict how the committee would vote:

... On the one hand, he is a man with enormous power. He is the favorite son of the Israeli public. People perceive him as the man who led Maccabi Tel Aviv and Israeli sport to its highest achievements. On the other hand, not many people can arouse such antagonism and even hatred as Mizrahi.

... As far as his status and his influence are concerned, Mizrahi does not need the 'Israel Prize'. He is the strongest person in Israeli basketball. However, to him, receiving the prize would be a stamp of approval to what he has always believed: Maccabi Tel Aviv is Israeli sport and Maccabi Tel Aviv is me (Shilon, 1998).

Receiving the prize in 1998 might have justified the claim of those non-supporters of Mizrahi's that people just cannot resist Mizrahi's power. Together with his indubitable success as Maccabi Tel Aviv's chairman, Mizrahi can also cite among his
list of titles the deputy chairmanship of the Israel Basketball Association and his senior membership position in FIBA. According to Ron Kaufman (1998, ITV), people outside of the Maccabi Tel Aviv organization see an obvious conflict of interests when a man holds both the number two position in the country's basketball hierarchy (as deputy chairman) and the chairmanship of Maccabi Tel Aviv. However, according to Kaufman, the IBA has long been Maccabi Tel Aviv's fortress. In a profile article on Mizrahi, Shilon (1998) supports Kaufman's view and gives further examples of the strength of Mizrahi and of the status of the manager of Maccabi Tel Aviv in Israeli basketball:

Let me give you some examples that will illustrate how strong Mizrahi is in the IBA as well as in FIBA. For many years, the State Cup finals have been played in Maccabi Tel Aviv's home stadium, Yad Eliyahu, which is also the biggest stadium in Israel. It gives Maccabi Tel Aviv a huge advantage which is why many teams have been trying for years to change it – without success. With Maccabi Tel Aviv people in the IBA it is hard to believe it will ever change. Secondly, teams other than Maccabi Tel Aviv, participating in the various European cups, ask Mizrahi to represent them in the game draws even though he is not their chairman. They (the teams Y.G) realize how strong he is in FIBA, and for both sides, the teams and Mizrahi, it pays off. The teams get a comfortable draw and Mizrahi gathers more power in FIBA. You have to understand that Mizrahi actually believes that Maccabi Tel Aviv and the State of Israel are one and the same. After a bomb exploded in Tel-Aviv and Maccabi Tel Aviv lost a game in Europe during the same week, Mizrahi was interviewed and promised that Maccabi Tel Aviv would do its best to overcome both disasters by winning the next game...

(Shilon, 1998:51).

When discussing and weighing the power balance among basketball teams in the Israeli league as well as the power balance between the two major sport centers, Maccabi and Hapoel, one must take into consideration the leading figurations involved. Shimon Mizrahi had the credentials, experience, authority and ability to arbitrate and solve most of the problems Israeli basketball faced during its first 15
years of existence. Nevertheless, according to Elias (1983), one must understand the fundamental interdependence, yet relative autonomy of human individuals and the structure of the societies that they form. In his book, *The court society* (1983), Elias illustrates the interdependence between the position and personality of the 17th century French King Louis XIV and the figuration of which he was part:

Without a systematic examination of the royal position as such, as one of the positions making up the figurations of the court and of the court and the French society, the relationship between the individual person and the social position of the king cannot be understood. The former developed within the latter, which in its turn was in a process of development and change both within the narrower structure of the court elite and in the broader one of French society as a whole. It is not necessary here to pursue in detail the connections between the personal development of the king and the social development of the royal position, but the conceptual clarification to which this model of the king's development contributes is of importance. The concepts "individual" and "society" are often used as if they referred to two different substances at rest. These terms can easily give the impression that they denote not only different objects, but objects existing in absolute isolation from one another. But in reality it is to processes that these words refer, processes that can be distinguished but not separated, the king's personal development and that of his position go hand in hand. Since the latter possesses a specific elasticity, it can be steered, up to a certain point, by the personal development of its occupant. But through its interdependence with other positions in the total social structure to which it belongs, each social position, even that of the absolutist monarch, combines with its flexibility an extraordinary autonomy, as compared to the strength of its individual occupant. Very firm limits are set to this scope for action by the structure of his position, limits which, exactly like the elasticity of a steel spring, make themselves more strongly felt the more he stretches and tests the flexibility of his social position by his individual behaviour. While on the one hand the occupant's personal development therefore influences within certain limits that of his position, on the other the development of his social
position as a direct representative of society as a whole influences the personal development of the occupant. (Elias, 1983:19).

This is why it is important to understand Shimon Mizrahi’s role within a larger social context. An individual’s personal development cannot be understood apart from the social positions he occupies and the differential scope for relative freedom of action which they entail (Dunning, 1994:22).

7.4 The greening of Israeli basketball

The Americanization of Israel basketball reached a turning point in 1984. The growing numbers of American players who came to reinforce the local teams, faced an ongoing financial crisis that threatened the existence of the local basketball league as it did many other businesses in Israel at the time. The 1984/85 basketball season however, was one of the toughest seasons basketball teams had faced since the establishment of the Israeli basketball league. In her article, The greening of Israeli basketball, Reva Garmise (1984) tried to explain the road along which Israel basketball was headed:

...Israel’s basketball teams now have about 40 Americans on their rosters. For the first time, second-division teams are also in the grab-bag, reinforcing themselves with Americans in the hope of winning promotion to the top league. Salaries run from a basic $15,000 to a high of at least $50,000, with top teams reportedly spending as much as $300,000 a year in salaries alone. Other major expenses may include international play, which means trips abroad and hosting visiting teams for the various cup games. While speculation used to center on the exact sums paid to top stars, today another question is paramount: How long will Israel's basketball teams be able to continue paying top dollar salaries in an era of 300% inflation? The answers are already forthcoming. The Hapoel, Maccabi, Elitzur and Beitar sports centers have recently instructed their teams not to sign any more contracts in dollars, and to convert all current contracts into shekels (at an exchange rate of IS65 per dollar, 50% lower than the current rate) ...The question remains: Where does the money
come from? Basketball Association secretary-general Abraham Zaif maintains that only one team approaches self-support and that is Maccabi Tel Aviv. Team manager Shmuel Macharovsky says that Maccabi's income is based on the support of its sponsor and on gate receipts for the European cup games. (He refused to supply any details as to the extent of the team's income or its expenditures). But Maccabi Tel Aviv seems to be in a class by itself. For the remaining teams, ticket sales are negligible (prices can run as low as $3.00 a ticket and game attendance as low as 150). Some teams have sponsors who contribute uniforms such as the familiar bright yellow Elite shirts which flash across TV screens during each televised Maccabi Tel Aviv game. These sponsors pay for the advertising value of the uniforms they have contributed, and other companies pay for the ads adorning the baseboards around the court, also seen on television (Garmise, 1984:32).

Yet, Maccabi Tel Aviv seemed to be in a league of its own. The other basketball teams in the Israeli league did not enjoy such benefits. According to Garmise (1984) one indication of the other basketball teams' rickety financial structure was the "Keystone Kops" comedy of errors involving the Maccabi Ramat Gan basketball team and their participation in that year's Korac Cup competition. With no apparent warning, and without informing the basketball association, Maccabi Ramat Gan informed FIBA that "for lack of funds", they were dropping out of the competition, after having won a place in the quarterfinals. The brouhaha that erupted seemed to end happily enough as the basketball association, the Ramat Gan municipality and other organizations involved in basketball scraped together $60,000 to assure the team's continued participation in the cup games. This, however, was not the end of the story. First, one of the contending European teams refused to readmit Ramat Gan, then the promised $60,000 failed to materialise, and then the players, who had not received their salaries for three months, threatened not to play at all unless they were paid. According to Garmise, Ramat Gan was not alone in its financial plight. Hapoel Ramat Gan, Hapoel Afúla, and Beitar Tel Aviv basketball teams and possibly some of the other teams were in equally dire straits (Garmise, 1984:33).
The gloomy financial situation of most of the teams at the beginning of the 1980s, led the IBA to reopen the debate regarding the inclusion of American players in the Israeli league. Simultaneously, realizing that the American players in most of the teams cost unaffordable, increasing amounts of money, IBA administrators insisted on severe measures meant to protect the league from probable disaster. The first immediate step was to ‘freeze’ promotion to and relegation from the top national league. Since most teams invested funds to avoid relegation to or win promotion from the second league, IBA administrators and the professional committee members decided to ‘freeze’ the league table and to ease the pressure on the teams. This ‘freeze’ was meant to give the IBA and the team representatives a ‘time out’ in the process of resolving the financial crisis. Another step taken by the IBA administrators was to establish a committee to ensure a ‘payment codex’ within the basketball league. One purpose of such a codex was, according to Garmise (1984), to force the teams to pay their players in shekels and consequently to force the teams to give more credit (as in playing time) to their native-born players. Garmise asserted that the effect of the decision to sign basketball contracts only in shekels - if it could be maintained - might have signalled the beginning of the end of the nearly total American domination of Israel’s basketball scene:

Today's economic situation may in the end do more to put native-born Israelis in the court than rules and regulations could do when money was easily at hand (Garmise, 1984:33).

However, not all team representatives in the IBA agreed to the actions taken by the IBA administrators. According to Naftali Goshen (1999, ITV), IBA's general secretary, the representatives of Maccabi, Beitar and Elizur centers could not find a common ground with the most powerful center, Hapoel, which had the largest number of representatives in the IBA. Because of this lack of agreement among the sport centers representatives, two big blocs were created: the Hapoel bloc headed by Eithan Hefer, chairman of the professional committee, and the Maccabi-Beitar-Elizur bloc led by Shimon Mizrahi of Maccabi Tel Aviv. The two blocs did not agree on three main points:

One. The legal status and rights of the naturalized players.
Two. The number of foreign players who would be allowed to play in the Israeli league and cup games.

Three. Setting down a ‘payment codex’ - with its regulations, if any.

In order to fully grasp the disagreement between the sport centers, one should be aware of the dynamics inside the centers. While Maccabi Tel Aviv representatives demanded the inclusion of another foreign player to the league, other members in the Maccabi-Beiter-Elizur bloc were not so confident that this was the best move for their teams. The case of Maccabi Ramat Gan, mentioned above, was an example of a Maccabi-affiliated team that could not afford another American on their team. However, the power of Maccabi Tel Aviv as the leading team and thus the policy leader, forced them to join the Maccabi Tel Aviv stand. However, one must remember, as Gramsci (1971) rightly notes, that relationships between the rulers and the ruled (and the relationships within the Maccabi center can serve as a metaphor here) cannot be characterized as simply the result of absolute submission by the latter. The most stable form of rule is one in which the strong (who are never all-powerful) have their way, only after the weak (who are never completely powerless) have their say (Guttmann,1994:6). Yet, the Hapoel representatives claimed that in the days that teams could not afford to pay their players, it would not be wise to add another foreign player to each team and thus increase the teams' constantly inflating debts.

Unable to reach an agreement that would please both blocs, the Maccabi-Beitar-Elizur bloc threatened to ban its members from playing in the upcoming season. Furthermore, according to Kaufman (1998:ITV), ignoring IBA rules, Maccabi Tel Aviv signed two American players in July 1985, in order to be prepared for the imminent European competition. This irregular move by Maccabi Tel Aviv led to the most severe crisis in the history of Israeli basketball. While the Hapoel bloc was determined not to allow any more foreigners into the Israeli league, Maccabi Tel Aviv was just as determined to add another one. When in the summer of 1985 the two bloc representatives, Hefer and Mizrahi, failed to reach a compromise, the Maccabi-Beitar-Elizur bloc announced that they were leaving the league and considering establishing an alternative league. In late summer 1985, they moved from talks to action. Maccabi, Beitar and Elizur set up a new basketball league named after the three centers: the MBE league.
According to Goshen (1999, ITV), when the Hapoel bloc representatives realized that the MBE league was threatening to become a reality, they proposed that they and the MBE bloc go to arbitration. In August 1985, the MBE bloc agreed to Ovadia Raziel, an advocate, as an arbitrator between the two sides.

Close to the opening of the 1985/86 season, Raziel submitted his ruling on the case, which had been handed to him just three weeks earlier, to the IBA. Raziel’s ruling, covering eight pages, was one of the most explicit and detailed documents on the state of Israeli basketball at that time. In his ruling, Raziel (1985) referred to the three main points of disagreement and stated that:

...The problem that bothered and preoccupied me more than any other, is consequent to the shameful and contemptible practice of taking advantage of the status of naturalized players. Various kinds of trickery and bogus conversions to Judaism, a supply of “brides for an hour” or more accurately, “basketball brides” have, with the help of several entrepreneurs, become common phenomena that even the High Court of Justice of the State of Israel has condemned. These bypass tricks and misuse of player status have reached scandalous proportions. The entire public and basketball fans in particular, have seen these phenomena become routine. It is damaging our national and educational values. Therefore, the first thing I was obligated to do was to stop this disgraceful phenomenon. Yet, I am aware that some players decided to immigrate to Israel from a sincere desire to tie their destiny with the Israeli nation, unlike basketball mercenaries, who came to this country to aggrandise their income and become willing accomplices in these fake marriages and conversions.

...It is for this reason that I rule to eliminate all privileges given to naturalized players until three years have passed from the day of their naturalization, and only after they have fulfilled their civic obligations, including being drafted into the Israel Defence Forces like every citizen. Hence, from this season onwards, the naturalized status will be eliminated and there will be only ‘Israelis’ and ‘foreigners’ in the league.
...I find myself obligated to emphasise that under no circumstances will this rule impinge upon the rights of immigrants wishing to come to Israel not to play basketball professionally. Every newcomer should be able to participate in any basketball league other than the top two national divisions. If such a person wishes to play in the first two divisions, then his team can employ him as part of its foreign player quota.

...As for the number of foreign players that will be able to play in each club in the league and cup games:
After assessing the previous situation when, in most cases, two foreign players were playing in each team, one as a foreigner and the other as naturalized (real or not!), I had to come to a decision whether to allow a second foreigner in the basketball league and cup games. Many arguments against the inclusion of second foreigners have been put forward. Most of these arguments dealt with the financial aspect. However, after taking into account all the parameters involved, to my mind there is no doubt that at least as far as economic reasons are concerned, these arguments are wrong.

