

Professor Liu Yi-chang *BBS, MH* DOCTOR OF LITERATURE *honoris causa*

Citation

Professor Liu Yi-chang, originally named Liu Tong-yi, and styled Chang-nian, with ancestral roots in Zhenhai District, Ningbo City, Zhejiang Province, was born in Shanghai in 1918. He graduated from St. John's University, Shanghai in 1941. During the war period, he worked as a supplements editor for two major anti-war newspapers, namely *National Gazette* and *Saodang Bao*. He came to Hong Kong in 1948, and has been living here since except for some short-term departures. Shanghai and Hong Kong have been regarded as “twin cities” in that both are modern cities with legendary backgrounds; Professor Liu is a significant witness to the changing times and places.

Professor Liu has been fond of writing since he was an eight-year-old primary two student. Recommended by an appreciative teacher, he was promoted to primary five, skipping two grades. In his teens, he loved hanging around the foreign concessions in Shanghai. Having seen some White Russian girls becoming prostitutes in order to make a living, he wrote his first short story *Anna Fuluoski in Exile* at the age of 17.

Having settled in Hong Kong, Professor Liu worked as an editor for newspapers and periodicals such as *Hong Kong Times*, *Sing Tao Weekly* and *Xidian*. During 1952 to 1957, he worked in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur as a supplements editor. On return to Hong Kong, he became Editor-in-chief for supplements like *Hong Kong Times: Repulse Bay* and *Sing Tao Daily: City Hall*, introducing a number of contemporary western literary works. From 1985 to 2000, he was editor of *Hong Kong Literature*. He was discerning in selecting contributions, as he stressed in the “Message from the Editor” of every issue that only original works would be published.

Professor Liu's writing practices also reflected the social changes of the time. Between the 1960s and 1970s, he wrote at least 13,000 characters a day for 13 newspapers and some non-periodical publications. He teased himself as a “two-timer”, i.e. writing to make a living in daytime and for his own interest in night-time. His writings are of a great variety. For instance, the stories in *Wrong Number* depicted the various metropolitan savours of Hong Kong.

Anything portrayed by Professor Liu becomes a story. In his serial fictional works such as *He Has A Sharp Knife*, *Ceramics*, “Bust-up” and “Riot”, etc., he used new and original narrative techniques to describe Hong Kong's major incidents of different times through different characters and implications. The variation in subject matter is closely related to media ecology. Once in an interview, Professor Liu mentioned how the *Sing Tao* of former times could accept *The Drunkard* and *Intersection*, while some newspapers required writings about bar girls. Between life and personal pursuits, he has always been resourceful and all-embracing.

Professor Liu loves movies. When he was young, he used to hang around Ever Shining Circuit and Nanfang Cinemas. No wonder his works give a cinematic feel, and subsequently became the basis and source of inspiration for movies. Developing robustly, movies had become a part of life among the general public in Hong Kong. Professor Liu depicted various phenomena in life with a cinematic touch, presenting to readers vivid scenes such as the 1967 riots, family disputes and frequent robberies. He meticulously enlivened his fiction with a contemporary appeal marked by narrative distinctiveness and rich meaning.

Apart from cultivating a world of literature, Professor Liu is also engaged in “tree planting”. Throughout more than half a century of an editorial career, he has nurtured representative generations of local writers who have invigorated and refreshed Hong Kong literature in different domains. They have been writing stories of a new era in a unique, personal and even cross-media style. Among Professor Liu’s masterpieces, *The Drunkard*, written in the 1960s in a stream-of-consciousness mode, and *Intersection*, composed in the 1970s in a parallel structure, have always been highly recommended. According to Professor Liu, the latter conveys even more original thoughts; the story reflects differences between two generations through two characters who both lived in Hong Kong in 1972 when a cross-harbour tunnel was newly constructed. They were heading in different directions, yet came across each other accidentally; they did not know each other, yet both were full of passion. *Intersection* is about Hong Kong and the modern age, men and women, as well as hope and frustration. Professor Liu is interested in the stories of a place, of an era and of humankind. He is a witness to an era.

Following Professor Liu in their passion for literature, literature lovers have attached importance to creativity and accepted a variety of writing styles. They have been willing to carry out experimental cultivation in literature, in the hope that new types of high-quality works can be cultivated.

Professor Liu often says that the nurturing of a writer depends on oneself. He himself is the best proof.

Professor Liu’s works have been translated into English, French, Italian and Japanese. His achievements have been widely recognised, including a Medal of Honour awarded by the Hong Kong SAR Government, an Award for Outstanding Contribution to Arts by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, and “Author of the Year” by the Hong Kong Book Fair. Due to his enormous contributions to the literary field and commitment to promoting Hong Kong’s literary art, he was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star in 2011.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of his extensive contributions to the local literary field, may I present Professor Liu Yi-chang to you for conferment of the degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*.

