

**DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION, *honoris causa***

Dr Jonathan Choi Koon-shum, GBS, JP



Mr Pro-Chancellor,

Traditionally, many had compared business to a battlefield; the road to success paved with cut-throat competition and rivalry. Game theorists Adam Brandenburger and Barry Nalebuff have told us otherwise. They believe that businesses could thrive together through “co-opetition”, a dynamic relationship founded on competition and cooperation simultaneously. This paints a completely different picture of what business should look like, and it is one Dr Jonathan Choi Koon-shum envisages for Hong Kong and mainland China.

Growing up in Hong Kong, there were two main influences that had shaped Dr Choi’s life and career. The first was his love for Chinese literature and history, which bestowed him not only wisdom and eloquence, but also a deep sense of moral ethics and compassion for others. The second and perhaps more important influence was his father Choi Kai Yau, entrepreneur and founder of the Hong Kong-based seafood-trading company Sunwah. Born in the same year Sunwah was established, Dr Choi had witnessed his father, through sheer hard work and dedication, transform their small family business into a leading player in the industry. His can-do attitude and diligence became the bedrock of Dr Choi’s strong work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit.

When Dr Choi graduated from St Paul Co-educational College, Japan was one of Sunwah’s major markets. One of the company’s Japanese business partners invited Dr Choi to study in Japan. However, to catch up with the rapid rate at which Sunwah was expanding, Dr Choi heeded to his father’s call for help and ended his studies in Kyoto of Japan early to join the family business. Working relentlessly alongside his father from the break of dawn till midnight, Dr Choi was eager to seize every opportunity he could get to observe and learn about the company’s operation.

Dr Choi was only 25 when he officially took over the helms and became Chairman of Sunwah Group. The timing of his succession aligned with the genesis of China's economic reforms. With Dr Choi's visionary leadership and optimism for the future, Sunwah was able to ride the crest of China's open-door policies and expand its global reach beyond the Asia-Pacific region, tapping into new markets in North America, Europe, and Australia. While Dr Choi valued family and tradition, he also understood the importance of innovation and diversification. Having established and secured Sunwah's leading position in seafood trading, Dr Choi also began looking for opportunities to diversify their business and investment portfolio. Moving away from the labour-intensive business model in food processing and trading, he turned to real estate development and financial services to further increase the company's capital and income. Today, Sunwah Group has flourished into a multinational conglomerate with businesses across eight different industries and sectors: seafood and foodstuffs, real estate, financial services, infrastructure, technology, education and training, media, and green technology and healthcare.

Not long after he took up the reins of Sunwah, his then half-retired father and the rest of their family began making plans to move their homes to Canada in 1984. Confronted with the decision to either stay in Hong Kong or join his family in Canada, what first came to Dr Choi's mind was the thousands of employees working for him at the time, as well as their business friends and partners. Holding himself accountable for the company's stakeholders, he ultimately chose to stay behind in Hong Kong to protect the family's legacy, a decision that speaks volumes about Dr Choi's leadership philosophy. Dr Choi had full confidence of China's development and the future of Hong Kong. Even at this early stage of his career, Dr Choi had led with confidence and empathy, adopting a management style deeply rooted in Chinese family values.

Through his father and Sunwah, Dr Choi had witnessed and lived the promises of China's development, and is eager to share his success and vision with all. To this end, Dr Choi has made conscientious efforts in promoting the formation of strategic alliances within business communities, locally and internationally. Among the various public positions he holds, he is perhaps most well-known for his role in the Hong Kong Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (CGCC). First joining the CGCC in 1997, he was elected Chairman in 2008, making him the youngest person to hold the position. Since then, he has been re-elected three times, most recently in 2018 for the 51st term of office. CGCC was one of the three founding Chinese chambers of the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention, an event held every two years that brings together several thousands of Chinese entrepreneurs from

all corners of the world. In 2018, Dr Choi initiated the CGCC World Chinese Entrepreneurs Summit in Hong Kong, which is also held every two years as a platform for the Chinese business leaders around the world to explore and discuss new business development opportunities. He received the World Outstanding Chinese Award from the United World Chinese Association in 2008 and the Lifetime Achievement Award in Business and Community Leadership from the World Chinese Economic Forum in Melbourne in 2012.

