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Abstract

Internationale Sportveranstaltungen - Tummelplatz für den Nationalismus oder Mittel für die Regionenbildung in Asien?

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International sports events undoubtedly have numerous political functions, such as raising the national prestige of competing countries, or promoting the host country as a travel or business destination. On a national level, these factors are obvious, but can sports events also contribute to the formation of a supra-national regional identity? This paper discusses three international sports events in 2002 - the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, and the Asian Games - and their impact on regional consciousness in East Asia. It concludes that in most cases the effects on a national level are far greater than those on a regional level. While sports events are unlikely to kick-start the development of a regional consciousness, they can however strengthen existing trends toward regionalisation. To this end, institutionalised regional events will be more useful than one-off events.