

## From an Acorn to an Oak

### L.Z. Yuan

was Senior Advisor, China Programme, of The Asia Foundation. He was instrumental in relieving the funding difficulties of *Renditions* in the initial years.



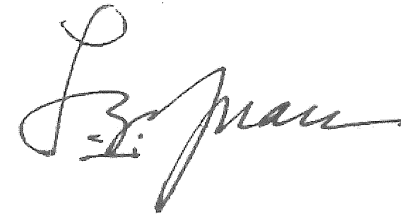
Early 1970s: L.Z. Yuan (left) at a meeting with Stephen Soong and Vice-Chancellor C.M. Li (right).

To sow a seed in fertile loam and watch it grow into a sturdy tree is one of the ways The Asia Foundation supports local creative initiatives. *Renditions* is one such venture in which the Foundation provided seed money to help Founding Editors George Kao and the late Stephen C. Soong launch the publication and to attract long-term support for its steady growth.

Chinese-to-English and English-to-Chinese translation was a field of Foundation interest thirty years ago. Making English material readily available to the Chinese, and vice versa, is an efficient way to promote international understanding and cultural exchange. Thirty years ago, Hong Kong-based modern influence, including Chinese translation of Western books, was beginning to slip into mainland China and, at the same time, translators would soon be in demand in anticipation of China's resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong. *Renditions* became a logical element in the cluster of translation projects at the time.

In celebrating *Renditions'* 30th birthday, we should not overlook another task so admirably performed by the Research Centre for Translation, which is the publisher, as well as the editor and their staff. Under the imprint of the Research Centre for Translation, they have published English collections of classical Chinese prose and poetry as well as contemporary and modern Chinese novels and short stories, many by young authors in mainland China. The Centre has adequately accomplished what Dr Choh-ming Li, the late Vice-Chancellor of the Chinese University, mentioned in his foreword for the inaugural issue of *Renditions*: that the magazine is 'designed for the general reader with an educated curiosity about Chinese culture, presenting materials originally intended for Chinese eyes'.

The Foundation salutes *Renditions'* Founding Editors George Kao and the late Stephen Soong for their vision and pioneering work and the current editor, Dr Eva Hung, for consistently maintaining the standard of a unique magazine that contributes to international cultural exchange. ☒

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Kao". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "K" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.