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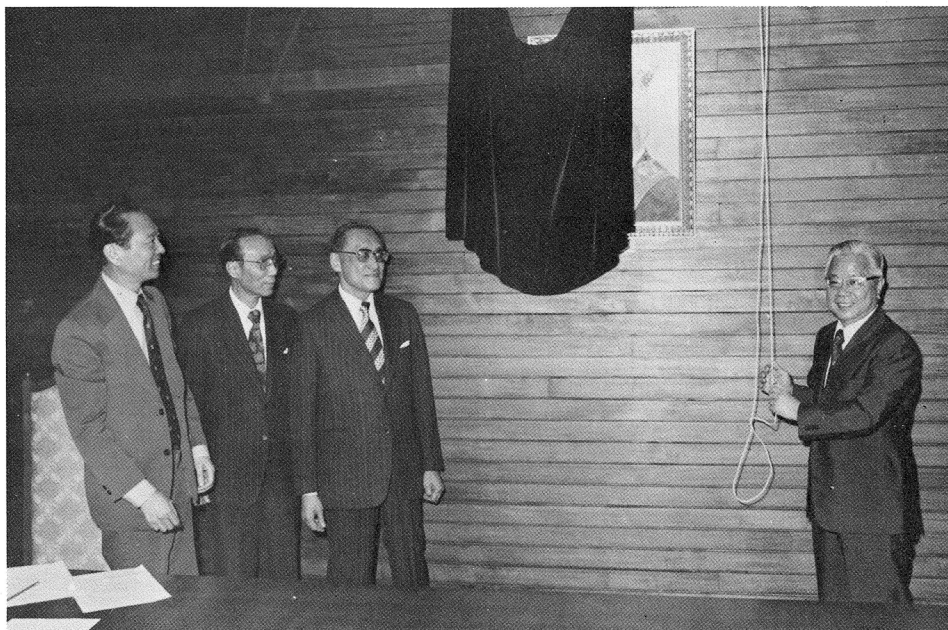
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Cover: *San Ti Shih Ching: Ch'un Ch'iu Ching*

United College Honours Its Past President



Mr. T. C. Cheng unveiling the portrait, looking on are (from left) Professor S. S. Hsueh, Sir Run Run Shaw, and Dr. the Hon. P. C. Woo

To commemorate the long and distinguished service of Mr. T. C. Cheng as President of United College from January 1963 to February 1977, the Board of Trustees of United College has presented an oil portrait of Mr. Cheng to the College.

At a ceremony held on 25th May, 1979, Mr. Cheng was invited to unveil his own portrait in the Board Room of United College, where it will remain on permanent display. Dr. the Hon. P. C. Woo, Chairman of the Board, then delivered a valedictory speech.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by Sir Run Run Shaw, Vice-Chairman of the Board, Professor S. S. Hsueh, Head of United College, and members of the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Cheng is currently Director of the School of Education of the University. He served as the

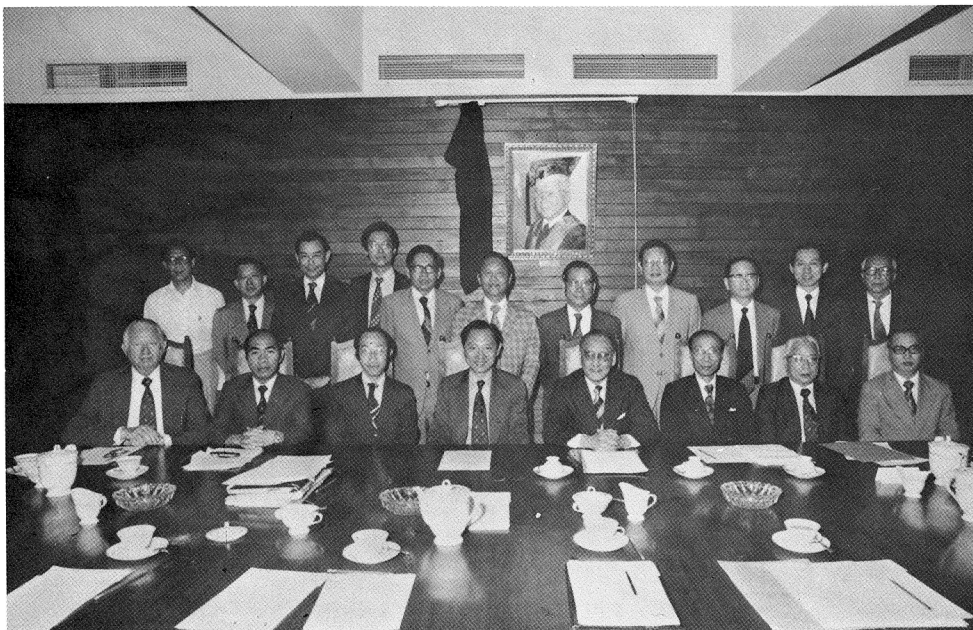
University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor from March 1977 to February 1979. He was the Chief Assistant Secretary for Chinese Affairs before he became President of United College.

Address by Dr. the Hon. P. C. Woo, CBE, JP

Mr. Cheng, Professor Hsueh, Members of the Board,

It gives me great pleasure to present to the College an oil portrait of Mr. T. C. Cheng as a gift from the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Cheng, as you all know, was President of United College from January 1963 to February 1977 when he became Pro-Vice-Chancellor following the reorganization of the University. While he was President of the College, Mr. Cheng was responsible for the major developments of the College. In October 1963,



Mr. T. C. Cheng with members of the Board of Trustees, United College

The Chinese University of Hong Kong was inaugurated and United College became a constituent College. In March 1971, foundation stones were laid for the five new buildings of the College here in Shatin, and in January the following year, the College was relocated to its present campus.

Under President Cheng's leadership the College made rapid progress, which was reflected by the large increase in enrolment, improved quality of staff and students and a general enlivening of College life. Closer relationship with the local community was also fostered. On the one hand, a wide range of public organizations interested in the promotion of higher education was represented on the Board of Trustees after its enlargement in 1965; on the other hand, the College offered its services to the community, including the conduct of training programmes for business

executives. New departments were also added to the College.

Mr. Cheng will retire from the University in October this year after 17 years of distinguished service. My account will not be complete without mentioning that he also served concurrently as Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University for a few terms during his Presidency, and has been the Director of the School of Education for 6 years until now.

