

Research on the reason of Olympic internationalization success from the cross-cultural perspective

Abstract

Although the modern Olympics has a history of just over one hundred years, compared with ancient Olympics, the internationalization of the Olympics has shown great success both from the members of the organization, the scale of the Olympics and the worldwide Olympic-related activities, which depends on its cross-cultural features. Cross-cultural features are shown in 4 aspects: the organization and organization members, bidding and hosting, sports projects and ideological system. Which precisely are the reasons for the great success of the Olympics internationalization? This study found: 1) cross-cultural organization and management made Olympics lead the healthy development of world sports; 2) the cross-cultural ideological system made the Olympics have a broad national foundations; 3) cross-cultural exchanges and exhibitions made various national cultures Respected and developed.

Keywords: culture-cross, olympics, internationalization

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Abbreviations: IOC, international olympic committee; IFS, international sports federation; NOC, national olympic committee;

Introduction

The modern Olympics are not only the largest sports phenomenon to date in the history of human society, but also a great social culture phenomenon in the history of human civilization.¹ A broad sense of Olympic culture is the sum of material and spiritual wealth created by the Olympics in practice. Material wealth, namely material culture, mainly refers to the transformation and development of human sports skills by Olympics, all kinds of equipments adopted by various venues and facilities, as well as cultural forms resulting from. Spiritual wealth, namely spiritual culture, mainly refers to the influence of Olympics on human's inner world and social behavior, and the related cultural and artistic activities. Which is also the narrow sense of Olympic culture?² Olympic culture is a multi-culture dominated by western culture, it is also a culture centered on education, and a culture taking sports as a carrier, and an advanced culture with great ideals and promotion.³

The Olympic culture connotation is very rich, mainly reflected in six aspects: harmonious development, unity and friendship, fair competition, focusing on participation, work hard, win glory for own country. Which reflects the human pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty, and is the precious wealth of human beings.⁴ Olympism is the core of the Olympic culture. The Olympic culture has promoted the social modernization of the whole world, driven the development of social economy and the progress of science and technology, and played a positive role in environmental protection and the green global plan. It also made the meaning of Olympics extend to a more Longitudinal and deeper level made it a multi-channel and multi-faceted way of economy, science and technology, culture communication.⁵ The great success of the internationalization of the modern Olympics is closely related to the cross-cultural features. Studying the cross-cultural features of the Olympics will further promote the enrichment and development of the Olympics, all ethnic cultures as well.

Investigation in Olympics cross-culture

The cross-culture of organizations and members

The successful internationalization of the Olympics is due primarily to the leading organization-IOC, the cross-cultural structure:

- A. IOC started out as an international organization. The first Olympic conference, 20 representatives from 8 countries including France attended the meeting, The agreement form of the conference was Olympic Charter, the Universality of IOC in Olympic Charter was reflected in: first, the operation of the IOC faced to the world; second, the worldwide competition had unified technical standards; third, many countries with different political system, economic development and cultural background joined the Olympic family.⁶
- B. The three pillars of IOC (IOC, NOC, IFS) and the leading bodies (the Executive Committee, 15 people) had extensive international representativeness. The Executive committee is democratically elected by secret ballot by representatives of IOC members at the plenary session. Representatives of IOC members were from NOC, IFS and the athletes' representatives.⁷ The internationalization of the members was the foundation of IOC internationalization. Because of the rapid development of the Olympics, by 2012 London Olympics, the NOC has reached 204, which means that almost all the world's nations are the representatives of IOC.

The cross-culture of bidding for and hosting olympics

The bidding for and hosting Olympics are the best reflection of the Olympic cross- culture. From the second session the modern Olympic was hosted outside Greece (2004 returned to Athens for Centennial) that is related to the Olympic bidding procedure which was divided into four steps:

- a. Each city's bidding are accept, publish regulations and submit the questionnaire;

- b. IOC Executive Committee confirm the candidacy, Candidate cities submit bidding reports;
- c. IOC Evaluation committees investigate and evaluate bidding city;
- d. Statement by the bidding city, the hosting city is determined.

