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Life to the City? The Meaning of Sporting Space in Taipei

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the aspect of sport, finding out the problem in Taipei's urban planning. Especially, in the view of people's sporting lifestyle from 1895 to now to open up a new way. The following will divide the Taipei's urban planning into three parts, the Japanese occupation (1895-1945), retrocession of Taiwan (1945-1980), localization of Taiwan (1980-). Each period has its own planning values and characteristics in sporting space. Appeal the urban governance to change its way from developmental model to human model and rewrite our life into Taipei.

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Keywords: Food; ethnic food; diaspora; identity

1. Diagnose the Taipei city health by observing the sporting lifestyle

Sport as a new element to the city, the discussion is only in the field of cultural studies in Taiwan. As a matter of fact, the sport isn't just a cultural factor. Moreover; sports issues could link with the debate of public space and other social problems. That's the exact area, which has the essence of daily life, residents' activities and city's source of vitality. It's necessary to diagnose seriously and understand the everyday life of citizens so that the operation of the urban planning will be closer to the public than before. (Fig. 1).

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Fig. 1. Baseball as the element in daily life.

Over the past few decades, diagnose cities' health is almost impossible in Taiwan. The strong top-down ideology in the urban planning lead to a series of problems, such as failure in reviewing the plan. In the terms of urban planning, the comprehensive review should be a tool for planners to revise the plan, but the review mechanism, which only deals with quantitative data, let the whole planning system out of order. In short, the transformation of cities is not only taking place in a particular field, but also causing the overall transmutation. In this respect, diagnosing a city with only few indexes or standards from planner isn't enough to clarify the situation that had happened. Although, the original idea of "Healthy City" that proposed by WHO (World Health Organization) is for rethinking the increasingly growing population problem since 1980s. In particularly, responding to living environment. Unfortunately, the urban planning in Taiwan is a lack of participatory mechanism. The top-down planning isn't work in any circumstances. It's necessary to bridge the plan and sport to offset the conflicts between each other, creating a new way to the future (Shirotsuki, Otuki and Sonoda, 2010). Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, had promoted the concept of Healthy City since 2002. However, the Taipei government define the healthy in a narrow sense. Which only focus on the medical, care services... Sport isn't the central character in this framework. Recalling the history of the urban planning in Taipei from 1895, the most favorite sport, baseball, is profoundly affected the whole Taipei city's pattern, space and planning strategy. However, it had never taken seriously in urban planning. The tension between the urban development and sporting space is getting worse and worse.

2. Changeable role of sporting space in Taipei

The sport, baseball, is called "Taiwanese pastime," also an important factor to indicate the daily life of Taipei (Wu, 2005). There are two dimensions about "Taiwanese pastime". First, Taiwanese past is a grand narrative to cover the essence of sport from the Japanese occupation to nowadays (Wu, 2005). It's not only affecting the urban planning, but also constructing the illusion to baseball. Second, when baseball is becoming part of life and gives energy to the city. Meanwhile, the sporting space, baseball, turns into the reproduction space to Taiwanese people. People could recognize the city by joining these activities. Showing their identity to the city (Suthasupa, 2011). With the change of time, these two senses interact with each other. Facilitating Taiwan's plan to design brand new landscapes in the city. The spaces will represent in our living environment. In this point of view, the following will divide the Taipei's urban planning into three parts, the Japanese occupation (1895-1945), early retrocession of Taiwan (1945-1980), after localization of Taiwan (1980-). Each period has its planning values and characteristics in sporting space. These constitute the meaning of sporting space to Taipei.

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