

Ideals and Significance of the Paralympics: Observations from Temporal and Spatial Dimensions

Kazuo OGOURA

Introduction

As the Paralympics becomes more widely recognized and the public's knowledge and interest grows, Paralympic competitions are, in part, starting to be commercialized and made into a form of entertainment. The current situation calls for a re-evaluation of what has been considered as the essential significance and effect of the Paralympic Games and the Paralympic Movement on society. In other words, there is an increasing need to look back on the history of the Paralympics to examine its original significance and ideals and, at the same time, to re-evaluate or re-examine the significance and ideals of the Paralympics through comparisons with similar international games and movements.

From this perspective, this article will attempt to revisit the original ideals of the Paralympics and to look back on the history of the Paralympics. It will also discuss the significance and ideals of the Paralympics from social and international perspectives, in particular through comparisons with other international disability sports competitions: the Deaflympics, Special Olympics, the VIRTUS (previously INAS) Global Games for persons with intellectual disability, and the Invictus Games.

The observation and analysis will focus on Paralympic ideals through the following eight dimensions: (1) as symbolized by the Paralympic symbol; (2) the slogans of the Paralympic Games; (3) the words of Sir Ludwig Guttmann; (4) the speeches at the opening and closing ceremonies; (5) the stage performances at the opening and closing ceremonies, medals, and songs; (6) the achievements of the recipients of the Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award; (7) comparison with major international disability sports competitions; and (8) comparison with the ideals of Japan's National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities.

1. The Ideals of the Paralympics in its Symbols

When the archery competition by patients of Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Britain—considered the origin of the Paralympics—was first internationalized, the flag of the games bore a symbol comprised of the initials “SMG” (for Stoke Mandeville Games) surrounded by stars representing the number of countries participating in the games. After the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) was established in 1989, the Rome 1960 Paralympic Games became recognized officially as the first Paralympic Games.¹ A symbol that joined the three wheels of the wheelchair was used (Fig. 1) for the Tokyo 1964, the Tel Aviv 1968, and the Heidelberg 1972 Paralympic Games. The three wheels represented “Unity,” “Friendship,” and “Sportsmanship.”



Figure 1. Symbol used at the Paralympic Games in 1964, 1968 and 1972.

Ludwig Guttman, 1976, Textbook of Sport for the Disabled, HM+M Publishers, 34.

In a message on the aims of the Games, Unity was described as “uniting paralyzed men and women from all parts of the world in an international sports movement,” Friendship as “through the medium of sports, to further friendship and understanding among nations,” and Sportsmanship as “the spirit of sportsmanship will give hope and inspiration to thousands of paralyzed people.”²

After the Seoul 1988 Games, it was decided that the Seoul Games logo consisting of five decorative motifs would become the symbol of the Paralympics (Fig. 2).³



Figure 2. Paralympic Symbol from the Seoul 1988 Games to the Lillehammer 1994 Games

IPC, “Seoul 1988,” <https://www.paralympic.org/seoul-1988/medals>, (September 7, 2019)

The explanation for this design was as follows: the five motifs represented the five continents and the five oceans, and the configuration of three motifs at the top and two at the bottom was meant to represent “w” for the word “world,” with the intent to express “harmony” and “unity of the disabled worldwide through sports.” The horizontal configuration of the motifs in two lines was a symbol of “equality” and “humanity,” respectively, and the dynamism of the wave shape signified the “willingness” and “determination” of disabled people to become fully active.⁴

However, the International Olympic Committee found its resemblance to the Olympic symbol of the five rings a problem. From the Lillehammer 1994 Games onwards, a mark using three of the same motifs in the shape of a mountain was adopted (Fig. 3). This mark symbolized the “Mind,” “Body,” and “Spirit.”⁵



Figure 3. Paralympic Symbol from the 1996 Atlanta Games to the 2004 Athens Games
Disabled World, “The Symbol for the Paralympics,” <https://www.disabled-world.com/sports/paralympics/symbol.php>, (September 7, 2019).

Later, at the meeting of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) in 2003, it was decided to adopt the new symbol of the “three Agitos.”⁶ (The three Agitos have been redrawn and recoloured as part of new brand strategy of the IPC in October 2019. And a new brand narrative “Change Starts with Sport” has been created as well)



Figure 4. Paralympic Symbol from the 2006 Torino Games
IPC, IPC VISION, MOTTO, SYMBOL, https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/120427151817794_Vision.pdf, (September 7, 2019).

The three lines encircling a central point symbolize motion and emphasize the role of the Paralympic Movement in bringing athletes together from around the world to

compete.⁷ When we look back on the history of the Paralympic symbol, it can be said that one of the ideals of the Paralympics is to promote activities of disabled people through sports and to bring disabled people together from around the world to foster solidarity and friendship.