If we consider the case from a purely economic viewpoint then it looks like a basic problem of supply and demand. While foreign players come mainly from the United States and from an extensive pool of players, "refugees" of the National Basketball Association in the United States or colleges, naturalized players come from a limited pool of players and consequently are more expensive. In most cases, the "price" of naturalized players is higher than that of foreign players. Moreover, in most Western European countries where teams participate in the European cup tournaments, teams are already using two foreign players. I see no reason why we should place our local teams in a position inferior to that of their competitors. On the other hand, it seems unlikely that a team would have two foreign players who will play only in the European arena. No true sportsman can tolerate a situation where players are part of a team only in certain games and not in others. Thus, I rule that from
this season onwards, two foreign players will be able to play in the Israeli league and cup games. Every team that signs two foreign players as mentioned above will be able to replace one or both of the players up to the sixth round of the league.

... As to the status of the local Israeli players, who undoubtedly suffer from the arrival of both naturalized and foreign players, I hereby permit clubs to transfer from its ranks to lower leagues young local players who might have lost their position on their teams because of the inclusion of another foreign player (Raziel,1985,2-5).

From Raziel's ruling one can learn how intended actions by various groups can lead to unpredictable outcomes or, putting it 'figurationally', to unintended consequences. By his decision, Raziel meant to eliminate the naturalized player phenomenon, especially given the pressure from the general public and religious groups, such the National Religious Party, which did not appreciate the 'shameful' conversions and the 'Marriages of connivance (and convenience)'(Rosenblum,1978:23) that enabled foreigners to play basketball in Israel. On the one hand, Raziel's decision prevented new foreigners from seeking naturalization. On the other hand, he did not solve the problem of the many existing naturalized players. Thus, the most clearly unintended consequence of Raziel's ruling was that, at least in the short run, the pool of naturalized players became smaller and hence more expensive. Furthermore, Raziel's decision, favouring the interests of teams competing in Europe over the interests of local Israeli players, was probably an indication of the power of the MBE bloc, and especially of Maccabi Tel Aviv's power in the IBA. Raziel's decision was another indication of the 'global-oriented' road Israel basketball was taking. Allowing two foreign players meant giving Israeli teams, and especially Maccabi Tel Aviv - Israel's 'showcase' basketball team - a better chance in their international games.

128 The National Religious Party (NRP) is also known as Mafdal – an acronym for HaMiflagah HaDatit-Leumit – and was formed in 1956 with the merger of two Orthodox parties: HaPoel HaMizrahi and Mizrahi. From the founding of the state in 1948 to 1977, the NRP (or its predecessors) was the ally of the Labor Party (or its predecessors) in forming Labor-led coalition governments; in return the NRP was awarded control of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.
Raziel's decision was also, in many ways, an indication of the deteriorating status of the Israeli basketball players. With the inclusion of a second foreign player many local players lost their place in the starting five and sometimes even on the bench. One such player was Avi Shiller who played in his youth for Maccabi Tel Aviv. However, the influx of American players lowered his status in Israel basketball.

Talking about his and his colleagues' professional status as basketball players, Shiller explained that:

I was one of the leading players in Maccabi Tel Aviv's youth team. Of course, like the first team, we were the best team in Israel up to the age of nineteen. However, since we all were drafted into the army, and since many American players started coming to Israel at the time I should have bloomed, I could not achieve my full potential. At first I thought I would be able to get along with the Americans. After all most of them did not play at the same position that I did (second guard or 'shooter', Y.G). However, it become crowded on the team and since I was one of the youngest players I thought it would be better for me to find another team that would appreciate my talents and let me play. I found a team that let me play but the process of Americanization of the league reached a point where all the teams had to sign two Americans in order to survive in the first league so we became casualties of a policy that preferred them over us. From the team of players that represented Israel in the under 19 European championships, only three of us played on a regular basis for teams at the first league. Most of us were demoted to substitute positions and a lot of Israeli players who could have played had the Americans not come, retired from professional basketball very young. As I see it, at the beginning of the process, the first Americans who came here were usually tall players who came to help the teams competing in Europe to perform well. At the time, I and a lot of my colleagues, believed that they (the American players Y.G) would help our basketball and lead us to success, which they did, at first. However, as the great influx of Americans started we understood that instead of teams based on Israelis with a little help from the Americans, most of the teams were based on Americans with one or two Israelis... As a player who grew up and was educated on the spirit...
of sportsmanship and the purity of the game, it really hurt. I guess in a way I must have been naive. After a while, it reached a point where the managers started treating the league as a business and most of the decisions were made on commercial grounds (Shiller, 1999 ITV).

Ironically, while most of the local talents suffered, there were some Israeli players who actually benefited from the process. Although it seemed that the imported players would damage all Israeli players, some of them, according to the supply and demand rules were able to benefit in the long run. The case to Tomer Steinhower, the tallest native-Israeli player in the league, was such an instance:

...It might have looked as though I should be the one who would suffer the most because of all the American players who came here. After all I am the tallest Israeli player in the league, along with another four or five guys who are over 2 meters tall. At first, it looked like the Americans would take our place since most of them who came were playing in my position but all of a sudden, teams where trying to import 'little guys' (guards, Y.G) and they needed tall players like myself. Bringing Americans to fill other positions was what created a demand for tall Israeli players. Sure, some claim that our (tall Israeli players Y.G) salaries were blown out of proportions but to me it is a simple case of supply and demand (Steinhower, 1998:ITV)

The case of Tomer Steinhower indicates that some Israelis, such as naturalized players, took advantage of the market forces and improved their position. However, the American players still dominated the Israel league.

Looking at figure 15 one can appreciate how dominant American players have become in Israeli basketball (1977-1992).
Figure 15: The top 10 players in the three most important categories of the game:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Assists</th>
<th>Rebounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = Americans  
N = Naturalized  
I = Israeli  
N/A = not available

* in 1977 the only statistics found consisted of the top 5 scorers.

The dominance of the American player in all categories of the game did not occur overnight. The process of importing American players started when American players were brought in mainly to compensate for the lack of height among Israeli basketball players. Most, if not all, of the players who came to Israel in the first wave of American players were tall who mainly played in position four or five ("center" or "forward," both positions which require the tallest players on the team to play close to the baskets and take "rebounds"). However, due to the nature of the process, which entailed increasing numbers of American players, team coaches and managers started signing American players who played in other basketball-court positions as well. The dominance of American players in the league in the late 1970s and early 1980s was mainly in the rebounds part of the game since most of the “big men” were Americans. However, with the increasing numbers of American players, who were found to be more skillful, dedicated and competitive and had a different attitude towards the game, other positions on the basketball court were taken by American players. To Zvika Sherf, former coach of Maccabi Tel Aviv and Israel’s national
team, this phenomenon was not surprising at all. Sherf tries to explain how he saw the process unfolding:

In the middle of the 1980s, Israeli basketball moved forward and even made some progress because of the integration of American players in certain positions. At certain stages, the American players gave Israeli basketball a boost that was shown mostly in the attitude towards the game of basketball. The American players pushed aside the old-style coaches and promoted new young coaches. The young coaches changed the perspective of the game: more hours were dedicated to practices, more work off the court, like in weight rooms, etc. The one thing you can ascribe directly to the American players, other than their contribution to our European career, is the tremendous improvement of the defense part of the game that they brought from basketball's homeland.

Two more significant things have happened in the Israeli league since the American influx. First is the attempt by some teams to challenge Maccabi Tel Aviv's hegemony and second, the Americans created a situation where there were eight or nine good teams and it made the league tougher and more attractive. The American players have definitely caused progress, as far as some elements of the game are concerned. They brought their basketball college education that stresses the importance of victory above all and even the realm of the impossible in some cases. As I said before, they increased the importance of defense and basically they were role models to the young Israeli players. Of course it may not apply to all of them but for most of them it is accurate. Their influence was felt on the other side of the court lines too, since they forced the local coaches to get better, to learn more and become worthy of coaching some very good American players (Sherf, 1998:ITV).

One of the characteristics of such American influence was the decline of English values relating to the importance of taking part, fair play, amateurism and other moral

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129 According to Lucas (1976 quoted in Figler 1994), the English must surely take the credit (or blame) for grafting values and outcomes of the highest order onto play, and placing compulsory participation in school competitive games among its highest priorities (Lucas, 1976:66).
values. Along with their playing abilities, some of the American players brought with them from the United States manners that did not fit the Israeli notion of basketball in Israel, as Sherf explains:

One of the main factors that had to be considered was the acclimatization of the American player to the team. Some very impressive players, professionally speaking, were a bad influence on their team. I for one, endangered my entire professional career, as Maccabi Tel Aviv coach, when I did not want Earl Williams, a legendary player of Maccabi Tel Aviv, to continue playing for the team. At the time, I thought that despite his impressive contribution on the court, socially he did more harm than good to the team. Some team managers learned how important the social factor was and built some very good teams. Others did not pay much attention to the acclimatization process and their foreign players suffered and immediately you could feel the difference on the court.

On the whole, American players are a challenge to local Israeli players. Usually, the Americans try to help their team to win therefore they help the young players on the squad. On the other hand we should have limited the import of foreign players to certain positions only, mainly under the basket, since we lack tall players in our country. However, from my experience, if there is an above average Israeli player he usually finds his place on the court. Nevertheless, I can not deny that some players, even talented ones, have been 'burned'. There are also players that are called "bodies"- players for scrimmages only. This is a typical situation in every professional team. It might be cruel for some players, but that's just how it is.

However, Sherf concludes by stating that:

To my mind, all of Western basketball, including Israeli basketball, has developed and come to what it has thanks to the Americans. This is not to say that it would not have developed without them but certainly the level would have been different (Sherf, 1998: ITV).
The way the game changed, according to Sherf, is an important part of the Americanization process as well as part of the globalization process influencing the increased competitiveness of the game of basketball in Israel. On the threshold of the 1985/6 season, some 40 American players were signed to play on the dozen teams in the first national league. However, a few weeks before the opening game, it looked as though only 11 teams would be able to play. Hapoel Afula became the first ‘victim’ of the process of commercialization that had started in the late 1970s and gained momentum in the 1980s. Afula became the first team to give up the battle, which seemed to have more to do with money than with basketball. The Afula managers could not afford to pay the salaries the American players demanded and decided to fold. Other teams did not surrender so fast. While attempting to make their teams profitable enterprises, they looked upon the American and naturalized players as important elements for turning their teams into commodities that would attract fans to the games. In order to raise funds needed for the American players, the managers solicited the mayors of their municipalities as well as private entrepreneurs to invest in the teams.

In order fully to understand the process of commodification of Israel basketball, one should be aware of the state of Israel’s economy at the same time. By the mid-1980s, the Economic Stabilization Program initiated by the Israeli government had led to a significant increase in economic activity in the country. Increased certainty brought about by the Economic Stabilization Program stimulated improved growth in income and productivity. Between July 1985 and May 1988, productivity increased cumulatively by 10 percent. The 1987 cuts in personal, corporate, and employer tax rates and in employer National Insurance contributions stimulated net investment during the same period. The freeze on public sector employment occasioned by the Economic Stabilization Program began lessening the role of government in the economy and increased the supply of labor available to the business community. This is why entrepreneurs such as Neil Gilman and Yaacov Schlezinger, two successful businessmen, decided in the 1985/86 season to invest in Israeli basketball teams. The first, Gilman, invested in the new promotion to the upper league, Elizur Netanya, and the second, Schlezinger, in Hapoel Haifa. Both Gilman and Schlezinger regarded the foreign players as the basis of their future teams and therefore signed as many
American players as they could. To their thinking, making their product (team) as attractive as possible was the most important factor in selling it (selling tickets, bringing in fans and generating publicity), as for every good commodity. Their perspective, a predominantly financial one, did not take into account the image of the local Israeli basketball team or the center that the team belonged to for that matter. Gilman of Netanya for example, signed five American players, four of them black, in what seemed to symbolize the exact opposite of what the national-religious sport center Elizur believed in. This power shift from the sport centers to private holdings was a central part of the commercialization process. The Israeli sport centers that could not support their teams anymore created a void into which the new entrepreneurs and business groups entered. Although these groups and persons did not have full control, the extent to which the power balance had shifted from the center to private hands was noticeable in the league.

7.5 The ‘chasing Maccabi’ syndrome

However, the process through which basketball became a holding of private persons did not seem to go according to plan, at least not the plan foreseen by the people and groups who had invested money in their teams. Some of them, especially Gilman and Schlezinger, apparently did not have the required patience and sound business foundations to challenge Maccabi Tel Aviv’s hegemony. Aiming so high proved to be overly ambitious, especially without the required experience that was needed to challenge the long-standing champion of the Israeli league. The two previous teams who tried to challenge Maccabi Tel Aviv for many years, Hapoel Tel Aviv and Hapoel Ramat Gan, did not prevail and one of them, Ramat Gan, even shut down. Both Netanya and Haifa also tried to challenge Maccabi Tel Aviv and ended up bankrupt. It took Gilman from Netanya two seasons to reach second place, but that was not close enough. At the end of the 1989 season Gilman left the country leaving debts that had a deleterious effect on his team. The same destiny was shared by Yaacov Schlezinger who survived one year more but eventually fled the country like Gilman. The cases of Netanya, Haifa, Tel-Aviv and Ramat Gan would appear to indicate that teams that tried to challenge Maccabi Tel Aviv’s hegemony not only

130 See the conclusion on page 260
failed to do so but also collapsed professionally and financially. To many people, the problem was mainly one of management since some of the teams came extremely close to beating Maccabi Tel Aviv. Sherf (1998 ITV) offers this explanation for the continuing success of Macabbi Tel Aviv team:

Maccabi Tel Aviv’s advantage was not just professional and financial. One must give credit to the Maccabi Tel Aviv executives who succeeded year after year in securing their hegemony. While many basketball journalists claim that Maccabi Tel Aviv’s financial advantage gave them a huge head-start, one can not ignore the years when people with financial abilities tried to threaten Maccabi Tel Aviv and win the championships, but could not succeed. As a coach who was on the other side in Israel and in Europe (as coach of Hapoel Ramat-Gan and of a team in Greece Y.G) I have to say that there is no comparison between the management of Maccabi Tel Aviv and the management of the other teams. It is totally different league. Maccabi Tel Aviv wins the championship year after year mainly thanks to its management team (Sherf, 1998: ITV).

According to Sherf, and many others, it would seem that the level of management of the teams attempting to compete with Macabbi was lower than the level of the game actually played on court. The cases of Gilman and Schlezinger proved that money was not enough, and that in order to run a team one had to have good management skills. In an era of professional basketball you must think of the long term and build a team with ‘healthy’ underpinnings. The teams challenging Maccabi Tel Aviv did not have the time to wait and sign on (mostly American) players who, like all mercenaries, were concerned mainly with money and not always with the success of the club they represented (Sherf, 1998: ITV).

