

**Guan Eng As Dong Jiao Zong's Linguistic Role Model**  
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**By Helen Ang**

Perhaps the Dong Jiao Zong decision to align with DAP comes from a belief that some of Lim Guan Eng's "shine" could rub off on the Chinese education movement.

To understand why the Chinese educationists should think so, we need to revisit the Chua Soi Lek-Lim Guan Eng debate on Feb 18 that was organised by the Asian Strategic Leadership Institute (Asli).

As everyone knows, the great debate on our two-race system was held in Mandarin. Asli director Michael Yeoh told a press conference that the language medium "was changed to Mandarin following Lim's request".

On Feb 23, Guan Eng released the English translation of his debate speech.

Speaking to the packed hall and televised audience nationwide, Guan Eng accused BN of dividing the rakyat into Malays and non-Malays.

Guan Eng also told his listeners: "In BN, Umno only takes care of the Malays, MCA only takes care of the Chinese, MIC only takes care of the Indians, Gerakan... I don't know takes care of who???.... That's BN with their "you take care of your race, I take care of my race". That is a two-race system! Conversely, in a two-party system, we are all brothers and sisters, we take care of each other; every Malaysian is part of one big family!"

Guan Eng's claim that Malays, Chinese and other ethnicities "are all brothers and sisters" is the type of vocabulary reflecting his party's Christian evangelist thrust. As is his preaching "every Malaysian is part of one big family!"

Never mind that the family members attend different schools, eat in different places (halal / pork served here), practice different religions (ummah / kafir dzimmi\*), possess different psyches, etc. etc.

Guan Eng's self-proclaimed success

Replying to a participant during the debate's Q & A session, Guan Eng told the floor: "After March 2008, everyone can see, touch and feel the changes that have happened. In Peninsular Malaysia, the first dual lingual road signs in Chinese were erected in Penang."

Please applaud Guan Eng's achievement for "the first dual lingual road signs in Chinese [that] were erected in Penang" after Pakatan took over the state.

If we were to go by Guan Eng's yardstick, countries like Germany, France and the rest that do not have bilingual signs for their road names would be disgracefully lacking in national 'Firstness'. [In Berlin, I saw road names carrying the word 'Strasse' (Jalan) monolingually and in Paris I saw they are 'Rue' (Jalan) monolingually too.]

Guan Eng, unlike "Umno only taking care of Malays" made his sales pitch that "we [Malaysian Firsters] take care of each other" in the Astro live telecast. According to our country demographic, three-quarters of television viewers would not have understood the language in which he spoke.

The DAP secretary general could have elected for the debate to be in Mandarin because he speaks

bahasa kebangsaan rather poorly. The MCA president, on the other hand, is a fluent speaker of Malay and hence either BM or English would not have been an obstacle for Dr Chua.

What takes the cake is Guan Eng's logic-defying challenge to his opponent: "Chua Soi Lek's refusal to release his own debate transcript in Bahasa Malaysia and English will only prove to non-Chinese speaking Malaysians that he focused on making personal attacks, lies and adopted divisive tactics during the historic Mandarin [debate]."

In the first place, if only Guan Eng had not insisted that the debate be conducted in Mandarin, then his quibble about Dr Chua failing to translate – in order to "prove to non-Chinese speaking Malaysians" – would have been a moot point.

So why didn't Guan Eng remember about the "non-Chinese speaking Malaysians" to begin with?

In truth, Guan Eng's nimble antics surrounding the above debate is merely characteristic of his party's duplicitous approach to policy and political affairs.

He makes the accusation that "BN divides the people into Malays and non-Malays" but his own party since obtaining power has been boasting non-stop that it gave the bumiputera a larger quota than the ruling party ever did.

Aren't the categories of bumiputera and non-bumiputera similarly "dividing the people" into two separate categories akin to the BN coalition formula that Guan Eng criticizes?

Yet DAP refuse to acknowledge their own adherence to the 'bumiputera and non' concept which is not dissimilar to the 'Malays and non' cleavage Guan Eng slams Umno for practising.

This bipolar personality disorder of the DAP is obviously a necessary playacting to reassure Malay voters that the privileges they've been enjoying would not be threatened in the event the community hands over Putrajaya to Pakatan.

DJZ hooking up with DAP

I had posted earlier in my blog that Dong Jiao Dong allowing DAP's involvement in their March 25 rally would only serve to politicize the gathering as confrontational. I also noted that DAP's unerring combativeness is not likely to yield a negotiated remedy to the DJZ requests.

A reader of mine commented in response that DJZ being confrontational now does not deviate from how this Chinese education movement had always been in the past and even when they had the backing of MCA and Gerakan who are the Chinese representatives within the establishment.

Going back to Guan Eng's debate speech, he complained that "MCA only takes care of the Chinese, MIC only takes care of the Indians".

Since he and his party – unlike the "racist" MCA, the "racist" MIC, the "racist" Umno and the "racist" everybody else seen through their DAP speck-free eyes – consider themselves to be Malaysian par excellence, it's quite strange, isn't it, why we've never heard them promoting the Malaysian First language.

Or is DAP unaware that Article 152 of the Federal Constitution spells out the national language? By the way, this 152 is that very same language that is the least and the one most minimally used by Guan Eng if you were to look at all his public speeches uploaded to YouTube.

Hanyu is the medium of instruction in 'Chinese school'. [Alongside is the mainline education stream called Sekolah Kebangsaan.]

Various official sources cite the particular statistics that more than 90 percent of Chinese parents send their children to Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan (Cina).

DJZ's data say also that 90 percent of SRJK (C) enrolment comprises Chinese pupils. Taken together, these facts indicate that the vernacular schooling system is a communal vested interest of the Chinese.

Thus it's perfectly understandable that MCA – the Malaysian 'Chinese' Association – should be concerned about Chinese schools.

When Hindraf voice their grievances about Tamil schools and other race-specific (i.e. Indian) issues, the DAP camp is quick to vilify them as "racists" and "extreme" in possessing such a communal mindset. When Malays just mention the word 'race', they're immediately branded "supremacists" by Chinese opposition supporters.

DAP take pride in positioning themselves as 'beyond race' and above the pettiness of the communalists (i.e. those who do not appear to object to the race label).

Previously Guan Eng had declared: "The time has come for all Malaysians to look at each other as fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and children faced with similar problems and filled with common hopes and aspirations. For this reason, whilst I will meet with any group seeking a dialogue, I am not keen to initiate discussions on my own with organisations based on a purely communal instead of a Malaysian agenda." (see 'BN's Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' in Malaysiakini)

Err, what is it again that DAP defines as the "Malaysian agenda" -- be it in the field of national education, national integration and what not?

How is it that DJZ has been led to believe that DAP, which places paramount emphasis on a "Malaysian agenda", can be of much help to the education movement's communal demands being met?

Can anyone refresh our memory on what DAP has ever done for Chinese culture and education?

But more pertinently, what does DJZ expect DAP to be able to achieve on March 25 and thereafter?

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\* Kafir: Non-Muslims in Malaysia have been categorized as 'kafir dzimmi' by the country's religious authorities in the prepared text of a national Friday sermon, viz. "Berdasarkan pemerhatian mimbar status orang bukan Islam di negara ini digolongkan sebagai ahli Dzimmi kerana pada prinsipnya mereka mentaati dan mengakui untuk tunduk kepada perjanjian kontrak sosial yang diwujudkan di bawah Perlembagaan Persekutuan." Source: Jakim, e-Khutbah (22 Jan 2010)

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