2. The Ideals of the Paralympics from the Perspective of the Slogans of the Paralympic Games

The ideals of the Paralympics have also been expressed in the slogans that the host city and its country have adopted for the event.

In the past, some of the Paralympic Games did not necessarily have clearly defined slogans. With others, the slogan used during the event preparation stage or during the event differed slightly from the points emphasized in the post-event report. Nevertheless, when we focus on the clearly defined slogans from past Paralympics, it is possible to find the following three points of Paralympic significance or ideals expressed overall. Since the 2006 Paralympics, common slogans have been used for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and these common slogans are included in the analysis below as Paralympic slogans.

The first is to inspire, awaken, and encourage people. It is expressed in such slogans as “Passion lives here” (Torino 2006 Games), “Inspire a generation” (London 2012 Games), and “Passion. Connected.” (PyeongChang 2018 Games).

The second is the display of human potential. Examples include “The triumph of the human spirit” (Atlanta 1996 Games), “No limits” (Lillehammer 1994 Games), and “Without limits” (Sydney 2000 Games).

The third is the spirit of solidarity. The slogans corresponding to this ideal are “A time to be together” (Toronto 1976 Games) and “One World, One Dream” (Beijing 2008 Games).

These suggest that the ideals of the Paralympic Games are to encourage and inspire people through the display of human potential and to enable people to share in the spirit of solidarity.

3. The Ideals of the Paralympics as Seen in the Words of Sir Ludwig Guttmann

The report on the Tokyo 1964 Games quotes Sir Ludwig Guttmann, known as the father of the Paralympics, as saying “Do not count what is lost. Use what is remaining

to the full,”⁸ and treats this quote as the ideal of the Paralympics. There are also people in the world of disability sports in Japan who repeat this quote as the origin of the Paralympic spirit. However, this quote could not be found in any books written by Guttman or by his long-time secretary Joan Scruton,⁹ or in the biography of Guttman written by Susan Goodman.¹⁰

Some take the view that the quote was disseminated in Japan by Yutaka Nakamura, the founder of Japan sun Industries (Taiyo no Ie) in Oita City, who heard similar words from Guttman. There are, however, no such words written in the detailed biography of Nakamura,¹¹ and this view lacks clear evidence.

A predecessor of Nakamura in disability care in Japan, Saburo Naito, the director of Kyushu Rosai Hospital, had already introduced in 1957 “a training method for disabled people who are unrecoverable to strengthen their remaining functions and to encourage their reintegration into society through inclusion of sports in their training.”¹² It may be that because ideas similar to the alleged quote by Guttman had already been spreading among people involved in disability care in Japan, the so-called “Guttman’s words” were used to spread to the wider public what was a common understanding among those involved in disability care.

For this reason, although we cannot determine the origin of what is often alluded to as “Guttman’s words,” we can consider them as an expression of the ideal of the Paralympics.

It should also be noted that the above quote seems to have been widely shared in Europe not specifically as the ideal of the Paralympics, but as words of encouragement for disabled people. As evidence, in D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* published in 1928, Lady Chatterley’s husband Clifford, who was paralyzed in the lower body from an injury in the war and became bound to a wheelchair, remarks “What remained to him was inordinately precious to him.”¹³ It is possible to say that strengthening of the remaining functions was considered a way to encourage disabled people, and this idea was keenly recognized in Europe after the First World War.

4. The Significance and Ideals of the Paralympics as Seen from the Perspective of the Speeches at Opening and Closing Ceremonies

A. The Rome 1960 Games and the Tokyo 1964 Games

At the opening ceremony of the Rome 1960 Games, Pope John XXIII, in praise of the athletes, said “You have shown what an energetic soul can achieve, in spite of apparently insurmountable obstacles imposed by the body.”¹⁴ At the Rome Games, Guttman said “The vast majority of competitors and escorts have fully understood the meaning of the Rome Games as a new pattern of reintegration of the paralyzed into society, as well as the world of sport,”¹⁵ and declared that social reintegration of disabled people was a core ideal of the Paralympics.

