



香港中文大學東亞研究中心
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
CENTRE FOR EAST ASIAN STUDIES

Seminar

The Importance of Being Chinese: Orientalism Reconfigured in the Age of Global Modernity

BY

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Date: 31 January 2008 (Thursday)

Time: 4:30pm — 6:00pm

Venue: Multi-purpose Room, G/F,

New Asia College Ch'ien Mu Library, CUHK

In the age of globalization, the issue of Orientalism seems no longer applicable to this “Empire” of ours, to borrow Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s term. But twenty-five years after the publication of his monumental *Orientalism*, Edward Said remarked shortly before he passed away, “I wish I could say that general understanding of the Middle East, the Arabs and Islam in the US has improved, but alas, it really hasn’t.” Has Orientalism disappeared with the swift development of global media? Has the silent Other, with its rising economic force, found its own voice at long last? This paper endeavors to use “China” as an example to reconsider the issue of Orientalism and trace the transformation of the Other in this so-called “China’s century.” By reorienting Chinese actress Zhang Ziyi, this paper remaps Orientalism in the age of global modernity. As noted by Arif Dirlik, “the very language of alternatives and multiplicity is enabled historically by the presupposition of a common modernity shaped by a globalizing capitalism.” This paper argues that in the age of global modernity we need to reconfigure our understanding of “China” in particular and “Asia” in general.

All are welcome.