



曹其鏞先生  
Mr Ronald Kee-Young Chao

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Mr Ronald K.Y. Chao, Vice-Chairman of Novel Enterprises Ltd, has a story to tell. Many fascinating tales, in fact, about Hong Kong's economic miracle in the 1960s and Mainland China's opening up, all from the perspective of someone at the heart of events. During this time, his family's wool-spinning and knitting business grew from 10 office staff to multinational levels, with Novel making Hong Kong a global hub for sweater production. In 1978, the Chao family, headed by former Shanghai refugee now magnate and philanthropist Chao Kuang Piu, became the first to set up a factory across the border. In the 1980s, they played a major part in establishing airline Dragonair.

Today, we also celebrate how Mr Ronald Chao is now pioneering further deep-rooted regional change through his drive for young people in Asia to understand each other better. HKUST students are among the beneficiaries of Mr Chao's vision, support and hard work to advance relations in the region as a whole.

While many at 70-plus would be thinking of slowing down, Mr Chao has been criss-crossing Asia in pursuit of his perceptive goal: to build intercultural student dormitories and set up study abroad scholarships for Asian students at leading universities in Asia. Given the shifting focus of the global economy and the often fraught relationships between Asian countries, Mr Chao wants to kick-start change among those who may be regional decision-makers one day.

He knows the long-lasting value of such early cross-cultural Asian insights. For his master's degree in engineering, he took the regular path of a US education. But unlike most of his Wah Yan peers in the mid-1950s, his undergraduate days were spent in Japan. Even more unusual, for two of his four years at the University of Tokyo, he lived in an innovative dormitory expressly created to build cultural understanding between local and overseas students.

This time spent in the East when others only learned about the West had a huge impact on his life. Equipped with Japanese language skills in mid-1960s Hong Kong,

永新企業有限公司副董事長曹其鏞先生的故事為人樂道。六十年代香港創出經濟奇蹟，其後中國內地改革開放，他見證著大時代變遷，譜出精彩傳奇。曹氏家族的紡織公司由最初只有十名員工發展成跨國企業，永新企業令香港在全球製衣業享負盛名。他的父親曹光彪先生早年從上海來港，後為紡織業大亨及慈善家。1978年，曹氏家族是第一位在內地設廠的港商。及至八十年代，家族於創辦港龍航空擔當舉足輕重的角色。

今天，我們表揚曹其鏞先生，他高瞻遠矚，致力促進亞洲各地的年青人彼此了解，矢志為區內帶來影響深遠的轉變，並盡心盡力支持加強區內的聯繫，香港科技大學的學生亦受益匪淺。

很多人踏入古稀之年會想到慢活，曹先生卻踏遍亞洲，努力不懈實踐其理想，期望興建跨文化學生宿舍，並為亞洲頂尖大學的亞裔學生設立獎學金，資助他們越洋進修。全球經濟重心轉移至亞洲，各國關係時有緊張，曹先生深信青年人將是社會發展的主力軍，他期望從培育亞洲新一代著手，增進諒解。

曹先生相信及早在亞洲培養跨文化視野具有深遠的價值。當年不少人到美國進修，他也是在當地修讀工程學碩士學位。然而，他在五十年代中期於華仁書院畢業後，卻與別不同，選擇在日本修讀學士學位。更特別的是，他負笈東京大學的四年本科生涯中，其中兩年寄住的宿舍開宗明義是要加強當地及國際學生跨文化交流，別具創意。

當時世界一面倒崇尚西方之際，曹先生卻選擇留守東方，這對他一生影響深遠。他精通日語，於六十

Novel became one of the first Hong Kong companies to send products to export-oriented Japan. His dorm friendships also stayed the distance. On a visit to Japan, he called up a long out-of-touch acquaintance who by then had become a government minister. The minister not only visited Mr Chao. He stayed for a two-hour chat!

Spurred on by these experiences, Mr Chao has since generously pledged US\$150 million to support educational institutions and scholarships in Greater China and Asia. In addition, he personally laid the groundwork through years of tough discussions with institutions and potential supporters in countries around the region. In 2010, his cross-cultural dormitories for Chinese and Japanese students finally began to be accepted, with five leading Mainland universities - Tsinghua, Peking, Fudan, Shanghai Jiao Tong and Zhejiang - coming on board. The concept later expanded to include other nationalities and was renamed the Asian Youth Center Project.

More success followed. With the support of luminaries such as former Hong Kong Chief Executive Mr C.H. Tung and HKUST Founding President Professor Chia Wei Woo, the Asian Future Leaders Scholarship Program was set up in 2013. The initiative currently includes 16 top universities in Greater China, Japan and Korea, with HKUST among the six anchor institutions. In total, around 100 students can benefit annually. Mr Chao's daughter Ms Ronna Chao, a HKUST Court Member, now runs the Bai Xian Asia Institute, which develops and implements the program. Professor Woo serves as President.

Befitting Mr Chao's contribution, recognition of his work has been cross-cultural, encompassing Japan's prestigious Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon as well as the Most Caring Individual Donor Award in the sixth China Charity Awards. Just as the French, English and Germans have set aside centuries of conflict to form the European Union, he doesn't see why it can't happen in Asia. It is for such inspired regional dreams, and outstanding practical provision to build cooperation, understanding and empathy, that we honor Mr Ronald K.Y. Chao at this ceremony today.

年代中期，永新企業成為第一批港商輸出產品到出口大國日本。而他與舍友的情誼更跨越地域界限。畢業後他曾到訪日本，致電予一位久未聯絡的朋友，對方當時已是國務大臣，他欣然前往探訪曹先生，彼此更促膝長談達兩小時！

這些經歷對曹先生帶來啟發，他決意慷慨捐出1.5億美元，資助大中華區和亞洲各地的教育機構，並設立獎學金。他更親力親為，奔走亞洲多國的教育機構，竭力游說支持，為這項構想奠下根基。2010年，他為中國及日本學生設立跨文化宿舍的計劃終於獲得支持，五間內地頂尖大學清華大學、北京大學、復旦大學、上海交通大學及浙江大學參與其中。其後計劃擴展，其他國籍的學生紛紛加入，並取名「亞洲青年交流中心」計劃。

成就接踵而至，在前任香港特別行政區行政長官董建華先生及科大創校校長吳家瑋教授等傑出人士的支持下，「亞洲未來領袖獎學金計劃」於2013年成立，得到十六間大中華區、日本及韓國頂尖大學的支持，而科大為計劃六所重點院校之一，每年共約100名學生受惠。曹先生的女兒曹惠婷女士是現任科大顧問委員會成員，負責管理百賢亞洲研究院，開展及推行這項計劃，而吳家瑋教授則擔任百賢亞洲研究院院長。

曹先生建樹良多，屢獲國際獎譽，包括日本政府頒發的「旭日中綬章」及第六屆中華慈善獎的「最具愛心慈善捐贈個人獎」。正如法、英、德三國能摒棄多個世紀以來的矛盾，成立歐盟，曹先生認為亞洲為何不可。曹其鏞先生胸懷崇高理想，為促進區內交流合作、彼此諒解和共融作出卓越貢獻，殊堪表揚。