In an address at the opening ceremony of the Tokyo 1964 Games, Guttman said “The basics of it [the Games] is always aligned with the three principles of friendship, unity, and the spirit of sportsmanship,”¹⁶ in what could be described as an explanation of the meaning of the symbol of the Paralympic Games. His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince Akihito (at the time), in an address at the opening ceremony, said “I express my respect to the achievement and spirit of the Stoke Mandeville Games that brought hope and meaningful life to physically disabled persons around the world,” and noted, “Sport has provided you [disabled people] with mental support and a quick path to being reintegrated into society,” in a speech that recognized the significance of the Paralympics as one of raising the awareness of the wider public about the role of sports in promoting social reintegration of disabled people.¹⁷ The report on the Tokyo Games summarized the significance of disability sports competitions, with the Paralympics foremost in mind, as follows:¹⁸

The meaning of disability sports competitions is first, to remove any inferiority complex in disabled people—as Sir Guttman has said, “Do not count what is lost. Use what is remaining to the full”—by having them train their body, have confidence in their physical fitness and functions, and have fresh hope and courage. Second, it is to show to the general public the potential of disabled people and to increase their interest and understanding. This will substantially help in the social reintegration of disabled people. Third, it is to promote, through

sports, friendship and fellowship among people who share a common predicament of having a physical disability, so that they can encourage each other in improving the lives of each person with a disability.

B. The Beijing 2008 Games, the London 2012 Games, and the Rio 2016 Games

At the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2008 Games, Philip Craven, then President of the International Paralympic Committee, quoted Confucius: “That friends should come to one from afar, is this not after all delightful?” These words suggest that deepening the bond of fraternity or friendship is part of the Paralympic ideal.¹⁹

At the same closing ceremony, Liu Qi, President of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, praised the Paralympic athletes for displaying a positive attitude toward life by exhibiting “self-respect,” “self-confidence,” “self-improvement,” and “self-reliance,” and at the same time, added to the above four, the elements of “fortitude” and of being “masters of their own destinies.” These words suggest that the significance of the Paralympic Games lies in how the performance of disabled athletes helps to stimulate a greater sense of independence among disabled people at large. Qi, moreover, added that “Inspired by the Paralympic Games, more than 300,000 people with a disability in Beijing further integrated themselves into society,” and emphasized the social significance of the Paralympics by saying that the Paralympics are a great event to encourage public interest in and to promote the cause for disabled people. He also mentioned the barrier-free improvements made to public facilities as the result of the Games, and touched on improvements made to non-physical aspects by saying, “An accessible bridge has also been formed to join our hearts.” His speech stressed the profound significance the Beijing Games had on society, and implied that such social significance was the essential principle of the Paralympics.²⁰

At the London 2012 Games, a disabled veteran gave a speech at the closing ceremony, in which he said, “We have all been touched by the triumphs and drama,” suggesting that the ideal of the Paralympics was also about confirming “the glory of triumph.”²¹ Sebastian Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, quoted the words of a Games volunteer in his speech, “The Paralympians have lifted the cloud of limitation,” stating to the effect that the meaning of the Paralympics was in removing limitations imposed by disability.²²

In his speech at the closing ceremony of the Rio 2016 Games, Philip Craven, then President of the International Paralympic Committee, said, “You showed to the world that with a positive attitude, the human body, and above all the human heart and mind, knows no limits and absolutely anything is possible,” and praised the Paralympians by saying, “You are now heroes and role models for a new generation of sports fans from all over the world.”²³

The speeches at the London and Rio Games overall lay emphasis on the effect of “inspiration” brought about by the athletes “overcoming disability” and excelling in their performances, reflecting the idea that this aspect of the Games is the very significance of the Paralympics. In contrast, the emphasis at the Beijing Games was on the positive effect of the Paralympics on improving facilities in both physical and non-physical aspects, on social participation of disabled people, and on the attitude of the public towards disabled people. This implies that how the ideals and significance of the Paralympics will be interpreted will depend considerably on the situation in the host country.

C. The Ideals and Significance of the Paralympics as Set Out by the IPC

The IPC sets out the ideals or significance of the Paralympics as “values” in its Annual Report. From the annual reports available on the IPC website as of October 2019, the Annual Report 2006 states the current values of the Paralympics as “determination,” “courage,” “inspiration,” and “equality.” The current explanation on these four values of the Paralympics was added in the Annual Report 2015. The athletes are considered to embody or maintain these values: “courage” is defined as “through their performances, Para athletes showcase to the world what can be achieved when testing your body to its absolute limits”; “determination” as “Para athletes have a unique strength of character that combines mental toughness, physical ability and outstanding agility to produce sporting performances which regularly redefine the boundaries of possibility”; “inspiration” as “Para athletes fully maximize their talents and abilities in their tireless pursuit of sporting excellence, and as role models they empower and excite others to get active and involved in sport”; and “equality” as “through sport Para athletes challenge stereotypes and transform attitudes, helping to increase inclusion by breaking down social barriers and discrimination towards people with an impairment.”²⁴²⁵

This annual report divides the process for concretizing these values into four stages - “drivers,” “goals,” “vision,” and “aspiration” - as a pathway or guideline so that the values the athletes are expected to embody will have a social impact (Fig. 5).

