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新界扶輪社陳子鈞大律師--香港市政局資深民選議員

New Territories Rotarian --The Honourable Peter Chan Chi-Kwan
Hong Kong Urban Council Senior Elected Member

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian) 15 October 2017



The Honourable Peter Chan Chi-Kwan (陳子鈞議員) (7 March 1936 – 15 March 2017) was a charter member and Vice-President from 1969 to 1972 of the Rotary Club of New Territories (新界扶輪社), Hong Kong. He later served the Club as its 3rd President in 1972-1973, carrying the profession of barrister-at-law.

Peter Chan pursued legal studies in Australia and the United Kingdom before returning to practice in the British Crown Colony Hong Kong. As a prominent figure in local governance, he served as a senior elected member of the Urban Council (市政局)---the body responsible for municipal services such as public health, recreation, and markets---participating in elected politics alongside reform-oriented independents during the final decades of British colonial rule. His tenure, spanning multiple elections including as an incumbent in the 1980s and 1990s, focused on oversight of urban amenities amid Hong Kong's rapid post-War development, though specific policy impacts remain documented primarily through Council records rather than individual attributions.



The Story of Peter Chan Chi-Kwan

Formal Education and Early Influences

Peter Chan Chi-Kwan was born on 7 March 1936 in the British Crown Colony Hong Kong, with ancestral origins in Dongguan, Guangdong province, China (中國廣東省東莞縣). During his early years, he received his initial secondary education at Cheung Chau Government Secondary School (長洲官立中學), Cheung Chau Island, before advancing to

King's College (英皇書院) on the Hong Kong Island. These institutions, operating under the British colonial system, emphasized a curriculum blending English-language instruction with classical subjects, reflecting the era's emphasis on preparing colonial subjects for administrative and professional roles. These institutions reflect a standard trajectory for local youth aspiring to professional paths amid mid-20th-century colonial Hong Kong's educational landscape.

Peter Chan later studied at the University of Melbourne in Australia, where he obtained higher education before returning to pursue legal training. Chan completed his legal studies in England, qualifying as a barrister-at-law, a path common for Hong Kong practitioners seeking admission to the local bar under colonial legal frameworks.

Early influences on Chan included his upbringing as an ethnic Cantonese in the British Crown Colony Hong Kong, where exposure to Anglo-Chinese bilingualism and colonial governance likely shaped his orientation toward legal and public service careers. No specific mentors or pivotal events from this period are documented in available records, though the structured, merit-based colonial education system provided foundational discipline for his subsequent professional trajectory.

Professional Career as Barrister

Peter Chan established himself as a barrister-at-law in Hong Kong, with records confirming his professional status by at least 1969, when he campaigned for the Urban Council under that title. His entry into legal practice followed the standard colonial-era pathway for Hong Kong barristers, typically involving qualification at an English Inn of Court and subsequent admission to the local bar, though precise dates for his call to the bar or pupillage remain undocumented in accessible public records, consistent with his legal studies in Australia and the United Kingdom. Chan focused his early career on general legal work.

Chan maintained a private barrister's practice in Hong Kong. While specific litigated cases are not prominently recorded in public sources, his work aligned with civil and public interest law, complementing his political engagements in municipal governance.

Political Involvement

Entry into Public Service

Peter Chan, having established himself as a barrister-at-law, transitioned into public service via electoral politics in colonial Hong Kong. His entry point was the Urban Council, the municipal body responsible for urban sanitation, recreation, and licensing in Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. Chan was first elected to the Urban Council in the 1969 municipal election, securing one of the five contested seats as a candidate aligned with the Hong Kong Civic Association (香港公民協會), a pro-establishment group advocating moderate reforms.

This election marked his debut in representative politics amid a period of social unrest following the 1967 riots, where turnout was low at approximately 20%, reflecting public disillusionment with indirect elections and colonial governance. Chan's victory positioned

him as a voice for professional and civic interests, leveraging his legal background to focus on accountability and municipal improvements. He went on to win re-election in subsequent polls, beginning a tenure that spanned over two decades.

