

# Gazette Supplement



## Encaenia 2019

Congregation

26 June

### 1 Conferment of Honorary Degrees

The Public Orator made the following speeches in presenting the recipients of honorary degrees at the Encaenia on Wednesday, 26 June:

#### Degree of Doctor of Letters

PROFESSOR DANIEL KAHNEMAN

Domine Cancellarie, collegae, hospites honorati, nonne credere licet nos discipulosque nostros in universitatibus versantes animum solutum ac liberum ad rationem quidem defigere posse, errores utique quam saepissime avertere? Lente tamen procedendum! Hic qui agmen ducit iam a puero miratus intellegere voluit quare tam mire, tam inconstanter nos homines iudicemus consiliaque capiamus, qui parum accurate provideamus, verum etiam nobis ipsis saepe parum capaces praevidendi videamur - hic tamen honorandus ipse morum studiosus talia melius scit divinare. Qui olim una cum amico Amos sociatus - haec amicitia, ut dicitur, ipsas sententias nostras convertit, mentem nostram penitus mutavit - in novam viam direxit illud genus oeconomicae scientiae cui 'morale' nomen imponimus, quo rationes instabiles hominum investigantur. Ex quo se totum ita dedit ut modos nostros cogitandi facilius scrutati comprehendamus; ut multis etiam aliis disciplinis multum profuerit, quod mens humana ita magis perspicua cognita sit. Iam nobis, res incertas dissensionesque vix civiles reipublicae nostrae deplorantibus, virum honorare placeat qui in studiis societatem etiam inter adversarios respectam laudat, qui insuper testimonio firmato nobis rationes mente acutius aestimantibus subvenit. Atenim saepe adhuc inepte, absurde ratiocinati nos agimus. Sed hic saltem 'intuitione', ut aiunt, cum ratione consociata usi pro certo habeamus hunc virum et hoc ingenium hodie celebratum apud nos et extra academiam magno momento fore. Audimusne eum dixisse se aut psychologikum fieri debere aut rabbi? Sed, nisi fallor, in se utriusque ingenium praestitit. הרואה את הנולד - איזהו חכם - Sapiens quis est? 'Is qui id videt quod inceptum est.'

Praesento virum liberum, qui nullius in sententiam addictus ea indagavit quae providemus vel petimus, Danielem Kahneman, apud Universitatem Princetoniensem professorem emeritum, praemio Nobeliano nobilitatum, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris.

#### Admission by the Chancellor

Iudiciorum iustorum ac confirmatorum defensor, qui summa vi nos monuisti ut mentes nostras adeo cognoscamus ut eis diffidere parati simus, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris honoris causa.

#### Paraphrase

Lord Chancellor, colleagues, guests, I believe universities are places where we hope that we, and our students, may employ our minds freely in logical thinking or, failing that, at least may beware of avoidable error. But... not so fast! Leading our line today is one who from his early years was already fascinated with seeing why we humans are so odd in our judgements and decisions - we're not very good at prediction, and we are so often marvelously, though for such a gifted behaviourist more predictably, unpredictable to each other. Our honorand's intellectual partnership with Amos Tversky - a 'friendship', it has been said, 'that changed our minds' - introduced a new era in the study of people's wayward mental processes, and brought new life to that branch of economics which we call 'behavioural'. Since then his life's work, in helping us to analyse and understand our peculiar thinking habits, has made psychological insights invaluable contributors to many other disciplines. At a time when we lament uncertainty in our country, and conflict in our body politic, we honour a man, a collaborative researcher, who shows the value of 'adversarial collaboration', and can with good evidence help us to diagnose and refine our 'mental accounting'. Irrational we may be in many of our thoughts and decisions, but in this one prediction, our intuition and our reason are in no disagreement - that the man and the mind we here celebrate will be of lasting importance in and out of the academy. He has said, I believe, that he had to become either a psychologist or a rabbi. Perhaps he has been both, in a sense. Who is wise? 'The one who understands the consequences of what is started.'<sup>1</sup>

I present a free-thinking and disciplined investigator of the intuitions and aims of all of us, Daniel Kahneman, Professor Emeritus at Princeton University, winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Defender of rational judgement, who have striven to show us to know our own minds well enough to mistrust them, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

