

Mr. Chairman, Mr. President, Members of the Board of Directors, and Honorable Guests:

I am most delighted to have come to the 31st Graduation Ceremony of Lingnan University to receive an Honorary Degree, together with Professor David Wang Der-wei and Dr. Wong Bing-lai. I am particularly gratified to be asked to speak on behalf of the awardees on this grand occasion.

In the past ten years, tertiary education in Hong Kong has expanded enormously. The number of universities has increased from three to eight. University student numbers have also soared, from what was only 8% of the relevant age group to the current 16%. The eight institutions under the University Grants Committee now admit as many as 14,500 first year first degree students every year. With the flourishing of tertiary education, changes in the political, economic and social spheres have occurred. Not long after the 1997 handover, there was the Asian Financial Crisis. Fortuitously, however, the solid financial institutions of Hong Kong have helped it to recover. The even greater challenge that we face now is how to find our place amidst the rapidly evolving economic configurations. As is well known, the economy is expected to enter a knowledge-based phase, in the context of which the people of Hong Kong must constantly improve themselves through learning and expand their horizons so as to keep up with the trends. In light of this, the education system of Hong Kong, especially its tertiary sector, plays a crucial role in nurturing the talents needed.

Most people will associate "talents" with professionals in the fields of medicine, law, accountancy and architecture, but that is a partial view. For talents are not to be decided on the basis of the occupational fields to which they belong. So long as they continue to update and upgrade themselves, people engaged in various occupations can be "talents" and make significant contributions to their own fields as well as to the society at large. With the advent of globalization and rapid changes in the economic and technological environment, it is essential that we have a thorough grasp of a basic knowledge of the world, wield powers of independent and broad-minded thinking, and exercise excellent social skills. In fact, these qualities are invariably stressed by employers making their hiring decisions.

I am glad to see that Lingnan University has set its mind on developing into "an internationally renowned liberal arts university with Hong Kong characteristics," because this will make possible the education of "talents" referred to above. There are four important components to Lingnan University's liberal arts education. (1) Curriculum and mode of teaching and learning: Lingnan University provides a wide range of choices in the curriculum. It emphasizes on language training and small-group learning which allows for close interaction between teachers and students. (2) Campus life: 75% of Lingnan students live on campus. They learn to manage their own time both inside and outside of classes, and to get along with other students staying in the hostels. (3) Social service: students are encouraged to participate in social work at the district level. This heightens their sense of social responsibility, especially their concern for the weaker groups in society. (4) Exchange

programmes: Lingnan University makes provisions for students to take part in overseas studies programmes during their period of study. This not only broadens their intellectual horizons but also enhances their understanding of foreign customs and cultures. In sum, through its unique mode of teaching and learning, Lingnan University inculcates in its students solid learning skills and a wealth of cross-cultural knowledge; it also fosters a sense of social responsibility and an ability to handle interpersonal relationships. The motto of the University—"Education for Service"—is indicative of the liberal arts mission it has set for itself. I am especially glad to see that in recent years many Lingnan graduates have performed commendably in scholarship competitions as well as contests in the literary and business fields, bringing honor to the University.

Finally I would like to speak briefly about the issue of insufficient funding for university Since 1998 the Government has gradually reduced the amount of funds institutions. allocated, encouraging the universities to tap new resources that will finance routine operations and make possible further developments. It is likely that tertiary education in Hong Kong will, in the future, proceed along these lines. The fact is that in the United States many famous universities—and nearly all liberal arts colleges—are private institutions backed up by enormous endowments. With mounting donations by alumni every year, and highly successful donation drives, they have been able to deal effectively with their financial needs. It is worth noting that many American universities and colleges have joint research efforts with business and industrial firms, and this opens up yet another channel for funding. All of these methods have been in use for a long time, and there is clear evidence of their effectiveness. The situation in Hong Kong differs in that tertiary institutions here have always been supported, singlehandedly as it were, by the Government. Private donations have been mainly for hardwares such as buildings and equipment and accounted for no more than a small fraction of the operation costs required. As the saying goes, "It takes ten years to grow trees but a hundred years to bring up a generation of good men." Education is a long-term investment, and the society certainly needs to pour in more resources in order to successfully cultivate talents. The Hong Kong Government can create favorable conditions in its taxation system so that private individuals and enterprises will be induced to donate to universities. Local tertiary institutions should also re-orient themselves and cooperate with various organisations on new research projects, while displaying their skill in acquiring donations and broadening their sources of income. It is obvious that, with the combined effort of all the parties involved, Hong Kong's tertiary education will continue to make rapid advancements, producing even more talents to meet the challenges of the new century.

I grew up in Hong Kong, and I have worked here for the greater part of my life. I sincerely hope that in its transformation into a knowledge-based economy, Hong Kong will be able to overcome all sorts of difficulties and emerge a winner. I know for sure, too, that the liberal arts education of Lingnan University is destined to make a remarkable contribution toward Hong Kong's social and economic transformation.