A similar ideological view (which to some is limited) of the importance of the managerial aspect, especially in terms of shaping the team, is presented by Jacobson131 (1994). According to Jacobson, immediate success in Israeli basketball is not an easy process. Jacobson explains why:

131 The late Shmuel “Sam” Jacobson was a successful basketball coach in the Israeli national league for many years.
Success usually emanates from signing two foreign players who meet the team’s requirements. The trick is to strengthen the existing team and improve on its weak points. Choosing such a player is not easy, and demands good scouting and recommending players who have been observed for a long period of time. Teams seeking a foreign player must look into the prospective player’s disciplinary and social past. The player’s physical condition during the last few seasons must be thoroughly investigated. One must check his history of injuries, and whether they caused him to temporarily stop playing. One must be very sure that the player’s nature blends with that of the existing members of the team, and whether his personal skills meet the team’s requirements. Teams must also check thoroughly with the authorities and the player’s past clubs whether he has ever been involved in the drug scene. One mustn’t ignore his interaction with others and his attitude towards the referees. The team must examine the player’s behaviour under pressure, how he handles himself in important and crucial matches, both in the league and in Europe. There are many subtle points which determine success or failure, therefore all facts must be taken into serious consideration when sizing-up a player. From my wide experience in coaching top teams in Israel, I have come to the conclusion that most teams repeat their past mistakes when choosing a foreign player. As a result of poor pre-season planning and bureaucracy, teams act too late, and so race against time, and then when faced with failure, everyone shifts the blame. It is a pity that experienced managers and coaches are pressured into making mistakes as the opening of the season approaches.

...(Unfortunately) the examples are numerous, and prove that teams have much to learn about signing foreign players. One must remember that foreign players do not build a team, but complete it, adding efficiency and spark which lead to its success (Jacobson, 1994:8).

However, examining the situation in other European basketball clubs shows similar problems, especially in terms of unfulfilled contracts and player abuse. A report from
the “New York Journal” (1993) demonstrates the poor relationships existing between some basketball clubs in Europe and their American players:

...Approximately 350 American basketball players were under contract to European clubs at the start of the 1991-92 season, ranging from Darryl Dawkins in Italy and Michael Brooks in France to Mike Mitchell in Israel and Michael Ray Richardson in Croatia. But with no international players’ association, few labor laws and many clubs struggling simply to stay afloat, let alone financially prosper, the opportunities for player abuse are everywhere.

Whether it was players demanding too much, or employers abusing/exploiting their players some action had to be taken. As one of the NBA executives explained:

Charles Grantham, president of the NBA Players Association, says he gets calls in his New York office every day from Americans in a jam overseas. He believes an international tribunal must be established to arbitrate and protect the rights of American players, especially if the game is to continue growing internationally.

"It's time to bring the European leagues into the modern world," Grantham says. "The teams in Italy and Spain and elsewhere must be made aware that these players are not cattle; they're human beings, and they should be treated as such. I'd compare this situation to the way the NBA was back in the early 1950s. From what I hear, the biggest problem is still getting paid."

Nevertheless, one has to remember that the situation was slightly different for the well-established teams such as Maccabi Tel Aviv. According to one of Maccabi Tel Aviv’s American players who played in Italy and Spain and who wished to remain anonymous, the bigger the city (and the club), the fewer were the problems facing the players:
As a rule, players who sign with teams in major European cities such as Rome, Munich and Barcelona generally have fewer problems adjusting to foreign ball. Those cities are more sophisticated. There is a McDonalds or a Pizza Hut on practically every corner, USA Today is available at every news-stand, and the language barriers are more easily broken down. Most importantly, there is a U.S. consulate nearby if the going gets too tough.

The collapse of some of the teams in the first national league led to another crisis in Israeli basketball. The scope of the crisis led Member of Parliament, Micha Goldman, an ex-chairman of one of the teams in the first league, to raise the problems of the basketball league in the Israeli parliament. On 24 January, 1990, Goldman opened a debate about the process of deterioration of Israel's basketball situation. In this special meeting Goldman (from the Labor Party) said:

Dear chairman, members of the Knesset. A few days ago an exposure was published in one of our leading papers regarding the situation of Israeli basketball. As a person who was personally involved in Israeli basketball and served as chairman of one of the teams in the league and is familiar with the league, it is like a personal crisis to me. We had some very nice achievements, especially in the European arena, however the process of importing American players in order to strengthen the teams led to an absurd situation. The local Israeli players became the minority on their teams and the Israeli basketball league seems to have become a small-scale model of an American league. The domination of the American players was at the expense of young and prospective Israelis who were pushed to the far end of the bench and sometimes completely out of top level basketball.

The crisis led to the downfall of a few teams. I read about debts of two and a half million dollars for one of the teams. I can tell you about higher amounts. I know about income-tax interrogations of a few chairmen in the league. Unfortunately, the sport centers are aware of the problem and do nothing. As I said before, I am familiar with what is happening in Israeli basketball. The situation has become unbearable especially because of the
lack of management abilities among most teams' executives. Some of them signed contracts with players knowing that they would not be able to pay. Their players find themselves running after their money in the courts. They leave the country and tell stories, which in some cases are totally true, about the low ethical level in terms of payment in Israel (Goldman, 1990:1825).

Following Goldman, MP Pinchas Goldstein (from the right-wing party Likud) asked the chairman's permission to speak and added:

The crisis is serious and we did not need the story in the paper to understand how serious the situation is. Most of the teams are on the verge of collapse and I agree that it is an unbearable situation. Everybody understands that the only stable team is Maccabi Tel Aviv and the rest of the teams are in a fragile situation. Since we do not have a minister in charge of sport in this country, not even a deputy-minister, the Minister of Education must do something about it. He should do something before it is too late (Goldstein, 1990:1827).

Another MP, Yigal Bibi from the National Religious Party, added his own opinion:

Dear chairman, Ministers and parliament members. A week ago we watched a game between Yugoslavia's champion basketball team and our champions, Maccabi Tel Aviv. I myself could not identify with our (my emphasis, Y.G) team. Unlike the Yugoslavians, we saw four foreign players representing our team and country. When I say I could not identify with them I mean that we enjoyed the winning but not the manner. The situation in basketball is gloomy. There are debts of millions of dollars, high payments to players that I doubt earn as much in other countries. The executives of the teams and people from the sport centers are seeking immediate success and cannot control the teams. Money is spent unprofessionally and unreasonably. ...what is being done today in Israel basketball is a scandal. Those of us who think that only the teams are in debt are wrong. Many mayors who wish to build themselves up on the
success of their basketball teams have lost millions of the tax-payers' money. I would stop the import of foreign players and let our young Israeli players play. One of the reasons why people are not coming to the games is because they can not identify with what should be their teams. Instead they see a bunch of players who play for money, with no enthusiasm at all (Bibi, 1990:1828).

However, there are many in Israel who would disagree with Bibi. The crowded Yad Eliahu stadium every Thursday - following the success of Maccabi Tel Aviv in the European arena - might serve as an example of process in which local ties and identities are being replaced by something broader and in which basketball fans do come to identify with success. These fans are not put off by the nationality of the players who bring that success.

Following the press releases and the parliamentary criticism over the gathering momentum of the Americanization process of the Israeli league, IBA officials set up a meeting at the end of the 1991 season to discuss the financial deficits of most of the teams. According to Goshen (1998, ITV) one of the paradoxes confronting the IBA officials was the fact that due to tax regulations in Israel it was cheaper for the teams to hire American naturalized players and to pay less tax than to sign an Israeli player who, because of Israeli tax laws, was much more expensive. However, all of the association members were determined to try to eliminate the de facto naturalization process of foreign players since the Raziel decision (1985) had eliminated the phenomenon only de jure. The association leaders were certain that appropriate legislation permitting teams to sign only one naturalized player, in addition to the two foreigners, would stabilize the league and improve the local Israeli players' status at the same time. Yet, while trying to advance from thought to deeds, IBA leaders faced two main obstacles. The first obstacle was legal. According to the IBA's legal advisor, an act such as restricting the number of naturalized players was discriminatory and therefore not 'legal-proof'. According to the IBA's legal advisor, the status of naturalized players, due to the State of Israel laws, is identical to other citizens in the country, and therefore they could not be discriminated against on such grounds. The second obstacle facing the IBA can serve as an example of how global processes occurring many miles away affected Israeli basketball and led to
unexpected consequences. The collapse of the communist regime in the USSR and the ensuing 'perestroika' (reconstruction), allowed thousands of Jews to immigrate to Israel. At the same time, suitable political conditions in Africa allowed thousand of Ethiopian Jews to immigrate to Israel as well. In order to comprehend the process of immigration to Israel, especially from the former Soviet Union, one must be familiar with the history of the process. Between the Six Day War (1967) and the Yom Kippur War (1973) the number of Soviet immigrants to Israel reached 100,000. This changed dramatically after the Yom Kippur War. In 1974, Israel for the first time encountered the phenomenon of people ‘bypassing’ Israel. About 21,000 Jews obtained exit visas from the USSR to Israel, but only 17,000 came on aliyah (immigration); the remainder waited at the Vienna transit point for entry visas to Western destinations. This trend was to become more marked in subsequent years, with the number of people "dropping out" en route to Israel by the 1980s actually exceeding the number who came on aliyah. In 1987, 90% of those who left the USSR decided not to come to Israel, and the topic was extremely controversial in Israel. Indeed, it only receded from the public eye with the increasingly severe Soviet restrictions on aliyah from the early '80s, and there was little change in aliyah figures under early "perestroika" in the mid-'80s until liberalization of the economy and regime was implemented at the end of the decade.

Thus, in 1990, when it had long been presumed that the era of aliyah from the Soviet Union was over and done, the picture was again transformed, in a totally unexpected manner. In spring 1990, the monthly figures for Soviet aliyah topped the 10,000 mark and by mid-year, over 50,000 olim (immigrants) had arrived in Israel. Over the next six months, another 135,000 olim came to Israel, with planes landing one after the other and disgorging hundreds of olim. The tally for one weekend alone in December that year was 5,000. Out of the 200,000 peak aliyah figures, Soviet olim accounted for 185,000 (Kadary, 1996,10).

In fact, the massive new influx from the Soviet Union resulted from a number of concurrent factors:

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132 In exchange for war-supplies provided by the Israeli government, the Ethiopians allowed Jews to leave Ethiopia to Israel.
1. Perestroika and glasnost under the Gorbachev regime;
2. The deteriorating economy of the former USSR;
3. Ethnic and political conflicts in the outlying republics of the former USSR;
4. Covert and overt threats of anti-Semitism. Soviet Jews left the former USSR en masse. With the new limitations on immigration to the USA, the growing flux of Jews made Israel their destination.

Mass *aliyah* of Jews from the USSR, later to become the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), was not essentially a new phenomenon. Nevertheless, with the exception of the very first years of its statehood, Israel had never received such a large wave of *aliyah* at any one time (approximately one-fifth of its total population!). Together with the dream of the exodus of the Jews of Silence (as the Jews behind the Iron Curtain were known), problems associated with *aliyah* rapidly began to emerge, mainly because of the large dimensions of the influx of people: employment, housing, lack of Hebrew—and, above all, the transition from the society of origin to Israeli society, which, as we have seen, was rapidly becoming a highly westernised society.

In the USSR, Jews were disproportionately represented in the sciences, medical profession, mathematics, physics and art. The wave of *aliyah* since 1990 has also been characterised by a significant preponderance of adults with higher education. Their overall contribution and potential to contribute to the State of Israel and to Israeli society as scientists, doctors and academics, in technology, research and the arts is undisputedly important.

There remain, however, many people with specialised professional skills which are inappropriate to the demands of the Israeli market, a factor which has obliged them to undergo retraining in order to market their skills. This applies to a wide range of professions, including teachers, engineers in specific sectors (railways, distribution, forestry, etc.), technicians, scientific personnel and all sectors of the medical profession.
Unsurprisingly, young people with higher education have found their niche more successfully than adults without qualifications. In addition, the path for *olim* from the western or European areas of the former Soviet Union has been far smoother than for those from the southern republics (Georgia, Bukhara and the Caucasus), when measured by their level of participation in the workforce, their income and their ability to continue in their previous professional field (Kadary, 1996:12).

As illustrated, for more than a century of *aliya* and half a century of statehood in Israel, aliyah has been and continues to be a phenomenon among the Jewish people, a factor which has no parallel in the history of modern migrations. It was and remains the ultimate goal and essence of the Zionist character of the State of Israel; it has brought full circle the many distinctive and diverse communities which were formed, flourished or foundered in the Diaspora as a creative people together in Israel. It is exactly the reason why the IBA leaders could not stop some of the new *olim* coming from the former Soviet Union from playing basketball in the Israeli league. One should bear in mind that according to the Raziel decision in 1985, ‘new’ naturalized players could not play basketball in Israel until the end of a three year waiting period. Therefore IBA leaders asked advocate Raziel to change his ruling because of the new reality Israel society was facing. Raziel’s decision in 1991 took into consideration the changed circumstances and distinguished between the new *olim* and the basketball-seeking olim and after a check by a legal committee, allowed them to play professional basketball in Israel only one year after their immigration and after completing their civic obligations such as those included in the Military Service Act that required them to be drafted into the army.