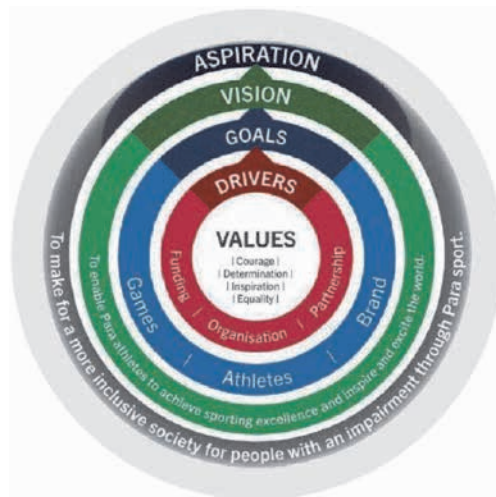


Figure 5. IPC’s Aspiration, Vision and Values

IPC, 2016, International Paralympic Committee Annual Report 2015, 11, https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/161017094732962_2016_10_11+IPC+Annual+Report+2015+web+version.pdf, (September 6, 2019)

These explanations, however, have not necessarily made clear the relation between the values embodied by the athletes (“courage” and “determination”) and the impact on society, including on disabled people (“inspiration” and “equality”). It should be noted that because the four values are placed side by side, it may give the misleading impression that social impact, such as empowerment and inclusion, can be achieved simply through the inspiration of personal efforts and talents of individual disabled athletes.

5. Ideals of the Paralympics as Seen from the Stage Performances at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Medals, and Songs

The ideals of the Paralympics are reflected not only in the speeches or other comments by the officials of the Games, but also in the stage directions for the opening and closing ceremonies, the forms of medals, and Paralympic songs.

Firstly, the Paralympic ideal of promoting social participation of disabled people

was expressed, for instance, at the stage performance during the opening ceremony of the Atlanta 1996 Games. At that ceremony, the national anthem was sung by a paraplegic singer, the host was the Hollywood actor Christopher Reeve, who had spinal cord injury from a horse-riding accident, and of the 14 U.S. Army parachutists descending into the center of the arena, the last to land was a soldier who had double leg amputation as a result of a parachute accident.²⁶ The fact that disabled people played their unique roles in the ceremony implies that their active participation in social activities is an ideal of the Paralympics. This kind of stage performance was also meaningful in terms of highlighting the diversity of disabled people. The same could be said of the opening ceremony at the Barcelona 1992 Games. At that ceremony, it was a single arm amputee who carried the Paralympic flame into the stadium. The flame was then passed on to a visually impaired athlete running with a guide dog, to an athlete with brain palsy, and then to an athlete in a wheelchair. This performance also highlighted the diversity of disability.²⁷ In the Paralympics, because attention is often directed to wheelchair events owing partly to the origins of the Paralympic Games, impressing upon people's minds the diversity of disability has an important meaning for society.

In this context, research on whether braille is used in the configuration of the medals at each of the Paralympic Games - as a measure of whether the diversity of disability has been taken into consideration - is summarized in Table 1. The fact that braille is used in every summer Paralympic Games since Athens 2004 indirectly confirms that promoting understanding of the diversity of disability and the social participation of disabled people are ideals of the Paralympics (not to mention its effect on encouraging the visually impaired to participate in the Paralympic Games).

For the Tokyo 1964 Games, Senichi Inoue composed the song "Tokyo Paralympic no Uta" with lyrics by Junsaku Kobayashi. In it, the Paralympic spirit of international solidarity and friendship is expressed by the words "power of love," "power to unite," and "power to connect." It can be said that cultivation of friendship and solidarity is proclaimed in the song as ideals of the Paralympics.²⁸

The IPC's official Paralympic Anthem "Hymn de l'Avenir" (Anthem of the Future) was composed in 1996 by Thierry Darnis. The Australian country singer Graeme Connors, who sang his own song at the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Games to popular acclaim, wrote the lyrics to "Hymn de l'Avenir" after the Games, and the

Table 1. The Paralympics Games that Awarded Medals with Braille

| Summer | Winter |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Toronto 1976 | Ornskoldsvik 1976 |
| Stoke Mandeville & New York 1984 | Tignes Albertville 1992 |
| Seoul 1988 | Lillehammer 1994 |
| Barcelona 1992 | Nagano 1998 |
| Atlanta 1996 | Vancouver 2010 |
| Athens 2004 | Sochi 2014 |
| Beijing 2008 | PyeongChang 2018 |
| London 2012 | |
| Rio 2016 | |

Brittain, I., 2014, *From Stoke Mandeville to Sochi: A History of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games*, Common Ground Publishers : IPC, "PARALYMPIC GAMES," <https://www.paralympic.org/paralympic-games>, (September 06, 2019).

