

The Olympic Torch Relay as a Venue of Political Struggles-The Case of Taiwan and China

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Abstract

This project focuses on the controversies of the Olympic Torch Relay of the 2008 Beijing Olympics between Taiwan and China. After numerous rounds of negotiations, Taiwan rejected being a stop of the torch relay and became the first IOC member to do so. Since the (re)introduction of the torch relay in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, it has become an invented tradition par excellence and carried many different political implications. China and Taiwan have complicated relationship since the Civil War of 1949 which expelled Republic of China out of the mainland. Taiwan's involvement in the IOC activities also mirrors the harsh political reality for the administration. On the other hand, 2008 Beijing Olympics is regarded as the crown jewel of the recent China Fever and an official testament of the surge of China. This thesis argues that, under this complex circumstance, the Olympic Torch Relay was a venue for political struggles. The then-ruling DPP administration appropriated it as its claim of Taiwanese sovereignty and beckoned the support from the pro-independence extremists.

Key words: Olympic Torch Relay, Taiwan-China Relationship,
Beijing Olympics

奧運聖火傳遞的政治鬥爭 ——以臺灣與中國為例

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摘要

運動與政治乃是交錯複雜的關係，本文利用2008年北京奧運聖火傳遞為例，來說明聖火為政治力量所用的來龍去脈，特別是內部面臨貪污醜聞，外在面臨中國崛起現實的雙重危機壓力下，民進黨政府將聖火視為中國政權代表，在長達一年半的協商後，又將爭議帶回原點，乃至破局。回顧聖火來台爭議，民進黨的初衷就是不願讓聖火來台，中間的協商、要求乃至最終的拒絕，其實都只是一齣為了掩飾其初衷的欲拒還迎戲碼。

關鍵詞：奧運聖火、國族主義、臺灣認同