

## In Memory of Professor Lim Hua Sing

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『亞洲「四極」經濟』(*The Four-Polar Economy of Asia*), [東亞經濟圈] (*East Asian Economic Integration*)  
…… Professor Lim's works in Chinese are displayed on the bookshelf in my office. These were the books he kindly gave to me when I joined the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) in 2009 because I was a fellow native Chinese speaker. Now he has passed away, but these books reminded me of his unique presence in this institution as well as in my professional life.

I remember Prof. Lim first of all as a scholar who worked tirelessly to bridge the academic worlds between Japan, China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Professor Lim was an overseas Chinese who grew up in Malaysia, received higher education in both Japan and the UK, and led an academic career spanning the UK, Singapore and Japan. Because of this transnational personal and professional profile, he saw it his calling to link scholars from different parts of East Asia to form a professional community. Most of his works were published in both Japanese and Chinese, and some in all three languages, Chinese, Japanese and English—a rare practice among academics. He also made great efforts in connecting with educational institutions and government organizations in Mainland China. He was invited to events organized by Chinese universities regularly, and always enthusiastically shared the details of his visits with me afterwards. When there were opportunities he would kindly involve me in these multinational professional events. Through his introduction, I became acquainted with scholars in the field of China Studies in both Japan and China. Sometimes when I ran into researchers at conferences or academic events, my being a colleague of Lim Hua Sing's helped create a sense of affinity and shorten the social distance.

Professor Lim had the vision of making GSAPS a central research and education hub in Asia. He advocated that the education should be open for not only young students and professional scholars but also people outside the academia, such as bureaucrats and entrepreneurs. He managed to raise funds for public lecture series and organized intensive training sessions for Mainland Chinese officials and corporate managers. I was invited to give lectures to such Chinese delegates twice, once to managers from one of the largest enterprises in China and the other time to officials from the State Council. The “students” attending these classes were already in the middle to upper management positions in both the enterprise and the State Council. Their enthusiastic participation in these lectures and obvious interests in the information I provided made me realize the values of such educational practices. These training sessions established GSAPS as a central educational institution in East Asia at the same time

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broadened the perspectives of a group of individuals who had the potential of becoming movers and shakers in China's politics and economy.

At a more personal level, I remember Professor Lim as a kind colleague and a fellow Chinese speaker. It was delightful to stop in the hallway and chat with him in Chinese for several minutes almost every week, getting updated on each other's recent trips and interesting happenings. Professor Lim was also a conscientious person. One small anecdote impressed me with his character. In the summer after the 3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima Nuclear Disaster in 2011, there was a call for power conservation in the office. We were advised to set the room temperature at 28 degrees Celsius. One day when I passed his office, I saw the building maintenance people busy working there. "Ah," he explained to me, "I can't work in a room that is 28 degrees. It is just unbearably hot for me. So I have asked them to take out half of the lights in my office as a trade off. Now I can set my temperature at 26. I don't need so many bright lights anyway."

It has been more than a year since Professor Lim's sudden departing, but whenever I walk pass Room 604 I still give a quick glance at the door that used to be his office. His door was often ajar. The image of him sitting behind a table with mounting but neatly stacked books in a half lit room lingered in my mind. For a whole year until recently, his name was on the nameplate beside the door, and below his name was marked [帰宅] (*Returned Home*). I always thought, with a feeling of sadness, "how befitting a metaphor that is."