Although Mr. Cheng will retire soon, he will still be with us on the Board of Trustees, and his achievements in the College—and in the University, I am sure—will always be remembered with esteem and respect. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I present Mr. Cheng's portrait. May I call upon Mr. Cheng to unveil the portrait.

Chinese Language Research Centre

The Chinese Language Research Centre was established in January 1979 under the Institute of Chinese Studies, with Professor D. C. Lau, the new Professor of Chinese, as Director.

Aims

The Chinese Language Research Centre aims to:

- (1) Conduct pure academic research on the Chinese language; and
- (2) Initiate a series of applied research projects, with a view to helping to raise the standards in Chinese in schools.

Research and Publication Plans

(A) Short-term projects

- (1) To organize, in collaboration with the Extramural Studies Department, a Diploma Course in Chinese Language;
- (2) To publish a journal on Chinese language and language teaching;
- (3) To conduct studies on secondary school textbooks of Chinese language and literature;
- (4) To conduct studies on existing primary school textbooks of Chinese language;
- (5) To compile a Chinese dictionary for secondary school students;
- (6) To compile a Chinese dictionary for primary school students;
- (7) To compile a series of indexes on research materials on Chinese language, the first one being *An Index to Zhong Guo Yu*

Wen compiled by Hui Lai-ping;

- (8) To produce cassette tapes of readings of secondary school prescribed texts in Chinese language and literature (in collaboration with the Extramural Studies Department);
- (9) To produce cassette tapes (with brochures) of standard Cantonese readings of characters in common use, with illustrations (in collaboration with the Extramural Studies Department);
- (10) To publish a handbook on correct forms for characters in common use;
- (11) To publish a series of monographs on Chinese language studies, the first one being *An Encyclopedia of Chinese Characters in Bird and Animal Forms*

(B) Long-term projects

- (1) To conduct studies on the teaching materials and teaching methods of Chinese in primary and secondary schools;
- (2) To conduct Chinese grammatical research:
 - (a) grammar of classical Chinese
 - (b) grammar of modern Chinese
 - (c) contrastive study of the grammar of Cantonese and *pu tong hua*
 - (d) contrastive study of the grammar of Cantonese and English
- (3) To compile a dictionary of words in common use for the general reader;
- (4) To compile a dictionary of classical Chinese of the third and second centuries before the Christian era.

Interview : Professor D.C. Lau

Professor D. C. Lau was born in Hong Kong in 1921. He read Chinese at the University of Hong Kong, and in 1946 went to Glasgow, where he read philosophy. He has been teaching Chinese philosophy at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London since 1950. In 1965 he was appointed to the Readership in Chinese Philosophy, and in 1970 to the Chair of Chinese, at the University of London.

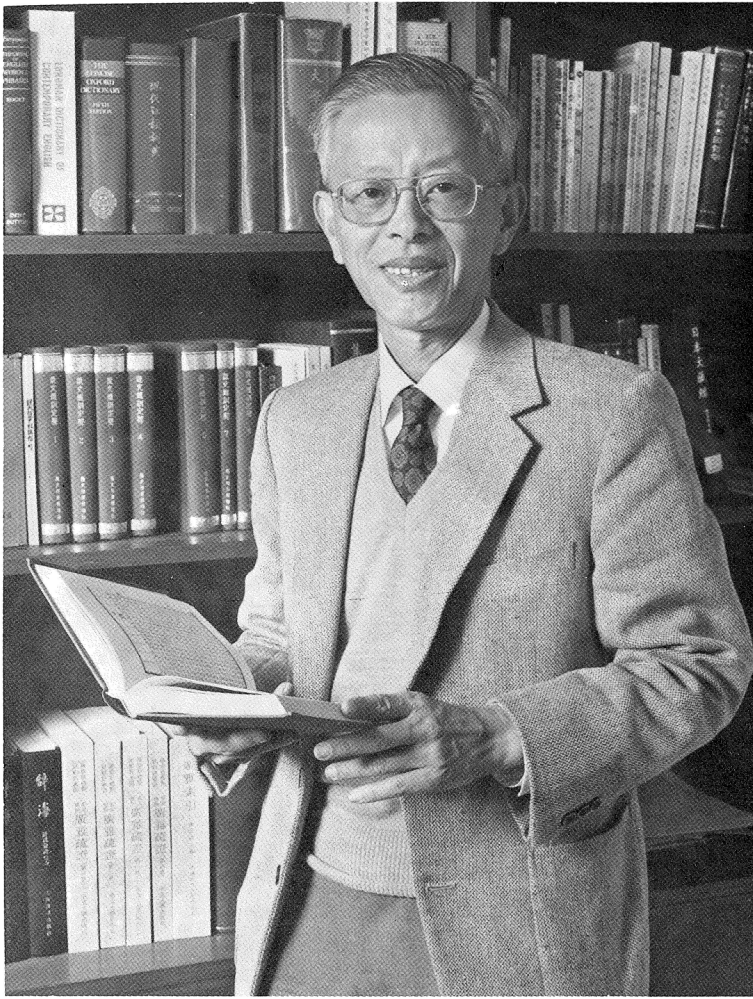
He has published new translations of the Lao Tzu, Mencius and Analects, and hopes to complete the translation of the Four Books by translating The Great Learning and The Doctrine of the Mean. His Lu Xūn Xiǎo Shuō Jí: Vocabulary has just come off the press.

Professor Lau was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, in 1975 by this University in recognition of his dedication to and achievements in the promotion of Chinese culture overseas.

Professor Lau joined the Department of Chinese Language and Literature of this University in 1978-79.