<sup>1</sup> Tractate Tamid, 32a

**Degree of Doctor of Science****PROFESSOR JENNIFER DOUDNA**

Ecce intra agmen nostrum manus felicium eorum qui potuerunt 'rerum cognoscere causas'. Non solum investigatores sed etiam nos oratores ex eloquenti principiorum animantium lingua laetitiam capimus, quod 'transcriptione' et 'translatione', ut dicimus, moleculae ad statum vitalem προτείνουσαι educantur. Et ubicumque fundamenta bene iacta sunt, ibi prospere succeditur. Raro autem aliquando ibi vitia quaedam miris modis ab ipsa Natura emendata sunt. Manum ducit femina doctissima quae ipsius Naturae operam imitata novas et sane perutiles rationes excoluit litteras eas 'edendi', ut aiunt, quibus forma et condicio unius cuiusque animantium constituitur. Miramur ingenium talium indagatorum, qui molecularum figurae principia, ubi aut aliena invadunt aut ipsa partim delentur vel mutantur, patefacta corrigere valent. Sunt enim haec persaepe morborum gravium et debilitatis causae. Honoranda nostra, cum adhuc iunior esset, ex arte et scientia crystallata tractandi callide cognovit quomodo quaedam ut solida corpora depingerentur qualia nemo antea depingere potuerat. Et postea eadem se ducem praebuit quae moneret quomodo ad aegritudines etiam maxime inobsequentes percurandas, vel etiam prohibendas, nobis progredi daretur. Quae societas insolenter fructuosa esse videtur ingenii hominum et inceptorum subtilium Naturae. At recte eam audiamus monentem ut caute ac gradatim agatur. Cum enim et quae sequamur indicet et qualia et quanta forsitan nobis immineant si nos eis immiscuerimus quae vita ipsa efficiat - ubi eam nefastam facultatem respicimus cursus naturae gubernandi - haec auctoritate validissima usa nos verbis claris ad officia agitata evocat ut in animo sit improba avertere. Nam si forte fissuram istam rerum agnosceremus, fortasse et illud intellegemus, quomodo lux inire possit.

Praesento ducem inter investigatores, quae a CRIS PARTICIPIT artes novissimas biochemiae, Jennifer Doudna, apud Universitatem Californiae professorem, Regiae Societatis sodalem, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia.

Biologiae audax et callida investigatrix, quae fundamenta corporum animantium ita comprehendis et administras ut innumerorum fortunae prosis, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universtitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

Behold, within our distinguished line, a cohort of those blessed beings who, as a Latin poet put it, 'Studying Nature's Laws, Thro' known Effects can trace the secret Cause'. The orator shares with the scientist great delight in the fertile language of biological building elements - the 'transcription' and 'translation' of DNA and RNA that lead to the formation of the vital protein. When the foundations are sound, all turns out well. On rare occasions deficiencies in the foundations have been made good by mysterious natural causes. And here at the head of the inner band is one who has learnt and developed, from Mother Nature's own such handiwork, new means to 'edit', for the benefit of all of us, the very letters of that genetic text that determines the form and condition of an individual being. We wonder at the ability of such researchers to find and correct those occurrences of invasion, or deletion, or mutation, of those fundamental elements in the molecular pattern that can lead to serious sickness and disability. Early in her career our honorand, using the techniques of crystallography, ingeniously discovered how to describe in three dimensions that which previously defied depiction; since then she has been a leader in showing how we may come to cure, or prevent, the most intractable of illnesses, in a wondrously fruitful alliance of human ingenuity and Nature's complex workings. But hers also is a voice of caution and restraint. In showing us the way forward, and the momentous possible consequences of human intervention in the mechanisms of life - the 'unthinkable power to control evolution' - she issues, with the authority of the formidable scientist, a clear call for ethical debate and the aim of preventing abuse. In acknowledging the 'crack in creation' we might also see 'how the light gets in'.

I present a scientific leader, Champion of CRISPR technology, Jennifer Doudna, Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, Fellow of the Royal Society, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Bold and inventive biologist, whose understanding and stewarding of the basic structures of living organisms may signally improve the lot of millions, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

## PROFESSOR ANDREA GHEZ

Est via sublimis, caelo manifesta sereno;/lactea nomen habet,  
candore notabilis ipso./ ... dextra laevaue deorum/atria nobilium  
valvis celebrantur apertis./plebs habitat diversa locis...<sup>1</sup>

