

THE
CHINESE SCHOOLS
OF MALAYSIA
TOWARDS THE YEAR
2000

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*A Hundred Years
Of Struggle,
Survival And
Its Future Development*

叶新田博士著
by *Dr. Yap Sin Tian*
Ph.D., Ed.D.

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大马华文教育迈向二千年



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DR. YAP SIN TIAN



As the honorary Secretary General of the United Chinese School Committees Association of Malaysia, Dr. Yap Sin Tian writes for the mass media, speaks in seminars and public forums on issues pertaining, more particularly, to the Chinese education of Malaysia.

He is a prolific writer and writes profusely in English, Chinese and in Bahasa Malaysia captivating the attention of serious readers with critical outlook.

Apart from writing on social, economical, cultural issues and on business administration, he has translated several philosophical books known as Chinese classics into Bahasa Malaysia, viz, *The Art of War* by Sun Tze, *Tao Te Cheng* by Lao Tze, the classical bible of Confucianism -- *The Great Learning* and *The Doctrine of Mean* in addition to *The Thought of Confucius in Administration and its Application in Modern Management*.

Dr. Yap Sin Tian having expert knowledge in business administration, writes articles on the application of Chinese administrative philosophy in modern management, especially the conversion of Chinese family business in coping up with modern management. In his endeavours on such great task of infusing the idea

of change in the management of the Chinese traditional style of business, he has written two books namely *The Transport Service Industry in Malaysia and its Future Development* (in English) and *The Application of Sun Tze's Strategy to the Modern Management* (in Chinese).

The Chinese Schools of Malaysia Towards The Year 2000 is one of his recent contribution.

This research is dedicated to the educationists and those who support the survival and struggle of the Malaysian Chinese Schools. This doctoral dissertation is a research serving two diversified purposes: (i) To fulfill the programme requirements for acquiring the Ed. D degree; (ii) To make a review of the Chinese Education in Malaysia and bring forth specific recommendations for its future development.

The Chinese Education in Malaysia, so far, has developed under special circumstances and survives under extreme adversary situations. Facing the great challenge of the decade of 90s and the threshold of 21st century, educationists are very much concerned about its future development. The review becomes imperative as new strategy has to be formulated to cope with the advancement of the nation and social development.

The Chinese version of the research is an authentic document of "The 1992 Conference of Chinese Independent Secondary School Committees of Malaysia" held on 21 and 22 of November, 1992. Though the objective of the research remains the same for both purposes, presentation varies slightly and the contents stretched or summarised in the interest of the readers.

**Extract of Comment from the Faculty Advisor,
Kensington University**

This doctoral dissertation has been produced with considerable effort in order to render a scholarly piece of work at the graduate level. I believe the effectiveness of the overall work speaks for itself when thoroughly read and understood by each individual reader. A relatively good dissertation overall.

- by James H. Lambert, Ph.D., Ed.D.

Preface

by

Prof. Wu Teh Yao

To write a preface for any book is not easy. It is a daunting task, especially if the topic under review is not the forte of the reviewer. Luckily, and by happy coincidence, the contents of Dr. Yap Sin Tian's book, *The Chinese Schools of Malaysia Towards The Year 2000 - A Hundred Years of Struggle, Survival and Its Future Development*, are not altogether new to this reviewer who was co-author of the Fenn-wu Report on Chinese Education in Malaya. That report was written in 1951. Much has changed. But the same anxiety, suspicion and fear about Chinese language and culture still exist. They are as real now as they were 41 years ago. But time has changed. More and more Chinese Malaysians have taken roots and Malaysia is now their home.

Dr. Yap's book is not only a timely reminder of the long, hard struggle of the Chinese community to establish schools for the education of their children but also provides guidelines for the future development of Chinese schools in Malaysia. The goals are modest, reasonable and realistic. The only criticism is that the year 2000 is but only 7 years away. Perhaps the year 2010 may be more realistic. The grinding wheel of education turns slowly, as it does everywhere and more so in a multi-cultural society like Malaysia. As the Chinese saying goes, "It takes ten years to grow a tree; it takes a hundred years to cultivate a man".

(十年树木，百年树人) That sight must not be lost. Dr. Yap is right when he urges us to look ahead, even to the year 2000. Certainly, the setting up of the Education Centre is cause for optimism. Who knows, by the year 2020 or before, an institution of higher learning with the Chinese language as the main medium of instruction will come into being?

Chinese education in Malaysia as shown in Dr. Yap's book, went through 170 years of struggle, survival, growth and crisis. Now the time has come for turning the crisis into opportunity and revival. The era of Chinese educational renaissance is at hand. "With education there is no class distinction"(). With such an ideal, Chinese education will not only enrich the educational level of Chinese Malaysians but also the cultural heritages of the Malaysian Nation.

Dr. Yap Sin Tian's book, *The Chinese Schools of Malaysia Towards the Year 2000* is a timely book, if not a timeless book, just as pertinent as other educational reports of the past.

Prof. Wu Teh Yao
December 1992
Singapore

Foreword

by

Foo Wan Thot

The golden rays of hope has at last shone through the pitch darkness and lights up the path of Malaysian Chinese education towards the 21st century.

In line with the social and economic developments required for the realization of Wawasan 2020, the government will correspondingly adopt a more open educational policy. Moreover, the regional macro-environment of East Asia has taken a turn which is more favorable for the development of Chinese education. These will inevitably result in the questioning of the wisdom of the mono-cultural education policy and the quota system of intake in the realm of tertiary education. On the other hand, new opportunities are now open to Malaysian Chinese Schools which all along emphasized the importance of trilingualism and the learning of science and mathematics.

