

To Lingnan philosophy graduates (The class of 2005)

Neven Sesardic

A strange thing happened here
around three years ago,
it's stranger than if in Hong Kong
we had a lot of snow.

Some students came to Lingnan,
I'm very pleased to say,
preferring love of wisdom
to studying BBA.

What all these youngsters wanted
was philosophy degree.
How many of them? Well,
precisely thirty three.

The teachers first approached you,
worrying a great deal
about your motivation.
Could it be for real?

But then it soon became
as clear as a day:
your interest was genuine
and not to fade away.

You read profoundest classics
and understood them right,
including the most obscure ones
(for instance, *Sein und Zeit*).

If lecture was about
Descartes or Kant or Hume,
debate would later move
to dormitory room.

And then, the rumor has it,
till late into the night
superb dispute would rage
without a winner in sight.

But when exhausted by many
thoughts so hard and deep
you had to play some games
before you went to sleep.

So next day was a problem
to stay awake in class,
oh, how it felt as if
the time would never pass!

Another observation
from teacher's point of view:
we couldn't always guess
what interested you.

Whatever course assignments
we drafted long ahead
it's often that you wanted
something else instead.

"Not analytic, please,
switch to continental"!
Or, "Eastern thought is great,
but less so Occidental"!

We tried to make you happy,
not with huge success.
We're sorry if our grading
caused you too much stress.

Since you'll be leaving soon,
advice from us must come;
it's not a command or order,
just a rule of thumb.

Don't let your books collect
the dust upon the shelf,
keep reading all these great minds,
and you will know thyself!