Tenure on the Urban Council

Peter Chan was first elected to the Urban Council in 1969, marking the start of his involvement in Hong Kong's municipal governance. The Urban Council, established under colonial administration, managed essential services such as public health, sanitation, recreation facilities, and cultural amenities across Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. As an elected member, Chan represented Kowloon-based constituencies, leveraging his background as a barrister to address regulatory and administrative matters within the Council's purview.

Chan secured re-election in 1973, 1977, 1981, 1983, 1986, and 1989, demonstrating sustained voter support amid evolving municipal elections that gradually increased direct representation. His affiliation with the Civic Association, a pro-establishment group, aligned him with moderate reformist positions on urban issues. During his tenure, Chan contributed to deliberations on practical governance challenges, including infrastructure maintenance and public welfare enhancements, though specific policy initiatives are less documented in available records.

Chan's 22-year service ended with his defeat in the 1991 Hong Kong municipal election, a contest marked by rising competition from newer political figures and shifting voter priorities ahead of the 1997 handover. Concurrently, from 1982 to 1991, he served on the Kowloon City District Board (九龍城區議會), extending his local oversight to district-level affairs that complemented Urban Council functions. In 1979, while on the Council, he assisted Queen's College (皇仁書院) alumni in probing an unexplained death, illustrating his role in bridging legal expertise with public service.

Policy Positions, Contributions, Criticisms and Political Opponents

Chan served as an elected member of the Hong Kong Urban Council from 1969 to 1991, securing re-election in multiple terms including 1983–1986, 1986–1989, and 1989–1991, primarily representing Kowloon City West. His contributions centered on the Council's mandate for urban municipal services, encompassing public health, sanitation, recreational facilities, and cultural amenities.

Concurrently, as a Kowloon City District Board member from 1982 to 1991, Chan engaged with pressing local challenges, including oversight of welfare and redevelopment efforts around the Kowloon Walled City (九龍城寨), supporting Kai Fong associations in promoting resident interests during a period of heightened urban density and administrative transition. His approach prioritized practical governance over ideological shifts, aligning with moderate civic groups advocating incremental reforms in municipal administration.

Peter Chan skeptical approach to decolonization initiatives drew opposition from

cultural reformers. In particular, during a public forum on the movement to establish Chinese as an official language, organized by the Hong Kong University Students' Union (香港大學學生會) on 19 September 1970, at City Hall (香港大會堂), Chan questioned whether the campaign would lead to the creation of a “third or fourth China”. His remarks provoked notable discontent among the approximately 600 attendees, many of whom supported expanded use of Chinese in official matters as a step toward reducing colonial linguistic dominance.

As a longstanding member of the moderate, reform-oriented Hong Kong Civic Association on the Urban Council, Chan encountered rivalry from candidates and groups advocating more assertive changes, including those aligned with labor interests or pro-Beijing affiliations. These opponents often emphasized grassroots representation and rapid localization, contrasting Chan's preference for measured evolution under the colonial framework.

Later efforts to form an elitist pro-Beijing political grouping with professionals and businessmen in the early 1990s highlighted tensions with established pro-China entities like the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong (民主建港協進聯盟), which prioritized broader membership bases, though Chan emphasized non-confrontational differentiation rather than direct conflict.

Views on Hong Kong Governance

Stance on Colonial Administration

Peter Chan demonstrated support for the stability and institutional framework of British colonial administration through his extended service on the Urban Council, an elected body advising the colonial government on municipal affairs from the 1970s until 1991. His 22-year tenure, spanning multiple terms under governors including Sir Murray MacLehose (麥理浩爵士), involved policy advocacy within the existing colonial structure rather than calls for its dismantlement.