- Q. You have expressed grave concern over the confusion in the Cantonese pronunciation of written Chinese. What do you think has led to such confusion?
- A. For hundreds of years, the pronunciation of written Chinese had remained more or less unchanged because throughout China, the same classics were taught and each written character was pronounced according to the *fan ch'ieh* (反切) spelling set down in ancient rhyme books. The correct pronunciation was thus passed on from generation to generation through the teaching and rote learning of these classics in old-style private schools. After the Revolution of 1911, a new type of school came into being, where classics were no longer taught and the traditional method of teaching the pronunciation of Chinese characters was abandoned. This

change inevitably created many problems for regions where books were taught in the local dialect. The present confusion in Hong Kong over Cantonese pronunciation is, to put it bluntly, attributable to teachers who cannot be bothered to look up in dictionaries or rhyme books the characters the pronunciation of which they are not too sure of. The mass media have also contributed to the present state of affairs. Broadcasters are often unaware that some characters have more than one pronunciation or are pronounced differently when read and when spoken. Take for example the character 玩 in the term 玩耍 'wan³sa²' (to play). Since the expression is a colloquial one, the character should be pronounced 'wan³' and not 'wun³', a pronunciation reserved for reading. I have, in fact, heard the character mispronounced on television. And I can think of many more

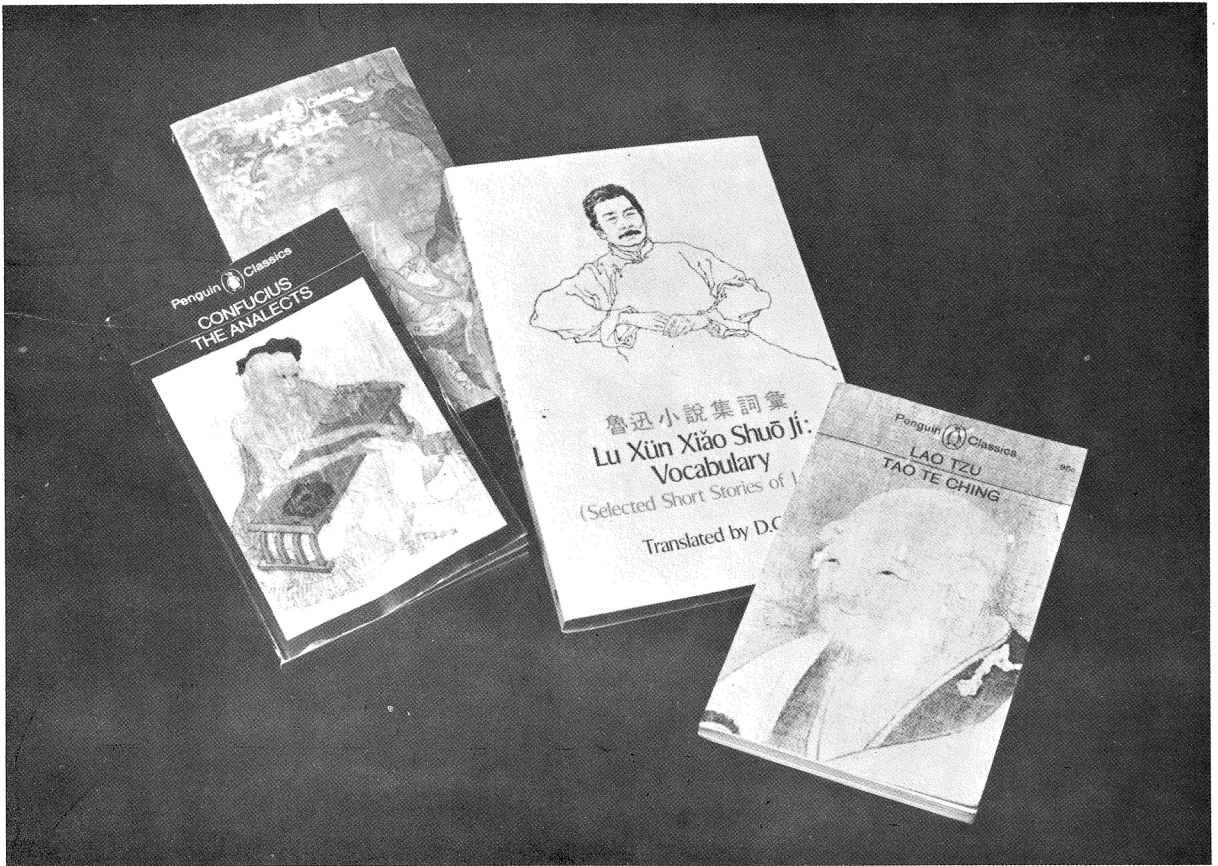


examples.

- Q. If the confusion over Cantonese pronunciation is allowed to continue, what will be the consequences?
- A. First and foremost, the purpose of communication will be defeated. Every dialect has its characteristics and rules and there are fixed rules of conversion between different dialects. The confusion over Cantonese pronunciation will not only upset its pronunciation pattern, but also create many unwarranted difficulties for Cantonese speakers when learning *pu tong hua* or other dialects.
- Q. Can we take the change in pronunciation of certain characters as the natural outcome of

evolution in pronunciation?

- A. The confused state Cantonese pronunciation is in can hardly be looked upon as a stage in the process of evolution. The changes depend on the whim of the speakers and are not of a systematic nature.
- Q. Then what should be done to rectify the situation?
- A. To standardize pronunciation, I'd rather we revert to the original correct pronunciation than make one of the new pronunciations the standard. Pronunciation of Chinese characters should be based on the rhyme books. It would be futile to talk about standardization if the spoken language was divorced from the written one.



Publications of Professor D. C. Lau

Q. Has the Chinese Language Research Centre formulated any plans to help standardize Cantonese pronunciation?

A. The Centre is very anxious to do what it can to help standardize Cantonese pronunciation. A *Cantonese glossary* is under preparation at the Centre. The glossary, based on *Kuang Yiin* (廣韻) and *Chi Yiin* (集韻) of the Sung Dynasty and Lu Teh-ming's *Notes on the Classics* (經典釋文) of the T'ang Dynasty and using books such as S. L. Wong's *A Chinese Syllabary Pronounced According to the Dialect of Canton* (粵音韻彙) as supplementary reference, will indicate clearly the Cantonese pronunciation of all entries.

The Centre will also cooperate with the Department of Extramural Studies of this University in producing cassette tapes of recordings in Cantonese of the *Three Hundred T'ang Poems* and other well-known anthologies. These tapes will be of use to readers who wish to learn correct pronunciation.

Q. Let us now turn to a broader question. How do you view dialect, Cantonese being one, in the context of the nation's language and culture?

A. From the cultural point of view, much importance should be attached to dialects and dialects should be preserved, because many of them do have a longer cultural tradition than Mandarin or *pu tong hua*. It would be a pity if dialects, which epitomize their own cultural traditions, were to die out. In other parts of the world a new trend is becoming apparent: greater importance is attached to dialects and regional accents than before. Take broadcasting in Britain for example. Thirty years ago, only those who spoke standard English were admitted into the profession; but in recent years, the wind has completely changed, and those with a slight regional accent stand a much greater chance of being recruited.