Another global event that took place at the same time and which also affected Israeli basketball, was the outbreak of the Gulf war in early 1991. When allied coalition forces moved to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait in January 1991, Iraq launched a series of missile attacks against Israel. Despite the provocation, Israel’s government refrained from entering the Gulf war directly, accepting U.S. government assistance to deflect continued Iraqi missile attacks. However, the missile attacks over Tel Aviv brought a halt to all IBA games. As a result of the war most of the foreign players left Israel, as did some of the American naturalized players. The majority of naturalized players, however, thought it was an excellent opportunity to prove that they had come
to Israel not just to play basketball but also to become ‘real’ citizens, and they stayed in Israel. The suspension of games caused financial difficulties to the teams, which had to honour most of their contracts with their players even when no games were being played and their primary source of income had dried up. Some of the teams were hurt more than others. The case of Maccabi Tel Aviv, which had to compete in the European cup games, can serve as an example of what an Israeli team had to cope with in such a situation. Due to the war in the gulf and its affect on Israeli basketball, Maccabi Tel Aviv was promised a $500,000 government grant to help it meet its considerable travel expenses. For the government of Israel, this had considerable symbolic importance because it provided visible proof that the hardships wrought by war had not brought the life of the nation to a standstill. For Maccabi Tel Aviv, the most difficult hardship of all stemmed from a decision – made by FIBA after the Scud missiles started falling - to prohibit any European Champions Cup games being played in Israel. As a result, Maccabi Tel Aviv had to play its scheduled home games at ‘away’ venues. Although any Israeli sports team, but in particular its most prominent one, was regarded as a prime target of terrorism, the team flew out of Ben Gurion Airport (usually on a Tuesday), played a basketball game in Europe on Thursday night, then flew back to Tel Aviv on Friday so the players could observe the Sabbath, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, and be with their families for at least part of the week. Maccabi Tel Aviv chairman Shimon Mizrahi worked to salvage Maccabi’s season in the European Champions Cup, suggesting to FIBA that Israel find a neutral site in Europe to play its scheduled home games. FIBA agreed. The problem was finding a city willing to play host to Maccabi. “We thought of playing in Holland but local authorities said, “We can’t for security reasons,” says Mizrahi. “Then we talked about playing in Paris, but at the last minute the French said there were too many Arabs in Paris, and there might be trouble. If we had not been so determined to play - even FIBA told us to quit - we would have had to give up, forfeit our games”. Brussels agreed to let Maccabi play in a small gymnasium, in the middle of a forest, with seating for 1,200 people, helping to save the last leg of Macabbi Tel Aviv’s season (Nack,1991:61).

These last two examples demonstrate how ties and complex interdependencies, on a global level and among several social groups, affected the Israeli basketball league directly and indirectly. The shifting of power balance among groups and persons due
to global processes such as the fall of the communist bloc and the Gulf War, emphasises that while trying to understand the process of Americanization as part of a larger globalization process, account must be taken of the intentional as well as the unintentional consequences resulting from such global occurrences.

Together, and almost simultaneous with the global occurrences, the impact of internal processes to Israeli society should also be recognised. One such process was the television revolution, which affected Israel at the beginning of the 1990’s. Of course it is not possible to separate local processes from those occurring at a global level especially those connected with the international penetration of American cable companies.

7.6 The television revolution and basketball in Israel

According to Weimann (1996), television was a single-station medium in Israel from 1968, when the Israeli Broadcasting Authority started airing television programs, and for almost 25 years, Israel had only one channel. The fact that most neighbouring countries broadcast only in Arabic further limited the options open to Hebrew-speaking Israelis, whose only choice was a relatively popular use of VCRs, rental videos, and 'no-other-possibility' devotion to the only existing channel in Israel (Weimann, 1984,1996). However, the 1990s brought dramatic changes. The Israeli parliament approved two significant changes that altered the media environment: the introduction of cable television; and the establishment of a second national channel, channel 2, which unlike the first one would be a commercial channel (Weimann,1996:244). These significant changes also altered the way sport was viewed and presented in Israel. The process by which Israeli society transferred, almost overnight, from a single to a multi-channel media society, influenced sport in general but basketball in particular. The 'key' player in the process was the new cable television network, Channel 5 – the sport channel. However, in order to understand the importance of Channel 5's role in altering the way sport was viewed, one must initially be aware of the broader social context of the establishment of cable television in Israel.
Cable television in Israel is privately owned and operated. According to the regulations, Israel was divided into 31 concession areas and the operator in each such area was determined by open tender. During 1992, most of the concessionaires began operations, with a penetration rate that averaged 40% of all Israeli households within the "cabled" areas. By the end of 1992, 400,000 households had subscribed to cable with a total of 1.6 million viewers (out of a total Israeli population of 1,290,000 households of which a third were areas as yet unreached by cable). By the end of 1994, 800,000 households (out of 1,200,000 households reached by cable) subscribed to cable, bringing the penetration rate to 67%. The cable services offered the subscribers approximately 40 channels, mainly foreign stations, received through satellite dishes in the cable station and transmitted through the cables to subscribers. Cable channels included Sky News, Sky One, and Super Channel from Britain; CNN International; MTV Europe and MTV Asia; the German SAT1 and SAT3; RTL from Luxembourg; BBC Asia; 3 Turkish channels; 2 Russian channels; the Spanish channel TVE; an Italian channel; Eurosport; French TV5; Star TV and Star One from Hong Kong; Arab channels from Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Egypt; and two Israeli stations. The Israelis were also exposed to the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) through the Middle East Network, located in Southern Lebanon. The cable services also provided five special channels: a movie channel, a sports channel, a children's channel, a family channel, and a nature/documentary channel. Another relevant aspect of the growth of cable television in Israel for this thesis is the process of internationalization of the television environment in Israel. Out of the over 40 channels offered by the standard cable service, only 2 are Israeli channels. The increased exposure to foreign stations may have a cultural impact especially in terms of "cultural invasion" (Weimann, 1984). What Weimann means is that Israel "wastes" its cultural talents by reconstructing American TV game shows, "Wheel of Fortune" and "Jeopardy" to name but two, rather than developing its own independent, "high culture" programming. And even when there are original productions they often seem to be little more than American programs in Hebrew, like Ilana Dayan's "Fact," or the local version of "Meet the Press." These programs preserve the American format, but seem to lean toward the sensational, if not confrontational (Kravitz, 1997). According to Weimann (1996), there might also be political consequences of the internationalization process, especially when one considers Israel’s security problems and the past ability of Israeli authorities to regulate the media during crisis and war. In
the cabled, global village to which Israelis have become hooked, the possibilities to regulate and censor satellite news and information are almost non-existent.

The rise of Channel 5 in the beginning of the 1990s was a turning point for basketball in Israel. To adapt Goldlust's (1987) words, the bond between basketball in Israel and Channel 5 was "a match made in heaven". For Israeli basketball, the most important change Channel 5 brought was the exposure of many more Israelis to the game. Almost immediately after signing the contract that gave the broadcast rights for the Israeli basketball league to Channel 5, live basketball games from the Israeli league started to be televised. At the same time, Channel 5 acquired part of the rights of the American NBA league and presented them side by side with the Israeli league. For the new channel, which was struggling for its existence, the basketball league and the NBA games from America provided a perfect solution for filling air-time in their initial broadcasts. The growing exposure to the game boosted other processes that gathered momentum at the same time. The commercialization process, which was first witnessed in the late 1970s, gathered at an increasing pace as sponsors renewed their interest in the league game. For the first time the IBA could sell the rights to bear the league name to a big sponsor and, most importantly, it was the first time the teams enjoyed fixed and equally shared revenues, which the IBA received from the broadcasting rights.

The agreement between Channel 5 and the IBA promised the basketball league that every week at least one game would be televised live. Another aspect, which has to be considered, was the level and quality of coverage that Channel 5 provided and its contribution to the growing popularity of the game in Israel. Channel 5 as a narrow broadcaster concentrating only on the production of the basketball league and editing imported games from the US, raised the standards of broadcasting to levels not previously seen on Israeli television. According to American-born Myelin Tenzer (1998, ITV), Channel 5 CEO, the production of the coverage of the Israel basketball league was defiantly trying to reach American standards of televised sports. Such standards involved a shift in the perceptions of sport coverage in Israel. Channel 5, like many of the Australian television stations studied by Goldlust (1987) and, indeed

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133 A narrow broadcaster means that the channel broadcasts only for a fixed number of hours a day and on a specific topic. The sport channel (5) usually broadcast from 4pm to 11pm every day.
like many other broadcasters throughout the world, shifted towards an American style of coverage stressing entertainment rather than traditional journalistic reportage. As Goldlust explains:

... As professional sport has become increasingly international over the past decades, so have examples of sports television produced by the wealthier and technologically more sophisticated services – those of the North American commercial networks, Western Europe and to a lesser extent Australia – become the leading models of media professionalism throughout the world-wide industry. Their styles and techniques are perceived within the industry as ‘state of the art’. As technical and on-air personnel from various countries are often involved in covering major international sporting events there are numerous opportunities for observing, interacting with and learning from the production techniques of the large American and British networks.

Also, local television services and stations in most countries import sport programs produced by the Americans and/or British and the styles and techniques used in these countries are seen by their regular viewing audience. If such telecasts become popular there are professional pressures for local production to imitate and incorporate such structure and techniques – particularly where there is commercial competition for the domestic audiences (Goldlust, 1987:114).

One should bear in mind, that, up to this point, the only basketball games on television were Maccabi Tel Aviv games from the European games. The television revolution and the map of broadcasting in Israel led Gabriel Weimann (1996) to examine the changes on the behavioural, cognitive, and even affective dimensions of the media revolution. According to Weimann, it appears that within a year of the introduction of cable, Israelis experienced a significant change in their consumption of television, in their feelings towards the medium, in the social context of viewing, and in related aspects of leisure activities. Though some of the early, dramatic changes were clearly the result of the rapid transition that caused a temporary "culture shock", the change in certain patterns of viewing and attitudes remained stable even after a year. With relation to sport in general, but basketball in particular,
there is no doubt that the change played a key role in the development of spectatorship of Israeli basketball and of basketball from around the world. The level and the quality of coverage led to the growing popularity of the game and the demand for basketball reached a peak in 1992. The growing coverage of sport events both locally and internationally led to a situation where sports became more and more 'legitimate' subjects in everyday conversations and in the newspapers. Therefore, it is no surprise that the demand for basketball, but mainly for quality basketball from the NBA, led three broadcasters in Israel to try to win the fourth sport concession as far as Israeli sport was concerned: the right to broadcast the NBA league and playoffs games. Each one of the three contestants, Channel 1, Channel 2 and Channel 5, held one of the concessions and gaining rights to the NBA would have given one of them an enormous advantage. The oldest and most established channel, Channel 1, held the rights for Maccabi Tel Aviv games in Europe and had the advantage of increased access since the vast majority of the population could tune in to its broadcasts. The second, Channel 2, was just emerging and as the first commercial station, it could offer financial incentives unavailable to the other contestants. The third, Channel 5, had experience with local Israeli basketball and high class sport coverage. At this point it might be worth mentioning that unlike news, where government regulation prevents monopolistic coverage, getting the exclusive rights to a sport event prevents other networks from telecasting the same event. Therefore, one can appreciate how important it was to all three networks to get the exclusive rights to the popular American basketball league. At the same time, the representatives of the NBA in the Middle East had to learn the broadcasting map in Israel in order to reach an agreement with the network that would most benefit the NBA. Channel 1 could provide the best viewer ratings by reaching greater numbers of the population but it did not have enough money for the rights. The second channel had the money but because of its internal structure could not broadcast all the games. The sport channel could show all the games but lacked funds and desirable ratings. Therefore, while seeking money, rating and maximum coverage of the game, the NBA representatives decided to share the rights among all three broadcasters and thus gain maximum coverage of the American league.

\[134\] Instead of awarding the right to run the second channel to one operating company, it was granted to three groups, each in turn allying with a number of economic interests. The successful applicants were selected by a public tender. Each of the three, broadcasts two days a week, while the seventh day is rotated among them on an annual basis (Doron, 1998:169).
7.7 ‘Hoop dreams’ and Israeli talents

The growing popularity of the NBA league in Israel, and growing numbers of international players in the NBA motivated a few young Israeli players to make the effort to reach the American league, considered by most authorities to be the best basketball league in the world. The American draft system, that promotes players from the local colleges and universities to the professional league, forced those Israelis aspiring to reach the NBA to join American colleges and universities in their efforts to become the first Israelis to join the American league.

Figure 16: Growth of international players in the NBA

One talented player, Nadav Henefeld, joined the University of Connecticut in 1989 and quickly earned a starring role with the university's basketball team. But because of pressure to rejoin his former team, Maccabi Tel Aviv, Henefeld returned to Israel after only one year with the university. In the 1990-91 season, Gilad Katz and Orly Grossman followed Henefeld’s footsteps to the University of Connecticut. Grossman played with the women's basketball team for one year; Katz played at Connecticut for

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135 As shown in the graph (NBA, 1999)
136 See page 102
two years. Because of their age and experience, they were limited to three years of athletic eligibility under National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules. Still, none of these players reached their goal - the NBA. Doron Sheffer, another talented Israeli player, came the closest to achieving this goal when he joined the University of Connecticut in the 1993 season. Sheffer was the most successful Israeli player in the US and how close he came to becoming the first Israeli to play in the American league can be gleaned from the following item published in the American Sporting News on Feb 26, 1996:

Since arriving at the University of Connecticut in 1993, Doron Sheffer has made it known that his No. 1 goal was to improve enough to play in the NBA. He has done just that, and he is expected to be no worse than a late first-round selection in June's draft. Although Sheffer is in his third year of college, this is his final season of eligibility. A native of Ramat Efal, Israel, the 6-foot-5, 197-pound point guard could become the first Israeli to play in the NBA. He will enter the NBA next season with more experience and savvy than your average rookie. He turns 24 on March 12. Before coming to America, Sheffer was one of international basketball's top point guards. He was MVP (Most valuable player Y.G) of the Israeli Club League in 1992-93 while completing a three-year military obligation... Sheffer is mostly a catch-and-shooter with a quick release who uses teammates' screens well to get open. NBA scouts would like him even more if he could improve as a penetrator and do a better job of creating his own shot. ... Known in his native country as "The Israeli Ice Man," Sheffer makes few mistakes with the ball. He sees the floor well, finds the open man and has an assist-to-turnover ratio of almost 2.5 to 1 this season. Sheffer is also a good rebounder for a guard, averaging almost five per game at Connecticut. Despite lacking the speed and quickness of many NBA point guards, he is a competitor who works hard on defense. He has quick hands and has averaged more than two steals per game over the past three seasons.... Pro scouts will examine Sheffer's footwork during the postseason All-Star camps to see how he fares playing man-to-

\[137\] The NCAA limits players age 24 or older to three years of play.
man defense exclusively. One thing NBA teams do not have to be concerned with is his durability. He has never missed a game during his college career and has started all but one.

Although Sheffer was picked only in the second round of the draft, and consequently decided to go back and join Maccabi Tel Aviv, he, like the other Israelis who played in the American colleges, motivated many Israeli basketball fans closely to follow American college games. Israeli fans had plenty of opportunities to watch their favourite college-basketball teams in action. All of Connecticut's men's home games were broadcast in Israel live, very often in the middle of the night (due to the time differences between Israel and the US). Often, the same matches were rebroadcast the following morning and again in prime television time that next evening.

However, American basketball is not the only American sport product to be embraced in Israel. The penetration by another sport, the American version of football, can be used as an example of how the process of penetration of Israeli society is facilitated.

As part of the US National Football League's (NFL) attempts to export the game worldwide, some 60,000 Israeli high school students are learning to play American Football in Israel. The NFL has targeted Israel as part of its plan to invest in the development of the game throughout Europe, the Far East, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand.