IPC Management Committee at the time decided that the Hymn with the lyrics "will become a regular feature (of the opening and closing ceremonies of the future Paralympic Games)."²⁹ The lyrics include "Facing the challenge, striving to find strength in the body, power of the mind" as well as words that stress friendship and unity. The Paralympic ideals of unity and friendship arising from coming together in one place to compete, and of developing a strong body and mind for the Games, are captured in the song as basic assumptions about the meaning of the Paralympics.

6. Ideals of the Paralympics as Seen from the Achievements of the Recipients of the Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award

At the very beginning of the Paralympics, sport was seen as a catalyst for rehabilitation and social reintegration of disabled people. However, as public awareness of the Paralympics rose and the Games became more competitive, there was a growing trend to attach more importance to athletes' performances and winning medals. In the face of this trend, a movement arose to focus more on the social significance of the Paralympics by honoring athletes who roused and inspired the world not simply by winning medals, but through their achievements beyond sporting performances. Specifically, the Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award was

established on the occasion of the Seoul 1988 Games by Whang Youn Dai who, as a disabled person, dedicated herself for many years to further the cause of disabled people in the Republic of Korea.³⁰ By analyzing the personal background and achievements of the recipients of this award, it can, in itself, indirectly prove that the Paralympics have a significance and ideals besides improving the athletes' competitive performances.

Analyzing the personal background of the recipients and the reasons for their award, the recipients can be broadly categorized into four groups, as shown below.

The first group of athletes is those who exhibited remarkable performances, such as winning multiple medals at both the summer and winter Paralympic Games. Examples include the German athlete Martina Willing, who was awarded in 2000, and the Canadian athlete Collette Bourgonje, who was awarded in 2010.

The second group of athletes is those who overcame particularly difficult adversities in disability. Examples are (a) the German athlete Axel Hecker, who was awarded in 2002 for overcoming multiple disabilities, and the above-mentioned Willing; (b) the American athlete Lonnie Hannah, who was awarded in 2006 for overcoming physical disability as well as cancer; and (c) the South African athlete Zanele Situ, the Ukrainian athlete Olena Iurkovska, and the Panamanian athlete Said Gomez, awarded in 2004, 2006, and 2008, respectively, for overcoming poverty and other difficult circumstances.

The third group of athletes is those who had a broad impact on society through their competitive performances or who played a role in society as a pioneer for disabled people. They include the South Korean athlete Mi-Jeong Kim, the 1998 recipient who became the first disabled person to study physical education at college in South Korea; Australian Rainer Schmidt, the 2004 recipient who is also active as an author and pastor; the South African athlete Natalie Du Toit, the 2008 recipient who engaged in fund-raising activities for a school for children with cerebral palsy; the Kenyan athlete Mary Nakhumicha Zakayo, the 2012 recipient who has promoted the Paralympic Movement and played an important role in society in encouraging women to participate; and Tatyana McFadden, the 2016 recipient who had a difficult childhood in Russia before moving to the U.S. where she worked to implement a law for ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to sports.

The fourth group of athletes is those whose achievements were extremely

impressive or symbolic in “overcoming disability.” They include Takayuki Endo, the 2010 recipient who climbed Mt. Fuji, and the above-mentioned McFadden, who made the Grand Slam in the marathon.

The observations and analysis of the above recipients and their personal backgrounds suggests that the Paralympics not only offers a model for “overcoming physical disability,” but can also serve as a symbol for overcoming all kinds of difficulties in life. The award, in a sense, also makes heroes and heroines of disabled athletes, because it honors the accomplishments of individuals, which in itself has an important social significance. It can also be observed that the social significance of this award and, by extension, of the Paralympics, can differ significantly depending on the situation in each country.

7. Comparison with Major International Disability Sporting Competitions

As a means to understanding the ideals of the Paralympics, it is necessary to look at and compare it with the stated ideals of other international disability sports competitions that are not limited in scope to one type of competition. For comparison, this article will look at the Deaflympics, Special Olympics, the VIRTUS (previously INAS) Global Games, and the Invictus Games.

Regarding the Deaflympics, its governing body the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD), in its Constitution referred to Articles 5 and 30 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and stated that ICSD’s mission will be in accordance with the two articles. Article 5 of the Convention proclaims equality and non-discrimination, and Article 30 clearly states that persons with disabilities have the right to participate in cultural life and sports activities.³¹ Therefore, it can be considered that the ideals of the Deaflympics are, at its source, elimination of discrimination against disabled people and promotion of participation of disabled people in sports. The Deaflympics, moreover, adheres to the motto “PER LUDOS AEQUALITAS (Equality through sport),” suggesting that equal treatment of deaf people through sport is its core ideal.