However, from the political point of view, demand for a standardized spoken and written language for the whole nation is inevitable, and

dialects are naturally relegated to a secondary position. This attitude is not surprising, for if China did not have a standardized written language, the nation would have broken up long ago into numerous small states like Europe in recent centuries. It is obvious that a standardized spoken and written language is a force contributing to the unity of a nation.

Q. As a man concerned with culture, are you more inclined to take the cultural point of view?

A. I favour the preservation of dialects and local cultures as far as possible provided that this does not jeopardize the unity of the nation.

Q. However, the primary function of language is to communicate ideas. If *pu tong hua* was dropped in favour of dialects throughout the nation, wouldn't the language be less effective as a means of communication?

A. Communication may be taken at two levels. A little knowledge of *pu tong hua* will suffice for everyday conversation, which is a comparatively superficial kind of communication. But one has to be truly proficient in the language one uses before one can have a deeper and more meaningful communication. It is doubtful whether an average person in Hong Kong can express himself in *pu tong hua* with the same degree of clarity and exactitude as in his own dialect. This is a hard fact to be faced. For people whose mother tongue is a dialect, there must be areas in which they are less articulate when communicating in another dialect or *pu tong hua*, based on northern dialects. These are the areas in which they have never been exposed to this dialect or *pu tung hua*.

Q. How would you define 'mother tongue'?

A. Theoretically 'mother tongue' is the language a person learned to speak during the first few years of his life. However, if he is then taken away from that language environment in his formative years, his 'first' language ceases to be his mother tongue. The society of truly bilingual people must itself be truly bi-lingual. I have in mind the Italian immigrants in London. The first-generation Italian immigrants tend to stay together and have cultural activities of their own, providing a somewhat natural language environment for the second generation,

who can still speak Italian in addition to English, but by the third generation, they can understand the Italian language but can no longer speak it fluently. The case of Chinese immigrants in Britain is even worse. The first generation, mostly not very well educated, does not normally have any interest in common with their children who are educated in Britain, nor is there any kind of organized cultural activities for the Chinese community. Therefore, although the second-generation Chinese start off by learning a Chinese dialect at home, they end up by speaking only the English language, the language of the environment they find themselves in. As for their own dialect, they can only understand but not speak it.

Q. What do you think of the proposal of local educators to use mother tongue as the medium of instruction?

A. I feel that, no matter what language the textbooks are in, the medium of instruction must be the one students are most at home in, otherwise, students' power of comprehension, thinking and expression will be severely restricted. The language most of the local students are conversant in is Cantonese. Hence, the use of the mother tongue for teaching means the use of Cantonese. At present Cantonese-speaking students are faced with countless difficulties. They use English textbooks, their teachers teach them in English or Cantonese or, more often, a hotch-potch of both, and although they think in Cantonese, it is not possible for them to express their ideas in written Cantonese. What makes it worse is that they are unable to express themselves well in either *pai hua wen* (written colloquial Chinese) or English because of their lack of proficiency. There will be no easy solution to this problem until the society makes up its mind on what to use as the medium of instruction.

Q. It is generally agreed that the language standards in Hong Kong are gradually declining. Do you think there is a better way to study Chinese?

A. When Cantonese-speakers learned to write in literary Chinese, they had to learn a written language whose construction is different from spoken Cantonese. Today Cantonese speakers who write in *pai hua* have also to learn a written language which is as far removed from spoken

Cantonese as literary Chinese for *pai hua* is by and large based on northern dialects. It is in fact easier in a sense to learn literary Chinese: we have a corpus which can serve as model, through which the grammar and vocabulary of literary Chinese may be learned. On the other hand, there is no comparable corpus in *pai hua*, and the evolution of *pai hua wen* since the thirties has rendered some of the famous works of that time less readable as a result of change in what is acceptable in style. Furthermore, in translating from Cantonese into *pu tong hua*, some of the finer shades of meaning is bound to be lost. In other words, writing in *pai hua* is not as easy as one would like to think. However, a good knowledge of literary Chinese will enhance one's ability to write better *pai hua wen*, as he may draw upon the rich classical vocabulary, and fall back, if necessary, on the more closely-knit and compact sentence structure of literary Chinese for conciseness.

I also feel that translation helps us to master the skill of writing *pai hua wen*. We normally take translation to mean rendering from one language into another, but it should also include rendition from literary Chinese into written colloquial Chinese, the two being very different. In the process of rendering, one has to be faithful to the original and yet produce a readable translation in *pai hua wen*. Once we have achieved this there will be little fear of relapsing into westernized sentence constructions which violate Chinese grammatical rules. To prove my point, I wish to point out that many famous English writers are well versed in Latin and have been well trained while at school to translate Latin accurately into readable English. Indeed, a deep-rooted and sound tradition in translation is a great help to the development of a language and its correct usage.

- Q. But China is not lacking in a tradition in translation. Did not the Buddhists in China translate their sacred scriptures a long time ago?
- A. I must say Buddhist translations never led to the building up of a healthy tradition. Since it is the sayings of the Buddha that were translated, strict adherence to the original was required, and translators of the Sutras had therefore to resort to direct, word-for-word translation, at the expense of readability as Chinese. In this sense, the translation of Buddhist Sutras proved

unsuccessful, and a sound tradition of translation failed to grow up in China.

It should also be noted that the Indians were very advanced in the study of grammar since very early times. Had China introduced the study of grammar from India at the same time as Buddhism, she would not have to wait until the 19th century before the first grammar appeared, and language teaching might be very different from what it is.

- Q. Are you planning to compile a 'classical Chinese-English' dictionary?
- A. Yes. Traditional Chinese lexicography suffers from two major drawbacks. First, indication of the actual usage of characters is often neglected; secondly, synonyms rather than definitions are used for explanations. The earliest Chinese dictionary, *Erh Ya* (爾雅), is a mere collection of glosses from ancient works. Each entry is defined in this dictionary in the form of 'A is B' with no attempt whatsoever to distinguish between 'A' and 'B'. This approach in fact reflects the Chinese mentality—the Chinese tend to look for similarities rather than differences between things. This mentality explains why we have many expressions like 'different routes lead to the same destination' and 'the three religions stem from the same source'.