Iamdudum agnoscimus quantum domiciliorum viciniarumque  
fortunae huc illuc iacentur; novimus deos iamdudum illinc  
migrasse, ut lacuna quaedam obscura ibi in medio candore lacteo  
mundi nostri stelliferi relicta manserit. Lacunae huius generis  
quamquam pondus ingens habent spatio admodum exiguo  
fruuntur, adeo ut nemo eas facile discernere potuerit. Quid?  
Scientiae astrophysicae doctorum est probare eas etiam revera  
esse. Hic igitur adstat investigatrix maxime insignis, quae cum  
doctrina praecellens tum indiCE Claro usa telescopiorum ante omnia  
perspicacum effecit ut quod olim nullo modo cernendum erat nunc  
nos percepturos esse speremus. Nam vias novas callide ingressa  
haec in partes caeli penetravit quae antea propter pulverem atque  
ipsa visum detorquente distantia aciem nostram fugiebant. Astra  
permulta exploravit, motusque eorum illustravit, quae velocitate  
vix credibili id mirum et gravissimum pondus velut amplexa  
circumire solent, quod hac docente credimus in medio mundo  
nostro, praetereaue scilicet in omni mundo situm esse, et fortasse  
contra opinionem communem simul magnitudinem et parvitatem  
in se continere. Et inde confidimus eandem multa nobis de ipsius  
gravitatis et ponderis natura explicaturam esse, ut melius ipsa  
mundi nostri initia intellegamus. Iam dei ex ulterioribus, ut puto,  
prospicientes - praesentibus, credo, cum illis Newton et Einstein -  
magni hanc aestimant quae novos studiosos ad astra educet, cuius  
ex inventione machinae magis et magis validae creari possint,  
quae denique puellis praecipue exemplo sit in studia physica et  
astronomica incumbentibus. 'Quaecumque ante putabamus,' inquit,  
'nos detecturos esse, ea omnia rebus conspectis contraria visa sunt.  
Ergo officium firmum ac perenne nos scrutatores habemus!'

Praesento investigatricem etiam inter stellas insignem, Andream  
Miam Ghez, apud Universtitatem Californiae professorem, ut  
admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Astrorum scientiae peritissima, quae studia physica assidue  
promovens ad caelum et ultra usque in infinita mentem nostram  
dirigis, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad  
gradum Docitoris in Scientia honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

There is a highway, says Ovid, visible when the sky is clear, which is  
called 'Milky Way'; there in the poet's day the upper-class gods still  
had their desirable mansions on either side of the road, the lesser  
gods living apart. We have since learnt to appreciate the ups and  
downs of property and residential areas, and to understand that  
long ago the gods moved away and left behind a 'black hole' at the  
centre of this 'galactic' (= 'milky') whiteness of our stellar world. Now  
black holes are enormously high in mass but vanishingly small,  
hard for anyone to perceive. It is for astrophysics to prove that they  
exist at all. Here is a scientist of great distinction whose leadership  
in theory, and whose practical work with the most probing of large  
'Keck' telescopes, has enabled us to perceive the once invisible. For  
she has used inventive new techniques to see through previously  
impenetrable barriers of dust and distortion; she has tracked and  
interpreted the movements of numerous stars that hug and encircle  
at huge velocity in their orbit the curious 'supermassive' entity  
that she convinces us sits in paradoxical combination of great and  
small at the core of our galaxy, and probably of every other galaxy  
too; and from such findings she promises to explain much about  
the nature of gravity and the very formation of our universe. From  
their greater distance now the gods, and Newton and Einstein  
alongside them, admiringly watch this investigator who trains the  
coming generation of scientists, whose ideas will develop ever more  
powerful telescopes, and who is an inspiration to young women to  
take up physics and astronomy. 'Every idea we've had about what we  
should find,' she says, 'has been inconsistent with the observations;  
for a researcher this is job security!'

I present a stellar scientist of inspiring imagination, Andrea Mia  
Ghez, Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, to be  
admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

Tireless astronomer and physicist, whose reach to the stars points  
well beyond them and even towards infinity, I on my own authority  
and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of  
Doctor of Science.

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I.168f.

**PROFESSOR SHAFI GOLDWASSER**

Fertur olim dixisse Curtius Gödel mathematicus, etsi de rebus universis aliquid dicere professus suspicabatur, nos solum propter motus animi vel institutionem vel alia aliena errare; rationem ipsam nunquam labi. Ecce femina disciplinae computandi perita, certe liberaliter erudita, neque affectuum hominum inscia. Et discipula et praeceptrix in utraque patria excelluit, et in scaenam ingressa qua vis ingenii et cogitationis maxime exercetur - theatrum dico fabularum reciproce relatarum - certe intellegit quomodo ea quae consentiamus mire extendenda et amplificanda sint. Quibus peritiis haud infirmata illa rationem subtiliter secuta curavit ut et in modis computandi elaborandis et in arcano scribendi more excolendo multum processerimus. Ne tamen haec tantum in academiae umbra valere videantur, inde cautiones quasdam agnoscamus emergere, quae pondus ingens habent, quibus securius seu privati seu in publico versati vivamus. Ex eisdem effici potest ut per novas vias tutius privatim colloqui et nostra communicare possimus, et quae 'data creberrima' cognoscamus custodiantur; quo utilius rectiusque ad beneficia adhibenda teneamus. Quod tamen effectu difficillimum erit, simul sperandum est nescioquo modo obstari posse eis qui malevoli se interponere velint vel nostris rebus cognitis abuti. Tempora, ut eadem animadvertit, mutantur, et potestates in illis; nam qua mentes nostrae saepius errare solebant nunc machinis adstantibus acrius et accuratius agitur; quod confidere videtur nobis universis profuturum esse, quantacumque pericula praevidemus. Orandum est ut quod ingenium machinis attribuimus ingenio humaniore benefice directum exerceatur. Nos manibus commendati talibus forsitan minus metuamus vigilantiam monstri illius stellati ne nos custoditos opprimat. Ea haec est quae inventis suis apte id respiciat quod magister Gauss, 'disciplinae sanctitatem' vocavit; sed et spem respiciamus et occasionem inauditam hominibus oblatam aptius inter se collaborandi.