How should Malaysian Chinese education progress, in this transitional stage ? In what way will the trend of educational development in the world as a whole influence education in Malaysia ? What are the changes that will be made in the formulation of educational policies as a result of changes in the Malaysian economic structure ? What are the possible influences of the forthcoming new Education Act on the development and future of Malaysian Chinese education ? What are our plans and strategies for the

future development of Malaysian Chinese education ? These questions are explored and carefully examined in this book in which Dr Yap Sin Tian has given a comprehensive and refreshing analysis.

Dr Yap Sin Tian is a learned scholar both in the field of business management and the realm of education. Besides, he is also dedicated to Malaysian Chinese education and to other social works. He advocates life-long education and has himself benefited from it.

This outstanding working paper was presented by Dr Yap in Chinese at "The 1992 Conference of the Chinese Independent Secondary School Committees of Malaysia". This working paper is now printed in book form both in Chinese and English. It is undoubtedly a very valuable and useful guide for all persons who are concerned with or involved in the Malaysian Chinese education movement.

**Foo Wan Thot,
Chairman,
United Chinese School Committees' Association of
Malaysia**

Foreword

by

Sim Moh Yee, JMN, JP

I have had personal acquaintance with Dr. Yap Sin Tian in recent years. Though I know him only for few years, I feel that he is a remarkable person judging from his contribution.

He is a man of self-orientation. From a humble beginning as a Chinese secondary school teacher, he made his way through by being an executive secretary in the chamber of commerce and industry, publishing manager and a managing director of a transport company. In the past thirty years, he engaged himself in different fields and has acquired vast experiences from his diversified activities.

He is interested in studying further. Now he manages a business, but he is not running after money. He is a remarkable man with the spirit of Confucianism in business. He studies incessantly while managing his business. Normally, a businessman will indulge in making money but not furthering his studies. But he holds that it is wrong just to follow the tradition in the face of rapid change around the world. Knowledge is wealth. Previously, people earn money by selling labour. But nowadays labour must be combined with knowledge for survival in this world. The business will be wiped out by the tide if there is no advanced information and proper management. Yap is aware of this and he makes

use of every minute of his leisure to study. Through continuous effort he achieved his Master degree in Business Administration from University of East Asia, Macau. In 1991 and 1992 he received a doctorate degree in Business Administration and Doctor of Education in Education respectively. We share the honour and congratulates him on his effort and achievement. He sets a good example for the people involved in commercial line and hope that people aspiring to achieve greater heights in commerce and industry will emulate the method applied by Dr. Yap.

Proficient in Chinese, Malay and English and Proliferous in Writing

The key to knowledge is language. It is not easy to be proficient in a language. But the author has profound knowledge in Chinese, Malay and English. He has compiled a dictionary of English, Malay and Chinese words. It is said by the ancient sage that writing is the tool to spread thought. The result of our research shall be bequeathed to our decedents. Otherwise it becomes useless. Since the mid-sixties, he commenced to write articles in Chinese. He has published several books. Just to improve intercultural relationship among the people, he initially translated Malay literatures into Chinese. Then he translated the Chinese literatures including the Malaysian Chinese modern poems into Malay. More particularly, he translated the Chinese classics such as 'The Art of War by Sun Tze'; the bible of taoism 'Tao Te Cheng'; classics of Confucianism – The Great Learning, and The Doctrine of Mean. His translation works are considered as faithful, intelligible, and fluent. These reveals that he has placed an onorous effort to

study diligently and digest the classics to accomplish the translations of these great writings.

Dedicated to the Educational Activity

In our society where people are influenced by the idea of utilitarianism, their philosophy is simple and realistic. It is hard to get people to do what Confucius said on the mission of life "to regulate the family, to rightly govern the state, and to make the kingdom to be in peacefulness and happiness" or to observe the saying of another sage Fan Chung Yen that to "be sorrowful in the face of sorrowfulness of the people of the nation and to be happy following the happiness of the people of the nation". To struggle for the just right and benefits of Chinese education in Malaysia is a task extremely difficult just as negotiating with the tiger for its furs. It has to face with suppression and mishap. Rarely we get people to work and sacrifice in the interest of public and community. And such unselfish and upright characters are regarded as 'big fools' by the society in general.

Yap represented the United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia (UCSCAM) in the National Economic Consultative Council in 1990 and the Educational Act Consultative Council in 1991 organized by the government of Malaysia to make review of economic and education policies respectively. He presented our views and recommendations in the Councils in education and culture, and our counter proposal regarding the New Education Act. The participation has experienced conflicts and controversies in the conference, but he contributed immensely.

Dr. Yap is the secretary general of the UCSCAM. He is suitable and qualified to hold such a high position, he is humble, responsible and mission-oriented. The organization is fortunate to have him at its helm. Recently he has authored his research work 'The Chinese School of Malaysia Towards the Year 2000'. It enunciates the development of education tendency in the world, the functions of education, the educational policy of Malaysia and the New Education Act, the prospects of Chinese education in Malaysia, the Education Centre of Dong-Jiau Zhong, the strategy and guidelines for the future development of Chinese Schools in Malaysia. The contents of this book is a well researched material with distinct and sharp analysis and justification which serves as an essential, prospective and highly valuable educational policy document setting the guidelines for the future development of Chinese education. The publication is just in time as we anticipate the proclamation of the new Education Act.

Sim Moh Yee, JMN, JP
Chairman,
United School Teachers Association of Malaysia.

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