ABSTRACT

The study of Chinese overseas is part of the study of humanity. To make it manageable, we have to reduce its scope. To make it meaningful, we have to use generalizations or abstract terms which encapsulate generalizations. Like human beings as a whole, the Chinese overseas are very heterogeneous, but we believe that somehow they are a meaningful subject of scholarly study. The paper explores some of the dilemmas of the general and the particular in the history of the peranakan Chinese of Java, themselves a far from homogeneous group.