

Twenty-Eighth Graduation Ceremony of Lingnan College
Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*
A Citation


Mr Kwok Man-cho

Mr Visitor,

Mr Kwok Man-cho is a pragmatic and open-minded entrepreneur with strong Hong Kong roots. A man of great vision, he has a strong sense of commitment to education and public service.

Descended from a prominent family in Zhongshan, Guangdong, Mr Kwok was born in Hong Kong in 1925. He attended Queen's College in 1936 and in 1941, when Hong Kong fell into the hands of the Japanese troops, left for the northern part of Guangdong to continue his secondary schooling. He then enrolled in the Department of Economics at Lingnan University where he received a bachelor's degree in 1948. After graduation, Mr Kwok went to Columbia University in the USA for further studies, obtaining his master's degree in 1951.

Mr Kwok returned to Hong Kong after World War II, at a time when all business languished. At the beginning of the 1950's, the Wing On Life Assurance Co Ltd was greatly in need of capable personnel for growth and development, and Mr Kwok at the young age of 26 gladly took over the task. His capability, acumen, professionalism and leadership played an important role in the undertaking. He endeavoured to effect reforms in administration and management, and at the same time drew on his expertise of contemporary marketing strategies to promote the business. His resourcefulness and vision provided a major engine for the company's growth to prominence – the company upgraded its image, scoring outstanding achievements at a time of instability.

The entrepreneurs in Hong Kong are renowned for their vigor, fortitude and forward thinking. These qualities have been well reflected in the continued exertions made by Mr Kwok during his forty years of business endeavour.

At the turn of the 1960's, following the rapid progress in Hong Kong, trade and business blossomed. The phenomenon was a potent attraction to many foreign investors who flocked here wanting a share of wealth and prosperity. During the period, Mr Kwok sought to enhance the profession in which he had been engaged. He spared no pains to expand the existing business and further explored new developments. His efforts soon bore fruit, cultivating a more solid foundation on which his company would make yet more substantial progress.

For more than four decades, Mr Kwok, as a man of inflexible will, has been a shining example for the Chinese entrepreneurs in Hong Kong. During the early 1970's, enterprises grew in astonishing diversity. Following this expansion, Mr Kwok joined hands with the third generation of the Kwok family, and took innovative measures for the family business. In 1972, the Wing On Life Assurance Co, Ltd was restructured as The Wing On Life Assurance (Holdings) Ltd, which after amalgamation with all other affiliated Wing On businesses in 1973, was renamed The Wing On (Holdings) Ltd that we know today. Mr Kwok has served as Chairman and Managing Director of the Wing On Life Assurance Co Ltd, Managing Director of the Wing On (Holdings) Ltd, and Director of the affiliated firms.

The valuable contribution Mr Kwok has made to the promotion and development of the insurance business in Hong Kong has earned him great respect from the profession. He has been elected and re-

elected Chairman of the Life Assurance Association of Hong Kong. His remarkable achievements are praiseworthy, but more important are the tireless efforts and determination harboured in his pioneering spirit, which serves as a model for all the Chinese enterprises in Hong Kong after World War II.

Even more commendable was Mr Kwok's active participation in social and religious activities as in other public services. He has been President of the Kwok's Clansmen Association, and a Member of the Consultative Committee for the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. He is now Chairman of the Council of YMCAS of Hong Kong and Council Member of the Chinese YMCA. Since 1995, as President of the YMCA, he has been providing steady support to the continual development of the organisation.

In addition, imbued with deep Christian values, Mr Kwok has taken up various responsibilities in Christian schools. He is Chairman of the Council of both True Light Middle School of Hong Kong and Hong Kong True Light College, past Chairman and current Director of the Council of the Chinese YMCA College, and Director of the Council of both the Chinese YMCA Secondary School and YMCA College of Careers. In all these tasks, Mr Kwok has been whole-heartedly dedicated to the promotion of the local education, bearing heavy responsibilities graciously.

Mr Kwok, his wife and two elder brothers all received a Lingnan education, fostering in them a deep feeling towards the *alma mater*. Soon after his return from the USA, he joined the Lingnan University Alumni Association, and for more than four decades, showed great affection for and provided dedicated service to Lingnan. By the end of the 1960's, when Hong Kong's economic development was still at its fledgling stage, Mr Kwok and his fellow schoolmates founded Lingnan College, with the ultimate aim to continue the educational mission of Lingnan University. Mr Kwok has since served as Chairman of both the Lingnan University Alumni Association of Hong Kong and the Lingnan Club, Supervisor of Lingnan Middle School and Lingnan College, and Director of Lingnan Education Organization. The significant contribution he has made to the development of Lingnan College is testament to his commitment and perseverance. He has been the Founding Vice-Chairman (1967) and Member (1967-1992) of the College's Board of Directors, Member of its Board of Governors and the Council (1992 to present). In 1978, in his capacity as Supervisor, Mr Kwok tendered an application together with the then President to the Education Department for Lingnan's registration as a recognised post-secondary institute. The application was successful and the College gained for the first time financial assistance from the government, which not only lessened the College's financial burden but enhanced its appeal for student enrollment. From 1983 to 1992, Mr Kwok served as Vice-Chairman of the College's Board of Governors, giving full support to the then Chairman Mr Tong Tin-sun in the College's attempt to overcome various obstacles, which finally resulted in the College's change of status to a degree-conferring institution. Since then, he has taken up such posts as Vice-Chairman of the College's Staffing Committee and Member of its Fund-raising Committee. His endeavours have made possible the realisation in the 1990s of the dream of Lingnan attaining university title in Hong Kong.