Coming back to the dictionary I plan to compile—it will only be a dictionary of a given period because I feel that the compilation of dictionaries should be on historical principles and a preliminary step is the compilation of dictionaries of different periods. The period I have in mind is from 300 B.C. to 100 B.C. I shall feed all available texts of this period into a computer. In most of the existing dictionaries, each entry is explained by quoting annotations from classical works, each quotation constituting a separate meaning, but some of these meanings are in fact identical. Therefore, we will have to reorganize the material and regroup them under clearly-drawn definitions in our dictionary. Further, we shall also give examples to illustrate the usage of a word under each meaning.

On Philosophy

Times have completely changed. Does ancient Chinese thought still hold good for today's society?

- A. Basic and abstract principles of philosophy, especially moral philosophy, are not too much affected by the passage of times. The more abstract a principle is, the more universal it is and the longer it will endure. For example, the principle of never harming others to benefit oneself is good for all times. Conversely, the more concrete a moral rule is, the more specific its functions and, as soon as the society in which it functions changes, it has to be amended. For instance, in the old days or in certain societies, rules of etiquette required that a hat be worn—but now practically no one wears a hat any more.

According to the Confucian school of thought, *yi* is the general principle and *li* the concrete rules. The relationship between *li* and *yi* deserves thorough study. Principles are abstract by nature and are ineffective by themselves unless they are embodied in concrete rules. Rules, on the other hand, are concrete by nature and are thus restricted in their application. Their relationship is a dialectic one: rules reflect the spirit of principles, but once times change, they have to be amended in accordance with the spirit. Therefore we should inherit the spirit and not merely follow the rules.

- Q. Is there any unreasonable element in the moral teachings of the Confucian school?

- A. The Confucian school's views on morality are basically sound. By and large, it is for this reason that the teachings in Confucius' *Analects* have not become obsolete and have been passed on from generation to generation. The unreasonable elements in Confucianism are, in the main, not found in the works of Confucius and Mencius, the founders of the school, but were introduced in subsequent ages.

Confucianism has always been subjected to distortion. Emperors, who were intent on consolidating their power, did all they could to bring the most popular school of thought of the time under their control. Because of the great popularity enjoyed by Confucianism among the Chinese people in all periods, those in power exerted immense pressure to make it serve their purposes and it suffered most at the hands of those in authority. In the past many intellectuals failed to uphold their principles and yielded to the intimidation or inducement of those in power, bending principles to suit their interests.

For example, 'blind filial piety' would be an ideal basis for the 'blind loyalty' demanded by emperors, therefore many stories exemplifying blindly obedient sons were concocted, distorting the relationship between father and son.

Another example is the chastity demanded over centuries of women, who were supposed to prefer death to remarriage. But was this inherent in early Confucian teachings? The answer is no, as the words of Tseng Tzu quoted in the *Pai Hu Tong* (白虎通) have it: 'In severing relations with a man, do not make it impossible for him to make friends; in divorcing a wife, do not make it impossible for her to marry again'. In other words, the man should only cite some trifling misdeed in divorcing his wife in order not to make it difficult for her to marry again. It is therefore clear that women in Tseng Tzu's time could, in fact, remarry.

There are still many instances of distorted Confucianism today. For example, it is still believed that the words of emperors, fathers and teachers are infallible and that their authority cannot be challenged. But Confucius rebuked Yen Yüan, saying, 'Hui is no help to me at all. He is pleased with everything I say'. However, as anything short of complete compliance would run counter to the interests of rulers, it is only natural for them to instil in their subjects an attitude that would best serve their interests.

It would be worth our while to study how Confucian teachings were distorted through the ages but so far nothing systematic has been done in this direction.

- Q. The relation between human nature and the way of heaven is an important issue in Chinese philosophy. Why is it that this was seldom discussed in the *Analects* but was thoroughly studied in the *Mencius*?

- A. Confucius discussed with his disciples morality as well as the decree of heaven, i.e. what heaven enjoins man to do. As for human nature, he had referred to it only once, but his observation that 'Close to one another by nature, they diverge as a result of repeated practice' is not necessarily connected with human nature, as 'man' is not explicitly mentioned. In the day of Confucius, Mo Tzu and Lao Tzu, human nature was not a prominent issue. It only became a hotly debated topic in the day of Mencius, when various

theories of human nature were put forward. Mencius discussed human nature with Kao Tzu. Kao Tzu conceived human nature as the sum total of man's desires, while Mencius objected to divorcing man's desire from the moral aspect of his nature and propounded a new theory of human nature. He did not contradict Kao Tzu's contention that 'Appetite for food and sex is "nature"' but held that human nature did not *solely* consist of 'appetite for food and sex' and that man and heaven were not diametrically opposed. The decree of heaven can be fulfilled by man as it is rooted in human nature.

Q. How does western moral philosophy differ from Chinese moral teachings?

A. Western moral philosophy is predominantly analytical. In China, equal emphasis is put on knowledge and practice of the moral virtues. Western moral philosophy is grounded on epistemology, taking the attributes of things as the basis of morality. In China, morality is expressed through *li* and *yi*.

Q. Can Taoism offer an effective remedy for today's utilitarian society?

A. The central tenet of Lao Tzu's philosophy is preserving the natural and genuine and discarding the artificial and hypocritical. However, for present-day society, his advocacy of 'having little thought of self and as few desires as possible' and 'knowing contentment' is more relevant. Man's desires know no limits and to satisfy these desires, he sets his heart on an incessant pursuit of material gains. Such desires account for the preoccupation of our society with material gain. We often hear people talk of basic necessities of life, but what in fact are *basic* necessities? It is obvious that the necessities of life are forever increasing. For instance, not too long ago, people in possession of a black and white television set were already quite contented; then they wanted colour televisions, and now they have gone a step further and want also video tape recorders. This is what we mean by 'avarice knowing no bounds' and the only remedy is to 'have as few desires as possible' and 'know contentment'.

Q. Both Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu belong to the Taoist school, but aren't there significant differences between them?

A. Lao Tzu was preoccupied with the practical question of how to lead one's life and avoided the question of death. But the main concern of Chuang Tzu was how to overcome the fear of death common to men who must all die. He thought that for anyone to succeed in overcoming this fear was 'tantamount to being released from hanging upside down by the heels'. In this respect, Chuang Tzu is rather close to Buddhism, but Buddhism has to contend further with the fact of transmigration. In *Chuang Tzu*, one does find this saying 'forms like the human are too numerous to be counted in the process of endless metamorphosis', but it is hard to tell from this whether he is a believer of transmigration or not. It is just possible that he had heard some rumours concerning Buddhism as the Buddha lived some two hundred years before his time.

