



**An address given by
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Today, The Chinese University of Hong Kong holds its Eleventh Honorary Fellowship Conferment Ceremony. On behalf of my fellow-recipients and myself, I wish to express our most heartfelt gratitude to the University for bestowing this honour on us. Over the years, I served on many occasions as the public orator at the conferment ceremonies for Honorary Fellows and Honorary Doctors, time and again standing at the other side of the stage, paying tribute to the distinguished leaders of various industries and professions. Now, I am here at this side of the stage to receive the accolade. It is so difficult for me to express my joy. My fellow-recipients, Professor Chang Shu Ting, Mr Fung Siu To, Clement, Professor Lee Hon Ching, Dr Lo Tak Shing, Peter and Dr Yeung Ming Biu, have contributed substantially to the University over many years, and it is my great privilege to receive the honour together with them.

My reminiscence goes back to the good old days more than half a century ago when I studied at Chung Chi College and the Chinese University was yet to be established. In 1965, I joined the faculty of the University after completing my studies overseas and served until my retirement in 2005. It is a period of four full decades in a blink. In the first decade, when people asked where I worked, I pleasingly answered, "The Chinese University." It gave me a sense of great fulfillment. In the second decade, when somebody raised the same question, I gave the same answer in a "matter-of-fact" manner. In the third decade, when somebody queried, "You are still with the Chinese University?" I blushed and replied, "Yes, still there." At that time, my uneasiness came from the inkling that a talented person should aim high, with the sky as the limit. In the fourth decade, when the same question was raised, I took pride in saying, "Yes, I am still at the Chinese University." I finally understood that I had followed the footsteps of the University, growing with her at the same pace, sharing the same feelings together, which might be happy or sorrowful. The wheel of time rolls on and makes changes. I was so fortunate to have witnessed the changes and participated in the evolution of history. What a wonderful opportunity I had, and how blessed I was!

People may think that staying in the same institution, a so-called "ivory tower", for as long as forty years may have segregated one from the world outside. Ivory tower is too distant from reality and life inside can be routine and mundane. However, as I was so deeply rooted in the Chinese University, I could keep myself far away from distraction, make friends with books and mingle with young people. My thoughts spread across a vast arena and my horizon extended to a boundary that knew of no limits. When I was on the track of my daily life, new ideas bubbled up and creativity emerged and cascaded incessantly.

The Chinese University nourished me, just like what she has done for numerous young people and scholars, generation after generation. Teaching and studying on a scenic campus fronted with a beautiful harbour and verdant hills as backdrop is a special blessing from heaven. Forty years ago, the University had the admirable foresight to set up the Department of



Translation, which was then the only academic department in a tertiary institution, whether local or elsewhere, with that title. Now, the tiny department which just had a minor programme of studies had evolved into an internationally renowned department with high academic standing. In those years, translation was not unlike a narrow path in the countryside. Now, the path has developed to become a trunk route with busy flow of traffic. As one of the founding faculty members of the Department, I must appreciate the foresight and recognize the pioneering efforts of my *alma mater* with deep delight.

A university is in fact not an ivory tower. It is an observatory. Climbing up the observatory, one can see far. When nurturing faculty members and students, the Chinese University spares no efforts in progressing with time in order to serve the society. My personal experience can be a vivid example. During my long tenure with the University, besides teaching and research, I actively participated in various cultural and social activities, both internal and external. Before the return of sovereignty of Hong Kong to the Mainland, I served on the Bilingual Laws Advisory Committee of the former Hong Kong Government. The experience gained in this Committee opened my mind to the differences between Chinese and western cultures, the essence of bilingual legislation and the indispensable spirit of the rule of law. As a resident of Hong Kong, I came to a deep understanding of the paramount importance of fortifying liberty and democracy and upholding the core value of judiciary independence of Hong Kong.

The sea accepts and contains hundreds and thousands of rivers, showing its greatness by accommodating them all. By analogy, the Chinese University is a comprehensive university with international acclaims. It has a full array of disciplines and places the same emphasis on teaching and learning. She embraces different disciplines without prejudice. This can be demonstrated by my fellow-recipients who come from various fields including science, economics and finance, arts, literature and medicine. Besides developing top-notch science and technology, the University never neglects the promotion of literature and arts. Not long ago, when the campus was still enjoying the prime of springtime, the Vice-Chancellor called academics, students and friends to a *fête champêtre*, by Lake *Ad Excellentiam* on the Chung Chi Campus. The participants were inspired by the beauty of nature through music, poems and songs, *kunqu* and calligraphy. They lingered at the fascinating party, enjoyed a wonderful time, and exchanged and savoured the experience of life. A higher education institution that features such events makes for an ideal venue for literary “banquets”. This is the reason which motivated me to organize the “Global Youth Chinese Literary Award for the New Century” for three consecutive runs from 2000.

The greenery of the Chinese University campus is adorned with blossom all year round. In March, we have brilliant azalea. In April, we have gorgeous bauhinia. In May, we have acacia, covering the campus with charming yellowish silk. Such a campus has matched up numerous romantic couples, including my better half and me. We met and fell in love here and walked through half a century together hand in hand. Every year, when the right time comes, I always want to take photos in order to keep the spring scenery alive. However, regretfully, time flies



too fast and flowers fade away too soon with no trace. I console myself that it is not necessary to lament because the scenery has been imprinted in my mind, and it will be a part of my perpetual memory.

There is a garden in everybody's heart. It is an evergreen garden, with blossoms of amazing colours. When one retires into this garden of the heart, one will be replenished with courage and resilience to face adversities and challenges. Life will then continue with its beauty forever and ever ...

The garden in my heart is the ageless and ever energetic *alma mater* – the Chinese University.