Praesento mathematicam et hodierni computandi taediferam, Shafi Goldwasser, apud Massachusettense Institutum Technologiae et Institutum Scientiarum Weizmannianum professorem, Praemio Turing nobilitatam, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia.

Numerorum et notarum mathematicarum imperatrix egregia, quae secreta callide parata protegis ut melius communicando confidere possimus, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

We are told that the great mathematician Kurt Gödel, though suspicious of generalisations, observed that 'every error is due to extraneous factors such as emotion and education,' whereas 'reason itself does not err.' The scientist I now introduce is no stranger to education, nor is she unattuned to emotion. As student and teacher she has greatly distinguished herself in both of her native countries of Israel and America, and she has actively entered the imaginative world of 'playback theatre', a communicative art in which shared experiences are marvellously extended and heightened. Her sophisticated application of reason remains unimpaired, and has led to a host of advances in theoretical computer science and encryption - but lest we think that 'theoretical' means laboratory and academy alone, here is work that underpins the most important safeguards of security in our private and public lives, and even between nations. It is work that aspires to develop systems to protect our communication with one another and with institutions, to safeguard information (what we are now encouraged to call 'big data') so that it can be used efficiently and responsibly for beneficial ends, and - here is perhaps the biggest challenge - to build its own checks against malicious interference and abuse. Our honorand notes that there is a shift of power in process, from human fallibility to machine-assisted accuracy and efficiency, and she seems sanguine in her belief that we, and the world, despite formidable risks, stand to gain. Let us hope that 'artificial intelligence' may be steered and mediated by beneficial human intelligence. Placing ourselves in such hands as hers, may we have less dread of the Argos-like monster of 'surveillance'? The achievement of such pioneers pays fitting homage to what Gauss called the 'dignity of science', but also offers momentous opportunities for responsible human cooperation.

I present a leading mathematical thinker and computer scientist, Shafi Goldwasser, Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Weizmann Institute of Science, winner of the AM Turing Award, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Masterly interpreter and mediator of numbers and systems, whose skilful and benign guiding of confidentiality may make modern communication safer, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

**DR CYRUS POONAWALLA**

In principio erat equus. Quem nunc produco Universitatis Punyapattanae alumnum egregium et philosophiae doctorem, paterfamilias factus gentis equorum generatricis generosorum se omnibus centaurum nobilem praebuit qui ad morbos depellendos spectant. Cursores ibi alti omnium optimi iam multos annos equariae suae summam gloriam certando comparaverunt. Et ibidem mature negotium quoddam susceptum est quo propter serum sanguinis equini extractum venditumque beneficia insigniter confecta sunt. Tempore novo apparent cursores autocineti; mox iuvenis novae laudis cupidus sperare coepit se panthera occidentali summota raedam Indice animatam parturum quam multi homines modico impendio emere et fovere vellent. Immo contra accidit ut ipsa in equaria nova incepta sint generi humano maxime beneficio futura. Nam abhinc paulo amplius quinquaginta annos officinam illam in fundo sitam ita auxit ut nonnulla *προφυλακτικά*, quae 'vaccina' vocamus, ibi parari possent ad diphtheriam et tetanum et postea mala multa alia seponenda, quae iam penes nos est avertere. Et id agebat ut haec mira cum copiose fierent tum multo minore pretio emerentur quam fieri potuisset si alienis officinis ea paranda tradidisset. Ecce inter commercia miraculum - res enim bene gesta non modo se sustinet sed insuper fortunas hominum in meliora mutant. Equo igitur et homine consociatis consilium ortum est quo per orbem liberis innumeris salus et vita darentur. Eum honoramus qui morborum remedium haud SÉRUM INSTITUTUM praestat, inter omnes plurima talia medicamenta suppeditanda providet, idque praecipue ubi pauci aliter talem cepissent facultatem sui protegendi. Credimus equidem tale et tantum negotium in arte biologica et medica praecellens salutem futuram omnium terrarum fulcire.

Itaque praesento virum et negotii peritum et humanitate plus quam equestri insignem, officinae medicae toto iam orbe terrarum respectae, Cyrum Poonawalla, Loti Splendore nobilitatum, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia.