These 4 steps reflect the openness and tolerance of IOC to various cultures. The first step of registration, as long as a member of the Olympic family, the city is eligible to sign up. In the second and third step, both the Executive Committees and the judges of the IOC come from different countries. Especially in the fourth step, the critical voting step, nearly 100 people participate in voting (2013 year, bided for 2020 Olympics, 96 people voted). These four steps can fully reflect the concept of democracy, impartiality, openness and inclusiveness. In fact, we can intuitively understand this point from the final choice of the host city.

From 1896 the first Olympics to 2016 Brazil Olympics, the Summer Olympics were held 31sessions, plus the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the Olympics were held in the 5 continents of the world and different countries of political systems, economic systems and cultural background (Table 1), after the 2nd World War (globalization began) a total of 19 Olympics were held, in addition to Africa and Antarctica did not hosted Olympics due to the special geographical and social environment, other continents have hosted or will host it before 2020, including 8 sessions in Europe, 4 in Asia, 2 in Oceania, 4 in North America, 1 in South America .As far as the political system of the hosting country is concerned, there were 8 constitutional

monarchy, 4 Parliament republicanism, 3 Presidential republicanism, 3 Federal republicanism, and 1 People’s Congress system. In terms of the economic background of hosting countries, 15 developed countries, 2 undeveloped countries, and 2 developing countries. As far as the cultural background of the hosting countries is concerned, there were 12 western cultures, 4 East cultures, 1 Indian culture, 1 Slavic culture, and 1 Latin American culture.

Although the numbers of different political systems, cultural and economic background of the hosting countries were unbalanced, but we shall understand this unbalance from many aspects: First, it is necessary conditions that the hosting city has a good traffic and safe environment by regulations, which is objectively unbalanced between countries and regions. It is understandable that the hosting number of developed countries is far more than the developing countries, but we must be beware of making use of the developing issues to restrict Olympics hosting and participation of the developing countries; Second, some countries with special cultural background and political system are few, naturally, the opportunity to host is relatively small; Final, in the contemporary society of western hegemony, it is normal because that Olympics stay in the cradle of western culture more time than others, We cannot blame cross-culture non-existent. No doubt, as both are developing countries and different cultures, the Olympics hosting in China and Brazil has far-reaching practical significance, which indicates that developing countries are important members of the Olympics family, the internationalization of the Olympics is inseparable from the developing countries, the Olympic culture is becoming more and more brilliant because of the exchange and integration of Chinese culture and Latin American culture.

Table 1 List of cities held by the Olympic Games after World War II

Sessions	14 th	15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th
Cities	London	Helsinki	Melbourne	Rome	Tokyo	Mexico	Munich
Countries	Britain	Finland	Australia	Italy	Japan	Mexico	Germany
continents	Europe	Europe	Oceania	Europe	Asia	North America	Europe
Political System	Constitutional monarchy	Parliament republicanism	Constitutional monarchy	Parliament republicanism	Constitutional monarchy	President republicanism	Parliament republicanism
Economy	developed	Undeveloped	developed	developed	developed	developed	developed
Culture	Western culture	Western culture	Western culture	Western culture	East culture	Indian culture	Western culture
Sessions	21 st	22 nd	23 rd	24 th	25 th	26 th	
Cities	Montreal	Moscow	Los Angeles	Seoul	Barcelona	Astra	
Countries	Canada	Soviet	USA	South Korea	Spain	USA	
Continents	North America	Europe	North America	Asia	Europe	North America	
Political System	Constitutional monarchy	Federal republicanism	Federal republicanism	President republicanism	Constitutional monarchy	Federal republicanism	
Economy	developed	developed	developed	developed	developed	developed	
Culture	Western culture	Slavic culture	Western culture	East culture	Western culture	Western culture	
Sessions	27 th	28 th	29 th	30 th	31 st	32 nd	
Cities	Greater	Sydney	Athens	Beijing	London	Rio	
Countries	Australia	Greece	China	Britain	Brazil	Japan	
Continents	North America	Europe	Asia	Europe	South America	Asia	
Political System	Constitutional monarchy	Parliament republicanism	People’s congress system	Constitutional monarchy	President republicanism	Constitutional monarchy	
Economy	developed	Undeveloped	developing	developed	developing	developed	
Culture	Western culture	Western culture	East culture	Western culture	Latin American culture	East culture	

