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A Political History of Sport in Sweden

Jens Ljunggren

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To Stina

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIF	Workers' Sport Federation (Arbetarnas Idrottsförbund)
CF	Swedish Central Association for the Promotion of Sport (Sveriges Centralförening för Idrottens Främjande)
DNA	Norwegian Labour Party (Det Norske Arbeiderparti)
DSB	West German Sport Confederation (Deutscher Sportbund)
FIFA	Fédération internationale de football association
GCI	Royal Gymnastics Central Institute (Gymnastiska Centralinstituttet)
IOC	International Olympic Committee
KI	Karolinska Institutet (KI)
RF	Swedish Sport Confederation (Riksidrottsförbundet)
RSI	Rote Sportinternationale
SAP	The Swedish Social Democratic Party
SASI	Sozialistische Arbeiter-Sport-Internationale
SFF	Swedish Football Federation Svenska Fotbollförbundet)
SGF	Swedish Gymnastics Federation (Svenska Gymnastikförbundet)
SKCFE	The Swedish Women's Central Federation for Sport (Svenska kvinnors centralförbund för fysisk kultur)
SKI	The National Athletics Confederation for Women (Sveriges kvinnliga idrottsförbund)
STUI	The Norwegian State Youth and Sport Office (Statens ungdoms og idrettskontor)



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This book, based on the extensive Swedish sport history research carried out over the last 50 years, aims to present to an international audience a coherent history of Swedish sport.¹ In particular, it highlights the relationship between sport politics and people's changing attitudes towards sport from the eighteenth century until today. When one considers the development of Swedish sport and sport politics over a longer period of time, a number of distinctive features emerge. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sport in Sweden was largely a political top-down project driven by public institutions. During the first third of the twentieth century sport in civil society also became the object of political intervention, and since the 1930s the level of political and organisational stability in sport has been remarkable. In this book, we will look into how and why this development has come about. Although the book does not offer a comprehensive comparative analysis, it outlines the characteristics of Swedish sport politics by contrasting it with circumstances in other countries, above all Denmark and Norway.

By investigating how different ways of pursuing and conceptualising sport have progressed and interacted, and how they have influenced as well been influenced by sport politics, this book discerns the role of governmental as well as municipal politics in the development of sport in Sweden. Here the concept of politics is divided into three analytical levels:

(1) the agency of government, parliament, public authorities and municipalities, (2) the countries' sport organisations' interaction with these public bodies and (3) the role of political ideology in sport and sport politics. The notion of *governmentalisation* refers to the involvement of the state apparatus in sport, *politicisation* to the extent to which sport has been imbued with political ideology and party politics and *instrumentalisation* to how sport has been used to achieve non-sport objectives for the public good.² As we will see in this book, Swedish sport has been greatly affected by governmentalisation and instrumentalisation while the level of politicisation has been low.

Through different means—in Sweden, above all public funding in combination with more or less outspoken expectations regarding how sport should be conducted and what it should contribute to society—politics has governed sport. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Swedish sport was closely connected to the country's education system and was therefore, by default, an object of political decision-making. It was, however, more difficult for the government and the parliament to govern the voluntary sport movement that began expanding in Sweden at the end of the nineteenth century. This was particularly the case since Swedish public authorities, like those in many other countries, were reluctant to intervene in voluntary sport associations and to legislate sport matters. Nevertheless, governmental institutions have successfully contributed to steering Swedish sport away from commercialism as well as imbuing it with ideals of respectability and societal benefit. There has, however, also been a tug of war between what in research has been conceptualised in terms of *citizen (or association) education* versus *competition education*.³

When it comes to sport politics, four Swedish historians in particular ought to be mentioned. In a number of books and articles, sport historian Johan R Norberg has analysed Swedish sport politics from a historical perspective. In his pioneering works on Swedish sport history, Jan Lindroth thoroughly charted the parliamentary and media political debates on sport at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Municipal sport politics has been scrutinised above all by sport historian Paul Sjöblom. This book is very much in debt to these historians' works. Also worth highlighting is Rolf Pålbrant's early dissertation on the Swedish worker sport movement, which has since been more or less overlooked by Swedish sport historians. Nevertheless, Pålbrant's analysis of the Swedish worker sport movement's internal conflicts over sport is an important piece of the puzzle for understanding how and why

Swedish sport and sport politics evolved as they did, which I will bring to the fore in this book.