Hominum adiutor naturae beneficia ad recta curantium, cuius vigor atque ingenium maxime egentibus proderunt, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

In the beginning was the horse. I introduce an eminent graduate and doctor of Pune University, patriarch of a great horse-breeding family, skilled centaur to preventers of illness. The family's world-leading coursers have over many years distinguished their stud farm above all others on the race track, while already in the farm's early days they had a small company for extracting and marketing horse serum, a signal equine benefit. In the changing new age of the sports car this man's youthful ambition was to upstage the jaguar with an Indian racing creature that many could afford and cherish. But this was not to be; rather among the horses themselves was a new beginning, for to the immense benefit of mankind a little more than fifty years ago our honorand developed the laboratory on the farm, at which vaccines are created for diphtheria, tetanus, and later for many other now avoidable diseases. And he made it his aim to produce these miraculous interventions in great quantity and at far lower cost than would ever have been possible had he consigned the task to other companies. Here is a commercial wonder - a successful venture that funds and sustains itself while changing the world for the better. From man and horse together has come a project that has saved the lives of countless children throughout the world. We honour a man whose timely Serum Institute of India is the world's largest provider of these anti-toxins, and this particularly in countries where few could otherwise have found the means for such protection. It is our belief that this leading biotechnology company in India now underpins the future health of the world's population.

I present an entrepreneur and humanitarian of more than equestrian distinction, a creator of a medical enterprise of world importance, Cyrus Poonawalla, awarded the Indian Padma Shri, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Friend of man and man's husbandry of nature's benefits, whose energy and talents will greatly help those in greatest need, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

## PROFESSOR SIR SIMON WESSELY

ἔχθιστος δέ μοι ἔσσι θεῶν οἱ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν,  
αἰεὶ γάρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε.<sup>1</sup>

Sic discordia inter deos oborta Iuppiter olim Martem adlocutus est. Nunc virum produco qui aspectu humaniore iudicans multa de bello bellorumque damno cognovit, multa quidem peregit ad haec mitiganda. Philosophus autem Gallicus quidam auctoritatis summae cum hoc sibi et aliis persuaderet, mentem corpori omnino disparem esse, parum nobis videtur animi medicinae profuisse. Iampridem enim scire oportet has nostris duas partes aegre posse discerni. Hodie igitur hic honorandus est ut qui studiosus et medicus 'firma animi confusione'<sup>2</sup> adhibita investigaverit quemadmodum illae coniunctae una agant et quibus condicionibus corporis et status vitae coniunctus animus aliquando aegrotet. Accedit quod inter primos melius per-spexit quibus modis aegrotantes curari, melius inter sodales accipi possint. Hic iuvenis quondam observatione et ratione usus demonstravit quandam ex nostris diutius administrantibus ad partes animi invadere eis praesertim quibus senectute vel morbo memoria deficere coepisset, aliter tamen primos ministros ad has partes multo rarius accedere potuisse. Itaque videmus eius iam tum interfuisse quae homines graviter laesi patiantur; postea et efficere potuit ut clarius appareret qualis esset in veteranis mentis condicio, et consolationis iis et sanationis opportunitates faciliores praebuit. De his et aliis graviter oppressis meditatus lucide nobis persuasit necesse esse vires scientiae psychologicae et medicinae animi una cum aliis curationibus recte cohaerere. Simul etiam acriter hortatur ut vires et in nobis iam insitas et quas in hominum societate inveniamus magni aestimemus; nam his nixis et convalescere nobis datur et ad salutem redire.

Praesento animi scientiae et medicinae peritum ut vigore et ingenio sic humanitate praeditum, qui efficienter saluti aegrotantium consulit, Simonem Carolum Wessely, equitem auratum, Societatis Regiae Medicinae praesidem, apud Universitatem Londiniensem Professorem Regium, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia.

Aesculapi heres, qui una cum eo penitus intellegis soma et psychen conspirare, qui apud nos officii psychiatricis praefuisti et magnopere subvenisti, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

In a moment of divine cabinet discord, Zeus once said to Ares: 'Of all the gods who tread the spangled skies,/Thou most unjust, most odious in our eyes!/ Inhuman discord is thy dire delight./The waste of slaughter, and the rage of fight.' Beside me stands one who from a more human perspective knows much, and does much, about the costs of armed conflict. Psychological medicine was, I am told, not greatly advanced when an influential French philosopher convinced himself and others that the mind and the body are completely different from one another; for since ancient times we should have been aware that they are not so easy to separate. Today we honour a scholar and doctor who has fearlessly studied not only the interaction of the two, and of organic and social conditions in mental illness, but has led the way in determining how sufferers from mental distress may be treated and better understood in society. An early paper of his demonstrated through statistics that one of our long-serving leaders reached parts of the brain, notably in those suffering from dementia, not reached by other British prime ministers. Our honorand's interest in the effects of trauma, an interest perhaps already seen at that early stage, has brought us insights into the mental condition of combat veterans, and has greatly improved their access to understanding and therapy. For these and for other sufferers from debilitating conditions he has shown and stressed the necessary balance between the powers of psychological, psychiatric and other medical approaches; but he has also greatly encouraged us to respect our own inner resources, and those that society may supply, for resilience and well-being.

