

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

THIRTY-FIRST CONGREGATION

Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Social Science, honoris causa

A Citation

Dr the Hon Daniel Chi Wai Tse, OBE, BS, MS, PhD, Hon LLD, JP

At the juncture of the Medieval and the Modern Age a profound change came over Western theology, in that the individual free will gradually replaced pre-destination as the key to salvation. This change had many far-reaching repercussions, and for instance is believed to be a cause of the rise of commerce and industry in the West. That change notwithstanding, we can hardly deny that in many cases one's path appears to be guided by fate rather than the person's own inclinations even today, and Dr Daniel Tse's career can perhaps serve as a good example.

Close to three decades ago, Dr Tse like many other gifted young men from this part of the world left for the United States in pursuit of a scientific career. After ten years of effort, just when his research work began to bear fruit, he became moved by an invitation from the Baptist College, decided to return to work in a then politically volatile Hong Kong, and three years later further accepted the College Presidency, a yoke under which he has now toiled for no less than fifteen years. During that one and a half decade Dr Tse has indeed worried, toiled, pleaded and against many odds moved heaven and earth for the advancement of his College, as all eyes could see. And as all would also agree, it has been mainly due to his tireless efforts that Baptist has now grown into a well established subvented tertiary institution which has won approval for offering degree courses. Looking back, surely the founding fathers of Baptist as well as Dr Tse himself would be glad that nearly two decades ago he had chosen to answer the call of his destiny.

Its historic march towards 1997 having started last year, Hong Kong has begun to witness fundamental social changes. It was also last year that saw Dr Tse taking on the role of a social activist. He accepted appointment to the Kowloon City District Board, and to the surprise of many, stood and won a highly competitive election to become one of the first elected members of the Legislative Council; he was then also invited to join the Basic Law Consultative Committee as well as the Executive Council. Moving thus directly into the inner core of political power from the outside academic world in the mere span of no more than one year is exceptional indeed. It is a measure of the degree to which his talents are now being appreciated, and probably also an indication of how keenly our leadership is now looking for new blood in anticipation of 1997. In view of the plethora of complex problems that surely will arise to confront the Government in due course, the people of Hong Kong are no doubt heartened and relieved to see a person of Dr Tse's calibre and dedication once again rise to the call of the times.

Dr Tse is, of course, by no means the aloof scholar that one might mistake him to be; rather he has always been the devout Christian with a keen sense of social responsibility. Besides church and religious activities, he has for years worked as director for a number of Christian secondary schools, and has also for over a decade involved himself in the community relations and civic education programmes of the ICAC. While unexpected turns in his remarkable career might have reminded one of the verse "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and wither it goeth", his path is really not difficult to comprehend if one turns to his faith for an explanation. It is all but natural that Dr Tse the man of faith and conviction should not rest on what has already been achieved by human effort, but rather should always work towards a higher goal in the same way as an instrument of the divine.

Dr Tse was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1977, awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws by Baylor University, his alma mater, in 1982, made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1984, and awarded an OBE in 1986. Mr Chancellor, in recognition of his contribution to higher education and of his social services, may I request your Excellency to confer upon Dr Daniel Chi Wai Tse the Degree of Doctor of Social Science, honoris causa.

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