Professor Yang Fujia
Doctor of Science *honoris causa*

Citation

A native of Ningbo, Zhejiang, Prof Yang Fujia was born in Shanghai. He graduated from Fudan University in 1958 with a degree in physics, staying on at the university as a teaching assistant on account of academic excellence. In 1963, he was selected to go to the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen (Denmark), a place known for atomic physics research, to further his work in nuclear physics as a visiting scholar, specialising in nuclear spectroscopy. During this time, his research confirmed a type of single particle motion in nuclei, which is still widely cited by the international nuclear physics community. Equally valuable to this young scholar was the opportunity to work with over 50 scientists from various nations. Through cooperation, interaction and mutual encouragement, Prof Yang felt deeply inspired by the Institute's "rich academic atmosphere of engagement in equal, free discussion and close collaboration".

On return to China in 1965, Prof Yang resumed his teaching and nuclear physics research at Fudan University. The Cultural Revolution broke out in the following year, which seriously disrupted educational work and scientific research. Amid social instability and a scarcity of resources, Prof Yang persisted in academic research. In nuclear spectroscopy, for instance, he developed a more unified formula for the decay of complex energy levels, which encompassed (as specific cases) most known formulas used in China and abroad. This has been widely used in the radioactive industry, leading to the development of a generalised formula for measuring the half-life of nuclei. When the Cultural Revolution ended, Prof Yang turned his focus to the advancement of nuclear physics in China: the nation's first accelerator-based atomic and nuclear physics laboratory was built under his persistent effort and leadership.

Promoted to professor in 1980, Prof Yang later served as Director of the Shanghai Institute of Nuclear Research (now called Shanghai Institute of Applied Physics) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. On account of his distinguished and ground-breaking achievement in nuclear physics research, Prof Yang was elected an academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 1991, and a fellow of The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World in the same year. He was appointed Vice-President of Fudan University in 1992, and also served successively as Chairman of the Shanghai Association for Science and Technology, as well as Vice-Chairman of the China Association for Science and Technology. In 1993, this nuclear physicist stepped onto a new path in his career—he was installed as President of Fudan University.

Moving from teaching and research to a position of educational administration, Prof Yang led Fudan during his six-year tenure to become a high-quality, people-oriented university that excels in both the humanities and the sciences. His goals and policies as an educator included requiring professors known for research to teach foundation courses, and reminding faculty "to teach students to be proper human beings first". On a practical level, he established the Fudan Development Institute, which acts as a government think-tank supporting efforts by Shanghai and the Central Government to develop a knowledge-based economy. Besides setting up a think-tank promoting the development of a knowledge-based economy, President Yang also actively promoted the international recognition of Chinese universities, by way of helping the world better understand China. He was founding President of the Association of University Presidents of China, and was elected an executive member of the International Association of University Presidents. He served as China's representative on the Board of Directors of the Association of East Asian Research Universities, and as a member of the Association of University Presidents of the Pacific Rim. His ideas for reforming and developing China's higher education did not go unnoticed in international higher education circles.

In 2001, two years after retiring as President of Fudan, Prof Yang was appointed Chancellor of the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom. This was unprecedented in British higher education, for by tradition the role was assumed only by royalty or peers of the realm. In all, Prof Yang's Nottingham appointment lasted twelve years, which further broadened his horizon and deepened his understanding of education, while stimulating new thoughts on reforming China's higher education. In 2004, just into his fourth year as Chancellor, Prof Yang led Nottingham to establish The University of Nottingham Ningbo China—China's first Sino-foreign collaborative university with full pedagogical independence granted to the foreign partner.

Nottingham Ningbo began admitting students in autumn 2004, with Prof Yang as its founding President to this day. This university created a new model for China's higher education to engage the world. Its goal is not to transplant a Western educational enterprise to Chinese soil, still less to make a profit for Nottingham, but to blend the best educational ideas and practices in the Chinese and British traditions, so as to cultivate true world citizens. After all, education in ancient China was a form of liberal arts education: the "six arts" of rites, music, archery, driving, writing and arithmetic stated in the *Rites of Zhou* cover civil and martial arts as well as the humanities and sciences; the humanistic education Confucius offered his pupils 2500 years ago included ethics, language, government, culture and learning, particularly the first aspect. Prof Yang set up a "dream foundation" at both Nottingham and Nottingham Ningbo to offer learning opportunities for qualified but underprivileged Chinese students. His dream is to help capable students transform their lives through education, and in turn contribute to society, country, and the world.

Over the past decade or so, President Yang has led Nottingham Ningbo to become a base for practising modern liberal arts education in China. Education at Nottingham Ningbo is marked by small scale, open atmosphere, teacher-student interaction, and student-based operation. He clearly stated that the university's main objective lies in nurturing talent and cultivating good, responsible citizens; the first duty of a university teacher also lies in nurturing people rather than publishing academic articles. Some students of Nottingham Ningbo told President Yang that the school's education has changed their lives.

Prof Yang's contribution to nuclear physics research and its applications is widely esteemed by the scientific community. What is more, he has served as helmsman of three Chinese and British universities in total: Fudan, Nottingham and Nottingham Ningbo. No wonder that this exemplary scientist and educator has been honoured with honorary degrees by Soka University (Japan), State University of New York (USA), The University of Hong Kong, University of Nottingham (UK), University of Connecticut (USA), Macau University of Science and Technology, and The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of his distinguished achievement in nuclear physics research and his significant contribution to Chinese higher education and to the international development of liberal arts education, may I present Prof Yang Fujia to you for conferment of the degree of Doctor of Science *honoris causa*.

Chinese citation written and delivered by Professor Charles Kwong