I present an energetic and gifted, but no less humane, scientist and effective advocate for the interests of the mentally ill, Sir Simon Charles Wessely, President of the Royal Society of Medicine and Regius Professor of Psychiatry at King's College London, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Heir to Asclepius and his instinctive understanding of the balance of soma and psyche, who have led and strengthened the psychiatric profession in our country, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

<sup>1</sup> Homer, Iliad V.890

<sup>2</sup> Cicero, Tusculan Disputations IV.37

**Degree of Doctor of Music****USTAD RAHAT FATEH ALI KHAN**

Socrates, si discipulo eius ingenioso credere licet, aestimabat musicae disciplinam maximum in academia pondus habere, quod rhythmos et harmonia penitus in animum descendant ut nos multis modis erudiant. Nos autem Reipublicae Litterarum cives schola nostra musicae antiqua gloriamur. Hic quem nunc commendo is est cuius et arte et ingenio adducamur ut una cum eo illam quoque miram et sublimem consensionem honoremus - qawwali dico, in quo consociantur musica et poemata Persice vel Urdu vel Hindi composita. Nam idem non modo in summis stat inter cantores huius generis sed etiam multum peregit ad hanc suam artem una cum animo ac venustate ghazal et qawwali modorum per orbem vulgandam. Nec sine causa nos praesertim recordamur abhinc quinque annos per huius carmina iuvenem quandam egregiam, huius concivem, cum praemio Nobeliano Osloae nobilitata esset, huius carminibus esse celebratam. Novimus quanti concordiam instauratam pendere deceat; novimus etiam musicam concordiam creare posse. Haec vox per ingentem illam Asiae paeninsulam et ultra quidem audita est. Hoc viro cantitante corda civium cinematographica spectantium ubique saltant: جریہ دہ ڈک ڈک جائے. Sed ante omnia spiritum dulcissimum Sufianum nobis hic maximorum vatum heres impertit, quippe qui verba ita eloquentia cum modis haurienda offerat ut 'fulmine percussi videamur et igne teneri' et inde per flammam ad summa gaudia impelli:

برق سی گر گئی کام بی کر گئی آگ ایسی لگائی مزا آگیا

Praesento hominem voce velut divina praeditum, elementorum raga et tala et dhun magistrum, Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Musica.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Cantator dignissime, Qawwal praestantissime, qui et versus et mele sacra Asiae cum omnibus communicas, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Musica honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

Socrates, if we are to believe his gifted pupil, opined that musical training is of the highest importance in education because rhythm and melody 'find their way into the inward places of the soul'<sup>1</sup> and make us better in so many ways. Our own Republic of Letters is proud of its time-honoured Music School, and the man I now introduce is one whose art and whole being invites us to honour, through him, that wondrous and mysterious alliance of music and Farsi, Urdu and Hindi letters that forms qawwali. Here is one who stands not only at the pinnacle of his tradition but has helped to make his art, and the spirit and beauty of ghazal and qawwali, famous throughout the world. At this university particularly we have cause to remember that his music celebrated a remarkable teenager from his native Pakistan at the Nobel Peace Prize concert in 2014. We, who place much hope in reconciliation, know that music itself may reconcile; our honorand's voice is heard and loved in all parts of the great Subcontinent and beyond, and by his songs hearts are set aflutter - jiyā dha ak dha ak jāye - in Bollywood watchers far and wide. But above all it is the exquisite Sufi sensibility that this heir of great singers conveys to us, in poetry and music that has such power as if 'Lightning has struck and overwhelmed us, igniting such a fire that ecstasy ensues.'<sup>2</sup> (barq sī gir gai, kām hī kar gai, āg aisi lagāi mazā ā gayā)

I present an inspired voice embodied, master of rāg, tāl and dhun, Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Music.

Worthy singer, Qawwal extraordinary, who convey to all the greatness of South Asian mystical word and tone, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Music.

<sup>1</sup>Plato, Republic 401d

<sup>2</sup>From an Urdu ghazal, Mere Rashk-e-Qamar, by the Pakistani poet Fana Buland Shehri and performed as a qawwali by Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (1948-97), uncle and forebear of the honorand.

