

Banalities of subalternism: Positing the Tionghua Peranakan in the Colonial discourse

ABSTRACT

Edward Said's Orientalism (1978) suggested that Orientalist discourse was a devious effort of the West to lure the colonized and the colonizer into an imaginary existence that would help ensure its domination of the East. Through the work of Homi K. Bhabha, this discourse was broadened to include the notion of delusive and elusive representations of the colonized "Other". When Lacan introduced the psychoanalytic approach to complement the interrogation of tropes in western historiography, it became conclusive that the colonial discourse would embody resistance in the form of subaltern voices from the movement of colonial encounter. This article hopes to posit the Tionghua peranakan people within this colonial discourse, claiming their subaltern marginality and diaspo[ri]c experience as the impetus that propelled them into a head-on encounter with the colonial.