

Ms Anna Wu Hung-yuk, GBS, JP

Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*

Citation

Ms Anna Wu Hung-yuk is widely acclaimed for her public service, with a record that spans four decades and eight administrations, beginning in the 1980s. She is perhaps best known for championing anti-discrimination legislation that helps protect the social goods of equality and inclusion in Hong Kong. As Chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission, which would not exist if it was not for her efforts, she took the Hong Kong Government to court for discrimination against girls in the high school admission system. To put it mildly, this was not well received within the government, especially when it lost the case in 2001. The case set a precedent: it showed that equality laws can be used to overturn systemic discriminatory practices in other spheres. It has also had a profound impact, helping to ensure gender equality in education.

Ms Wu has chaired many other public bodies over her long and distinguished career. As Chair of the Hong Kong Consumer Council in 1997, she introduced significant reforms to better protect consumers. As Chair of the Mandatory Provident Funds Schemes Authority (MPFA) from 2009 to 2015, she was able to reduce risk and cost for employees and to enhance choice. As founding Chair of the Competition Commission from 2013 to 2020, she was a trustbuster. During this time, significant legal precedents were established to protect freedom of the market, particularly through the prohibition of cartels.

Ms Wu has also held appointments in other public bodies including the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Law Reform Commission, the Securities and Futures Commission and the Hospital Authority. She served as member of the Legislative Council from 1993 to 1995 and the Executive Council from 2009 to 2017. She is also a Justice of the Peace. She was awarded the Silver Bauhinia Star in 2000 and the Gold Bauhinia Star in 2011 in recognition of her outstanding public service.

Born to parents who fled to Hong Kong for refuge, she has always had a strong sense of empathy with the underprivileged. The social unrest of the 1960s was an education in inequality and deprivation. A nun in secondary school encouraged her to read the newspaper to understand the world but cautioned her “to rely on facts and facts alone.”

In 1975, she completed her law studies at the University of Hong Kong. Studying law was not her first choice but “the law,” she says, “found me.” Her passion for the law grew when she realised that she could use it to help the underprivileged exercise their rights. She recalls, for instance, helping a woman to renew a hawker’s license. The young lawyer felt great satisfaction at being able to help restore the woman’s ability to earn a living for herself and her family. She used this story to illustrate the point that law must safeguard individual rights and must matter not only in theory but also

to real people. In her professional life, she specialised in intellectual property law and corporate-commercial cases. She made senior partner at her firm by the age of 30 and was admitted to the Roll of Honour of the Law Society of Hong Kong.

On the Legislative Council, she lobbied the then colonial government to consider her Private Member's Bill on Equal Opportunities. This was the first time a lawmaker had presented a private member's bill that addressed a whole policy area. Her lobbying pressured the government into setting up the Equal Opportunities Commission and enacting the first anti-discrimination ordinances.

To Ms Wu, law is a tool for social change. "Law," she says, "leads to good practice and cultural change." To refine this tool, she leads research initiatives. She uses it to advocate for businesses and government bodies to put diversity into practice. In research and advocacy she harnesses the power of the public, by working with NGOs. She believes strongly that diversity is good for all stakeholders – for individuals, businesses, and the wider community. She points out that, statistically speaking, companies that adopt gender equality and ethnic diversity actually become more profitable.

Law is not just a tool for social change. Challenging stereotypes and biases is a long uphill battle to change mindsets that are deeply entrenched. In her many roles on different public bodies, she has faced criticism, opposition, threats and even organised protests, but she has never given up. What keeps Ms Wu going is her unyielding determination to stick to her principles and values.

Having devoted most of her professional life to championing equality, diversity and inclusion, Anna Wu's advice to us is: "to look beyond differences to free our minds from perceptual handicaps, of our own and of others." Looking back on a life marked by so many changes and challenges, she believes that it is her sense of mission, her determination and her willingness to engage with widely contested views that have enabled her to make it this far. She wants to share the following sentiment with the Lingnan community: "What shapes a person is her response to change. One must never be indifferent to change." Many people resist change, but Ms Wu has embraced it, doing all she can to ensure change is positive.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of her outstanding achievements in the advocacy and protection of equality and inclusion in Hong Kong, may I present Ms Anna Wu Hung-yuk for conferment of the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Citation written and delivered by Professor Lisa Leung Yuk-ming