**MR YO-YO MA**

Num musica lingua quaedam sit iam pridem quaerimus. Sunt tamen qui nos certiores faciant, cum modis numerisque sententias suas adeo eloquenter efferant ut nemo fere has non pernoscat, nemo eis non funditus sit commotus. Talem produco linguarum multarum peritum, immo poetam multa ac varia versantem, qui ubicunque cantum audit fabulam quandam ibi latentem perceptam capessit, summaque facilitate et lenitate praeditus ad hanc omnibus enarrandam praeter ceteros aptus est. Hic, ut dicit fidicen alius consors eius, ex chordis suis velut ponte facto orbis terras diversas in unum iunxit. Hic Ioanne Sebastiano instinguente artificium suum unicum et animum musicae venustate affluentem ubique beneficio obtulit. Nam magistri illius opera ordinata fidicina itineribus factis late per continentes ab hortis in urbes, a carcere et chorea usque in mysteria fabularum dilatavit, et consonanter comitante Emanuele Ioannem alterum et Ludovicum eximia arte interpretatus est. Idemque, ut mihi videtur, aliquid maximi pretii contulit eo tempore quo tuis auspiciis, Domine Cancellarie, colonia illa Serica mancipio translata est; eo denique modulante Petrus ille Iliades iam CL annos natus Petropoli vigore plus quam iuvenili floruit. Nec tantummodo in musica tali maiorum nostrorum excellit; verum etiam alia multa quae tractavit iam TANGO Argentinae choreas et fidiculas Appalachiae et cantus populares Fenniae, ne omittam qui jazenses vocantur aut qui cinematographica exornant. Quid? Hoc duce permulti a diversis undique terris congregati sociique facti et sibi et nobis variorum generum musicae – Sinicam dico et Mongolicam et Persicam – cognitionem usumque tradiderunt. Ut hanc saltem novam Viam Sericam cum plausu nos accipere oportet.

Praesento tibi civem terrarum omnium, musicum et modestum et praestantem, virum humanum egregie insignem, rosae subolem petuniaeque dominum, Yo-Yo Ma, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Musica.

*Admission by the Chancellor*

Inter musicos poeta eloquens, qui nobis ea impertiris qualia verba vix promere possunt et per artem tuam partem nostram meliorem informas, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universtatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Musica honoris causa.

*Paraphrase*

Is music a language? An old question, and a possible answer may be found in those gifted beings who speak with such eloquence through melody and rhythm that others instinctively understand their statements and are profoundly moved by them. Here stands a polyglot, a poet in many styles, who sees that 'behind every piece of music there is a story' and whose warmth of spirit is uniquely fitted to telling it to all. In his hands, says a fellow musician, the instrument he plays is everywhere a bridge that links the world as one. 'Inspired by Bach', he has placed his technical mastery and lyrical soul at the service of people the world over, travelling with that master's suites from America to Europe and Asia, from garden to city, from prison room to dance floor and to the inner world of fiction. His partnership with Emanuel Ax has given us Brahms and Beethoven beyond compare. His music was, I believe, a treasured moment, my Lord Chancellor, in the return of Hong Kong to China, and Tchaikovsky lived more vividly than ever at the age of one hundred and fifty in our honorand's Leningrad performance of 1990. Nor is his achievement in our classical music alone, for he has conversed with the cultures of tango and Appalachian fiddle, of Finnish folk song, of jazz and film-score. And his leadership has assembled and allied members of a wider world to meet us, and each other, from musical traditions of China, Mongolia and Iran – a new 'Silk Road' project we may celebrate without reserve.

I present a citizen of the world, a modest yet towering musician, a humanitarian of rare achievement, scion of the Rose<sup>1</sup> and Master of the Petunia<sup>2</sup>, Yo-Yo Ma, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Music.

Poet among performers, communicator of more than words can tell, whose music may inspire what is the better part of us, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Music.

<sup>1</sup>His teacher and early mentor was the great American cellist Leonard Rose.

<sup>2</sup>The nickname given by a student to his instrument, and then adopted.



## 2 Encaenia

The Public Orator delivered the following introduction to the Creweian Oration:

**Public Orator:** Honoratissime Domine Cancellarie, licetne anglice loqui?

**Chancellor:** Licet.

**Public Orator:** Gaudeamus igitur!

Still, when the manager of an oil company was asked not so long ago why he employed so many Classics graduates, he replied: 'The answer is simple: they sell more oil!' An endorsement of Latin and Greek from the now declining age of fossil fuels? Well, Latin has other more sustainable uses too, as I hope we have seen. It can be fun for children, as well as developing their cognitive abilities. One of our research students has been discovering that young children's understanding of the contemporary world is enriched by making them familiar with phrases such as *carpe diem*. It was once fun for adults too, witness my distant Latin-speaking predecessors, the University Orator and that thorn in the institutional flesh called *Terrae Filius*, official buffoon, 350 years ago here in this glorious building, indeed on the day of its opening and of the first ever Encaenia. In July 1669 Mr Gerard of Wadham College made a speech before the assembled scholars, visitors and dons that was 'so inflammatory that Gerard was subsequently expelled from the university.' No translation or crib was needed. His speech, which inveighed against one and all, was of course enthusiastically copied into student notebooks and widely disseminated. Well, it was the duty of those orators and jesters to provoke and sting. More recently our public manners and discourse have improved, haven't they, be the spaces safe or not? Nowadays we turn to our vernacular and use this occasion to see what is good and praiseworthy, first among those outside our own number whose achievements we particularly value, and then, as ordained by Nathaniel Crewe, we say something of the events of the year and thank some of our most magnanimous benefactors.

