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Academic Journal Report: Inter-Asia Cultural Studies by Nicole Barnes

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I have in my hot little hand the December 2008 issue (Volume 9, Number 4) of a hot little journal from Routledge Press, *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*. Supported by the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation and Taiwan’s National Chiao Tung and Tsing Hua Universities, this journal has a truly international editorial collective hailing from Singapore, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Taiwan, the PRC (including Hong Kong), Japan, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, Korea, India, and the U.S. To further demonstrate its comprehensive Pacific Rim approach, the journal accepts publications in Asian languages as well as in English. Although this is an academic journal, it addresses contemporary issues that all China Beat readers could enjoy. Volume 9 Number 2 was a special issue dedicated to Taiwanese filmmaker Hou Hsiao-Hsien. Each issue also includes a “visual essay” focusing on analysis of visual culture.

The December 2008 special issue on Urban Imaginaries features seven articles on specific features of urbanity in Hong Kong (which garnered 2 articles), Tokyo, Shanghai, Sydney, San Francisco, and Beijing. Law Wing-sang explains the popularity of police-gangster movies in Hong Kong cinema (as best exemplified by the wildly popular *Infernal Affairs series*) by linking them to Hong Kong’s dirty past of “collaborative colonialism” in which British succeeded in subduing the colony only with Chinese help. Koichi Iwabuchi also uses film—specifically, the movie “Lost in Translation”—as a focal point for a discussion of Tokyo’s own modernity being “lost in translation” as other cities leave the once über-modern Japanese capital in the dust.

Yaming Bao explores white-collar consumer culture in contemporary Shanghai through an examination of the "Xin Tiandi" (新天地 "New Space") shops, the Kodak company’s "Kodak Super Cinema World", and the weekly entertainment magazine 上海一周 (*Shanghai Weekly*). John Nguyet Erni interviewed 50 people in Hong Kong to investigate the “social and political after-shock” of SARS. Graeme Turner’s article juxtaposing urban and suburban Australia calls to mind UCI’s own Mark Levine’s work on Tel Aviv and Jaffa (see the *Journal of World History*). It seems that cities around the world claim modernity by distinguishing themselves from their suburbs and neighboring cities.

This issue’s visual essay, an interrogation of Chinese modernity and state-sanctioned violence as expressed in twentieth-century gardens in Beijing is by none other than Geremie Barmé, a prolific China scholar whose name often crops up in China Beat posts.

Lastly, I must say that *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* is very sleek. It is attractively thin (not at all intimidating), includes Asian text rather than mere romanization, and has high-quality paper for sharp images. It is well worth checking out.