According to Griver (1996), NFL Israel, a local branch of the American NFL company, has worked out a ten-year game plan which is as strategically meticulous as a successful game plan in American football. In the first phase, sponsorship, promotional and broadcasting deals are being put in place. At the same time, 60,000 high-school students will learn to play the game: the Amal vocational training high school network will give American football classes to 40,000 of its students, and Israel Radio's network "Reshet Gimmel", together with the McDonald's hamburger franchise, has recruited some 20,000 youngsters for American football courses around the country.
In the second phase, one of the NFL’s leading teams - the New England Patriots – is committed to playing an exhibition match against another major US team at Israel’s national soccer stadium in Ramat Gan in 1998. Furthermore, Israeli interest in American football will presumably be stimulated by live weekly broadcasts of a big NFL match with Hebrew commentary on a local television station.

7.8 The Americanization of Israeli society in the 1990s

The exposure to American culture, especially via the media, led many Israelis to look to the US as the land of their dreams. Those who did leave Israel to the US belong to the mass of emigrants (estimated by Israeli authorities at 450,000 people since 1948) who have been seeking their luck in America. Those who have remained in Israel also seem to have happily embraced American culture, as Kravitz (1997) explains:

It seems, then, that Israel has become enamored of a number of American myths and customs that transcend the realm of the Americanization of global culture, albeit with unpredictable results. The most potent American belief adopted by Israelis appears to be the myth of "rags to riches," or the myth of the self-made man, even though the Israeli version differs from the American original.

...Part of the explanation to this conundrum might lie in a very unflattering portrait of Israel, that of Israel as the client state of its American patron. In this scenario, the destinies of the two nations seem so intertwined, that it becomes logical for Israel, America's so-called 51st state, to celebrate America's July 4, on Israel’s independence day, one that usually falls in April or May, depending on the Hebrew lunar calendar. There is no doubt that Israel, in some respects, is a client state of the United States. No other nation receives more in American foreign aid than it does. But I suspect Israel looks upon America as much more than a patron. And Israelis seem to accept many of the myths that are often thought to be specifically American, even if they consummate those myths with a Middle Eastern twist. How else is one to explain the long-
running ad in the Israeli daily, "Yedeot Achronot," which features Bill Clinton, or someone who appears to be his exact double, pontificating on the benefits of owning one's very own Chrysler automobile. No matter how much trouble Clinton may have at home with his integrity, Israelis seem to believe that he is honest enough to sell them a new car (Kravitz, 1997:58).

However, according to Kravitz, the Americanization process of Israeli society was not limited to certain areas of the culture. Even in areas where Israeli culture was certainly original, the American influence threatened to overwhelm the local ways of doing things:

Even in cultural areas specifically Israeli (Jews, after all, imagine themselves to be the people of the book), American culture has changed what and the way people read, but not necessarily for the better. Israel has lately become inundated by a number of original Hebrew best sellers, written in the style used by popular American writers who sell millions of copies of their books, something previously unthinkable in Israeli culture. Reading was a high culture activity and was not meant to carry over into the popular realm. The people of the book had never imagined they would one day be reading "pulp fiction," so to speak, or not reading at all; scanning, instead, the cable stations, hoping against hope that something more interesting than the home shopping channel would be on TV (Kravitz, 1997:59).

Another person who believes that Israelis not only do not resist American culture but rather embrace it with joy, is Ofer Shelach (1998, ITV). According to Shelach, Israelis are no different from people all around the globe who like to eat McDonald’s, wear Nike shoes and use Intel in their computers. However, it seems that Israelis often embrace aspects of American culture that create a pale version of what seems to be, according to Shelach, a not so glamorous society. “Take for example Israeli basketball. For years we import American players who can teach us a lot about working habits, work ethic, etc. However, we choose to adopt the ‘winning at all costs’ mentality that leads to shameful incidents that threaten to ruin our
basketball league” (Shelach, 1998:ITV). Shelach, like many other people in Israel, appreciates the American players, who serve as role models to the young Israeli players and who bring with them influences from their college basketball education. However, these American influences are also partly responsible for a perceived decline in English values relating to the importance of taking part, fair play, amateurism and other ethical values.

Nevertheless, while discussing the influence of American culture on Israeli society, there are some who argue differently:

… in all fairness, it is important to mention the positive impact of the American media on its Israeli counterpart. Ironically, because of the Israeli media’s desire to get the scoop, a clear influence of the American media, Channel One, the government-owned TV station, has managed to uncover what is perhaps the greatest scandal in the history of Israeli politics, something that has been dubbed Bibigate. Channel One has exposed the arrogance and disregard for basic democratic principles held by the government in power and has even captured Benjamin Netanyahu (Israel Prime-Minister 1996-1999, Y.G) paraphrasing Richard Nixon’s vehement denial that he, after all, was not a crook. Perhaps I credit the American media with too much influence on Israel, since it is clearly of importance that the state-owned station, a concept foreign to American capitalistic culture, was able to bring the government’s plot to bankrupt the position of attorney general/counsel to the government to light. And this seems to be a reversal of Noam Chomsky’s well known American premise that the media is always already in the service of the institutional powers that be. But there can be little doubt that the model of Watergate is always present in the Israeli media as an ideal while Israeli journalists seek the ultimate scoop (Kravitz, 1997:57).

138 See for example Figler (1994)
The process of Americanization of Israeli culture seemed to reach new heights during the 1996 election campaign. In the opening paragraph of his essay analyzing the campaign, Ari Shavit asserts that:

These were Israel's most Americanized elections ever. They featured an American-bred candidate running against an American-backed prime minister who was marketing an American-sponsored peace process with American-style TV ads that assured an America-worshipping Israeli public that peace is simply a celebration of the great American dream. Yet at the very same time it was the most Jewish of campaigns, a pastiche of great expectations and deep anxieties, of nearly messianic hopes and profound existential fears (Shavit, 1996:40).

While supporting this line of argument, Dan Caspi (1999) explains why such a campaign is apparently so fondly accepted in Israel:

The wave of Americanization sweeping through Israel society over the past few years has clearly affected the political sphere. The United States is willing to give and Israel is more than willing to take, adopting living patterns from American society with a goodly measure of admiration and reverence. For better or worse, the American model stimulates a powerful desire for emulation – and with good reason. The accompanying image of power, abundance and success adds spice to the resulting imitation and is reinforced as the American orientation increasingly penetrates Israel political culture, supplanting traditional European inclinations. Increasing contact with American administrative procedures directly or indirectly affects the young and the inferior client (Caspi, 1999).

There is no doubt that the influence of American culture on Israeli society is extensive. These last few examples show how the American system has become a model for many aspects of Israeli life. Just as Israeli basketball became Americanized, other aspects of Israeli life were subject to similar American influences. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine these processes (such as the political shift towards Americanization) in greater detail, one must bear
in mind that these processes are interdependent and impact upon Israeli basketball in a variety of intended and unintended ways.

Conclusion

In this chapter the process by which basketball in Israel become involved in the network of overlapping social and global forces was examined. In order to understand the processes more adequately the chapter discussed the changing power balance between various groups and people in the figuration such as Israeli, American and naturalized players, coaches, IBA leaders and administrators, sponsors and entrepreneurs, mayors, lawyers, parliament members, reporters, journalists and commentators. All these actors helped to a greater or lesser extent, to influence the development of Israeli basketball and were themselves caught up in the process of Americanization. This process of the Americanization of Israeli basketball involved a complex series of interdependency chains involving unequal power balances. Power, it must remembered, is not a ‘thing’ which some group possesses and others do not, but is a feature of all social relationships. As Elias puts it:

In relations between parents and infants, masters and slaves, power chances are distributed very unevenly. But whether the power differentials are large or small, balances of power are always present whether there is functional interdependence between people...power is not an amulet possessed by one person and not another; it is a structural characteristic of human relationships – of all human relationships (Elias,1978:74).

Above all, it was suggested that the Americanization process of Israeli basketball, and in the broader context, the Americanization of Israeli society, which involves a blending of intended and unintended practices, can not be understood without attempting to view that process as interdependent with other processes. Processes such as professionalization, privatization and capitalization, side by side with global occurrences such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Gulf war, played a significant role in the changes in Israeli society and basketball that occurred in the period between 1978 to 1996.
In addition to addressing the hypothesis that the Americanization process as part of the globalization process can serve as an explanatory tool in regard to Israeli basketball (which is located in Asia, competes in Europe and is dominated by Americans\textsuperscript{139}), the chapter also discussed global-cultural dimensions similar to the five ‘Landscapes’ (‘ethnoscape’, ‘technoscape’, ‘mediascape’, ‘financescape’ and ‘ideoscape’) detected by Appadurai\textsuperscript{140} (1990).

There was a detailed exploration of the multidirectional interweaving of global cultural flows along with several other unique processes, such as politization of sport, detected with relation to Israeli society in general and basketball in particular. The influx of American basketball players into the Israeli basketball league, as well as the export to America of a few Israeli players, can be ascribed to the ‘ethnoscape’ dimension, and seems to be the basis of several other social changes that intertwined with American-cultural flows in Israeli basketball. On the ‘financescape’ level, the dependence of the Israeli economy on annual American aid, and the use of the popular American currency did not just affect trade in the Israeli basketball arena but also led to increasing imports of American products and goods that can be regarded as part of the ‘technoscape’ dimension. However, most acute among changes in the various scapes seems to be those on the ‘mediascape’ level, as part of what Jhally (1989) and Maguire (1990) refer to as the ‘media/sport production complex’. The development of a multi-channel system in Israel brought images and portrayals of global, but mostly American, sports to Israeli audiences. One example would be the coverage of the American basketball league, the NBA, through television and newspapers. On the ideoscape level, the chapter detected a consistent decline in the Zionist ethos that led to a decline of the ideological framework of the sport centers. The weakening of the sport centers and the privatization process that took place as part of a larger capitalization process can be attributed to the growing popularity of the American capitalist system that was embraced by sport administrators as well as by a large percentage of the Israeli population.

\textsuperscript{139} Similar to the finding presented in Figure 15, American dominance continued in 1996 as only 3 (15\%) Israelis were among the top 20 scorers in the league. Furthermore, only 2 (10\%) Israelis were among the top 20 rebounders as 13 (65\%) Israelis were among the top 20 assisters.

\textsuperscript{140} Aspects of the overlapping dimensions of social change that conjunct with global flows have been captured by Appadurai and have been discussed in chapter 2.
With regard to the Israel Basketball Association’s role in the process of the Americanization of Israeli basketball, the chapter drew a picture of a non-static organization composed of members whose values are shaped by the culture in which they live, and hence are subject to the same processes operating in that society. Dunning and Sheard (1976) made a similar point when they argued that:

Organizations in the real world are configurations of interdependent human beings who have been socialised into the norms and values of a given culture, perhaps into those of a given specific sub-culture. Moreover, the personnel, at least in complex societies, have multiple memberships and hence, very often, conflicting allegiances. They also tend to be subjected to conflicting pressures. As a result, no organization can ever be insulated from the wider society within which it is set. Organizations, that is to say, do not have impermeable boundaries. Even “total institutions” are not completely closed, but have relations of various kinds with the outside world (Dunning and Sheard, 1976:35).

Nevertheless, one must bear in mind IBA legislation over the years favouring the inclusion of American basketball players. Such legislation was a result of a process in which individuals, particularly the team representatives, were caught up in figurations\footnote{141 Using the concept of power might help us to have a better understanding of the process. Power, according to Elias (1978), is a dynamic phenomenon which "...at the core of changing figurations is a fluctuating tensile... a balance of power moving to and from, inclining first to one side and then to the other. This kind of fluctuating balance of power is a central characteristic of the flow of every figuration".} that eventually led to consequences which were sometimes contrary to the IBA’s own goals. However, as Dunning and Sheard (1976) remind us, “To think of organizational goals is to involve the reification of the concept of organization and render it “consensualist” and “harmonisitic” (Dunning and Sheard, 1976:33). Hence, awareness of the different groups and people (along with their different interests) who comprise the IBA, and who were involved in the decision making process over the years, leads to a better understanding of the decision-making process occurring within this complex organization.

\footnote{141 Using the concept of power might help us to have a better understanding of the process. Power, according to Elias (1978), is a dynamic phenomenon which "...at the core of changing figurations is a fluctuating tensile... a balance of power moving to and from, inclining first to one side and then to the other. This kind of fluctuating balance of power is a central characteristic of the flow of every figuration".}
Part 4: Conclusion

Chapter 8: Findings and conclusions

8.1 Introduction

In 1949, a year after the establishment of the state of Israel, the Anglo-Jewish author, Arthur Koestler wrote *Promise and fulfillment: Palestine 1917-49*, in which he attempted to predict the future of the society emerging in the Jewish state. Koestler wrote that it was difficult indeed to foresee the direction which this new Hebrew civilization would take, but that “one thing seems to be quite clear: within a generation or two Israel will have become an entirely ‘un-Jewish’ country”. Already, Koestler stated in 1949, young people born in Israel were quite distinct from Diaspora Jews: “With each generation this contrast is bound to increase,” culminating in the creation of a Hebrew identity and culture that would be completely foreign to anything the Jews had previously known.

Thirty years earlier, social critic Thorstein Veblen offered the opposite forecast about the fate of the Jewish Society the Zionists sought to create in Palestine. According to Veblen, if the Zionists succeeded in gathering the Jews to their new state in their ancient land, they would isolate themselves completely from the wider world and concentrate solely on their particularist heritage, on “studies of a talmudic nature.” The Jewish people would no longer be exposed to modern European culture; this, in turn, would remove the conditions that until then had encouraged outstanding Jewish individuals to turn outward and contribute decisively to Western culture and modern science (Ravitzky, 1999:188).

Which of them was right? The answer depends, according to Ravitzky, to a great extent upon which social, cultural or ideological group one chooses to look at. Therefore, assuming that knowledge about one nation’s sport is knowledge about that nation’s society (Elias, 1986), throughout this thesis Israeli professional basketball has been used as the prism to identify processes occurring within Israeli society.
The intent of this chapter is to present findings and to draw conclusions from a research process that investigated the development of Israeli basketball. More specifically, this chapter will ascertain whether an Americanization process as part of a broader globalization process can serve as an explanatory rationale for the American influence on basketball in Israel. Several questions regarding the Americanization thesis were addressed in this research: What constitutes Americanization? Is it simply a question of the presence of a cultural product from a 'foreign' culture or does it involve a shift in the habitus and conscious make-up of people? How 'intended' is the process described? How complete does the process have to be for domination to be said to have occurred? What abilities must people possess in order to understand, embrace and/or resist these processes? What constitutes the 'indigenous/authentic' culture that the foreign culture threatens? To answer these questions, a process-sociological perspective was adopted which, as demonstrated in this thesis, is suited to assist in the task of explaining such a process. Furthermore, in tracing broader globalization processes, emphasis in this thesis has been placed on the growing network of interdependencies that involve economic, political, cultural and technological dimensions.