Strengthening of solidarity, international collaboration, and a sense of unity among the deaf are also an important point in terms of the aims of the Deaflympics, and is evident from the official ICSD website. While looking back on the history since the

International Silent Games, the starting point for the Deaflympics, the website states that “the establishment of a sense of identity within the world-wide deaf community” is one of the missions of the Deaflympics.³² These ideals pertaining to the “identity” of the deaf and “strengthening of solidarity” through the Deaflympics are also evident in the fact that the Deaflympics is organized separately from the Paralympics.³³

As for Special Olympics, its stated mission is to “provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.”³⁴

What should be noted here is the particular emphasis on the word “year-round.” In other words, in addition to the World Games, which are organized every four years, Special Olympics places weight on continuous daily activities. It is considered important that “through the power of sports, people with intellectual disabilities discover new strengths and abilities, skills and success. Our athletes find joy, confidence and fulfillment—on the playing field and in life. They also inspire people in their communities and elsewhere to open their hearts to a wider world of human talents and potential.”³⁵

Special Olympics considers that it is important to increase opportunities for interaction among persons with intellectual disabilities and between persons with and without intellectual disabilities. The significance, therefore, of the Special Olympics Movement lies in providing meaningful opportunities for such interactions.³⁶

As mentioned, the key aim of Special Olympics is to promote participation of people with intellectual disabilities in sports. At a glance, the resulting “empowerment” of people with intellectual disabilities may appear similar to the “empowerment” of disabled people in the Paralympics. In Special Olympics, however, there is not necessarily emphasis on “overcoming disability” or “excelling in performance,” and in terms of gaining the understanding of society, their ultimate aim is not about introducing barrier-free designs. In other words, the social model whereby changes in the physical and non-physical aspects of society will remove disability, does not apply directly to people with intellectual disabilities. In that respect, there are differences in the ideals between Paralympians who often go through the process of rehabilitation,

overcoming disability, and achieve athletic performance, and Special Olympic athletes who do not necessarily go through the same process. To put it differently, it can be said that while the Paralympic Games may attach too much emphasis on athletes' performance and medals, Special Olympics gives more emphasis on the participation of athletes. If so, a comparison between the Paralympics and VIRTUS (previously INAS) Global Games may be more beneficial when it comes to intellectual disabilities, than a comparison between the Paralympics and Special Olympics.

The INAS/VIRTUS website states that one of their visions is "the belief that an intellectual impairment, autism or Down syndrome should not be a barrier to competing at the highest levels." INAS/VIRTUS sees its role as promoting inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. As a member of the Paralympics, it supervises eligibility and classification and supports athletes in their development.³⁷ INAS/VIRTUS assists the participation of athletes with intellectual disabilities in the Paralympic Games, and has established a working partnership and cooperation with the IPC.

Lastly, in relation to the history of the Paralympics that has positioned sports as a means to support rehabilitation and social participation of disabled people, a comparison can be made with the ideals of the Invictus Games, which are organized as part of the rehabilitation of disabled veterans.

The disabled veterans who can participate in the Invictus Games are not only the wounded and injured, but also sick veterans. The purpose of the Games is to "use the power of sport to inspire recovery and support rehabilitation." On the other hand, the Games puts emphasis on an ideal different from those of the Paralympics by proclaiming as its aims and ideals, "using the power of sport to generate a wider understanding and respect for those who served the country."³⁸ The Latin word *invictus* used in the name of the Games means "unconquerable" or "invincible," and this expression of a fighting spirit in the name suggests that the Games are in themselves a form of a "fight" with "victory" in the participants' second life at stake.

8. Comparison with the Ideals of the National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities

In Japan, the Tokyo 1964 Paralympic Games (officially, the 13th International Stoke Mandeville Games for the Paralysed) prompted the establishment of the Japan Sports

Association for the Disabled (today's Japanese Para-Sports Association), which organized the National Sports Festival for People with Physical Disabilities (from 2001, the National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities; hereafter the "NSFPD") every year from 1965. The ideals of the NSFPD were derived from the outcomes of the Tokyo 1964 Games of "maintaining and enhancing physical fitness, improving their remaining functions, and promoting psychological rehabilitation of the physically disabled persons who participated in the Paralympics" and "as for the general public, of profoundly increasing their understanding of and interest in physically disabled persons." This process was expected to "contribute to furthering independence and rehabilitation of the physically disabled."³⁹ These ideals are basically the same as the ideals of the Paralympics.

Sports essentially entail physical movement. For disabled people, improvement of their fitness levels not only increases their independence, but also facilitates their participation in society. It can be said that improving physical fitness is a common ideal for both the Paralympics and NSFPD. In fact, expressions such as "Take off and fly" and "Fly away" were used at 11 out of 55 games of the National Sports Festival for People with Physical Disabilities and NSFPD.