During his lifelong service, Mr Kwok has been a man of exemplary industry devoted to a noble cause, embodying the Lingnan spirit of integrity and loyalty. Not only does he demonstrate great entrepreneurship in his career, he also seeks to serve the community in all possible ways and is unswervingly dedicated to educational services.

Mr Visitor, for the accomplishments he has attained in his career and the outstanding contribution he has made towards the advancement of Hong Kong society, may I present Mr Kwok Man-cho for the award of the Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.

嶺南學院第二十八屆畢業典禮 榮譽法學博士郭文藻先生讚詞

監督先生：

郭文藻先生是一名胸襟恢宏的實幹型企業家，在創業方面具有超凡眼光與能力，對社會公益及教育事業亦極具熱心。

文藻先生出身廣東中山望族，一九二五年在香港出生，三年入讀皇仁書院，四一年因香港淪陷返回粵北，完成中學教育後入讀廣州嶺南大學，四八年取得商學士學位，畢業後負笈美國，五一年獲哥倫比亞大學碩士，主修保險學。

二次大戰後香港社會百廢待舉，亦正是文藻先生學成歸來之日。五零年代初，香港永安人壽保險公司力圖發展，需才殷切，年僅二十六的文藻先生乃欣然出掌該公司業務，以其精明幹練、專業實學及勇於進取的精神，興革內部行政，並引入現代經營手法推動業務。在當時變幻不定的時局中，先生當機立斷，高瞻遠矚，使公司形象一新，業務蒸蒸日上。

眾所週知，香港企業家素以魄力、堅毅意志和廣闊視野見稱。這種難能可貴的素質，在文藻先生過去四十年營商生涯中，一一表現出來。

六零年代末、七零年代初，香港發展迅速，工商各業飛躍前進，外商紛紛來港，競求創造財富機會。此時文藻先生既立足香港，不矜不伐，除用心拓展原有業務外，更自強不息，致力開創多種嶄新事業，兼程並進，使公司根基更為穩固。

四十多年來，文藻先生以其不屈不撓之志，孜孜矻矻，致力推動工商各業的發展，為香港華商企業史留下令人難忘的光輝一頁。七零年代初，隨著香港多元企業不斷發展，文藻先生進一與郭氏第三代精英合力，於一九七二年將永安人壽保險公司合併，易名為今日之永安集團有限公司，並擔任永安各聯號公司主席兼總經理。七零年代初，永安人壽保險公司與永安各聯號公司合併，易名為今日之永安集團有限公司，並擔任永安各聯號公司主席兼總經理。

文藻先生對香港保險業的推動及改進，建樹良多，深為同業敬重，屢次被推舉出任香港人壽保險公會主席。其事業成就，固然令人欣羨，其蘊含的創建精神，更可作為戰後香港華資企業發展的一個典範。

文藻先生除事業有成外，尚熱心參與本港社團、宗教團體及諮詢委員會活動，曾任香港郭氏宗親會會長及香港青年會會長，對促進和發展青年會社會公益貢獻良多。

文藻先生又本著榮神樹人之旨，致力促進香港中學教育的發展，竭盡忠誠，勞怨弗辭。先生現任香港青年會主席及現任校董、青年會中學校董及現任校董、青年會中學校董。

另一方面，文藻先生與夫人及兩位兄長皆屬「紅灰兒女」，對發展嶺南教育事業不遺餘力，甫自美國學成回港，即加入嶺南有關教育團體工作，四十年如一日。六零年代末，香港社會經濟仍在草創階段，文藻先生即與同儕合力在港創辦嶺南書院，一德一心，銳意延續先賢之教育理想。先生曾先後擔任嶺南書院、嶺南教育機構董事、嶺南學院董事會創會副主席及主席等要職。一九六七至九二年間，先生以書院校監身份，聯同代表嶺南向教育司署爭取為認可專上院校，獲政府撥予津貼。這不但減輕學校經濟負擔，對招生更有莫大幫助。一九二三年間，先生出任校董會副主席，全力協助高等院校。其後文藻先生更出任校務會人事委員會副主席及委員等職位，對學院在九十年代之發展作出積極貢獻，即將正名為大學奠下穩固基礎。

郭文藻先生克己奉公，殷實幹練，處處體現出嶺南人「殷紅如血、深灰似鐵」的紅灰精神。先生不僅是卓有成就的企業家，更是不辭勞瘁的實務工作者，畢生熱心教育事業、為推進社會公益盡心盡力。

監督閣下，為表揚郭文藻先生的事業成就和對香港社會作出的卓越貢獻，懇請授予榮譽法學博士學位。