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Olympic Echoes

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The echoes of the Beijing Olympics have been soundly drowned out, at least in US medialand, by the Democratic Convention. Even so, there’s still a lot of good and interesting coverage and reflections on the Beijing spectacle. Here are a few of our favorites.

1. For a variety of takes on the closing ceremony, see Danwei’s wrap-up.

2. In case you missed them, here are Xinhua’s pictures of a sweaty President Bush chatting with the eventual gold medalists in women’s beach volleyball.

3. Mary Beard at TLS wrote two recent pieces on the Olympics that may be of interest—both written from a classicist’s perspective, the first beginning from the premise of how London will possibly live up to Beijing’s show, while the second a tongue-in-cheek reflection on Greek Olympic traditions.

4. For those tracking superstitions in 2008 (like the earthquake premonitions and the Olympic harbingers of doom), Shanghaiist is keeping up on connections between the earthquake and the Chinese medal count.

5. After all the mentions in the media over the last few weeks of the massive mobilization of humans necessary for the Olympic performances (a mobilization made possible, commentators implied or sometimes said, because China is an autocratic regime), Jamie Metzl of the Asia Society urges in FEER that liberal democracies need to go toe-to-toe with Beijing’s technocrats and prove that liberal democracies can also put on a good show. (Is that the acrid smell of Cold War in the air?) At openDemocracy, Kerry Brown argues that the Olympics have already changed China in ways that matter. For a nuanced discussion of this notion of “changing” China, take a listen to Louisa Lim’s Monday report.

Tags: The 2008 Beijing Olympics