THE SWEDISH AND THE NORDIC MODEL

It has been common among historians, journalists and politicians to speak of the Swedish model. Primarily, this notion refers to the smooth forms of cooperation that were established on the Swedish labour market during the late 1930s. Already then, the journalist Marquis Childs identified the Swedish Middle Way between capitalism and communism, and over the years Sweden has been considered extraordinary in several ways.⁴ The hasty Swedish development from being poverty-stricken to a modern industrial nation was unique, and recently it has even been suggested that Sweden was the country with the highest degree of equality in the world for a good part of the twentieth century.⁵ Repeatedly, the Swedish model has been defined by its high level of welfare, its peaceful labour market relationships and its party-political culture of compromise and consensus. Additionally, the corporate governance model—aimed at involving the country's interest organisations in governmental decision-making and assigning them authority tasks—has been considered fundamental to the Swedish model. It is common knowledge that the crisis settlement between the Social Democratic Party and the Farmers' Federation (a political party for farmers) in 1933—the Saltsjöbad Agreement in 1938 between the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) and the Swedish Employers' Confederation (SAF)—was decisive. The model can, however, not be limited to the crisis settlement and the Saltsjöbad Agreement. It also includes what happened in the 1950s and 1960s regarding welfare, taxes, social security and the wage-leading export industry which resulted in high real wages, corporate profits and low unemployment. The model reached its peak during the post-war period in the 1950s and 1960s and has been on the edge since the 1970s, due to globalisation.⁶

Even sport in Sweden has been organised based on a particularly Swedish model, it has been contended. In an overview, historian Susanna Hedenborg and sociologist Tomas Peterson connect the Swedish sport model to the country's welfare model, characterised by far-reaching social equality in combination with a high degree of female employment and gender equality. The state's support of sport has been rooted in, not least, the ambition to educate children and young people—a particularly important target group for sport as well as for the Swedish welfare state in

general. Like the labour, temperance and revival movements, sport has been defined as a people's movement. Consequently, its relationship to the state has been based on an implicit contract to protect the independence of sport along the lines of the corporative governance model. When the government investigation report *Sport for All* was presented in 1969, it became the benchmark for many years of the role of sport in the welfare society, that is, to educate the citizen, strengthen public health and offer people meaningful leisure time.⁷

In 2019, the Swedish Sports Confederation (Riksidrottsförbundet, RF) organised approximately three million members. After rapidly increasing in the 2000s, government support for sport was around two billion SKR, with large contributions from the municipalities as well. Nevertheless, without the large amount of voluntary work carried out by leaders, coaches and parents of children and young people in sport, the Swedish sport movement would never have been able to function and develop as it did during the nineteenth century.⁸ By following the development of Swedish sport and sport politics from the eighteenth century until today, this book puts the notion of the Swedish sport model into perspective.

As mentioned above, this book analyses the development of Swedish sport politics using international perspectives. However, it must be emphasised that no comparative history in the strict sense will be conducted here. In this book one will not find a clearly established model for international comparison, and the different countries included in the analysis will not be considered to the same degree.⁹ In the analysis, the international outlook is foremost a means to put the Swedish development in perspective, and only the parts explicitly dealing with politics will be compared. Primarily other Scandinavian countries, that is, Denmark and Norway, will be considered (Finland is not included of language reasons). Sporadically, the development of Swedish sport and sport politics will also be related to Britain and Germany, the home countries of modern sport and gymnastics and in many ways each other's sport-political contrasts—a highly intervening state in Germany in contrast to a lack of governmental intervention in sport for a great deal of the twentieth century in Great Britain.¹⁰