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Thank you.



主席先生、陳校長、各位校董、各位嘉賓:

本人謹以非常興奮的心情,參加嶺南大學第三十一屆學位頒授典禮,並接受 大學頒授榮譽博士學位。同時獲頒這榮銜的還有王德威教授和黃炳禮博士。承蒙 大學邀請本人作為榮譽博士領受人的代表,在這隆重的典禮中致辭,倍感榮幸。

近十年來,香港專上教育發展迅速。大學的數目由三間增至八間。至於大學生的人數,亦由過去佔適齡人口的百分之八增加至百分之十六。現時大學教育資助委員會屬下的八間院校,每年錄取學士學位課程一年級新生達一萬四千五百名之多。在高等教育蓬勃發展的同時,香港於政治、經濟、社會各方面亦出現重大的轉變。回歸不久,香港便碰上亞洲金融風暴,幸而本港金融體制健全,得以化險為夷。目前我們所面對的更大考驗,是如何在急速的經濟轉型中立足。如眾所知,香港經濟現正朝向知識型的產業發展,香港人必須不斷自我增值,終身學習,擴闖視野,才能跟上形勢。在這方面,香港的教育系統,特別是高等教育,擔當非常重要的角色,就是為社會育才。

所謂人才,一般人多會聯想到醫生、律師、會計師、建築師等專業人士,這是頗為片面的看法。須知才與不才,並非以所從事的職業作為劃分。各行各業工作的人,只要能不斷更新知識,自我增值,與時並進,都是人才,都能夠對其本業和社會作出貢獻。況且隨著全球化的發展,經濟環境變化迅速,科技日新月異,若要更好地面對競爭,便需要掌握較全面的基本知識,需要有獨立思考的能力、寬廣的胸懷和視野、以及良好的人際關係技巧。事實上,大部分僱主在招聘職員時,都十分強調以上條件。

本人很高興看到嶺南大學的使命是發展為一所「國際馳名而具香港特色的博 雅教育大學」,因為這可以有效地培育以上所述的人才素質。嶺南大學的博雅教 育,包含四個重要組成部分:(一)課程及教與學的模式:嶺南提供廣泛的科目供 學生選擇,著重語言訓練和小組教學,並強調師生之間的密切關係;(二)校園生活:百分之七十五學生在校園住宿,他們會學懂如何安排自己的學習和課餘時間,以及如何與其他宿生相處;(三)服務社區:嶺南鼓勵學生參加社區工作,培養他們對社會的責任感,特別是對弱勢社群的關懷;(四)學生交流計劃:嶺南鼓勵學生在三年學習期間,抽部分時間到海外大學進修交流,藉以擴闊國際視野,了解不同的文化和風尚。綜而言之,嶺南大學以她的獨特的教與學模式,授予學生切實的學習技巧和豐富的跨文化知識,令他們具備社會責任感,能掌握人與人之間的溝通技巧。嶺南大學的校訓 — 「作育英才、服務社會」,正是嶺南博雅教育的最佳註腳。本人尤其高興的是近年嶺南大學不少學生在公開的獎學金遴選、商業管理和文學創作等比賽中,取得優異成績,為嶺南增光。

最後本人想談談香港大專院校目前所面對的經費不足問題。據知政府對大專院校的撥款資助,由一九九八年起已逐年削減,同時則鼓勵院校自闢財源,以供營運發展所需。今後香港高等教育的發展,大概將會循此而行。事實上,美國方面,很多著名的大學和幾乎所有博雅教育學院(liberal arts colleges),都是私立的。這些學府通常都有數目龐大的基金支持其經費,另加每年校友的捐獻,以及週全的籌款計劃,因此財政上都可應付裕如。值得注意的是,美國的大專院校多有與工商界合作開發科研成果,以增闢收入。這些做法都是行之已久和效績卓著的。香港的情況有所不同,大專院校歷來得到政府全力資助,民間捐獻主要是一些硬件,在院校的整體經常營運費用中所佔比率極小。須知教育事業是長期的投資,所謂「十年樹木、百年樹人」,因此社會應投入更多資源,積極培養人才。香港政府可以在稅制方面創造有利條件,鼓勵私人及企業捐助大專院校發展。大專院校亦應面對社會,與企業機構合作開發科研項目。同時,也需要發展 赛慕經費的技巧,廣闢財源。相信在各方努力下,香港的高等教育可維持迅速發展,為香港培育更多人才去面對廿一世紀的挑戰。

本人成長於香港,大半生在香港工作服務,因此衷心希望香港能在轉型往知 識經濟的過程中,克服各種困難,取得豐碩的成果。嶺南大學的博雅教育,肯定 可為香港社會與經濟的轉型作出貢獻。

多謝各位。