possibly come from farm animals. Fowl, could this new species of coronavirus cause respiratory diseases in cattle, pigs and birds? It is known that viruses from fowl rarely cross over to humans in the past, but Avian Flu is already a good example. If given time and sufficient contacts, humans as infecting hosts through mutation are capable of adapting to viruses. Experts are now convinced that animal pathogens and human infections could be isolated from all, or nearly all, cases; second, it must be cultured in isolates, and third, the cultured viruses indeed produce symptoms of SARS. From patients in several different countries, and cultured germs must be able to re-create the disease. From a sample of SARS patients, because this type of plasma contain high titre of SARS-specific antibodies, capable of neutralising the SARS virus. Should the Hospital Authority have moved more swiftly to set up an official protocol for more frontline doctors to apply this plasma therapy to critically ill SARS patients, more lives could have been saved.

But in the end, today's shrinking global village in which globe-trotters move around constantly, the more effective safeguard of public health against any eventual outbreak of epidemics still lies in the setting up of an epidermic networking system, both nationally and internationally. As Dr. A. J. to be a joint Guangdong and HKSAR communication networking on health issues at all levels (i.e., public health control, identification laboratories, research and medical treatment, as well as health education), and the recent outbreak of SARS in Hong Kong would have possibly been much better controlled. Under the auspice of WHO, the mainland along with the province of Guangdong is now in full collaboration with Hong Kong SAR government to set up such an epidemic communication network. It’s late, but better than never.

Since it has long been known that the coronavirus family includes viral pathogens and bacterial particles. Specificity of IFG is highly specialised and directed by the identities of previous infections. As a result, IG have been widely used in the treatment of influenza, malaria and Hepatitis B. IFG derived from locally collected plasma is regarded as HK community-specific. For example, if the donor plasma pool consists of convalescent individuals of atypical pneumonia and bird flu, and IG helps to hospital in HK to treat emerging epidemics of unknown causal agents. What are community-specific immunoglobulins? IFG is circulating antibodies in blood to neutralise foreign pathogens (e.g. viral & bacterial) antigens. The preparation of IG is highly specialised and directed by the identities of previous infections. As a result, IG have been widely used in the treatment of influenza, malaria and Hepatitis B. IG, derived from locally collected plasma, is regarded as HK community-specific. For example, if the donor plasma pool consists of convalescent individuals of atypical pneumonia and bird flu, IG produced could be used for the treatment of the infectious diseases. As the risks of IG therapy are minimal (NIH Consensus Development Program 1990), it could be an alternative choice for certain groups (e.g. renal failure and heart disease) of patients who are not entirely suitable for taking standard drugs. In fact, during the current SARS outbreaks, more than twenty SARS patients in serious conditions were saved using plasma collected from convalescent SARS patients, because this type of plasma contain high titre of SARS-specific antibodies, capable of neutralising the SARS virus. Should the Hospital Authority have moved more swiftly to set up an official protocol for more frontline doctors to apply this plasma therapy to critically ill SARS patients, more lives could have been saved.

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The story of HKU's early history has been told many times before, but this new book on the subject, published by Oxford University Press to mark the 90th anniversary of the University, adopts a more scholarly approach to the subject than has ever been attempted previously. The editors of the book, Professor L K C Chan and Dr Peter Cunich of the Department of History, explain that the volume attempts to make a major contribution to our understanding of the early development of higher education in Hong Kong. "It aims", said Dr Cunich, "at placing HKU in the regional and international context of higher education before the Second World War".

The twelve essays which make up the volume have all been written by specialists from the History Department, both current teachers as well as former staff and graduates, so it is a work which shows great affection for the University while being an impressive work of scholarship. As Professor Wang Gungwu said at the launch of the book in December, the story of HKU is a noble one which needs to be retold anew with each passing generation of students in order to remind us of the difficult struggle which was necessary to establish HKU as one of the finest universities in East Asia.

For a long time it did seem that the establishment and continuation of HKU was indeed an impossible dream. The book relates the succession of financial crises which brought the University to the verge of bankruptcy a number of times, the difficulties of student recruitment, and ultimately the heavy impact of the Japanese Occupation which closed the University from 1941 until 1946. But it also reveals the flame of determination which enabled staff and students to continue dreaming throughout these difficult years. There are chapters which deal with student life during the 1920s and 30s, the arrival of women students, the large contingent of Malayan Chinese students who came to HKU, and the dedication of students and staff alike during the wartime years. In fact there is something to interest every graduate in this book, whether it be a survey of teacher training between the two world wars, or the establishment of St John's and Morrison Halls.

An Impossible Dream reveals that dreams do come true, but it takes a lot of dedication and fortitude. These are valid observations at a time when HKU is dreaming of being one of the top twenty-five universities in the world!