After having initially being applied only to Sweden in research and public debate, the notion of the model has gradually been broadened to include the Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland).¹¹ In many ways, these countries have similar histories. All are small states marked by relative homogeneity in terms of ethnicity and religion. Additionally, they have been formed by Lutheran Protestantism conveyed

by hegemonic state churches, believed by many to have promoted a work ethic and a sense of equality. In addition, the Scandinavian countries have been stable democracies firmly anchored in the rule of law and are politically characterised by compromise and consensus across class as well as party-political lines. During the twentieth century, while avoiding fascism and communism and taming capitalism, they managed to secure democracy and form strong welfare states. Beginning in the 1920s and into the post-war period, the ‘golden age of welfare’, their welfare systems expanded. While instead from the 1970s onwards, political consent has declined and the states have retreated to some extent. From that point on, the Scandinavians have appeared less distinct and particular compared to the rest of the world.¹²

As a subcategory of the Nordic social and political model, the Nordic sport model has also been discussed. For example, sociologist Richard Giulianotti explains this model by highlighting its commitment to nature and outdoor life, the importance of sport for all, the promotion of grass-roots participation and the inclusion of marginalised populations, and the fact that the Scandinavian countries emphasise ‘strong collectivist values and team ethics’.¹³ It has also been suggested that the Nordics have been characterised by a strong focus on democratic education in sport, equality, widespread formally and democratically managed voluntary associations, long-lasting amateurism and a commitment to anti-doping.¹⁴ In measurements of participation in sport and physical activities, the Scandinavian countries rank high. The European Commission’s European Barometer 2022 states: ‘A national analysis shows that respondents in Finland (71%), Luxembourg (63%), the Netherlands (60%), and Denmark and Sweden (59% in both countries) are the most likely to exercise or play sport’.¹⁵ Norway was not included in this survey; however, participation in sport is even higher there.¹⁶ These countries are also among those with the highest average government expenditures (GDP percentage) on sport and recreation.¹⁷

Political and organisational aspects of the Scandinavian model have also been addressed by researchers. In an overview, Nils Asle Bergsgard and Johan R. Norberg conclude that Denmark, Norway and Sweden have been characterised by publicly funded sport organisations which, in close cooperation with state authorities, virtually monopolise sport. Nevertheless, the guiding principle of this collaboration has been the autonomy of sport; however, governments in the late twentieth century and early 2000s have taken steps to tighten control over it. Consequently, it is a complex matter

to relate sport politics to welfare politics. Scandinavian governments have considered sport important enough to grant it substantial financial support, although without formalising it by integrating it more closely into its general welfare administration. A number of challenges to the Scandinavian sport model have also been identified.¹⁸

Nevertheless, great differences are obvious between the Scandinavian countries. The most evident centralised system is found in Norway, where after the Second World War the Norwegian Sport Confederation (Norges Idrettsforbund) merged with the worker sport movement and, in 1996, its Olympic Committee fused with the Norwegian Sport Confederation (to form the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation [NIF]). Sweden has been characterised by its unified organisational model, albeit less centralised than the Norwegian one. Here, the state and sport have interacted in terms of consensus and pragmatism based on an implicit agreement according to which the RF assumes social responsibility and a measure of state influence in exchange for extensive public support. The most decentralised and pluralistic is Denmark, where different sport organisations representing diverse aims and sport cultures exist in parallel still today. In Denmark, the state was long even more reluctant to intervene in organisational sport matters, which, however, did not prevent it from enacting laws that indirectly had a major impact on the sport organisations. From the 1970s, sport was included in the state's cultural politics.¹⁹