Beyond strengthening the collaborative relationship among Chinese businesses and industries, Dr Choi also actively contributes to the advancement of China and Hong Kong's trade relations with other countries. He was the Chairman of the Hong Kong-Japan Business Co-operation Committee from 2011 to 2015. Dr Choi is also the Founding Chairman of both the Hong Kong-Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Hong Kong-Korea Business Council. In the technology sector, particularly, Dr Choi serves as the Economic Advisor to the President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and has promoted the development and research of Linux in support of the open source ecosystem. In 1995, he established the Chinese Academy of Sciences Honorary Academician Foundation to support senior academicians of the Academy. Dr Choi made a donation to establish the Hong Kong Academy of Sciences in 2015 and serves as its Senior Advisor. Dr Choi is also the Chairman of the China-India Software Association and China-Hong Kong-Israel Technology Cooperation and Promotion Center. In recognition of his commitment to international cooperation, he was awarded the Friendship Order by the Vietnam Government and appointed as an Honorary Ambassador of Foreign Investment by the South Korea Government in 2015. In 2017, he was the recipient of the Japan Foreign Minister's Commendation Award and the Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters of France. In 2019, he received the 'Friend of Diplomacy' award from the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in Hong Kong. Dr Choi is recognised as 'Mr ASEAN' and 'Ambassador for Hong Kong' in the business community.

The vision and strategic foresight that allows Dr Choi to steer Sunwah towards new heights also made him a revered figure in the economic development of Hong Kong, especially in terms of its trade relations with mainland China and overseas countries. He currently represents Hong Kong, China in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Advisory Council. Dr Choi is also a Standing Committee Member of both the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce. On regional cooperation, he is the Hong Kong-Chairman of the Mainland China-Hong Kong Belt and Road Business and

Professional Services Council and the Chairman of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area Entrepreneurs Union. Locally, he also serves as a member of the Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development HKSAR as well as a Council Member of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

No introduction of Dr Choi would be complete without mentioning his philanthropy, especially in the field of education as well as art and culture. Dr Choi believes that education plays a crucial role in China's phenomenal development. Beyond the provision of academic training, he has emphasized the importance of building up the willpower and confidence of today's youths. His family has always devoted themselves to charitable work in education, sponsoring the establishment of several schools and colleges in their hometowns of Zhongshan and Macao since the 1970s. Through the Sunwah Foundation and The Jonathan KS Choi Foundation, Dr Choi continues this legacy of philanthropy, whether in terms of enhancing student access to higher education, fostering academic and research exchange, or strengthening research in innovation and technology. He established the Guangdong Sun Wah Education Institute, the Sun Wah International Business School of Liaoning University, the 3e International School in Beijing and the West Point Grey Academy in Vancouver. In Hong Kong, he established the Choi Kai Yau School and has served several universities as a court or council member. Dr Choi is a Justice of Peace and received the Gold Bauhinia Star award from the Hong Kong SAR Government.

One of his most recent projects would be the Jonathan KS Choi Cultural Centre, which comprises a series of cultural centres built to promote academic and cultural exchange among Hong Kong, mainland China, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, France, and Canada. The opening of the first cultural centre at the Vietnam National University in Hanoi in 2015 was officiated by Deputy Prime Minister, now Prime Minister of Vietnam. With the support of French presidents, a cultural centre was established in the National Superior School for Fine Arts in Paris in 2017, followed by a centre for the promotion of cultural heritage at the Arab World Institute in Paris in 2018 and a recent partnership with The Tokyo Museum (Palais de Tokyo) in Paris in contemporary art education. A cultural centre at the Chinese University of Hong Kong is now under planning for construction.

Nalebuff has said, "Real success comes from actively shaping the game you play—from making the game you want, not taking the game you find." From his study plans, to his succession of Sunwah, Dr Choi has always been able to not only overcome, but transform every crisis to an opportunity. Through his public service and active engagement with the

community, he continues to inspire, shape and lead the development of Hong Kong and mainland China.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, in recognition of his tremendous contribution to Hong Kong and his tireless support for the educational and technological reform of mainland China, may I invite our President to present Dr Jonathan Choi Koon-shum, in absentia, for the award of Doctor of Business Administration, *honoris causa*.