Chuang Tzu had also great insight into many philosophical problems, such as the relation between language and ideas. It is a pity that the extant text of the *Chuang Tzu* is so corrupt as to make a thorough study of his philosophy an almost impossible task. Recently two copies of the *Lao Tzu* dating from the Western Han were discovered. How much more helpful would it have been if it was the *Chuang Tzu* that was discovered!

Q. Could you tell us something about your research on the philosophy of the Pre-Ch'in period?

A. Many of the ancient Chinese philosophical works are fraught with problems, with the possible exception of the *Analects* and the *Mencius*. It is doubtful if the *Lao Tzu* represents one school of thought; and the text of the *Chuang Tzu* is, as I have just said, far too corrupt. Therefore my study of Pre-Ch'in philosophy is not restricted to any one school but is focused on the development of Chinese thought in the third century B.C. I am working mainly on the *Lü Shih Ch'un Ch'iu* (呂氏春秋) (with a Postscript dated 239 B.C.) and the *Huai Nan Tzu* (淮南子) (c. 140 B.C.) because a more comprehensive knowledge of the subject may be obtained from these two works, which are eclectic in nature. By identifying and understanding the basic concepts of this period, we can further try to understand the world view and outlook on life of the time.

Q. Are there any fundamental differences between ancient Chinese philosophy and western philosophy?

A. Yes, there are conceptual differences between ancient Chinese and western philosophy. The development of science in the West is attributable to the application of the concept of mechanical causality to explain natural phenomena. This concept prevailed until the beginning of this century when Einstein's theories gained acceptance. Ancient Chinese used more than one concept to interpret those phenomena explained by causality in the West. One of these concepts is that of stimulus and response. As Hsün Tzu put it, 'When the forest is luxuriant, axes will arrive; when a tree affords shade, birds will use it as a place of rest; when there is vinegar, gnats will gather.' Another one is that of 'sympathetic attraction between things of the same kind'. Again to quote Hsün Tzu, 'When a horse neighs, other horses will respond' because '(the gentleman) sees to it that his words are perfect and men who are like him in this respect will respond.' The Chinese proceeded to study the problem why only things of the same kind would respond and extend its application to explain other phenomena.

Q. How long have you been doing this research?

A. I have worked on the *Huai Nan Tzu* for about ten years. I am now working on the *Lü Shih Ch'un Ch'iu* and am making better progress. I hope to come up with something in one or two years' time.

Q. Apart from philosophy, I understand that you have a strong interest in translation.

A. When I was teaching Chinese abroad, I employed the traditional method of on the spot translation in class used in the teaching of Latin and Greek. This provides very good training for both teacher and student, and the ultimate aim is to be able to tell immediately whether the translation is faithful to the original and whether it is in idiomatic English.

My main interest lies in the translation of classical works. Possibly because my training is in philosophy, I am very meticulous about the grammatical correctness of writings; therefore when I was translating the *Analecets* and the

Mencius, I was very careful with the grammar of the original text. Besides, I paid special attention to the implied meaning of words and phrases. Only when these hidden meanings are grasped can one hope to produce a good translation. For example, a literal translation of the saying '古之學者爲己，今之學者爲人' (scholars of antiquity studied for their own sake, scholars today study for the sake of others) would lead foreign readers to think that ancient people were very selfish. Misunderstanding can only be avoided by rendering it in some such way as, 'Men of antiquity studied to improve themselves; men today study to impress others'.

Q. What is the greatest difficulty in translation? What are the major differences between translating literary works and philosophical works?

A. In translation, we must be aware of the basic meaning as well as the extended meanings of words. For the rendering into English of a Chinese word whose extended meaning is used in a sentence, I would not consider it satisfactory to reproduce only the extended meaning of the original in the context: the translation must also have the same basic meaning—and this is the most difficult part of translation.

I have for years been engaged in the translation of ancient philosophical works, but my interest in poetry translation was only developed in recent years. I feel that in the translation of literary works, the beauty of the words used must be retained, while in the translation of philosophical works, not even a small deviation from the ideas of the original should be tolerated, and every hidden meaning in the text must be given full treatment.

Q. Can translation be taught?

A. Theories of translation can be taught, but when it comes to practice, theories are of little help. Sensitivity to a language can only be acquired through hard practice; a teacher can, perhaps, give a student advice here and there but not in any systematic manner.

In translating language A into language B, it is essential for the translator to understand language A perfectly—but he need not be able to write it well—but he must be able to express himself well and with resource in language B.

First Language and Second Language (English Summary)

By Professor D.C. Lau

We are all concerned about the progressive lowering of language standards amongst school pupils in Hong Kong. The purpose of this Symposium is to discuss the problem and see if we can come up with any ideas which will help to improve the situation. I wish to discuss the problem in connexion with the teaching of Chinese and to put forth some personal views with the hope that they may provoke discussion among participants.

I

I think it is important to draw a distinction between first language and second language. The methods appropriate to the teaching of the one are very different from that appropriate to the other. There are certain conditions enjoyed by the learning of the first language which are, at least partially, absent in the learning of a second language. First, when a child learns his first language, his language potential is in a most pliable state, something which will never happen again. Second, the child is normally in a uni-language environment where he is exposed to the language all the time. In contrast, when a person comes to learn his second language, his language learning potential is, to a greater or lesser degree, less pliable. Any feature of the second language which is different from the first will have to be mastered with conscious effort, the degree of success depending on how gifted the person is. He is bound to be older in age than when he learned his first language. Lastly, and perhaps, most important of all, he is usually in an environment where exposure to the second language is limited.

Given these differences, to treat a second language as if it were a first language is bound to lead to unsatisfactory results.