If we also consider other countries, it becomes even clearer what defines the Scandinavian and Swedish sport models. In a comparative overview of Canada, England and Norway, significant differences are revealed; however, these cannot be easily related to prevailing welfare models. It appears, among other things, that the role of the British state has grown more extensive over time than is the case in Norway. In Canada and Britain, organised sport is more fragmented than in Norway, while the lack of strong sport confederations in Canada and Britain seems to give more leeway to state agencies. Professional sports are more widespread in Canada and Britain than in Norway and Germany, although the latter are moving in the same direction. In federal systems such as Canada and Germany, the federal states play a greater role; and in all countries the local level is also decisive, especially for 'sport for all', while elite activities are more commonly administered by the central political bodies. In all countries, sport politics is dominated by the executive power rather than the parliament, while organised interest organisations and voluntary organisations are integrated in the

decision-making processes. With the close ties between interest organisations in sport and their governments, Norway and Germany are the most corporatist systems, partly due to their more unified organisational culture. Over time, expectations as to what sport should contribute to society have increased from simply military defence matters at the beginning of the century to solving all sorts of societal problems. The individualistic cultures of Canada and Britain have been more focused on competitive and elite sports than the more egalitarian cultures of Norway and Germany, where sport for all has been clearly in focus and early talent development questioned to a higher degree than in Canada and Britain. In terms of proximity to the state, the civil society and the market, US sport has been marked by its closeness to the market, French sport instead by its closeness to the state, while the Scandinavian countries have represented a middle way, although with increasing market orientation over the last 50 years.²⁰

DISTINGUISHING TRAITS OF SWEDISH SPORT POLITICS

Many of the research examples above analyse the Swedish and the Scandinavian models primarily by relating, or comparing, them to the notion of the Social Democratic welfare model, developed by the sociologist Gøsta Esping-Andersen.²¹ To trace the roots of Swedish sport politics this book instead goes further back in time, and in so doing also identifies some distinguishing traits in Swedish sport and sport politics.

It is a main argument in this book that Swedish sport politics and the development of sport in the country have been affected by political power relations and the formation of classes and groups in society and how these have shaped and influenced the state. At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, whereas in Britain there was diffused popular sport and in Germany gymnastics was shaped in boarding schools and eventually developed into a broad nationalistic popular movement, in Sweden physical education was a top-down project promoted by progressive middle-class intellectuals along with military officers. At this stage, physical education was promoted to form such voluntarily law-abiding, patriotically committed, idealistic, masculine Swedish citizens that the liberal state was held to be in need of after the abandonment of royal autocracy.

It has been contended in research that sport in the Scandinavian countries has played a decisive role in disseminating democracy.²² In this book, I instead focus on how the process of democratisation affected sport and

sport politics. At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, in terms of democratisation, Denmark and Norway were ahead of Sweden, and in these countries constitutional issues were high on the political agenda. Sport was also drawn into political conflicts between conservatives and liberals and was thus established as a political item and an object of political conflict. In Sweden, however, this was not the case. Heightened conflicts over sport did take place here, but they were of a cultural and professional kind. Thus, sport was not linked to the ideological right-left dimension of politics to the same degree as it was in the other Scandinavian countries, which, as we will see, affected sport politics well into the twentieth century.

Eventually, another political conflict based on the right-left dimension came to prevail in society: that between socialism and bourgeois political parties. How the worker sport movement was confronted during the interwar period had far-reaching consequences for how sport politics developed. The advanced democratisation in Norway, and the fact that the Norwegian Labour Party (Det norske arbeiderparti) could therefore terminate its cooperation with the liberals early, led to the Labour Party being radicalised; this in turn strengthened the Norwegian worker sport movement and indorsed sport-political conflicts in the country. During the interwar period, the Swedish Social Democrats instead actively put a lid on the worker sport movement, which never gained many followers.²³ An already relatively minimally politicised sport was thus further de-politicised by political means. In addition, the right-wing Swedish Central Association for the Promotion of Sport (Sveriges Centralförening för Idrottens Främjande, CF) was also put aside by political means. Although this was done for organisational rather than political reasons, it furthered the less politically profiled Swedish Sport Confederation.