8.2 Israel: the globalization of a village

Throughout this thesis it has been argued that in order to have a better understanding of what is happening in the 'local' (i.e. Israel basketball as part of the Israel society), we must look first at the 'global'. Robertson's view (1995) that much of the promotion of locality is in fact done from above or outside has been adhered to.

An array of globalization research was reviewed in this thesis. Throughout this review, several different traditions were identified. As chapter 2 demonstrated, proponents of the different perspectives more or less agree that we are dealing with long-term processes that have occurred unevenly across all areas of the planet. These long-term processes, involving an increasing intensification of global interconnectedness, are seen to be gathering momentum, and despite the 'unevenness' of these processes, it is becoming more difficult to understand local or national experiences without reference to global flows (Maguire, 1999:37).
Consequently, in order to examine basketball as part of a widespread global sport culture, the origin of the global process and its cultural flows were scrutinised before turning to its local implications. For that purpose, Appadurai’s model (1991) was used as a framework for my research. Appadurai’s analysis of global cultural flow was readily adapted, as chapter 2 shows, to illustrate and explain the globalization of sport. Since the main area of investigation is basketball, chapter 3 outlined the early development of basketball and shed light on the process that led to the diffusion of the game around the world. Attention was given to the development of basketball in the United States, where the game was invented more than a century ago, and focused on a whole network of social functions surrounding the game. Chapter 3 also looked at the extent to which the circulation of universal American commodity-signs attached to basketball (Andrews, 1997), resulted in the convergence of global markets, lifestyles and identities.

While the debate over the extent of American dominance over the sports world was presented and analysed, it was argued here that “Americanization” is a much more useful and accurate term than “globalization” in the Israeli context. The extent to which Israeli basketball was arguably Americanized over the last 30 years led to a series of questions that this thesis tried to answer.

The first issue the research looked at was “what constitutes Americanization and whether it is simply a question of the presence of a cultural product from a ‘foreign' culture”. In the case of Israeli basketball (as in the rest of the world), the product is clearly American. As chapter 3 illustrated, basketball has the distinction of being the only major competitive sport that began in the United States that later spread around the globe. However, in the Israeli context it was not only the game that was imported but also American players who have dominated Israeli basketball almost since its establishment. The influx of American basketball players since the 1960s has been an ongoing process that led to dependent relations between the Israeli teams and their American players. A distinction was made between players who came for Zionist reasons and those who came primarily to play basketball. The growing numbers of Americans playing basketball in Israel increased the number of players who made basketball their full-time occupation and emphasized the intertwined process of
professionalization of basketball in Israel. The American players definitely elevated the level of the game in Israel as Sherf explains:

...all of Western basketball, including Israeli basketball, has developed and come to what it has thanks to the Americans. This is not to say that it would not have been developed without them but certainly the level would have been different.

According to most of the interviewees in this thesis, Sherf included, the American players gave Israeli basketball a boost that was shown mostly in the attitude towards the game. They served as role models to young Israeli players as they brought with them, among other things, influences from their college basketball education which stressed the importance of victory above all. However, the characteristics of such an American influence were also responsible for the decline of English values relating to the importance of taking part, fair play, amateurism and other moral values. As chapter 8 outlined, along with their playing abilities, some of the American players brought with them from the United States manners that did not fit the existing Israeli notion of basketball and how it should be played. At the same time, the Americanization of Israeli basketball accelerated other processes such as professionalization and commodification that threatened, like other unintended consequences, to lead to a process of financial disintegration of Israeli basketball. The American influx into the Israeli basketball league also led to growing competitiveness that, at best, created a situation in which eight or nine good teams competed and made the league tougher and more attractive to sponsors and spectators alike. At the same time, it accelerated the 'chasing Maccabi Tel Aviv syndrome' - teams that tried to challenge Maccabi Tel Aviv's hegemony by signing American players, not only failed to do so but also collapsed professionally and financially.

As chapter 6 illustrated, with the growing number of American-born immigrants who came to ply their trade in Israeli basketball, voices were heard that questioned not only the rising number of Americans, (which lowered the representation of local talents), but more acutely, the proliferation of illicit practices which undermined ethical standards. Rumours circulated regarding the Jewishness of some of the American players, together with well-documented stories about "quickie" conversions
to Judaism. These conversions, which according to the “Law of Return” allowed imported players to compete in Israel, were performed in small communities in the United States and led to what Rosenblum (1978:11), among others, called “the conspiracy of silence in Israel”.

This latter example coincides with one of the main arguments in this thesis which asserts that in order to obtain a better understanding of Israeli basketball, one must bear in mind the developing structure of Israeli society as well as other far-reaching figurational processes. Even if Israeli basketball has undergone a significant shift toward Americanization, it is admissible to ask whether this change is different in dimension and scope from similar processes which have taken place in other domains in Israel – economics, media, and politics. Thus, going beyond the search for a single cause for the process of Americanization, this thesis also discussed the power relations among various groups that constitute Israel society, based on the analysis of processes that gathered momentum parallel to, and in conjunction with, the Americanization process. In order to fully comprehend the process of Americanization, processes such as ‘professionalization’, ‘secularization’, ‘urbanization’, and ‘militarization’, which were discussed more fully in chapter 6, should be borne in mind.

Another question this thesis attempted to answer: was “How ‘intended’ was the process described?” As Caspi (1996) observed, and as chapter 4 demonstrated, it would seem that, from the very beginning, Americanization was to a great extent a communication process which was imported to Israel, much like other social and cultural fads and fashions. However, a number of changes within Israeli society, such as those discussed in chapters 4 and 5, “contributed to the lowering of cultural barriers and to softening the ground which then appeared to absorb thirstily the principles of the American... style” (Caspi, 1996:179). One of the barriers lowered was closely connected with a process which transformed Israeli society, almost overnight, from a single television channel society to a multi-channel media society. This process influenced sport in general but basketball in particular. The way in which communication systems developed in Israel, particularly television, helped in allowing the penetration of transnational media agencies (CNN, Sky), as well as of sports organizations such as the NBA and NFL. According to Andrews (1997), a key
factor in the NBA’s rapid emergence in Europe during the mid- to late 1980s (and as chapter 7 illustrated, in Israel in the 1990s) was the changing structure and scope of television in the reciprocally changing European geopolitical formation. Yet, the global dissemination of American sport forms, which developed to varying degrees in different countries and continents, was controlled and manipulated by transnational media and marketing agencies as well as by sports’ organizations, as Maguire explains:

While it is important to probe the existence of relatively autonomous transnational practices, the researcher should not be unaware that national and transnational media and marketing agencies, as well as sports organizations such as the NBA and the NFL, will attempt to manipulate and control such processes. It is also legitimate to note, though more particularly concerning specific sports, such as European basketball, that a combined process of commodification/Americanization has occurred, but has done so within the context of broader globalization processes. This can take several forms: the global migration of American sports personnel, the global spread of American sport forms and the global adoption of the marketing of sports along American lines. This is accelerated in both intended and unintended ways by the media-sport production complex. Though these forms have developed to varying degrees in different countries and continents, more usually they interweave in a mutually reinforcing manner (Maguire, 1999:171-2)

Notwithstanding, Maguire claims that people do not freely choose which cultural products are consumed:

The sport industries do provide a staple diet of western products, and the cult of consumerism is spreading around the globe. In some respects, the sport-media production complex also ensures that the marketing of the same (Italics in original) sport forms, products and images does occur. ‘Local’ people do not freely choose which cultural
products are consumed. There is political economy at work regulating global flows (Maguire, 1999:213).

In the case of the Israel, it is argued here that the Americanization process accelerated and was more evident mainly due to the special relations between Israel and the United States. As chapter 4 demonstrated, Israel has been dependent since its establishment almost entirely upon the United States for security and diplomatic support. The United States government has expressed its commitment to Israel’s security and well-being and has devoted a considerable share of its world-wide economic and security assistance to Israel. As for the question regarding the abilities of people to understand, embrace or resist the process of Americanization one must remember that along with the United States economic and military assistance to Israel, a large part of the grants provided to Israel takes the form of American credit to purchase American goods and military supplies. In other words, to a large extent, the Israel government does not have freedom of choice since it is constrained to buy mostly American products from the grants provided. In addition, the free trade agreement signed in 1984 makes American products relatively cheap and therefore worthwhile importing to Israel. As for Israel citizens, Garfinkle (1996) emphasises the importance of the American currency in Israel when he claims that the Israeli currency is closely bound up with the fate of the American dollar. When the dollar suddenly weakens it either makes Israeli products more expensive or, if products are sold for the same dollar amount, reduces profits. A strong dollar tends to raise housing prices in Israel, which are generally quoted in dollars (Garfinkle, 1996:565). It is, therefore, not surprising that some people predict that Israel will become the United States’ 51st state, while some would say that this process is already under way. However, as Yair Sheleg, a senior journalist in the Haaretz daily asserts, the real question is Israel’s cultural identity:

...It is not the state’s formal definition, but its cultural identity. The great enemy of the Jewish, or the Israeli, national identity is undoubtedly the “global village”. Obviously, this is not just an Israeli problem, but a world-wide phenomenon. Around the world, the preservation of a unique

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142 Notwithstanding, it is argued here that the relationship between the two allies should be understood as interdependence rather than totally dependent relations.
local or national identity has become increasingly difficult. American culture has become ubiquitous. American movies and television cover the globe; even when the local language (as in Germany, Y.G) is dubbed in, the viewers' world becomes at least partly American, as an American outlook becomes inculcated into the worldview of those watching both the big and small screens. "Americanism" in this context is, however, only a metaphor (Sheleg, 1999:202).

To Sheleg, the "global village" does not refer to American domination of all parts of mass culture, but simply refers to the popular, consumerist culture to which America gave birth. He continues:

...This is the realm in which the dollar is the supreme value, where people are measured by their purchasing power, and products – from books to socks – are also measured according to their commercial worth. Television and movies comprise only one category in this consumer culture. This new value system negates the values of an earlier... era when people believed in religion, a unique national culture and social commitment. At best, the consumer culture replaces these with a distorted caricature, such as the fundamentalist preacher or national fanatic (Sheleg, 1999:202)

Yet Sheleg is not the only one concerned about Israeli culture. Israel's former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech in December 1994, voiced his concern as well: "Jewish culture has lived over many centuries; now it has taken root again on its own soil. For the first time in our history, some 5 million people speak Hebrew as their native language". "This," he noted, "is both a lot and a little: a lot, because there have never been so many Hebrew speakers; but a little, because a culture based on 5 million people can hardly withstand the pervasive, corrosive effect of the global television culture". Peres has long been concerned that Israel could lose what is unique about its culture. "We have a very special culture based on religion, history, tradition, literature - all the things that brought us to Israel in the first place," he said. If Israelis were to lose this sense of specialness, Peres adds,
“they might not feel the same dedication to the goals we have traditionally striven for in Israel” (cited in Chabin, 1995).

In order to have a better perspective on Peres’ and Sheleg’s views, one should bear in mind the history of the state of Israel as part of the broader Zionism idea. The process of the establishment of the state of Israel, which was documented in chapter 4, can assist in providing such a perspective. As chapter 4 illustrated, throughout the years the Zionist vision moved between two opposing desires: the desire to establish a model society, “a light unto the nations,” on the one hand, and, on the other, the need for the normalization of Jewish life (Azaryahu, 1999:39). The Zionist ambition has always comprised two objectives: to forge a new relationship between the Jewish people and the Gentile world, and to create a new Jewish people in the process. Through this process, the Diaspora would eventually disappear. Americanization therefore causes problems for Israeli Zionists when it undermines, or seems to distort, their goals (Garfinkle, 1996:561). As this thesis demonstrated, American cultural influence is so huge that many places in Israel sometimes feel like a transliterated America. That bothers many Israelis because, as far as Israel and Zionism are concerned, America has made imitating and envying the Gentiles fashionable again. For religious Jews, it has led to the additional worry that in a generation or two most secular Israelis will be de facto Gentiles who just happen to speak Hebrew (Garfinkle, 1996:565).

Thus, the Americanization process seems to ‘threaten’ Israel’s ‘authentic’ culture. The American liberal democratic doctrine143, is non-national and, to a large extent, is anti-national and individualistic in the extreme. Zionism, in contrast, grew as a national democratic movement, which, as mentioned earlier, developed against the backdrop and under the patronage of the national democratic philosophy of Western Europe.

Similar to what was outlined in chapter 4, Schweid (1999) mentions that Israel was able to impede the effects of post-modernism which America represents until the Six-

143 In its basic model, it views the state as belonging to its citizens, in contrast to a nation-state that belongs to the nation as a historical being. Thus, it views the state as responsible for the well-being and happiness of its citizens as individuals, not the nation’s survival as an autonomous entity.
Day War, by applying social and economic policies dictated by the need to absorb masses of immigrants. According to Schweid, these barriers fell after the Six-Day War, and the influence of the political, social and cultural conceptions of post-World War II American liberalism penetrated Israeli society with great momentum. To Schweid then, the issue is:

The assimilation of the basic concepts of American liberal democracy and, foremost, the adoption of the social concepts of this democracy; the free-market economic ethos; the abandonment of the socialist social-policy parameters that had guided Israel as an immigrant-absorbing country until the Six-Day War; and the forfeit of integrationist social aspects in education and in the army, all for the sake of an ideology of unrestrained competition - all of these, after the fact, turned post-Zionism into a form of social behaviour and socio-economic policy (Schweid, 1999:5).

Furthermore, he argues that the process, in which post-Zionism absorbed American concepts, led to

...contemporary culture acquired through the media directly from American culture. Anyone who so desires can stroll at leisure through foreign cultural landscapes in Israel and can find assimilation in a gamut of values and symbols: political, ethical, social, creative, spiritual and even linguistic (Schweid, 1999:6).