II

In Hong Kong over 99% of school children have Cantonese as their first language. This means that not only English should be taught as a second language, but, for pedagogical purposes, *pu tong hua/pai hua wen* as well. The implications are that in the

teaching of this combination of *pu tong hua* and *pai hua wen* methods appropriate to the teaching of second languages should be used. In other words, the knowledge of the first language must be fully exploited. Let us divide a language into three components: sounds, grammar and vocabulary. It would mean that sounds of the second language will be taught on the basis of the sounds in the first language with which the pupil is already familiar. Similarly, grammatical structure of the second language must be explained in terms of the grammar of the first language. The teaching of grammar is at the moment not fashionable, but I should like to remind the audience that in matters of education what is fashionable need not be sound and one must have the courage of one's convictions. What I am advocating is not only that we should teach the grammar of *pai hua wen* but also that we should teach this through a contrastive approach. In order to do that we must first investigate Cantonese grammar, a subject which is still largely unexplored. Once we have investigated Cantonese grammar not only can we do a contrastive study of Cantonese and *pu tong hua* but of Cantonese and English as well. Finally, there is the problem of vocabulary. This is, perhaps, the most difficult of the three components. With a second language there must be areas to which the pupil is practically never exposed. For instance, how many people who are considered competent in speaking *pu tong hua* and writing *pai hua wen* can speak or write, without difficulty, about matters pertaining to the kitchen? In recognized languages, one can at least resort to bilingual dictionaries. But in the case of Cantonese, being a mere dialect, there is no such aid. There is, therefore, an urgent need to compile a Cantonese-*pai hau* dictionary, so that the pupil when faced with something he can say in Cantonese has a reference work he can turn to to find the *pai hua* equivalent. To a lesser degree a dictionary giving Cantonese equivalents to *pai hua* expressions will also be useful.

III

I am in favour of teaching *pu tong hua*. The correct pronunciation of a language is an integral part of that

language. Someone who can write *pai hua wen* but only pronounce it in Cantonese pronunciation cannot be said to have completely mastered the language. But the usefulness of *pu tong hua* goes beyond this. The learning of a language is mainly a matter of exposure, and this is one of the stumbling blocks in the learning of *pai hua*. Hong Kong is almost exclusively Cantonese speaking. The pupil who is learning *pu tong hua* lacks the opportunity of coming into contact with it. How can we overcome this lack of exposure? For this let us take a backward glance into Chinese history. For nearly two thousand years, ever since the written language became separated from the spoken language, all Chinese had to resort to translation whenever they wrote, as they had to write in classical Chinese. Classical Chinese, by definition, was a dead language and exposure was out of the question. How, then, did the Chinese acquire the ability to write classical Chinese? The answer is simple. They did it through rote learning. Rote learning, to a certain extent, compensated for the lack of exposure. It was through rote learning that they acquired a feeling for sentence pattern, sentence rhythm as well as an adequate vocabulary. We can take a leaf out of their book. The situation with regard to *pai hua* in a Cantonese speaking environment is more complicated than that of classical Chinese in the past. If we look upon *pu tong hua* as the spoken side of *pai hua wen* and *pai hua wen* as the written side of *pu tong hua* we can see that exposure is uneven. The opportunity of hearing and speaking *pu tong hua* was never very great but seems to be diminishing. For instance, ten years ago the cinema was dominated by films with *pu tong hua* dialogue, so that the regular film goer, at least, had considerable opportunity of being exposed. But today a film with *pu tong hua* dialogue has to be dubbed in Cantonese before it can be a viable proposition. Even this last opportunity of exposure to *pu tong hua* is thus taken away. As for written *pai hua*, of course, there is still ample opportunity of reading it, but this is where the speaking of *pu tong hua* comes in. The Cantonese pupil almost invariably reads his *pai hua* in Cantonese pronunciation. This makes it sound unnatural. One of the reasons for this is that *pu tong hua* has a lot of unstressed syllables, particularly in the case of grammatical words, while there is no such syllables in Cantonese. Thus in reading *pai hua* in the Cantonese pronunciation, all the unstressed syllables are converted into stressed syllables. This contributes to the lack of euphony. With the lack of euphony, the Cantonese pupil is liable not to develop an adequate feeling for *pai hua*, a feeling which can only come through the total experience of reading the text in the correct pronunciation with the right rhythm and

sentence intonation. It is for this reason that I advocate the teaching of *pu tong hua* in primary schools. All that is necessary is to teach the children the correct *pu tung hua* pronunciation together with the rudiments of sentence patterns and a basic vocabulary which is likely to be different from the Cantonese. The aim is to enable them, once they reach secondary schools, to read their *pai hua* texts aloud in the correct pronunciation. A certain amount of rote learning or, at least, repeated reading aloud of the text will be of enormous importance to the writing of correct *pai hua*. In cases where the same expressions have different meanings or where the construction differs a little in the two dialects, taking an expression as a whole including the pronunciation will help to prevent confusion. For instance, the same expression 葡萄 means different fruits in Cantonese and *pu tong hua*, but if the pupil learns to say *pú táo* in *pu tong hua* when he means grapes and, *p'ou⁴ t'ou⁴* in Cantonese when he means a different fruit, then the right expression will come to him naturally whichever dialect he may be speaking. Finally, there is the question of feeling for the language which can only be acquired through treating the speech activity as an integrated whole and not as a hybrid of Cantonese pronunciation and written *pai hua*.

A word to avoid possible misunderstanding. In classifying *pu tung hua/pai hua* as a second language I imply no playing down of its importance. My classification starts purely from pedagogical premises. If there is any truth in my view, then the use of inappropriate methods constitutes a great obstacle to language and cannot but retard the progress of the pupil.

IV

Ten years ago there was a similar symposium on the teaching of Chinese. Professor Chou Fa-kao, the then director of the "Chinese Linguistics Research Centre" of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, in a paper presented to the symposium, put forth a number of valuable ideas, including contrastive study of grammar and Cantonese-*pu tong hua* vocabularies. Ten years later the work he proposed remains as urgent as it was then. The Chinese University is very concerned, indeed, with the lowering of language standards in schools and has, therefore, revived the Centre under the new name of 'Chinese Language Research Centre'. It is hoped that in the years ahead some of these tasks will be accomplished. In order to succeed, not only those of us who are at the Centre will have to make a great effort but, more important, we shall need the encouragement and support of the public at large.

Symposium on Language and Education in Hong Kong

The Department of Chinese Language and Literature, the Department of English and the School of Education of the University, in collaboration with the Language Centre of the University of Hong Kong, held a symposium on "Language and Education in Hong Kong" on 26th and 27th May.

The aim of the symposium was to study objectively and by means of research in academic theories, the problems of language education in Hong Kong today, and to suggest possible ways of raising the standard of Chinese and English teaching in local primary and secondary schools.