The Swedish state took a particular stance towards sport. For a long time, the Danish state considered sport to be part of people's private life; and although the nationalistic rifle movement was publicly supported from the 1860s the Danish Sport Confederation (Danmarks Idrætsforbund) was not, and when it was finally granted public means during the early twentieth century it was only to a low degree.²⁴ In Norway, it was the other way around. During this period, the practice of the Norwegian state's interference in sport (and not only in sport) was established, which led to a more unified organisation structure than in Denmark. The Swedish state represented a middle position, governing voluntary sport without intervening in it.²⁵

The low degree of party and ideological politicisation in Swedish sport paved the way for a palpably trusting relationship between state authorities and the sport movement. Whereas in Denmark and Norway there was friction between state and sport during the post-war period, the Swedish government was in full support of the RF. Still, the RF had now strengthened its position in relation to the public authorities. Although there was a conflict of interest, public authorities no longer tried to correct the RF, as had been the case during the interwar period. The trustful relationship between state and sport in Sweden was not only due to the conception of the state or the general low level of politicisation in Swedish sport politics. Just as in the case of de-politicisation, it was also a matter of agency. It was about the shaping of extensive networks between state, municipalities and sport and about skilful agency by the RF.

What, then, were the consequences of sport politics and the organisation of sport? In terms of sport activity, the results seem outstanding, with high participant levels in all of the Scandinavian countries. In this respect, it seems as if we should prefer the centralised Norwegian model, since Norwegian activity numbers are the highest. This would be a premature conclusion, however. Sport activity rates are affected by so many other things, such as levels of income and education, gender, place of residence, leisure time, the general standard of living, the diffusion of sport facilities, available land areas and so on.²⁶ In terms of sport participation, it seems that the existence of a large voluntary sport sector is in itself more important than the specific organisation of it.²⁷ It would therefore be more apt to discuss, and compare, the organising models in terms of democracy, accountability and pluralism versus uniformity and adaptability—and also, being more abstract, in terms of performativity; that is, to what extent do the models shape people's sport habits and to what extent do people's sport habits shape the models? There are signs today that people's sport habits have outgrown the existing sport models. Increasing numbers of people practise sport and exercise. However, they tend more and more to do so outside the traditional clubs and associations.²⁸

In practice, the public authorities guarantee the RF a special position over other, either *de facto* existing or possible, alternatives. Government and municipal grants are mediated via the RF to sport associations and clubs. In order to gain access to these as well as other organisational and material resources, associations (and through them the clubs) are in practice forced to apply for RF membership. Therefore, the RF is able to act as a sport gatekeeper by granting membership or not. Additionally, the RF

performs its authority tasks by answering only to its own members and not the voters and taxpayers who largely finance its activities, and is only to a certain degree subject to the same rules and requirements for transparency that other public authorities are.²⁹

This book shows that sport politics was heavily affected by the general political development in the country. Still, it also demonstrates that although sport has received large state subsidies it has functioned as a unit on the side, on terms different to those of many other public units. In Sweden, this was the case in particular from the 1970s onwards. When during the last third of the twentieth century, the corporative governance model was abolished in many other political areas this did not happen in sport to the same degree. Sport was also relatively less affected by financial cutbacks, demands of marketisation and public control systems during the period. The Swedish sport model was thus more resilient, and less exposed to political pressure for change, than many other political areas.

Certainly, a relationship of trust, stability and political consent can be described positively in terms of solidity and organisation skill. Nevertheless, it can also be considered a relationship of power in which agents join together and set the framework for a stable community that is difficult to access and change from outside. The Danish model has been far more pluralistic than the Swedish one, and in terms of innovation and adaptation, the Swedish model seems to be the least prone to change among the Scandinavian countries. At least this has been the case in investments in elite sport. We can also think of the establishment of the Danish Superliga in 1991 and the Norwegian Tippeligan in 1993. In these two countries, elite football has reached a higher level of commercialisation and has been more successful internationally compared to Sweden.³⁰ A different example of Swedish inflexibility is that the Norwegian model has accepted a double organisational arrangement within Sámi sport where instead the unified Swedish model has been kept intact.³¹

THE BOOK'S LAYOUT AND SOME OF ITS TOPICS

This book scrutinises the interaction between sport politics and people's different approaches to sport in everyday life. This will be done by focusing on how three different, variously overlapping and conflicting, ways of pursuing and conceptualising sport have evolved over time. These notions, I suggest, are better suited for analysing broad sport-historical and sport-political processes than the so often applied theory of sportification.³²