Chinese citation written and delivered by Professor Chan Wai-ying

劉以鬯教授 BBS, MH

榮譽文學博士

贊辭

劉以鬯教授原名劉同繹，字昌年，1918年出生於上海，祖籍浙江寧波鎮海。1941年畢業於上海聖約翰大學，二次大戰期間曾任兩抗戰大報《國民公報》及《掃蕩報》副刊編輯。1948年來港後，此後除短暫離港，一直生活於此。上海與香港這兩座城市，論者冠以「雙城」稱號，二者同是摩登城市，身世又同是一頁又一頁的傳奇。在時代與地域轉換間，劉教授正是其中重要的見證人。

劉教授自小學二年級八歲時已喜愛寫作，並得到老師賞識推薦越級升至五年級。少年時愛走到上海租界流連，看到白俄女子受生活所逼當妓女，十七歲便以此創作第一篇小說〈流亡的安娜•芙洛斯基〉。

來港後，劉教授先後出任《香港時報》、《星島周報》、《西點》等報刊雜誌編輯。1952至1957年曾到星加坡及吉隆坡編輯副刊。回港後曾主編《香港時報•淺水灣》、《星島日報•大會堂》等副刊，引介不少西方現代文學作品。1985年開始編輯《香港文學》，至2000年。劉教授選稿獨到，每期編者的話均強調只刊登具新意的作品。

劉教授的寫作狀況同時反映當時的社會變化。在六十至七十年代，他曾經一天為十三間報館以及其他不定期刊物寫稿，一天至少寫一萬三千字。他曾自稱「一腳踏兩船」，即白天為生活寫稿，晚上為自己而寫。他的作品變化多樣，如《打錯了》結集的故事，呈現出香港多樣的都會風情。

在劉教授筆下，無物不是故事。他的系列小說如《他有一把鋒利的小刀》、《陶瓷》、《吵架》、《動亂》等，敘事手法新穎，把香港在不同年代所發生的大事件透過城中不同人物，以富有趣味的形式呈現出來。題材的變化，與傳媒生態亦關係密切。在一次訪問中，劉教授提及當年的《星島》可接受《酒徒》與《對倒》，有些報章則指明須寫吧女題材。在生活與個人追求的夾縫間，劉教授善於應變、兼容並包。

劉教授喜愛電影，大光明、南方電影院是他小時候流連之地，難怪他的作品具電影感，其後更成為影視作品的依據及靈感來源。香港電影蓬勃發展，早成為市民生活的一部份，而劉教授以仿如電影鏡頭的筆觸，描繪生活現象，甚至如六七暴動、家庭不和、劫案頻生的實況，亦一幕幕活現讀者眼前。劉教授仔細賦予小說既具敘事特色又有豐富喻意的現代面貌。

除了開發出一片文學天地以外，劉教授同時是一位「植樹人」。他在超過半個世紀的編輯生涯中，培育出一代又一代的香港文學代表作家。這羣代表作家在不同的領域，給香港文學帶來活潑清新的空氣。他們以獨有的、具個人面目的，甚而以跨媒介的方式，寫出一段段新世代故事。劉教授於六十年代以意識流手法寫成的《酒徒》，與七十年代用平行對接寫成的《對倒》，一直廣受推薦。劉教授曾說《對倒》的意念更見新穎。《對倒》的故事反映兩代人的差異，但共同生活於1972年海底隧道剛建成的香港，二人在城中有不同的方向卻又不期而遇，互不相識卻同時懷抱熱情。《對倒》既寫香港，也寫摩登時代，寫男人和女人，也寫盼望與失落。劉教授關注的是一地的故事，也是時代的故事、人的故事。劉教授是時代的見證人。

文學愛好者相繼追隨劉教授對文學的熱愛，注重創新並廣納百川，願意於文學領域從事實驗耕作，希望培植出優秀新品種。

劉教授常說，作家的培養，靠的是自己。他本人是最好的證明。

劉教授的作品先後給譯成英文、法文、意大利文及日文。他的成就得到多方肯定，先後獲香港特區政府頒發的榮譽勳章、香港藝術發展局頒發的傑出藝術家貢獻獎、香港書展「年度作家」等。2011年以其在文壇的貢獻，並致力推廣香港文學藝術的成績，獲頒授銅紫荊星章。

主席先生，為表揚劉教授對香港文壇作出的多方面貢獻，本人謹恭請閣下頒授榮譽文學博士學位予劉以鬯教授。

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