Chan exhibited reservations toward initiatives challenging colonial norms, as seen in his skeptical participation in the 1970s movement to establish Chinese as an official language alongside English---a reform aimed at mitigating English-centric policies rooted in colonial rule. Described as consistently mocking the campaign, he attended events to question its implications, suggesting concerns over potential fragmentation rather than endorsement of broader localization efforts.

This approach reflected a preference for incremental reforms within the colonial system over confrontational decolonization, consistent with his role alongside figures like Elsie Tu (杜葉錫恩) in pressing for accountability and anti-corruption measures without undermining the overarching British-led governance.

Perspectives on Corruption and Accountability

Peter Chan operated in an era when corruption scandals, particularly within the Hong

Kong Police Force, prompted the creation of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) (總督特派廉政專員公署) on 15 February 1974, following public outrage over cases like that of Peter Godber, who fled the territory amid bribery investigations in 1973. As a barrister and elected Urban Council member representing districts such as Kowloon City, Chan contributed to local governance oversight, where accountability mechanisms were essential to prevent malfeasance in public works and services. In November 1977, amid debates on relaxing pursuits of corrupt officials under police pressure, Chan was referenced in press coverage alongside discussions of specific graft cases, indicating his engagement with issues of prosecutorial rigor and governmental integrity. His legal expertise likely informed a perspective favoring independent investigations and rule-of-law principles to combat systemic graft, aligning with broader colonial reforms that prioritized empirical enforcement over leniency.

Approach to Municipal Reforms

Peter Chan approached municipal reforms through his involvement with the Hong Kong Civic Association, which collaborated with groups like the Reform Club (香港革新會) in advocating for urban governance improvements. These efforts prioritized practical improvements in housing policy, city planning, and sanitation to meet the demands of Hong Kong's rapid post-War urbanization, often critiquing colonial administrative inefficiencies while advocating for greater elected input in local decision-making.

Chan's reform efforts emphasized bridging governmental policies with citizen needs, supporting initiatives for expanded public amenities and accountability in municipal services such as health and environmental management, which the Urban Council oversaw under colonial rule. He viewed the Council's role through a lens of limited autonomy under the prevailing separation-of-powers framework, pushing for measures to reduce bureaucratic manipulation and enhance service delivery, as reflected in contemporary discussions on Council independence. This stance aligned with incremental democratization at the municipal level, prioritizing evidence-based enhancements over radical overhaul amid Hong Kong's evolving socio-economic landscape.

Notable among his contributions was sustained advocacy for responsive urban policies, including better oversight of public housing and recreational facilities, which helped maintain the Council's influence in daily governance despite appointed majorities. Chan's legal background as a barrister informed a principled, rule-of-law-oriented approach, favoring transparent procedures and public consultation to reform entrenched practices, though specific legislative outcomes tied directly to him remain documented primarily through group efforts rather than individual bills.

Enduring Impact on Hong Kong Politics

Following the abolition in 1999 of the Urban Council in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Chan focused on leadership roles in professional and

educational alumni organizations. He held the presidency of the Association for the Promotion of Modernization by Professionals (香港促進現代化專業人士協會), an organization he co-founded earlier, where he continued to advocate for modernization efforts and professional development in Hong Kong. As a qualified barrister-at-law, Chan maintained involvement in legal circles, though specific cases from this period are not prominently documented in public records. His post-political engagements emphasized community and professional networking, reflecting his earlier commitments to public service and education.

As a retired barrister and former Urban Council member who had stepped back from frontline politics, his death did not prompt significant media coverage or political discourse in Hong Kong at the time. Peter Chan's involvement in the Hong Kong Civic Association, one of the Colony's earliest organized political groups founded in 1954, contributed to the establishment of reformist advocacy among middle-class professionals during the colonial period. As a founding member and former Vice-Chairman, Chan participated in efforts to influence municipal policies on urban development, housing, healthcare, economic growth, education access, public security, and street hawker regulation, which helped shape foundational aspects of Hong Kong's local governance framework.