The cross-culture of projects

This paper analyzes the cross-culture of projects from two aspects both projects sources and projects national suitability. From projects sources:

- A. Olympic projects include sports, disciplines and events, the sports are 36 from 12 countries and regions, three continents and many different cultures (Table 2);
- B. According to the 2005 IOC agenda, sports set no more than 28, no less than 15.

Projects set by the hosting country, and decided by the IOC session that makes the appropriate adjustments to the sports, disciplines and events according to participation and attraction (the last three sessions change as follows (Table 3); In 2014 in the 127th IOC plenary session, 2020 Olympic agenda was passed, no restrictions for sports, events allowed for a maximum of 310. Such reform actually opens more

sports into the Olympics.⁸ The diversity of Olympic culture will be further developed. About projects national suitability: through the medals results of the last 7 Summer Olympics, the top three are mostly in the USA, China and Russia. But this three countries did not have an absolute advantages, other countries accounted for a large proportion of medals (Table 4) which showed that projects advantages in other countries were also prevalent (Table 5). There are a great relationship between projects advantages and each country or nation's culture, history, geography, race, etc, such as Brazil⁹ and Argentina's football¹⁰ are mostly related to their culture and history; French fencing,¹¹ South Korea's Taekwondo and archery¹²⁻¹⁴ are related to their historical culture tradition; Australia,¹⁵ British¹⁶ and Canada's sailing and geographical location have a natural relationship; China's advantages of weightlifting, table tennis, diving are related to history, culture and tradition. Projects national suitability can increase the participation of various countries and ethnic groups, while respect and allow the independent and free development of their respective cultures.

Table 2 Source countries for summer olympic games

Sports	Trampoline	Beach volleyball	Softball	Track and field	Swimming	Gymnastics	Tennis	Rugby
Source Countries	France	USA	USA	Greece Britain	Britain	Greece	France	Britain
Sports	Football	Eurhythmic	Triathlon	Taekwondo	Archery	Table Tennis	Basketball	
Source Countries	China	Germany Greece	USA	Korean Peninsula	Britain	Britain	USA	
Sports	Rowing	Water Polo	Diving	Boxing	Bicycle	Badminton	Volleyball	
Source Countries	Britain	Britain	Sweden	Britain	France	Britain	USA	
Sports	Equestrian	Synchronized Swimming	Sailboard	Weightlifting	Canoeing	Modern Pentathlon	Shooting	
Source Countries	Britain	Canada	Hawaii	Britain	Canada	France	USA	
Sports	handball	hockey	Sailboat	Baseball	Judo	Wrestling	Golf	
Source Countries	Germany	Britain	Netherlands	Britain	Japan	Greece China	Scotland	

Table 3 Number Changes of projects in the last three Olympic Games

Sessions	Sports number	Disciplines number	Events number	Projects changes
Beijing olympic games	28	38	302	
London olympic games	26	36	302	Baseball, Softball out
Rio olympic games	28	38	306	Golf, 7-man Rugby in

Table 4 The top three medals in last 7 summer olympic games compared with others

Sessions	Top three	Top three medals total and proportion (%)	Others	Others medals total and proportion (%)
The 25 th	CIS, USA, Germany	302 ; 0.37	61	513 ; 0.63
The 26 th	USA, Russia, Germany	229 ; 0.27	76	613 ; 0.73
The 27 th	USA, Russia, China	244 ; 0.26	77	683 ; 0.74
The 28 th	USA, China, Russia	258 ; 0.28	84	671 ; 0.72
The 29 th	China, USA, Russia	282 ; 0.29	108	676 ; 0.71
The 30 th	USA, China, Britain	257 ; 0.27	85	705 ; 0.73
The 31 st	USA, Britain ,China	257 ; 0.26	84	716 ; 0.74

