

GRADUATION

Gillian Bickley

Will you write something about all of us?
the tall student shyly asks, self-deprecatingly.

-What is there to say?

That you sat in front of me for fourteen weeks,
did the assignments I requested,
spoke up when I asked you to
and bravely took the floor, when it was your turn.

You did what was required.

Some of you asked me what to think,
and a very few,
agreeing,
when I said,
"Think for yourselves",
dared to
disagree with me.

Some of you thought me
unreasonable, to expect you to read
the few books set,

feeling
my more proper behaviour
was, to give you
handouts, model essays,
which would
indirectly
tip you off
what the examination questions
would be,
and to them for you.

Some of you found some enlightenment
in the foreign books I put before you, new ideas
that resonated with your personal growth.
Some of you were startled and surprised to find in foreign
lives so many social issues like your own.

| a n | t h o | l o | g y |

You are very different
from the Hong Kong students of the
seventies, burnt and burning from the Cultural Revolution;
from the students of the eighties,
wondering what
Hong Kong under Chinese rule would be
and weeping for lost friends at Tienamen.

You have arrived at another place,
political and personal maturity
in a modern society

and are planning
responsibly to make it yours.

I wish you luck!