However, the 1999 abolition of the Urban Council curtailed the municipal model Chan exemplified, redirecting political focus to district councils with reduced autonomy. The Civic Association's early model of professional-led political engagement influenced subsequent groups, promoting accountability in governance amid Hong Kong's transition to Chinese sovereignty, though its direct policy impacts waned with systemic changes post-1997. In 1984, Chan contributed to discussions on New Territories land leases, presenting a solution to Beijing that was adopted as part of Annex III of the Sino-British Joint Declaration--《Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong 中華人民共和國政府和大不列顛及北愛爾蘭聯合王國政府關於香港問題的聯合聲明》.

In his vocational service, Chan served as Advisor to the New Territories Heung Yee Kuk (新界鄉議局) as well as the Cheung Chau Rural Committee (長洲鄉事委員會).

His advisory role to the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (香港工會聯合會), a major pro-establishment labor organization, extended his influence into labor rights and political alignment, supporting structures that persisted after the 1997 handover and informed pro-Beijing representation in legislative and district roles. This alignment reinforced a tradition of moderate, establishment-oriented civic participation, contrasting with more confrontational democratic movements.

In the political sector, other than the Urban Council and the Kowloon City District Board, Chan was appointed in 1985 to the Consultative Committee for the Hong Kong Basic Law (香港基本法諮詢委員會) by the People's Republic of China Government. Chan had also served

as Member of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (中國人民政治協商會議廣東省委員會委員)。

In the community service sector, other than the Rotary Club, Chan was a director of Pok Oi Hospital (博愛醫院) in Yuen Long (元朗)。 Since 2000, Chan was Board Chairman of King's College Old Boys' Association Primary School No.2 (英皇書院同學會小學第二校)。

Chan was decorated in 1977 by the Hong Kong Governor Sir Crawford Murray MacLehose (香港總督麥理浩爵士) "The Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal" to award individuals who had been deemed to have made a significant contribution to their fellow citizens, their community, or to Hong Kong。 The Medal was to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ascension of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to the throne, United Kingdom。

The Honourable Rotarian Peter Chan Chi-Kwan passed away on 15 March 2017 due to acute pneumonia, aged 81。



新界扶輪社陳子鈞大律師--香港市政局資深民選議員

陳子鈞 (Peter Chan Chi-Kwan) (1936年3月7日-2017年3月15日)，香港執業大律師，1969年至1972年期間曾任新界扶輪社(New Territories Rotary Club)創社社員及副社長。隨後，他於1972-1973年度擔任第三任社長。

陳子鈞祖籍廣東東莞，1936年出生於香港。少年時就讀於長洲官立中學(Cheung Chau Government Secondary School)、英皇書院(King's College)。後赴澳洲，就讀於墨爾本大學(University of Melbourne)。又赴英國，研習法律於倫敦中廟法學院(The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, London)。

在政治領域方面，1954年陳子鈞發起成立香港公民協會(Hong Kong Civic Association)，歷任秘書長及副主席要職，最後擔任名譽會長直到終生，貢獻良多。陳子鈞自1969年代表香港公民協會出任香港市政局(Hong Kong Urban Council)民選議員，1973、1977、1981、1983、1986、1989年均獲選，連任七屆直至1991年，凡二十二年之久。期間曾任市政局酒牌局主席、九龍城寨清拆事宜特別委員會委員，為市政局資深議員。

陳子鈞亦於1982年起出任九龍城區議會(Kowloon City District Board)民選議員，連任至1991年。陳子鈞曾任新界鄉議局顧問、長洲鄉事委員會顧問，1985年被邀任香港基本法諮詢委員會委員。另一方面，也曾任中國人民政治協商會議廣東省委員會委員。

在社區服務領域，除了扶輪社之外，陳子鈞亦於1985年創立「促進現代化專業人士協會」，任會長。也曾任香港工會聯合會法律顧問、博愛醫院總理、《青聲》月刊編輯委員會主席。2000年「英皇書院同學會小學第二校」正式開辦，自此，陳子鈞擔任學校董事會主席。