This ethos of individualism and competitiveness that permeates Israel’s society has coincided, according to those who are concerned for Israel’s ‘indigenous’ culture, with the gradual dismantling of the Israeli welfare system and, some would say, the social cohesion that made Israel feel in many ways like one large family. One such person is Hebrew University political scientist Ze’ev Sternhell. Sternhell says that "Individualism is the pillar of political behaviour in the west and it is becoming so in this country as well. One of the reasons why the welfare state is going to pieces is that collective values are crumbling" (quoted in Arnold, 1999:4).
In this political context, consideration must also be given to the fact that many Israeli politicians visit and spend extended stays in the United States. Perhaps it is not coincidental that both Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu, (who later succeeded Rabin in the same post), served as Israeli Ambassador to the United States and, while in that post, undoubtedly absorbed elements of the American political culture.\textsuperscript{144} (Caspi, 1996:182-3). In his research on the political campaigns in Israel, Caspi makes a clear distinction between the different views regarding the process. To Caspi there is a clear difference between adopting American political standards and procedures and Americanization \textit{per se}. According to Caspi, the difference between Americanization and standardization is not of a marginal nature. The former gives preference to the source of innovation over the adopter of the innovation, often out of a sense of superiority. The latter view assumes that the adopting unit controls the diffusion process; that is, the adopter decides if, to what extent, and how the innovation should be absorbed. Caspi’s conclusions regarding the process were:

The Americanization of electoral campaigns in Israel may provide a few important lessons to other young democracies which are inclined to idealize the experiences of the older ones. Most young democracies apparently need a model for imitation, and in some cases, the import of tried and true democratic procedures may save time. It is not easy to resist the temptation to walk in the footsteps of an old and experienced democracy. On the other hand, imitating the ways of others can be a mistake if it fails to recognize the unique and valuable attributes of a country’s political heritage. The case of election campaigns in Israel proves the fallibility of blind imitation of a “big brother”. The price, as proved by the changes in the nature of electoral campaigns in Israel, may be too high for a young democracy (Caspi, 1996:188).

In some respects, the findings of this study on Israeli basketball are similar to those of Caspi. As outlined in this study, Israelis often embrace aspects of American culture

\textsuperscript{144} It might be worth adding that Israel’s next Prime Minister (as of May 1999) Ehud Barak earned his Masters degree in systems analysis from Stanford. His coalition member, ‘Meretz’ leader Yossi Sarid, studied at New York’s New School for Social Research while Supreme Court President Aharon Barak completed advanced legal studies at Harvard University in Boston.
that create a pale version of what seems to be not so glamorous a society. Where the
Israeli basketball league is concerned, it appears as though “we import American
players who can teach us a lot about working habits, work ethic, etc. However, we
choose to adopt the ‘winning in all cost’ mentality that leads to shameful incidents
that threaten to ruin our basketball league” (Shelach,1998:ITV).

However, the present study disputes the logic of the assimilation-within-Israel thesis
suggested by Caspi and Schweid. Even Schweid agrees that assimilation in its classic
form is a process experienced by a minority that lives amid a large, wealthy majority.
The minority is swallowed up by the majority society, knowingly and voluntarily
obfuscating the indicators that distinguish it from the majority and disappears. While
this definition seems to fit the findings of this study, one can not deny that Israelis
still live in their own state and speak its vernacular, and therefore cannot assimilate
completely, at least not in the classic form.

On the other hand the intention here is not to imply that Caspi and Schweid are totally
wrong. In the case of Israeli basketball, and in much broader context, the suggestion
is that Israel society is ‘overshadowed’, maybe more than even before, by the more
powerful American state. However, as this thesis indicates and as process-
sociologists would argue145, assimilation, at least in any simple sense, is not a
sufficient explanation of the observed events. Therefore, it is possible to share with
Scott the view that:

No matter how determined the attempt to transmit homogenous and
uniform cultural material, actors are too knowing and culture too
complex for any process of cultural exchange – no matter how
unequal – to be exclusively one way. One implication here may be
that it is complexity of culture itself rather than the greater flexibility
of globalization as compared to so-called ‘Americanization’ that
explains the eclecticism of cultural exchange; such eclecticism being

145 For example, Maguire (1999) argues that “while globalization processes do not necessarily lead to
the destruction of ‘local’ culture, such cultures survive in a context more defined by powerful
established nations and/or transnational groups” (Maguire,1999:40).
the normal condition of cultural interaction irrespective of the ways in which inequalities of power mould those interactions (Scott, 1997:19).

While recognizing that the Americanization process involves a blend of intended and unintended practices, it is also argued here that monocausal and unidirectional analysis of such a process might not reveal the whole picture. This process of Americanization is not simply about interdependent relations, rather it is concerned with the inter-relatedness of multi-faceted configurations. Processes such as 'professionalization', 'commodification', 'secularization', 'urbanization', and 'militarization' are also part of a very complex society and should also be borne in mind. While this study focused on one dimension of Israeli society, Israeli basketball, which according to this thesis underwent a significant shift toward Americanization, it is also argued that this shift is not entirely different in dimension and scope from similar processes in other areas in Israel such as economics, politics or communications. Although other, yet smaller-scale, processes of Japanization, Africanization and Russianization are also gathering momentum, it seems that as far as Israel is concerned, 'the long rise of the west' is continuing.

Conclusion

As Maguire, (1999) asserted, and as this thesis upheld, the process of globalization contains interdependency chains that are contoured and shaped by a series of unequal power-balances involving global transnational corporations, regional sub-contractors, sports organizations, media networks, workers and consumers (Maguire, 1999:128). Yet, it is also demonstrated here that globalization is not a simple process of homogenization. Nor does the spread or diffusion of styles of behaviour solely depend on the activities of established groups. A multiplicity of two-way processes of cultural interaction criss-cross the semi-permeable barriers that established groups within Western societies, and within Western and non-Western societies (such as the United States and Israel), deploy to maintain their distinction, power and prestige. The more they become inter-connected with outsider groups, the more they depend on them for social tasks. In so doing, the contrasts between them diminish (Maguire, 1999:45).
On the local level, it was also suggested here that Americanization might be a more suitable term in the Israeli context. Few Israelis would dispute that American influence has made a tremendous impact on daily life in Israel. As Israel turned 52 (in May, 2000), signs of Americanization are everywhere, from the increasing infusion of English words into the Hebrew language, to the popularity of television programs, to the influx of American basketball players who dominate the Israeli basketball league. Moreover, this is evident in the fashions worn by Israeli children, the fast-food franchises that dot the landscape and the political mannerisms of its American-bred prime minister(s). However, this process in not exclusively one way: when Israel’s Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu felt himself blocked in his dealings with the Clinton administration in 1996, he proved adept at using American Jewish and Christian lobbies\(^{146}\) - as well as alternate centers of power in America such as Congress and the media - to press Israel’s case (Arnold, 1995).

Nonetheless, it seems that this process has made the people of Israel more competitive and capitalistic, more private, materialistic and career-minded. While some nations, like the French\(^{147}\) and the Chinese, attempt to restrict the spread of Americanization in their homelands, according to this thesis, Israelis, at least most of them, show no intention of constructing a floodgate.

However, this process of Americanization is far from being complete. Some people like Ze’ev Chafets, an author and columnist for the Jerusalem Report, wishes it were. Chafets wishes that the Americanization process would go even further, toward the institutionalized separation of church and state as enshrined in the United States Constitution. "There’s only one political culture which actually works in the world and that is the Anglo-American political culture," Chafets says. "We should only be so lucky as to actually become a democracy after that model...We're not there primarily because this is a country which still aspires to a compromise between democracy and some sort of medieval rabbinical theocracy, and until we can get that sorted out, Israel won’t be a democracy in the American sense." (quoted in

\(^{146}\) Many Christians take a special interest in Israel as the site of the supposed biblical miracles and, perhaps, see the resurrection of the state of Israel as a precursor for the coming redemption.

\(^{147}\) According to Dvir (1996), in 1996 some 16,000 French voters signed a petition to keep McDonald’s out of the Vavin-Brea square in Paris. The French also kept McDonald's away from the Eiffel Tower area (Dvir, 1996:11)
Arnold, 1995). This perpetual dilemma, Jewish religion in the Jewish state (Abramov, 1976), illustrates only one dimension of a complex culture. The widely diverse population which arrived in Israel from many different ethnic, religious, cultural and social backgrounds reflects many of the country's characteristics, such as the great diversity of lifestyles, beliefs and habits, and the combination of a unique and ancient heritage.

As this thesis draws to an end it is difficult indeed to foresee Israel's future as well as to completely answer the "question of Judaism", as it was posed by Ahad Ha'am, Koestler, Veblen and many others. However, one thing seems to be clearer. As the phenomenon of reciprocal relations is gathering momentum between peoples and cultures, and as the global system continues to remake itself, becoming ever more complex, many more investigations of this kind need to be conducted.
## Appendix I: Basketball rules (FIBA, NBA, McDONALD’S OPEN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NBA</th>
<th>FIBA</th>
<th>McDONALD’S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size of court</td>
<td>94’ x 50’</td>
<td>28m x 15m</td>
<td>94’ x 50’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-point field goal line</td>
<td>23’9”</td>
<td>20’7”</td>
<td>22’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted area (key)</td>
<td>16’ x 19’ Rectangle</td>
<td>12’ - 19’8” Trapezium</td>
<td>12’ - 19’8” Trapezium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>4 - 12 minute periods</td>
<td>2 - 20 minute halves</td>
<td>4 - 12 minute periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overtime periods</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time between 1st/2nd &amp; 3rd/4th periods</td>
<td>2:10</td>
<td>No special provision</td>
<td>2:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of time-outs allowed - game</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 per half</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of time-outs allowed - overtimes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of time-outs allowed - 4th period</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>No special provision</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of time-outs allowed - last 2 minutes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No special provision</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-outs must be called by</td>
<td>Player in game</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Player/Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-out duration</td>
<td>1:40</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>1:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-second time-outs</td>
<td>1 per half</td>
<td>No special provision</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock stops last minute of 1st, 2nd, 3rd periods after successful FG</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No special provision</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock stops last two minutes of 4th period &amp; overtimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot clock</td>
<td>24 seconds</td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>24 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot clock reset</td>
<td>Ball hits rim</td>
<td>FG attempt released</td>
<td>Ball hits rim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of halftime</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>10/15 minutes</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fouls allowed per game</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoot penalty free throw (regulation)</td>
<td>5th team foul or 2nd in last two minutes</td>
<td>8th team foul (in half)</td>
<td>5th team foul or 2nd in last two minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoot penalty free throw (overtime)</td>
<td>4th team foul or 2nd in last two minutes</td>
<td>No special provision (Extension)</td>
<td>4th team foul or 2nd in last two minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of FT's shot on technical foul (bench)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of technicals for ejection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball awarded to after technical foul called</td>
<td>Team in control when called</td>
<td>Team of the FT shooter</td>
<td>Team in control when called</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seconds to shoot FT's</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions on defense</td>
<td>Illegal defense guidelines</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closely guarded for 5 seconds - violation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution between multiple free throw attempts</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time allowed to replace ejected or disqualified player</td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td>30 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interference with the ball above ball above the rim, in the cylinder, ceases when the ball hits the rim</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NBA official web site: URL: nba.com
Appendix I.I: Basketball court official size (According to FIBA)

All lines 5 cm wide and in the same color

This three-point line is not included in the three-point field goal area

Direction of play

Two-Point Field Goal Area

Three-Point Field Goal Area
Appendix II: Historical highlights

17th-6th C.
BCE
BIBLICAL TIMES
(BCE - Before the Common Era)
c. 17th century
The Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob - patriarchs of the Jewish people and bearers of a belief in one God - settle in the Land of Israel.
Famine forces Israelites to migrate to Egypt.
c. 13th century
Exodus from Egypt: Moses leads Israelites from Egypt, followed by 40 years of wandering in the desert.
Torah, including the Ten Commandments, received at Mount Sinai.

13th-12th centuries
Israelites settle the Land of Israel
c. 1020
Jewish Monarchy established; Saul, first king.
c. 1000
Jerusalem made capital of David's kingdom.
c. 960
First Temple, the national and spiritual center of the Jewish people, built in Jerusalem by King Solomon.
c. 930
Divided kingdom: Judah and Israel

722-720
Israel crushed by Assyrians; 10 tribes exiled (Ten Lost Tribes).

586
Judah conquered by Babylonia; Jerusalem and First Temple destroyed; most Jews exiled to Babylonia.

536-142
PERSIAN AND HELLENISTIC PERIODS

538-515
Many Jews return from Babylonia; Temple rebuilt.

332
Land conquered by Alexander the Great; Hellenistic rule.

166-160
Maccabean (Hasmonean) revolt against restrictions on practice of Judaism and desecration of the Temple

142-129
Jewish autonomy under Hasmoneans.

129-63
Jewish independence under Hasmonean monarchy.

63
Jerusalem captured by Roman general, Pompey.

63 BCE-313 CE

ROMAN RULE

(CE - The Common Era)

37 BCE - 4 CE
Herod, Roman vassal king, rules the Land of Israel; Temple in Jerusalem refurbished

c 20-33
Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth

66
Jewish revolt against the Romans

70
Destruction of Jerusalem and Second Temple.

73
Last stand of Jews at Masada.

132-135
Bar Kokhba uprising against Rome.

c. 210
Codification of Jewish oral law (Mishnah) completed.

313-636

BYZANTINE RULE

c. 390
Commentary on the Mishnah (Jerusalem Talmud) completed.

614
Persian invasion

636-1099

ARAB RULE

691
On site of First and Second Temples in Jerusalem,
Dome of the Rock built by Caliph Abd el-Malik

1099-1291
CRUSADER DOMINATION
(Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem)

1291-1516
MAMLUK RULE

1517-1917
OTTOMAN RULE

1564
Code of Jewish law (Shulhan Arukh) published.

1860
First neighborhood, Mishkenot Sha'ananim, built outside Jerusalem's walls.

1882-1903
First Aliya (large-scale immigration), mainly from Russia.

1897
First Zionist Congress convened by Theodor Herzl in Basel, Switzerland; Zionist Organization founded.

1904-14
Second Aliya, mainly from Russia and Poland.

1909
First kibbutz, Degania, and first modern all-Jewish city, Tel Aviv, founded.

1917
400 years of Ottoman rule ended by British conquest; British Foreign Minister Balfour pledges support for establishment of a "Jewish national home in Palestine".

1918-48
BRITISH RULE

1919-23
Third Aliya, mainly from Russia

1920
Histadrut (Jewish labor federation) and Haganah (Jewish defense organization) founded. Vaad Leumi (National Council) set up by Jewish community (yishuv) to conduct its affairs.
1921
First moshav, Nahalal, founded.