Talks on Special Topics

"Language education policy", Professor R. Lord, Language Centre, University of Hong Kong

"Intelligence, language background, and exposure time in the development of bilingual competence among secondary school students", Dr. P. K. Siu, School of Education

"First language and second language", Professor D. C. Lau, Department of Chinese Language and Literature

"Classical Chinese in the Chinese language curriculum for the secondary school", Professor M. Ma, Department of Chinese, University of Hong Kong

"English as a foreign language at primary level: the search for content", Mr. R. K. Tongue, English Language Adviser, Education Department

Group Discussions

Apart from these talks, four rounds of group discussions were held to study a number of important issues. Topics for discussion include: (in the area of medium of instruction) the relationship between the medium of instruction, language learning and the study of other subjects; the social, economic and developmental considerations in the selection of an instructional medium; (in the teaching of Chinese) objectives, teaching materials and existing problems in teaching; (in the teaching of English) the functional approach, which is the latest development in education

in recent years; English for science and technology, English for specific purposes; and the implications of first language teaching in foreign language teaching.

Materials for Discussion

Before the symposium, various professionals in Hong Kong were requested to write articles from different academic points of view, and preliminary reports on a number of major research projects were published. These include a research into the effects of the medium of instruction on the academic achievement and cognitive development of students, conducted by the School of Education; a comprehensive survey of Chinese language textbooks for primary schools, carried out by students of this University's Department of Chinese Language and Literature; a survey of the attitudes of Anglo-Chinese school students towards bilingual education, and a study of the English standard of Form 1 students, both carried out by the Education Society of the University.

Opening Remarks by Mr. T. C. Cheng, Director of the School of Education

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to welcome you here on behalf of the Symposium on Language and Education in Hong Kong.

In recent years, the average standards of both Chinese and English among our students in Hong Kong have been falling. With the introduction of free junior secondary education, it is likely that these standards will become even more uneven. The question of how best to cope with the practical difficulties of language teaching in Chinese and English has thus become a subject of hot debate among local educators.

I would say that our Symposium is significant in at least two ways.

First, Hong Kong is a bilingual society, and in terms of the education of our next generation, the teaching of the Chinese and the English languages should be of equal importance. If we consider language as a tool, we may find that, to enable our students to master these two tools, that is, the Chinese and the English language, we have been used to different teaching methods and materials; but at the

same time, if we have a close look at them, we may find that there are some common areas. This Symposium will provide, for teachers of Chinese and English, a meeting ground for exploration and mutual exchange of ideas and may hopefully result in improvements in the teaching of these two important languages to students of all levels of ability.

Second, language education is not simply a matter of passing on a certain linguistic tool to our students. To be more specific, we need to guide our students to develop not only their linguistic capabilities, but also their intellect and personality. Hence, if we are to have a thorough examination of the past and present states of language education with a view to making specific proposals for future improvement, it is imperative that we proceed on the basis of the following:

- (1) the experience and views offered by language teachers,
- (2) the theoretical foundation offered by linguists and psycholinguists, and
- (3) the pedagogy offered by curriculum designers and educational researchers.

In other words, there ought to be an integration of experience, theory and methods which will help us to formulate a much needed language policy.

We are all aware that Hong Kong is a centre of cultural exchange between the East and the West. The objective of our language education is to produce bilinguals, proficient in both Chinese and English, and equipped with a keen intellect and moral character. To achieve this objective, the concerted efforts of teachers in primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions, the open support of the Government, and the whole-hearted co-operation of the public are all equally indispensable.

With these remarks, I would urge you to consider seriously these significant questions confronting us today.

Finally, I would like especially to express our thanks and gratitude to Professor M. Ma of the University of Hong Kong and Mr. R. Tongue, the English Adviser of the Hong Kong Government, who will each honour us with a keynote address, and all the esteemed and distinguished educationists who have come to join us in this Symposium.

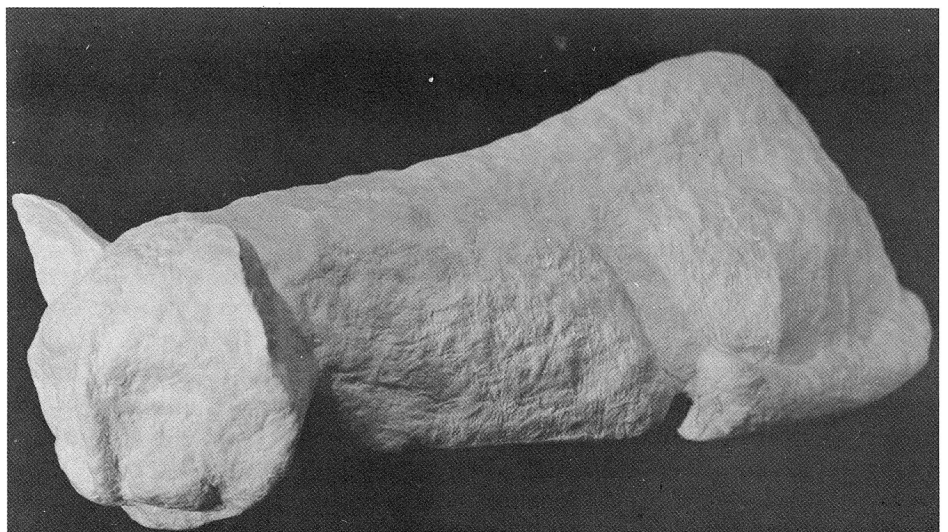
I have now great pleasure in declaring this Symposium open, and in wishing it every success.

Exhibition of Fine Arts Department

An exhibition of works by students of the Fine Arts Department was held at the City Hall from 15th to 17th June, 1979. Items on display included Chinese paintings, works of calligraphy and seal-carving, modern ink-wash paintings, sketches, oil paintings, prints, sculptures and ceramics. All the exhibits were arranged according to years in order to show the public the department's curricula, course requirements, the development of a course over a period of four years and inter-curriculum relationships, and to give the visitors a comprehensive picture of the department's progress.



*(From left) Mr. Y. W. Lee,
Dr. Ma Lin, Mr. Y. T. Kwong,
Mr. James Watt and
Dr. Ambrose King
at the exhibition*



*Cat (Sculpture—Paper)
by Au Yim-ling*



*Landscape (Chinese ink-painting)
by Lau Chan-wo*

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