

LIM LIAN GEOK

SOUL OF THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE



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This is the first book in the English-language on a man who has been beatified as the "Soul of the Malaysian Chinese" since his passing in 1985. No other Malaysian Chinese has been accorded that honour. No other Malaysian Chinese has been given the privilege of lying-in-state at the Chinese Assembly Hall in Kuala Lumpur. At his funeral, the procession was the largest the capital had ever witnessed for any Malaysian Chinese.

His name is Lim Lian Geok and every year during the anniversary of his passing in December, leaders of political parties, associations and school children go to pay their respects at this great man's mausoleum at the Hokkien Cemetery in Kuala Lumpur.

He was spokesperson for the Malayan Chinese community throughout the Independence struggle and he took part in the "Malacca Talks" with the Tunku over the Constitutional issues in 1955. He was even asked to write Hari Raya messages in the Jawi scripted Utusan Melayu in the Fifties.

And yet this patriot and educator was stripped of his Malayan citizenship and his teaching licence in 1961 despite his contributions toward mother tongue education, civil rights and nation building.

Lim Lian Geok was not your stereotype Malaysian Chinese leader in a suit, driving a limousine and yearning for power, wealth or honorific titles. Until the end of his life, he lived simply and in humble lodgings. He was first and foremost a teachers' union leader who lived his mission of a civil rights leader of the Malaysian Chinese community.

This book is an attempt to inform Malaysians that it is time to right an injustice done to this exemplary patriot and civil rights leader by reclaiming his Malaysian citizenship and teaching licence and to say to all the world, 'This was a man!'



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