1922
Britain granted Mandate for Palestine (Land of Israel) by League of Nations; Transjordan set up on three-fourths of the area, leaving one-fourth for the Jewish national home Jewish Agency representing Jewish community vis-a-vis Mandate authorities set up.

1924-32
Fourth Aliya, mainly from Poland.

1931
Etzel, Jewish underground organization, founded.

1933-39
Fifth Aliya, mainly from Germany.

1939
Jewish immigration severely limited by British White Paper.

1939-45
World War II; Holocaust in Europe.

1941
Lehi underground movement formed; Palmach, strike force of Haganah, set up.

1944
Jewish Brigade formed as part of British forces.

1947
UN proposes the establishment of Arab and Jewish states in the Land.

1948
The state of Israel established.

Source: Israeli Foreign Ministry (1997)
Appendix III: Statement on Palestine by British Foreign Secretary Bevin (13 Nov. 1945)

His Majesty's Government have been giving serious and continuous attention to the whole problem of the Jewish community that has arisen as a result of Nazi persecution in Germany and the conditions arising therefrom. It is unfortunately true that until conditions in Europe become stable the future of a large number of persons of many races, who have suffered under this persecution, cannot finally be determined. The plight of the victims of Nazi persecution, among whom were a large number of Jews, is unprecedented in the history of the world. His Majesty's Government are taking every step open to them to try and improve the lot of these unfortunate people.

The Jewish problem is a great human one. We cannot accept the view that the Jews should be driven out of Europe and should not be permitted to live again in these countries without discrimination and contribute their ability and talent toward rebuilding the prosperity of Europe. Even after we have done all we can in this respect it does not provide a solution of the whole problem.

There have recently been demands made upon us for large-scale immigration into Palestine. Palestine, while it may be able to make a contribution, does not by itself provide sufficient opportunity for grappling with the whole problem. His Majesty's Government are anxious to explore every possibility which will result in giving the Jews a proper opportunity for revival.

The problem of Palestine is itself a very difficult one. The mandate for Palestine required the mandatory to facilitate Jewish immigration and to encourage close settlement by Jews on the land, while insuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced thereby. His Majesty's Government have thus a dual obligation, to the Jews on the one side and to the Arabs on the other.

The lack of any clear definition of this dual obligation has been the main cause of the trouble which has been experienced in Palestine during the past twenty-five years. His Majesty's Government have made every effort to devise some arrangement which would enable Arabs and Jews to live together in peace and to cooperate for the welfare of the country, but all such efforts have been unavailing. Any arrangement acceptable to one party has been rejected as unacceptable to the other. The whole history of Palestine since the mandate was granted has been one of continual friction between the two races, culminating at intervals in serious disturbances.

The fact has to be faced that since the introduction of the mandate it has been impossible to find common ground between the Arabs and the Jews. The differences in religion and in language, in cultural and social life, in ways of thought and conduct, are difficult to reconcile. On the other hand, both communities lay claim to Palestine, one on the ground of a millennium of occupation and the other on the ground of historic association coupled with the undertaking given in the First World War to establish a Jewish home. The task that has to be accomplished now is to find means to reconcile these divergencies.

The repercussions of the conflict have spread far beyond the small land in which it has arisen. The Zionist cause has strong supporters in the United States, in Great Britain, in the Dominions and elsewhere; civilization has been appalled by the sufferings which have been inflicted in recent years on the persecuted Jews of
Europe.

On the other side of the picture the cause of the Palestinian Arabs has been espoused by the whole Arab world and more lately has become a matter of keen interest to their 90,000,000 co-religionists in India. In Palestine itself there is always serious risk of disturbance on the part of one community or the other, and such disturbances are bound to find their reflection in a much wider field. Considerations not only of equity and of humanity but also of international amity and world peace are thus involved in any search for a solution.

In dealing with Palestine all parties have entered into commitments. There are the commitments imposed by the mandate itself, and in addition the various statements of policy which have been made by His Majesty's Government in the course of the last twenty-five years. Further, the United States Government themselves have undertaken that no decision should be taken in respect to what, in their opinion, affects the basic situation in Palestine without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews. Having regard to the whole situation and the fact that it has caused this world-wide interest which affects both Arabs and Jews, His Majesty's Government decided to invite the Government of the United States to cooperate with them in setting up a joint Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, under a rotating chairmanship, to examine the question of European Jewry and to make a further review of the Palestine problem in the light of that examination. I am glad to be able to inform the House that the Government of the United States have accepted this invitation.

The terms of reference of the Committee of Inquiry will be as follows:

(1) To examine political, economic and social conditions in Palestine as they bear upon the problem of Jewish immigration and settlement therein and the well-being of the peoples now living therein.

(2) To examine the position of the Jews in those countries in Europe where they have been the victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution, and the practical measures taken or contemplated to be taken in those countries to enable them to live free from discrimination and oppression and to make estimates of those who wish or will be impelled by their conditions to migrate to Palestine or other countries outside Europe.

(3) To hear the views of competent witnesses and to consult representative Arabs and Jews on the problems of Palestine as such problems are affected by conditions subject to examination under paragraphs 1 and 2 above and by other relevant facts and circumstances, and to make recommendations to His Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States for ad interim handling of these problems as well as for their permanent solution.

(4) To make such other recommendations to His Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States as may be necessary to meet the immediate needs arising from conditions subject to examination under paragraph 2 above, by remedial action in the European countries in question or by the provision of facilities for emigration to and settlement in countries outside Europe.

The procedure of the committee will be determined by the committee themselves and it will be open to them, if they think fit, to deal simultaneously through the medium of subcommittees with their various terms of reference.
The committee will be invited to deal with the matters referred to in their terms of reference with the utmost expedition. In complying with the second and fourth paragraphs of their terms of reference, the committee will presumably take such steps as they consider necessary in order to inform themselves of the character and magnitude of the problem created by the war. They will also give consideration to the problem of settlement in Europe and to possible countries of disposal. In the light of their investigations they will make recommendation to the two Governments for dealing with the problem in the interim until such time as a permanent solution can be submitted to the appropriate organ of the United Nations.

The recommendations of a Committee of Inquiry such as will now be set up will also be of immense help in arriving at a solution of the Palestine problem. The committee will, in accordance with the first and third paragraphs of their terms of reference, make an examination on the spot of the political, economic and social conditions which are at present held to restrict immigration into Palestine and, after consulting representative Arabs and Jews, submit proposals for dealing with these problems. It will be necessary for His Majesty's Government both to take action with a view to securing some satisfactory interim arrangement and also to devise a policy for permanent application thereafter.

This inquiry will facilitate the findings of a solution which will in turn facilitate the arrangements for placing Palestine under trusteeship.

So far as Palestine is concerned it will be clear that His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of their duties and responsibilities under the mandate while the mandate continues. They propose, in accordance with their pledges, to deal with the question in three stages:

(1) They will consult the Arabs with a view to an arrangement which will insure that, pending the receipt of the ad interim recommendations which the Committee of Inquiry will make in the matter, there is no interruption of Jewish immigration at the present monthly rate.

(2) After considering the ad interim recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry, they will explore, with the parties concerned, the possibility of devising other temporary arrangements for dealing with the Palestine problem until a permanent solution of it can be reached.

(3) They will prepare a permanent solution for submission to the United Nations and, if possible, an agreed one.

The House will realize that we have inherited, in Palestine, a most difficult legacy and our task is greatly complicated by undertakings, given at various times to various parties, which we feel ourselves bound to honor. Any violent departure without adequate consultation would not only afford ground for a charge of breach of faith against His Majesty's Government but would probably cause serious reactions throughout the Middle East and would arouse widespread anxiety in India.

His Majesty's Government are satisfied that the course which they propose to pursue in the immediate future is not only that which is in accordance with their obligations but is also that which, in the long view, is in the best interests of both parties. It will in no way prejudice either the action to be taken on the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry or the terms of the trusteeship.
agreement, which will supersede the existing mandate and will therefore control ultimate policy in regard to Palestine.

His Majesty's Government in making this new approach wish to make it clear that the Palestine problem is not one which can be settled by force and that any attempt to do so by any party will be resolutely dealt with. It must be settled by discussion and conciliation, and there can be no question of allowing an issue to be forced by violent conflict.

We have confidence that if this problem is approached in the right spirit by Arabs and Jews, not only will the solution be found to the Palestine question, just to both parties, but a great contribution will be made to stability and peace in the Middle East.

Finally, the initiative taken by His Majesty's Government, and the agreement of the United States Government to cooperate in dealing with the whole problem created by Nazi aggression, is a significant sign of their determination to deal with the problem in a constructive way and a humanitarian spirit. But I must emphasize that the problem is not one which can be dealt with only in relation to Palestine; it will need a united effort by the powers to relieve the miseries of these suffering peoples.

Throughout there has been the closest consultation between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and myself in this matter, which concerns him since the mandatory status of Palestine brings that territory within the responsibility of the Colonial Office. But it is also of deep concern to me since the problem is clearly an international problem.

It is the intention of the Government that the problem shall be continued to be handled in close collaboration between our two departments in order that the particular question of Palestine and the wider international issues which are involved may be harmonized and treated as a whole, as a great human problem.

Appendix iii: Law of Return 5710-1950

Right of aliyah** 1. Every Jew has the right to come to this country as an oleh.**

Oleh’s visa 2. (a) Aliyah shall be by oleh’s visa.

(b) An oleh’s visa shall be granted to every Jew who has expressed his desire to settle in Israel, unless the Minister of Immigration is satisfied that the applicant

(1) is engaged in an activity directed against the Jewish people; or

(2) is likely to endanger public health or the security of the State.

Oleh’s certificate 3. (a) A Jew who has come to Israel and subsequent to his arrival has expressed his desire to settle in Israel may, while still in Israel, receive an oleh’s certificate.

(b) The restrictions specified in section 2(b) shall apply also to the grant of an oleh’s certificate, but a person shall not be regarded as endangering public health on account of an illness contracted after his arrival in Israel.

Residents and persons born in this country

4. Every Jew who has immigrated into this country before the coming into force of this Law, and every Jew who was born in this country, whether before or after the coming into force of this Law, shall be deemed to be a person who has come to this country as an oleh under this Law.

Implementation and regulations

5. The Minister of Immigration is charged with the implementation of this Law and may make regulations as to any matter relating to such implementation and also as to the grant of oleh’s visas and oleh’s certificates to minors up to the age of 18 years.

DAVID BEN-GURION
Prime Minister
MOSHE SHAPIRA
Minister of Immigration
YOSEF SPRINZAK
Acting President of the State
Chairman of the Knesset

* Passed by the Knesset on the 20th Tammuz, 5710 (5th July, 1950) and published in Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 51 of the 21st Tammuz, 5710 (5th July, 1950), p. 159; the Bill and an Explanatory Note were published in Hatz’ot Chok No. 48 of the 12th Tammuz, 5710 (27th June, 1950), p. 189.

**Aliyah means immigration of Jews, and oleh (plural: olim) means a Jew immigrating to Israel.

Law of Return (Amendment 5714-1954)*
Amendment of section 2(b)
Amendment of sections 2 and 5

1. In section 2 (b) of the Law of Return, 5710-1950**
(1) the full stop at the end of paragraph (2) shall be replaced by a semi-colon, and the word "or" shall be inserted thereafter;

(2) the following paragraph shall be inserted after paragraph (2):

"(3) is a person with a criminal past, likely to endanger public welfare."

In sections 2 and 5 of the Law, the words "the Minister of Immigration" shall be replaced by the words "the Minister of the Interior."

MOSHE SHARETT
Prime Minister

YOSEF SERLIN
Minister of Health

Acting Minister of the Interior

YITZCHAK BEN-ZVI
President of the State

* Passed by the Knesset on the 24th Av, 5714 (23rd August, 1954) and published in Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 163 of the 3rd Elul, 5714 (1st September, 1954) p. 174; the Bill and an Explanatory Note were published in Hatza'ot Chok No. 192 of 5714, p. 88.

** Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 51 of 5710, p. 159, LSI vol. IV, 114.

Law of Return (Amendment No. 2) 5730-1970*

Addition of sections 4A and 4B

1. In the Law of Return, 5710-1950,** the following sections shall be inserted after section 4:

"Rights of members of family"

4A. (a) The rights of a Jew under this Law and the rights of an oleh under the Nationality Law, 5712-1952,*** as well as the rights of an oleh under any other enactment, are also vested in a child and a grandchild of a Jew, the spouse of a Jew, the spouse of a child of a Jew and the spouse of a grandchild of a Jew, except for a person who has been a Jew and has voluntarily changed his religion.

(b) It shall be immaterial whether or not a Jew by whose right a right under subsection (a) is claimed is still alive and whether or not he has immigrated to Israel.

(c) The restrictions and conditions prescribed in respect of a Jew or an oleh by or under this Law or by the enactments referred to in subsection (a) shall also apply to a person who claims a right under subsection (a).

Definition

4B. For the purposes of this Law, "Jew" means a person who was born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion."

Amendment of section 5

Amendment of the Population Registry Law, 5725-1965
2. In section 5 of the Law of Return, 5710-1950, the following shall be added at the end: "Regulations for the purposes of sections 4A and 4B require the approval of the Constitution, Legislation and Juridical Committee of the Knesset."

3. In the Population Registry Law, 5725-1965,**** the following section shall be inserted after section 3: "Power of registration and definition

3A. (a) A person shall not be registered as a Jew by ethnic affiliation or religion if a notification under this Law or another entry in the Registry or a public document indicates that he is not a Jew, so long as the said notification, entry or document has not been controverted to the satisfaction of the Chief Registration Officer or so long as declaratory judgment of a competent court or tribunal has not otherwise determined.

(b) For the purposes of this Law and of any registration or document thereunder, "Jew" has the same meaning as in section 4B of the Law of Return, 5710-1950.

(c) This section shall not derogate from a registration effected before its coming into force."

GOLDA MEIR

Prime Minister

Acting Minister of the Interior

SHNEUR ZALMAN SHAZAR

President of the State

* Passed by the Knesset on 2nd Adar Bet, 5730 (10th March, 1970) and published in Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 586 of the 11th Adar Bet, 5730 (19th March, 1970), p. 34; the Bill and an Explanatory Note were published in Hatza'ot Chok No. 866 of 5730, p. 36.

** Sefer Ha-Chukkim of 5710 p. 159 - LSI vol. IV, p. 114; Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 5714, p. 174 - LSI vol. VIII, 144

*** Sefer Ha-Chukkim of 5712, p. 146 ; LSI vol. VI, p. 50.

**** Sefer Ha-Chukkim of 5725, p. 270 ; LSI vol. XIX, p. 288.
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