胡紅玉女士，GBS，JP

榮譽法學博士

贊辭

胡紅玉女士由20世紀80年代開始投身公共服務，至今40年，經歷八屆政府，廣受讚譽。她最為人們熟知的是倡議反歧視立法，該法案頒布後成為香港推動和維護平等共融的重要支柱。在其擔任過的許多公職中，最重要的可說是平等機會委員會主席，如果沒有她的努力，該委員會根本不會存在。作為委員會主席，她將香港政府告上法庭，指控中學入學制度有歧視女生的成分。說得委婉一點，此舉並不受政府內部的歡迎，最終政府在2001年敗訴。自此該案確立先例，表明平等法可用以糾正其他行業的系統性歧視做法，對教育界別而言更產生了深遠的影響，確保了運作上性別平等。

胡女士在漫長而傑出的職業生涯中，曾擔任過許多公職，她於1997年擔任香港消費者委員會(消委會)主席，在消委會引入了重大改革，加強保護消費者的權益。她於2009至2015年出任強制性公積金計劃管理局主席，為全港僱員增加了選擇，並減低了風險和成本。2013至2020年期間，胡女士擔任競爭委員會的創會主席，通過禁止合謀壟斷操控，為保障市場自由建立了重要的法律先例。

胡女士亦在其他機構擔任公職，包括廉政公署、法律改革委員會、證券及期貨事務委員會和醫院管理局。她於1993至1995年出任立法局議員，並於2009至2017年出任行政會議成員。她也獲委任太平紳士，並在2000年和2011年因其傑出的公共服務貢獻而分別獲頒銀紫荊星章和金紫荊星章。

胡女士的父母為了尋求庇護而逃來香港，她從小就培養了對弱勢群體的強烈同理心。20世紀60年代的社會動盪讓她深入了解不平等和剝削的情況。中學時一位修女鼓勵她多看報以認識世界，但也提醒她「唯有事實可為依據」。

1975年，胡女士在香港大學完成了法律課程。學習法律並不是她的首選，但正如她所說：「是法律選擇了我。」她與弱勢社群相處之後，知道法律知識可讓他們行使權利，對法律的熱情也隨之增加。她曾協助一位婦人更新小販牌照。對於能夠幫助這位婦人恢復謀生能力以照顧自己及家人，她感到非常滿足。她以此例子說明法律必須保障個人權利，並關注活生生的人而非理論。她專門從事知識產權法和商業交易，並在30歲之前成為其公司的高級合夥人，亦成為香港律師會的榮譽律師。

胡女士出任立法局議員時，曾遊說當時的殖民政府通過她提出的平等機會私人條例草案。這是首次有立法局議員提出涵蓋整個政策範疇的私人條例草案，促使政府後來成立了平等機會委員會，並首次頒布了反歧視條例。

對胡女士來說，法律是改變社會的工具。她說：「法律能促進行為規範和文化轉變。」她還主持研究工作，與非政府組織合作，並遊說企業和政府機構實行多元共融。她堅信多元化對個人、企業和社區等各方面都有利。她指出，根據統計，奉行性別平等和種族共融的公司實際上盈利會更佳。

法律是改變社會的工具。消除固有觀念和偏見是一場漫長的硬仗，涉及改變根深蒂固的思想。她於各公共機構任職時，曾面對批評、反對、威脅，甚至有組織性的抗議活動。但她從不放棄，讓胡女士勇往直前的是她持守個人原則和價值觀的堅定決心。

胡女士職業生涯的大部分時間都在倡議平等、多元化和共融，她給我們的建議是：「要放眼差異之外，把我們的思想從自己和他人的偏見中解放出來。」回顧這段充滿變化和挑戰的人生，她認為是使命感、決心和願意討論具爭議性的議題，使她能夠走到今天。她希望與嶺大社群分享一個理念：「人如何回應轉變決定他是個怎樣的人，人決不能對轉變無動於衷。」很多人抗拒改變，但胡女士不一樣，她擁抱改變，並竭盡所能確保所推動的改變都是正面的。

主席先生，為了表彰胡紅玉女士在倡議和維護香港的平等和共融方面的傑出成就，我謹恭請閣下頒授榮譽法學博士學位予胡女士。

贊辭由梁旭明教授撰寫及宣讀