

# **Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor GBS, JP**

## **DOCTOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCES *honoris causa***

### **Citation**

Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor joined the Hong Kong Government as an Administrative Officer in 1980, upon graduation from the University of Hong Kong with a degree in sociology. In 33 years of distinguished public service, first as a civil servant and then as a politically appointed official, Mrs Lam has gone through the baptism of multiple challenges in such diverse posts as Deputy Secretary for the Treasury, Director of Social Welfare, Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning & Lands (Planning & Lands), Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in London, and Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs. Taking up the even weightier responsibility of a Principal Official, Mrs Lam accepted an appointment as Secretary for Development of the Hong Kong SAR Government in 2007, and was chosen by the newly elected Chief Executive in 2012 as Chief Secretary for Administration.

Mrs Lam's career is of course far more than a rising sequence of honours and promotions. She had been engaged in social service voluntary work in her secondary school days; as a university student, she had been an activist fighting for social compassion and justice, such as proper treatment of the Yau Ma Tei boat people. Having worked at the same social goals from different positions, Mrs Lam appreciates the "external pressures exerted by groups and individuals needed to keep government under proper checks and balances". Yet she believed that the most direct way for herself to help bring about social progress is to work in the government. Indeed, she applied only for a job in the public service when she was about to graduate, and has spent her entire career serving the people of Hong Kong. She may be called, in the broad sense of the term, a social worker born and bred to lead.

There is perhaps something of a social worker at heart in any idealist serving the public and yearning to see holistic progress. In spite of her eminent position, Mrs Lam remains a public servant at heart, not only impartial and diligent but also caring and ardently in touch. For instance, as Director of Social Welfare at a time of high unemployment and severe fiscal deficit, she worked hard to ensure the financial sustainability of a social security safety net for the disadvantaged. During the outbreak of the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong in 2003, Mrs Lam worked with three other senior civil servants to set up the We Care Education Fund in their personal capacity, raising over HK \$80million to meet the long-term educational needs of children whose parents had died of SARS.

This may be one reason why Mrs Lam is known as a true fighter in public circles. All depends on what one fights for, and how one fights. As a top policy maker, she balances administration by law based on reason and fairness, with a flexible, open-minded approach that pays heed to citizens' feelings, opposing views, historical contexts and local interests. Amid more than her fair share of frustration, Mrs Lam has kept faith in the core ideal of public administration: a government only governs through serving all. She knows well that "more patience, dialogue and diplomacy are required to secure the best public interests than were needed two or three decades ago", and her broad-mindedness translates into an inclusive capacity to build consensus in the long run. Through the years and the challenges, Mrs Lam has refined an outlook true to character and much respected by others: a composed style coupled with no-nonsense straight talk that blends courtesy in attitude and firmness of principle.

Mrs Lam's holistic concern for Hong Kong ranges from sustainable development, housing and social welfare to environmental protection, urban renewal, heritage conservation and cultural projects, for her career has been a continual integration of experience and cross-fertilisation of expertise. A case in point is her Treasury experience, which has enhanced her awareness of the dual need to tap resources and manage expenditure. This translated into efforts to raise the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of non-government organisations in the social welfare sector, through introducing a lump sum grant subvention system that increased operational autonomy and flexibility. Over three decades of public service have sometimes brought fatigue even to a tireless reformer, yet chronic hard work and overtime do not stifle a youthful dream dear to heart. "We need to relieve poverty, perfect the social security system and extend elderly care services," Mrs Lam spoke as a matter of course, showing that her abiding priority stays with the grass roots of society. Underneath a calm demeanour and an even tone flows a disciplined passion for the people she cares about, a sense of gratitude for the privilege to serve a place she calls home.

This sympathy for the common people may be why the "superlady", as she has been called, sees herself as an ordinary person. Balancing the demands of family and career is never an easy task, especially for a modern woman with traditional values. In Mrs Lam's own words, "I need to be very disciplined. I almost never went out on official dinners when my children were young. Sometimes I had to go to the market and then cook myself, as I never engaged a domestic maid. I wanted my children to be brought up by myself." In fact, Mrs Lam even once sought a voluntary "demotion" to work in London in order to look after her sons. "Now that my kids have grown up, I spend even more hours at work," she added. If she seems almost bionic at times, it is because she has a stronger heart and mind, a more resolute will and spirit to serve society than most people.

As a reminder in the *Analects* says (in a slightly modernised translation), "an intellectual must be strong and resolute, for his responsibility is heavy and his course is long. He takes humanity as his responsibility—is that not heavy? Only with death does his course stop—is that not long?" Through three thousand years of praxis, from pre-Confucius to post-Fan Zhongyan and to today's reformers, male and female, the spirit of public service is an inherited impulse in the Chinese intellectual tradition. It is fitting today that Lingnan University, as an institution of liberal arts education for service, should honour Mrs Lam for her exemplary spirit and sterling achievements in public service.

Mr Chairman, for her distinguished service to the government and people of Hong Kong, may I present Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor to you for conferment of the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences *honoris causa*.