Note The data comes from the official website of China Olympic Committee: <http://www.olympic.cn/>

Table 5 The top 10 Countries' Advantage project in last 7 summer olympic games

Countries	USA	China	Russia	Germany	Australia
Advantage project	Track and field	Weightlifting	Track and field	Track and Field	Track and field
	Swimming	Diving	Swim	Kayaking	Swim
	Ball	Badminton	Gymnastics	Equestrian	Rowing
	Gymnastics	Table Tennis	Wrestling	Rowing	Kayaking
		shooting		bicycle	
Countries	France	Italy	Brazil	Korea	Britain
Advantage project	Fencing	Fencing	Track and field	Taekwondo	Sailboat
	Bicycle	Bicycle	Boxing	Archery	Windsurfing
	Taekwondo	Water polo	Wrestling		Equestrian
	Sailboat		Weightlifting		ball
	Windsurfing				

Note The data comes from the official website of China Olympic Committee: <http://www.olympic.cn/>

The cross-culture of ideological system

The Olympic ideological system mainly includes the Olympics, the Olympic purpose, the Olympic movement purpose, the Olympic spirit, the motto, the famous sayings and the others.¹⁷ It can be seen from table 6 that we can sum up Olympic ideological system in 4

words “harmony, education, fairness and development”. Which is all country and nations’ pursuit, is the common ideal and goal? Therefore, the Olympic ideological system represents the common aspiration of the people all over the world, and is the basis for the fusion of cultures around the world.

Table 6 The epitome of main content of Olympic ideological system

Directions	Contents	Contents epitome
Olympism	Olympism is a philosophy of life which strengthens the constitution, will and spirit, and makes it develop in an all-round and balanced way. Seeking to integrate sport with culture and education, to create a way of life based on the principle of striving for joy, playing a good example of education and respecting the basic principles of social morality.	Harmony, Education, Fairness
Olympic purposes	A sport serves for the harmonious development of human beings, and promotes the establishment of a peaceful society to safeguard human dignity.	Harmony,
Olympic movement purposes	The youth should be educated By carrying out sports activities without any form of discrimination and in accordance with the spirit of the Olympics-mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and fair play which will establish a peaceful and better world.	Harmony, Education, Fairness
Olympic spirits	Mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and fair play	Harmony, Fairness,
Mottos	Faster, higher, stronger	Development
Sayings	Participation is more important than winning	Harmony, Education

Note Olympic ideological system comes from Kong Fanmin, Olympic Cultural Studies [M]. People’s sports press 2005:21-22.

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Cross-cultural organization management made the Olympics lead the healthy development of world sports: From the moment when the modern Olympics came out of Greece, history paid his glorious duty that is to lead the healthy development of world sports. A cross-cultural international organization is the premise of the healthy development of international sports, a set of international rules system is the foundation of its healthy development.¹⁸ According to the Olympic Chart the IOC is mainly responsible for correctly guiding the development of competitive sports and ensure the Olympics regularly carried out, the main task of the NOC is to develop and maintain

the Olympics in their respective countries or regions, The IFS is to take charge of the technical and administrative aspects of the sports events under its jurisdiction.¹⁹ The cooperation and complement each other of this three organizations make the Olympics (including other competitive sports) healthy develop in the world. Although there are stimulants, political interference and other negative effects, but once every 4 years the summer Olympics, the winter Olympics ,Paralympics and the Youth Olympics are orderly carried out under the organization of IOC. In addition to the Olympics, All kinds of sports competitions on every continent are becoming more active. This is inseparable from the rational plan and organization of the IOC and NOC, the coordination and standardization of the IFS as well.

The cross-cultural ideological system made the Olympic movement have a broad national foundation

The success of the Olympics includes at least three aspects:

- i. The overwhelming majority of countries in the world actively participate in it;
- ii. It leads the development of international sports;
- iii. The most extensive mass base. The development of these three aspects cannot be separated from the soul of the Olympics, that is, the ideological system.