1977年，香港總督麥理浩爵士(Sir Crawford Murray MacLehose)授予陳子鈞「英國女王伊麗莎白二世登基銀禧紀念獎章」，以表彰其對社區做出了重大的貢獻。

廣東大律師事務所執業大律師

陳子鈞是廣東大律師事務所執業大律師，1970年代起，在香港市政局議員任內推動法律與政治事務融合。作為基本法諮詢委員會成立前的關鍵推薦人，他促成梁振英參與香港回歸法律事務。1984年陳子鈞成為深圳經濟特區首批香港籍仲裁員，開創內地引入境外法律專業人士先例。1988年至2003年擔任深圳市政府兼職法律顧問，參與特區立法與重大專案論證。合著出版《民法典時代遺囑見證實務》等法律實務著作。1991年陳子鈞獲司法部核准辦理跨境公證業務，執業範圍涵蓋民事經濟領域。

1980年代起陳子鈞任廣東省政協委員，成為粵港兩地法律協作的重要紐帶。

1982年香港基本法起草工作啟動前，憑藉精通中英文的法律專業背景，陳子鈞向相關方推薦梁振英擔任基本法諮詢委員會秘書長(梁振英是陳子鈞在英皇書院學弟)。

1984年陳子鈞參與制定《中英聯合聲明》附件三期間，與梁振英共同赴北京就新界地契法律問題進行專題研討。同年受聘為深圳仲裁辦公室(現深圳國際仲裁院)首批香港籍仲裁員，參與審理涉外商事糾紛。自1988年9月起，連續三屆擔任深圳市政府兼職法律顧問，為特區法制建設提供專業意見。

學術研究與著作

陳子鈞合著《民法典時代遺囑見證實務》，系統分析律師見證業務風險防範與標準化流程。

陳子鈞參與編撰《老年人防騙維權攻略》，結合法律實務經驗為老年群體提供維權指導。著作內容均聚焦法律實務操作，與其大律師執業領域形成專業呼應。

專業資質與榮譽

1991年11月經司法部核准，陳子鈞成為獲准辦理內地與香港間公證業務的23位香港律師之一，執業地址位於香港中環德忌笠街(D'Aguilar Street)。公證業務範圍涵蓋公司章程認證、經濟合同文書公證等跨境法律事務，服務期限實行定期委託審核制。

陳子鈞大律師痛於2017年3月15日因急性肺炎，與世長辭，享壽八十一歲。喪禮及追思儀式於3月29日舉行，翌日辭靈。



香港特別行政區政府第三任行政長官(2012年—2017年)

梁振英---「悼念陳子鈞學長」

陳子鈞是早我十四屆的英皇書院學長。1979年，廖秉漢學長在西營盤住所墮樓，死因不明。陳子鈞時任大律師及市政局議員，我和幾位同屆校友找陳子鈞申訴，那是我們第一次見面。

後來我加入英皇書院同學會及專業人士促進現代化協會，和陳學長共事，並經常隨陳學長到內地講課。

1984年，中英兩國政府就香港前途問題談判後期，我和陳學長兩人應邀到北京。就1997年6月27日新界土地年期屆滿一事，向國務院港澳辦陳述解決方案。此解決方案後來被採納，成為中英聯合聲明附件三的主體。

三星期前，我到北京開會，晚上經常在酒店房間觀看電視劇「歷史轉折中的鄧小平」。看到中英兩國就香港前途問題談判的一集，想起和陳學長當年上京，住在華僑飯店的情景。

豈料回港後不久，就收到同學會傳來的噩耗。

陳子鈞學長任英皇書院同學會會長歷八年，並曾任專業人士促進現代化協會會長，貢獻良多。陳學長為人風趣幽默，處事舉重若輕，今與世長辭，我輩校友無不茫然。

陳子鈞學長，請安息。

學弟 梁振英

2017年3月29日