Citation written and to be delivered by Professor Alan Au Kai-ming

榮譽工商管理博士

蔡冠深博士

副校監先生：

俗語有云「商場如戰場」，人們普遍認為商業活動總離不開割喉式的競爭，逐鹿馳騁；彷彿只有不斷誅滅競爭對手才能踏上成功之路。但博弈論經濟學家布蘭登勃格（Adam Brandenburger）及奈爾伯夫（Barry Nalebuff）卻持相反見解。他們在二人合著的《Co-opetition》一書中，鼓吹企業之間的「合作競爭」，即同時存在競爭和合作的動態關係，能有助促進企業相互發展。此理論與人們的既定觀念背道而馳，卻正是蔡冠深博士期望的未來中國和香港的發展方向。

蔡博士於香港長大，有兩個主要因素成就他的精彩人生和輝煌事業。首先是他對中國文學和歷史的熱愛，不僅啟發了他的智慧和口才，更深深醞釀了他的道德倫理觀和對人的同情心；此外，對蔡博士影響更深的，就是其父蔡繼有先生。蔡繼有先生當年一手創立新華集團，最初以經營海產貿易生意為主，而蔡博士也在新華集團成立的同一年出生。他親眼目睹父親多年來辛勞不斷、焚膏繼晷，最終將小型家族生意擴展成行業龍頭；蔡博士亦以父親的拼搏和勤奮精神為借鏡，奠定他日後職業操守和企業家精神的穩固基石。

蔡博士畢業於聖保羅男女中學時，日本是新華集團的主要市場之一。當時集團的一位日本業務合作伙伴邀請蔡博士到日本京都學習，豈料新華集團步向急速發展的趨勢，人手不敷應用。父親希望他提早結束學業，回港協助打理家族生意，蔡博士亦一口答應。自此蔡博士與父親朝夕並肩作戰，努力不懈，並把握每個機會，觀察並了解公司的運作。

蔡博士正式接管父親的海產王國年僅廿五，並獲任命為集團主席，上任後適逢中國開始推行改革開放。憑藉他的非凡遠見、領導才能及對內地前景的信心，新華集團受益

於中國的對外開放政策：不但開拓國內業務，更成功把生意擴展至亞太地區以外的環球市場，包括北美、歐洲、澳洲等。蔡博士十分重視家庭和傳統，同時亦了解創新和多元化業務的重要性。蔡博士在奠定新華集團於海產貿易行業的領導地位後，仍不斷尋找機會，期望集團業務和投資組合更多樣化；於是在勞動密集型的食品加工和貿易之外另覓商機，著手投身地產開發和金融服務市場，以進一步優化集團資本和收益。今時今日，新華集團已晉身跨國集團行列，業務涵蓋八個不同行業和範疇，包括海產食品、地產建築、金融財務、基礎建設、高新科技、教育培訓、傳媒文化和環保大健康。

蔡博士接任集團主席後不久，當時半退休的父親和家人於 1984 年計劃移居加拿大。蔡博士面對留港或移加的抉擇，首先想到集團數千名員工的生計問題，還有公司的合作夥伴亦可能無以為繼。為了對公司的所有持份者負責，他最終選擇留港守護家族生意，而這個決定亦充分體現蔡博士的管理哲學，及他對中國的發展和香港的未來充滿信心。蔡博士一向以自信和同理心服眾，領導手法以中國傳統家庭價值觀為本。

蔡博士從父親和新華集團身上，見證並實現了中國內地蓬勃發展的願景，並渴望與所有人分享他的成就和遠見。因此，他積極推動本地和國際企業組成合作聯盟，以加強業內資訊交流，為業界謀福利。他曾擔任各種商會公職，當中以他在香港中華總商會的彪炳功績最為人津津樂道。蔡博士於 1997 年加入香港中華總商會，2008 年獲選為會長，成為歷屆最年輕的會長。隨後連任三屆，包括於 2018 年獲選連任為第 51 屆會長。香港中華總商會是世界華商大會三個創會成員之一，兩年舉行一次大會，滙集來自世界各地的數千名華人企業家。2018 年，蔡博士首創在香港舉辦兩年一次的中總世界華商高峰論壇，作為華人企業領袖探索和討論新業務發展機會的平台。他於 2008 年獲世界華人協會頒發世界傑出華人獎，並於 2012 年在墨爾本獲世界華人經濟論壇頒發商業及社會領袖終身成就獎。