The Olympic ideological system mainly includes Olympism, the Olympic purpose, the purpose of the Olympics, the Olympic spirit, motto, famous sayings and others,²⁰ as mentioned earlier, we can use “harmony, education, fairness, development” 4 words to summarize it. The Olympic ideological system has been practiced all over the world since it was founded, such as:

- I. Emphasis on education. Education and Culture Committee was established. The Youth Olympics was set up to integrate sport with culture and education that the youth are educated in accordance with the Olympic spirit- mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and fair play.
- II. Care about the growth of the disabled. The Paralympics was set up to call on the world to encourage, care for and help the disabled.
- III. Concerned about the development of youth in poor countries.

The Olympic Solidarity Fund was set up to help some NOC to carry out their national sports and education undertakings. For example, in December 8, 2014, the IOC passed the Olympic 40 reforms, the 19th of Olympic Channel establishment plan and the 24th of hope project construction, mainly for the different cultures and different nationalities adolescents around world that their sports and culture education were strengthened. The Olympic ideology which was expressed by IOC with Olympic Charter is actually every government and people’s common aspiration and desire. And was unremittingly taken actions by IOC with people all over the world in more than 100 years of development, which makes it have a world wide support and participation.

Cross-Cultural exchanges and exhibition made various national cultures respected and developed

Since the development of human society, colorful and splendid cultures were created. In a large scale, there are eastern culture and Western culture, from the countries and the nations, there are Chinese culture, India culture, Mayan culture, and so on. These cultures are the wisdom crystallization of the working people of the countries and the nations. The Olympic culture is a multi-cultural,²¹⁻²³ which is the main component of sports culture. From the broad sense, sports events such as basketball and volleyball, sports venues and equipments, sports training concepts, sports management systems all belong to sports culture. It is precisely because of these differences, each country and nation create different sports cultural characteristics, such as Chinese sports events advantages, the characteristics of Chinese sports training methods, the characteristics of Chinese sports technique and tactics, Chinese sports “ Nationwide system “, and so on. This is not only the wealth of the Chinese people, but also the common wealth of the

world people. It should be respected and shared by people all over the world. The Olympics bears this important responsibility and provides this platform for the people of the world.

The Olympics is also a platform for world cultural exchange.²⁴ Due to the influence of geography, climate and politics, the sports culture of different countries are very different, which is the premise of sports culture exchange.²⁵ Numerous historical facts have proved that the speed and level of culture development depend on its collision, communication and integration with other cultures, and depend on the richness of cultural resources it can utilize. The more diverse and richer the cultural resources are, the faster and healthier the culture develops. The Olympics displays each national culture, at the same time, also gives each other a chance to communicate, so that each national culture absorbs nutrients from each other, and get richer and more developed.

Conclusion

The International Development of modern Olympics is very successful. 1) the organization includes most of the world’s countries and major sports associations. The number of the NOC has increased from 8 in 1900 to 204 in 2014 in 2012 London Olympics, IFS has developed to 64; 2) The Olympic scale is becoming bigger and bigger. The Summer Olympics lasted more than half a month, the participating athletes reached more than 10000; The number of audiences watching the opening and closing ceremonies through the TV broke the record many times. The total economy was huge, such as the Beijing Olympics, more than 5 billion audiences from more than 220 countries and regions watched the games, total economy reached a record about one hundred and twenty billion Yuan, not included all pick match in each continent; 3) sports have become increasingly active. In addition to the summer Olympics, the other Olympic Games have also had an unprecedented development, the Winter Olympics, the Paralympics, the Youth Olympics; many related cultural and scientific activities are being carried out worldwide. From the cultural perspective, the modern Olympics have Cross-cultural features in 4 aspects: the organization and organization members, bidding and hosting, sports projects and ideological system. Which precisely are the reasons for the great success of the Olympics internationalization? With the development and progress of the society, the Olympic cross-culture will be further strengthened and the internationalization of the Olympics will be more successful.

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Conflict of interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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