On the other hand, the NSFPD has not provided any official explanation as to what extent the principles of competition should be adopted in the NSFPD and to what extent competition over performance in sports should be encouraged in achieving the above ideals. To begin with, the number of athletes that each delegation can field at the NSFPD is calculated by dividing the total number of athletes participating in the game by the number of official booklet certificates of physical and intellectual disabilities issued by each prefecture and designated city on a pro rata basis. The selection of athletes is decided by a selection committee composed of members from disability organizations and disability sports organizations from different prefectures and major cities in Japan. The committee is expected to give due consideration to prioritizing athletes who have not yet participated in the NSFPD. From this, it is possible to surmise that the main objectives are to field athletes from all parts of Japan and to improve their physical capabilities.⁴⁰⁴¹

These ideals are also reflected in other aspects of the games. In the 55 games of the National Sports Festival for People with Physical Disabilities and NSFPD organized between 1965 and 2019, none has proclaimed victory or glory in their

slogans. At the 1968 games in Fukui, the slogan did contain the word “glory,” but it is the “glory of perseverance and efforts” and not the “glory of victory.” There is no mention of the “limitless human potential” often proclaimed at the Paralympic Games.

Expressions such as “making utmost efforts,” “perseverance,” “with all might,” and “efforts” can also be found in the slogans of the National Sports Festival for People with Physical Disabilities and NSFPD. Whereas one of the sources of inspiration in the Paralympic Games is the achievement of the seemingly impossible, the expectations in the NSFPD are to praise, and be inspired by, the very act of the athletes exhibiting their very best effort.

Conclusion

The above observations and analysis show that the Paralympics, which began originally with Guttman’s ideals of “overcoming disability through rehabilitation by means of sports” and “fostering international solidarity,” has, through the passage of time, come to lay more emphasis on “inspiration” from athletes’ high levels of competitive performance. Such “inspiration” has come to be seen as having significance, first as a symbol displaying capabilities of disabled people and their participation in society and second, as a catalyst for improving the social environment in which disabled people are placed.

However, this historical process has also created a tendency where those participating in the Paralympic Games are seen not as “persons with disability” but purely as “athletes.” This tendency is “metamorphosing” the Paralympic Games from a sporting event for disabled people to an international sporting event that, although requiring “disability” as a condition for participation, is developing in new, distinct ways.

Therefore, it would not be surprising if the ideals or significance of such “distinct” games did not necessarily relate directly to “disability.” An indication of this is the trend where the word “disability” is not clearly stated in the Paralympic logo or the slogans of the Paralympic Games. Attention should be given to the fact that the ideals of the Paralympics have changed with the passage of time and have been dependent on the social conditions prevailing in the year in which the Paralympic Games are held.

References

- 1 JPC, "Paralympic to wa (What is the Paralympics?)," <https://www.jsad.or.jp/paralympic/what/history.html>, (18 October, 2019).
- 2 Guttmann, L., 1976, Textbook of Sport for the Disabled, HM+M Publishers, 34.
- 3 IPC, "Seoul 1988," <https://www.paralympic.org/seoul-1988/medals>, (September 7, 2019).
- 4 Brittain, I., 2014, From Stoke Mandeville to Sochi: A History of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, Common Ground Publishers, 154.
- 5 IPC, IPC VISION, MOTTO, SYMBOL, https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/120427151817794_Vision.pdf, (September 7, 2019).
- 6 IPC, "Athens 2004," <https://www.paralympic.org/feature/no-18-agitos-paralympic-symbol-unveiled>, (September 7, 2019).
- 7 IPC, "The Paralympic Symbol - What Does The Agitos Mean?" <https://www.paralympic.org/video/paralympic-symbol-what-does-agitos-mean>, (September 7, 2019).
- 8 Disability Information Resources, The Tokyo Games for the Physically Handicapped Paralympic Tokyo 1964 Report No.2, <http://www.dinf.ne.jp/doc/japanese/resource/handicap/jsad/z16002/z1600202.html>, (5 September, 2019).
- 9 Scruton, J., 1998, Stoke Mandeville: Road to the Paralympics, The Peterhouse Press.
- 10 Goodman, S., 1986, Spirit of Stoke Mandeville: Story of Sir Ludwig Guttmann, HarperCollins Publishers.
- 11 Committee for Publishing the Biography of Nakamura Yutaka, 1988, Nakamura Yutaka Den (Biography of Nakamura Yutaka), Committee for Publishing the Biography of Nakamura Yutaka.
- 12 Ibid., 49.
- 13 Lawrence, D.H. (Translated by Ito Sei), 1996, Lady Chatterley's Lover, Shinchosha Publishing Co., Ltd., 7.
- 14 Brittain, I., From Stoke Mandeville to Sochi: A History of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, 55.
- 15 Bailey, S., 2008, Athlete First: A History of the Paralympic Movement, Wiley and Sons, 26.
- 16 Disability Information Resources, The Tokyo Games for the Physically Handicapped Paralympic Tokyo 1964 Report No.2.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Disability Information Resources, The Tokyo Games for the Physically Handicapped Paralympic Tokyo 1964 Report No.1, <http://www.dinf.ne.jp/doc/japanese/resource/handicap/jsad/z16002/z1600201.html>, (5 September, 2019).
- 19 China Daily, "Full Text of Speech by IPC President Craven at Beijing Paralympics Closing Ceremony," September 17, 2008, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/paralympics/2008-09/17/content_7036101.htm, (September 05, 2019).
- 20 China Daily, "Full Text of BOCOG President's Speech at Closing Ceremony of Beijing Paralympics," September 17, 2008, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/paralympics/2008-09/17/content_7036061.htm, (September 05, 2019).
- 21 Brittain, I., From Stoke Mandeville to Sochi: A History of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, 273.
- 22 Global Times, "LOCOG Chairman Sebastian Coe's Speech at Closing Ceremony of London Paralympics," September 10, 2012, (September 6, 2019).
- 23 IPC, "IPC President's Speech at Closing Ceremony of Rio Games," September 18, 2016,