蔡博士不僅致力強化大中華地區工商業界之間的緊密合作，為促進中國和香港與其他國家的貿易關係也貢獻良多。自 2011 至 2015 年，他擔任香港日本經濟委員會主席。蔡博士除擔任「香港•越南商會」及「香港•韓國商會」的創會會長之外，在科技領域也不遺餘力；他擔任中國科學院院長經濟顧問，並積極推動 Linux 的開發和研究，以支援開源生態系統。1995 年，蔡博士成立中國科學院院士榮譽基金會以支持學院的高級院士。他於 2015 年捐款成立香港科學院，並擔任院長高級顧問。蔡博士亦身

兼「中印軟件協會」和「中國香港以色列民間科技合作及促進中心」主席。為表彰他在國際合作方面所作出的貢獻，他於 2015 年獲越南政府頒授「友誼勳章」，亦獲韓國政府任命為「對外投資推廣榮譽大使」，更於 2017 年獲日本「外務大臣表彰」和法國「藝術與文學軍官勳銜」。2019 年，蔡博士更獲中華人民共和國外交部駐香港特別行政區特派員公署頒發「外交之友」榮銜。蔡博士被商界公認為「東盟先生」和「香港大使」。

蔡博士的遠大目光和卓見策略不但讓新華集團業務屢創高峰，也讓他成為香港經濟發展史上廣受尊崇的知名人物。他致力為香港締造與中國內地及其他國家的商貿關係；目前亦代表中國香港出任亞太經濟合作組織（APEC）商貿諮詢理事會委員，同時獲委任為全國政協及中華全國工商業聯合會的常務委員。在區域合作上，他亦擔任內地—香港一帶一路工商專業委員會港方主席及粵港澳大灣區企業家聯盟主席。在香港，蔡博士亦身兼行政長官創新及策略發展顧問團成員及香港貿易發展局理事會成員。

談到蔡博士的豐碩成就，不可以不提他在慈善事業方面的貢獻，尤其是在教育範疇及文化和藝術上特別彰顯。蔡博士認為中國能有非凡的發展，教育可謂厥功至偉。他除了提供學術訓練外，也注重培養現今年輕人的意志力和自信心。自 1970 年代以來，蔡博士一家便致力於慈善教育發展，於家鄉中山和澳門贊助興建多所中小學及學院。通過「新華基金會」及「蔡冠深基金會」，蔡博士承傳了家族的慈善事業，讓更多學生獲得接受高等教育的機會，促進學術和研究交流，鼓勵創新和科技研發。蔡博士開辦了廣東新華教育學院、遼寧大學新華國際商學院、北京三奕國際學校及位於溫哥華的 West Point Grey Academy。在香港，蔡博士興辦蔡繼有學校，亦擔任多所大學的校董會成員。蔡博士也曾榮獲香港特區政府頒發太平紳士和金紫荊星章。

最近蔡博士於中國、日本、越南、柬埔寨、法國及加拿大創辦「蔡冠深文化中心」，旨在促進各國之間的學術和文化交流。第一個文化中心於 2015 年在河內越南國家大學由越南副總理（即現任總理）主持開幕。在法國總統的支持下，另一所文化中心於 2017 年在巴黎國立高等美術學院成立，一年後亦在巴黎的阿拉伯世界文化中心成立蔡冠深文化遺產促進中心。最近則與巴黎的東京宮合作，促進當代藝術教育。目前香港中文大學的文化中心也正在規劃過程中。

奈爾伯夫曾說過：「博弈取勝之道，在於積極塑造你身處的賽局：即並非選取尋獲的賽局，而是要締造想要的賽局。」從蔡博士的留學計劃，以至他繼承家族生意，無論遇上

任何挑戰，總能一一克服，每每轉危為機。藉著對公職的全情投入、對社區的積極參與，他將繼續啟發、塑造、領導香港和中國內地的發展。

副校監先生，為表彰蔡博士對香港所作出的重大貢獻，以及對內地教育和科技改革的不懈支持，本人在此恭請校長引介未克出席典禮的蔡冠深博士接受本校的榮譽工商管理博士學位。

英文贊辭由區啟明教授撰寫及宣讀