*English citation written and delivered by Professor Charles Kwong*

# 林鄭月娥女士

榮譽社會科學博士

## 贊辭

林鄭月娥女士於 1980 年取得香港大學社會科學學士學位，旋即加入香港政府政務職系出任政務主任。在三十二年卓越的公共服務中，從最初當公務員到其後當上問責官員，林女士在不同崗位上經歷了多重挑戰的洗禮，包括任職副庫務司、社會福利署署長、房屋及規劃地政局常任秘書長（規劃及地政）、香港駐倫敦經濟貿易辦事處處長，以及民政事務局常任秘書長等。2007 年，林女士獲委任為香港特別行政區政府發展局局長，肩負起作為主要官員的重任，更於 2012 年獲新當選的行政長官提名為政務司司長。

林女士的事業，當然遠不止是一系列的榮譽與升遷。她在中學時期就投身於社會服務的志願工作，在大學期間亦是爭取社會關懷與公義的積極分子，例如對油麻地艇戶的適當安置。從不同的位置朝著相同的社會目標努力，讓林女士明白「政府需要外界團體及個人的壓力，以達致制約與平衡。」然而對於她自己來說，在政府的架構之內工作，才是協助推動社會進步最直接的方式。臨近畢業之際，林女士只申請了公共服務方面的職位，而她畢生的事業，正是全心全意服務香港市民。廣義地看，她可以說是一個既屬天賦亦經培育的社會工作領袖。

一個服務公眾、渴望整體進步的理想主義者，心中大概總有幾分社會工作者的情懷。林女士儘管地位顯赫，卻始終懷著公僕之心，不僅公正、勤奮，而且充滿關愛與熱誠。例如林女士曾在香港經歷高失業率與嚴重財政赤字之際任職社會福利署署長，期間努力確保社會保障安全網在財政上的可持續性，從而保護弱勢社群。在 2003 年香港非典型肺炎疫情爆發期間，林女士與三位高級公務員以個人身分，成立了「護幼教育基金」，先後籌得八千多萬港元，為在非典時期失去父母的孩童提供教育所需的長期資助。

這或許是林女士被公眾視為真正戰士的其中一個原因。一切繫於為何而戰，如何而戰。作為最高層的決策者，林女士既以理性與公平為法理管治之本，同時以靈活、開放的方式考慮市民感受、相反意見、歷史背景與本位利益等，於兩者之間取得平衡。在承受本職以外的挫折中，林女士仍然深信公共行政的核心理想：政府只有通過服務全體民眾才能實現管治。她清楚明白「相比二、三十年前，我們需要更多耐心、對話與技巧以確保最大的公眾利益」，而她開闊的胸襟也轉化為包容力，長期有助於建立共識。歲月和挑戰，洗練出一種忠於性情而廣受尊敬的風度，從沉著鎮定的風格到務實直率的言談，乃至結合著堅守原則而不失謙恭的態度。

林女士對香港的全局關注，涵蓋可持續發展、房屋、社會福利、環境保護、市區重建、文物保護與文化項目等範疇，因為她的事業是一個不斷結合經驗、運用專業知識相互灌溉的過程。一個明顯的例子是，林女士的庫務經驗提升了她對開源與節流並重的意識。她採用了增加營運自主性與靈活性的整筆撥款制度，致力提高社會福利非政府機構的效率及成本效益。三十多年的公共服務，有時也會為一個不知勞累的改革者帶來幾分疲倦，然而長期的辛勞與超時工作，並沒有扼殺內心年輕的夢想。「我們需要紓解貧困、完善社會保障系統和擴展長者護理服務，」林女士理所當然地說，反映她永遠將基層民眾放在第一位。在平靜的舉止、平和的語調下面，流淌著關愛民眾的克己熱情，以及對有幸服務家國鄉土的感銘之心。

大概正是一份對民眾的關切之心，使這位人稱「超級女士」的官員把自己視為普通人。平衡家庭與事業從來並非容易的事；對懷著傳統價值的現代女性來說尤其如此。用林女士的話說：「我需要非常自律。當孩子們還小的時候，我幾乎從不出席公務晚宴。有時我不得不親自去市場買菜、做飯，因為我沒有雇用家庭傭工。我希望親自照顧孩子的成長。」事實上，林女士曾經主動申請「降職」調往倫敦工作，以便照顧孩子。她補充道：「如今孩子長大了，我有更多時間投入工作。」假如她偶爾帶點近乎超人的味道，那是因為跟絕大部分人相比，林女士具備更堅強的心智、更堅毅的意志和精神服務社會。

誠如《論語》提醒我們，「士不可以不弘毅，任重而道遠。仁以為己任，不亦重乎？死而後已，不亦遠乎？」從孔夫子之前到范仲淹之後，乃至今日無分男女的改革者，服務人群的精神經過三千年的實踐，早已成為中國士人傳統一脈相承的心念。今日，嶺南大學作為一所「作育英才，服務社會」的博雅教育學府，得以表揚林女士服務社會的典範精神與卓越成就，實屬得宜。

主席先生，為表揚林女士對香港特區政府及市民所作出的傑出貢獻，本人謹恭請閣下頒授榮譽社會科學博士學位予林鄭月娥女士。

英文贊辭由鄺龔子教授撰寫及宣讀