- <https://www.paralympic.org/news/ipc-president-s-speech-closing-ceremony-rio-games>, (September 6, 2019).
- 24 IPC, 2016, International Paralympic Committee Annual Report 2015, 11, https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/161017094732962_2016_10_11+IPC+Annual+Report+2015+web+version.pdf, (September 9, 2019).
- 25 IPC, Strategic Plan 2015 to 2018 Strategic Outlook for the International Paralympic Committee, https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/150619133600866_2015_06+IPC+Strategic+Plan+2015-2018_Digital.pdf, (9 September, 2019).
- 26 Brittain, I., From Stoke Mandeville to Sochi: A History of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, 199.
- 27 Ibid., 175.
- 28 Japanese Organizing Committee of the XIII International Stoke Mandeville Games 1964, 1965, The Tokyo Games for the Physically Handicapped Paralympic Tokyo 1964 Report, 174.
- 29 IPC, 2001, The Paralympian, 4.
- 30 Whang Youn Dai Achievement Award Official Site, <http://whangaward.org/en>, (September 6, 2019).
- 31 Deaflympics, "Constitution," <https://www.deaflympics.com/icsd/constitution>, (September 7, 2019).
- 32 Deaflympics, "Pioneers and Leaders," <https://www.deaflympics.com/icsd/pioneers-and-leaders>, (September 7, 2019).
- 33 Ogoura K., 2018 "The Deaflympics: History, Present Status, Issues, and Comparison with the Paralympics," Journal of the Paralympic Research Group, 8, 1-25.
- 34 Special Olympics Nippon, "SON ni tsuite (About SON)," <http://www.son.or.jp/about/index.html>, (7 September 2019).
- 35 Special Olympics, "About Our Mission," <https://www.specialolympics.org/about/our-mission>, (September 7, 2019).
- 36 Ogoura K., "Research Note on Special Olympics," Journal of the Paralympic Research Group, 10, 148-149.
- 37 INAS, "Our Vision," <https://inas.org/about-us/who-we-are/who-we-are>, (September 7, 2019).
- 38 Invictus Games Foundation, "Top page," <https://invictusgamesfoundation.org>, (September 7, 2019).
- 39 Japanese Para-Sports Association, 2019, Shogai Shya Sports no Rekishi to Genjyo (History and Current Status of Para-Sports), https://www.jsad.or.jp/about/pdf/jsad_ss_2019_web.pdf, (7 September, 2019).
- 40 19th National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities, IKojin Kyogi Sanka Iko Chosa Hyo (Yoshikil) Kinyu Yoryo (Questionnaire about Participating in Individual Competition (Form1) Procedures for Preparing a Document), <https://www.ibarakikokutai2019.jp/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/01-sankaikoutyousakinyuuyouryou.pdf>, (18 October, 2019).
- 41 Sasakawa Sports Foundation, 2014, Heisei 26 Nen do Monbukagakusho 'Kenjyo sya to Syogai sya no Sports Recreation Katsudo Rentai Suishin Jigyo (Chiiki ni okeru Syogaisya no Sports Recreation ni kansuru Chosa Kenkyu) Hokokusyo (Report 2014 of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology on Sports and Recreation Activity Cooperation Promotion Project of Able-bodied Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Study on Sports Recreation Activity of People with Disabilities in Communities)), 59, http://www.ssf.or.jp/Portals/0/resources/research/report/pdf/2014_report_23.pdf, (18 October, 2019).