After all, sport is far more than merely a development towards intensified competitive sport; researchers have therefore developed other analytical models, for instance Henning Eichberg's triangle model of different bodily practices.³³ Additionally, this book is based on a triangle model, although a different one, inspired by the Swedish researcher Tomas Peterson's distinction between *citizen (or association) education* and *competition education*.³⁴ Yet another way of pursuing sport I will refer to is *personality education*. This means that people have used sport not primarily to become better members of society or to improve their competitive skills, but to shape themselves physically and mentally as individuals. In the post-industrial society, from the 1970s to the present, personality education has taken shape as a serious alternative to competition education and as such has presented itself as a challenge to the Swedish sport movement. By investigating how these three ways of pursuing sport have progressed and interacted, and how they have influenced as well as been influenced by sport politics, this book discerns the role of both state and municipal politics in the development of sport in Sweden.

The book's chapter layout is designed to capture the interplay between politics and sport. Chapters 2 and 3 move internally between the levels of sport and sport politics. Afterwards, the chapters alternately focus on the development of sport politics and sport, to make it clear how one leads to the other. The comparative elements concentrate, with a few exceptions, on the political levels. A number of other aspects of the development of sport—for example, commercialisation, equality, social structure, sportification, medialisation—are therefore not subject to international comparison.

Let me finally highlight yet some other topics, not already mentioned, that will recur throughout the book, for instance gender relations and sport feminism. The actual participation of men and women in sport is a quantitative measure, but as we know, sport helps to shape and reinforce both ideals and ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman. It is well known that nationalism and socialism have used sport for political purposes. Another political ideology that has made use of sport is feminism. During the period covered in this book, sport has been feminised as well as de-feminised. This book shows that the development has gone in waves and taken different shapes in different contexts rather than occurring linearly. In addition, gender relations have also shaped sport. For example, if we want to understand why Ling Gymnastics developed the way it did and spread around the world, an important explanation lies in

women's position on the Swedish labour market. The exercise sport that expanded during the last third of the twentieth century was also largely a consequence of women strengthening their position the labour market.

Yet another distinguishing trait of Swedish sport politics is that it has been focused much more on *biopower* (this notion derives from Michel Foucault and refers to techniques directed at the body to form the population) than on *soft power* (this notion derives from Joseph Nye and refers to how nations gain power by making themselves attractive, for instance through sport).³⁵ From the end of the eighteenth century the political interest in supporting sport in various forms has been about shaping the country's citizens to fit the societal and political order, and over time politicians' requirements regarding what sport should contribute to society have increased, which is an interesting phenomenon considering that the trust in social engineering and the controllability of society in general has rather decreased.³⁶ Primarily, this book focuses on the domestic political aspects of Swedish sport, while the foreign politics dimensions of sport have not yet been thoroughly researched. To date, however, the available research indicates that Swedish politicians have been less interested in using sport to position the country in the international arena than in forming the country's inhabitants. This, I believe, helps to explain why the political focus on elite sport in Sweden has been relatively weak as well as why Swedish attempts to arrange the Olympic Games have been so unsuccessful.

Phases of intellectualisation and de-intellectualisation have also affected sport and sport politics. When the modern sport (gymnastics) began its spread in Sweden at the end of the eighteenth century, it was linked to educational institutions and was promoted by representatives of the country's intellectual elite. As sport at the end of the nineteenth century developed into a voluntary competition activity, the intellectuals (academics, priests, teachers) were replaced by civil servants, entrepreneurs, the military and eventually workers. The representatives of the sport-critical Ling Gymnastics, however, were well versed in contemporary philosophy and enthused by contemporary intellectual debate. The form of criticism they directed at competitive sport at the end of the nineteenth century was close to how leading Swedish as well as international intellectuals of the time critically analysed industrialism and modern society. In the post-war period, sport's connection to contemporary intellectual debate was loosened. From the 1960s, sport-critical debates with intellectual overtones were expressed yet again. In Sweden, the emergence of academic sport

