

The cunning of the Olympic flame

By Tony Curzon Price,
Created 2008-04-07 21:24

The sight of symbolic attacks on a symbol (the flame) of a symbolic representation of war (the games) may seem too layered even for our mediatised sensitivities. And yet the protest works for me. I asked Grace and Kanishk in the office today, and neither could muster much enthusiasm for the games. I asked David (our Front Page editor) later on, and he remarked: "... it all seems overdetermined, don't you think? the games, Tibet ... it's a big year".

Overdetermined? Just simple causality to me ... until I saw the possible denouement in all its symbolic glory. The flame crosses the world leaving a smokey trail of imperial abuse; the games and the consumer brands behind the olympics are irrecoverably tarnished as they should have been in 1936; the Chinese, facing a boycott of the opening ceremony, save face by offering good faith talks to the Dalai Lama ...

The flame is a trial by fire for the Chinese state, and in this fantasy, it passes.

Source URL:

http://www.opendemocracy.net/blog/tony_curzon_price/the_cunning_of_the_flame