research was followed by a critical debate, directed particularly at children and youth sport. Until the 1970s, academic sport research had predominantly been based on the natural sciences; now, however, it began expanding into the humanities and social sciences. Dissertations and other research reports surfaced in pedagogy, history, psychology and, in time, also sociology, ethnology, philosophy, etc. Within these academic fields, ‘critical sport research’ focused on questions of inclusion and exclusion in relation to such things as gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality and social constructions. The academisation of sport thus led to the academic discourse within the humanities and social sciences being transferred to sport and its governing bodies.³⁷ This is not to say that intellectuals would generally be more critical of competitive sport than other groups in society; quite the contrary.³⁸ What it does mean, however, is that sport-critical trends mainly take shape within intellectual and academic environments.

NOTES

1. This book is based on an earlier Swedish edition; Jens Ljunggren. (2020). *Den svenska idrottens historia*. Natur & Kultur: Stockholm; parts of the Swedish text have been reused in this book. The analytical framework is, however, different.
2. Analytical notions, a variation of Nils Asle Bergsgard et al. (2007). *Sport policy: A comparative analysis of stability and change*. Butterworth-Heinemann: Amsterdam, p. 47.
3. Thomas Peterson (2002). ‘En allt allvarligare lek: Om idrottsrörelsens partiella kommersialisering 1967–2002’, pp. 21–33. In Jan Lindroth & Johan R. Norberg (eds.). *Ett idrottssekel: Riksidrottsförbundet 1903–2003*. Informationsförlaget: Stockholm.
4. Marquis William Childs. (1936). *Sweden: The middle way*. Yale Univ, press: New Haven.
5. Erik Bengtsson. (2020). *Världens jämlikaste land?* Arkiv förlag: Lund.
6. Per Thullberg & Kjell Östberg. (1994). ‘Inledning’, pp. 5–7. In Per Thullberg & Kjell Östberg (eds.). *Den svenska modellen*. Studentlitteratur: Lund; Klas Åmark. (1994). *Vem styr marknaden? Facket, makten och marknaden 1850–1990*. Tiden: Stockholm, pp. 151–162; Yvonne Hirdman, Urban Lundberg & Jenny Björkman. (2012). *Sveriges historia 1920–1965*. Norstedt: Stockholm. pp. 368–369.
7. Tomas Peterson & Susanna Hedenborg. (2016). ‘Den svenska idrottsmodellen’, pp. 21–33. In Susanna Hedenborg (ed.). *Idrottsvetenskap: En introduktion*. Studentlitteratur: Lund.

8. Johan R. Norberg. (2021). *Statens stöd till idrotten: Uppföljning 2020*. Stockholm: Centrum för idrottsforskning, pp. 21, 53; Tomas Peterson & Susanna Hedenborg. 'Den svenska idrottsmodellen', pp. 21–33.
9. For an extended discussion on comparative analysis of sport politics, see Barrie Houlihan. (1997). *Sport, policy and politics: A comparative analysis*. Routledge: London, pp. 1–21.
10. Barrie Houlihan. *Sport, policy and politics*, pp. 55–57.
11. For reasons of consistency, I here discuss Scandinavia (Denmark, Norway, Sweden), even though some of the researchers referred to are talking about the Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland as well as the Faroe Islands). However, Iceland and the Faroe Islands are rarely considered in their research.
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26. Torben Fridberg. (2010). 'Sport and exercise in Denmark, Scandinavia and Europe'. *Sport in Society*: 4 (13), pp. 586–587; Christine Dartsch Nilsson (ed.). (2019). *Idrotten och (o)jämligheten: I medlemmarnas eller samhällets intresse?* Centrum för idrottsforskning.
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28. Torben Fridberg. 'Sport and exercise in Denmark, Scandinavia and Europe', p. 588.
29. Filip Wilkander. 'Svensk idrottspolitik—en bollbyråkrati'. <https://timbro.se/allmant/svensk-idrottspolitik-en-bollbyrakrati/>; Cf. Josef Fahlén & Cecilia Stenling (2016). 'Sport policy in Sweden', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*: 3 (8), p. 527.
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