This is after all a seat of endeavor, and we take duly modest pride in achievement; on the early rungs of the *curtus honorum* we have with us a selected number of the University's prize-winners across our disciplines, modestly ready to receive our admiration. On your feet now, students and alumni, and enjoy our applause! And now sit, look up and around and see looking down on you from heaven the various disciplines allegorised as female figures - yes, outnumbering males by myriads to zero, while amongst our students women outnumber the men by little more than one percent, though rising. These goddesses, I mean those up above us, are agents of harmony, and the arts and sciences are here joyously and fruitfully interconnected.

And thus also, centuries later, we live and work together in departments and colleges, perhaps admittedly wondering from time to time about the nature of governance and our part in it - are we here a direct or a representative democracy? Where better to think about this than here at the site of so many of our debates and deliberations? We expand, of course, even if too fast for some and too slowly for some. Standing almost literally on the shoulders (or should I say on the toes?) of earlier building achievements, we have the prospect of a new graduate college focused on interdisciplinary work in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Environmental Change, and Cellular Life. It will, in name - 'Parks College' - and location, and

no doubt in character, link us to the nearby earthly paradise of the University Parks, whose recently retired presiding genius as Keeper of our parks and gardens we celebrated amongst this year's honorary Masters of Arts.

Cheerfully facing off both accusations of, and congratulations upon, social engineering, we see the launch, after much strenuous work and deliberation, and indeed pioneering achievement on the part of Lady Margaret Hall and University College, of ambitious 'access' schemes in which the University aims to admit an increasing number - rising over the next four years to one in four - of its able undergraduates from hitherto underrepresented groups, and more specifically those who have experienced severe disadvantage or educational disruption. We are, of course not yet congratulating ourselves, but merely noting with cautious approval, that our numbers from ethnic minorities are rising steadily - though, as we have learnt from politicians to say, 'we still have some way to go' - and that we have been able to expand the so-named UNIQ introductory summer school, our one-week residential programme for sixth-formers from areas with low rates of progression to higher education. This year's numbers rose by 50%, to nearly 1,400 students.

In one league table - not to worry, there are still many others to gloat over if we wish - we are pipped to places one and two by Cambridge and St Andrew's. We must congratulate both our own Vice-Chancellor and her successor at St Andrew's, while sympathizing with what will inevitably be for both of them conflicted loyalties. But we still hold our head high in international reputation. Singling out his Oxford career among the distinctions of John Kennedy, Republican Senator from Louisiana, President Trump has observed: 'This is a man who is totally brilliant. You know, I don't know if you know what this means: Oxford. Right? He went to Oxford. Oxford is a very - I'm very much into the world of schools. Oxford - you have to be very, very smart to go to Oxford. And he's very smart.'

And some interventions from abroad are even more welcome. Last week we announced what our Vice-Chancellor is surely right to call a 'transformative' donation - about the biggest in our history in fact - to establish and build a new Humanities Centre; thanks to Mr Stephen Schwarzman who even upstaged the Boris and Rory show on the front page of the Times, we are to bring together, on a new site by the old Radcliffe Infirmary, faculties, performing arts, libraries, new research and study programmes, and notably amongst them a new focus on the role of ethics in our engagement with artificial intelligence. Altogether a strong endorsement of the central role of the Humanities in what universities aim to do.

Oxford still attracts headlines in research, and in a year in which we honour so many distinguished scientists I may be forgiven for concentrating for a moment on some of our own such activities, and showing how closely linked we are, in our passions and our priorities, to colleagues and institutions intellectually, if less geographically, close us. Our Campaigns and Digital Communications team is, I am assured, the most-visited university website in the UK. Studies in artificial intelligence, quantum computing and climate change have been effectively communicated to the world outside the ivory tower, but there is more to say.

A robot has now outperformed the human hand in retinal surgery - though, to be fair, he or she, or zee, had the advantage of good training from the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences. But we should also note that creativity is already credited by some to these mechanical paragons. Ai-Da, the alluringly feminine robot artist who has done a portrait of Ada Lovelace, put in a guest appearance a few days ago at St John's. She cited Yoko Ono, George

<sup>1</sup> See F Henderson, 'Putting the Dons in Their Place: A Restoration Oxford *Terrae Filius* Speech', in *History of Universities* 16/2 (2000), pp32-64.

Orwell and Aldous Huxley as her inspiration. 'If we can learn from things in the past,' she says, tilting her head and adjusting her line of vision, 'maybe we can make our future a little brighter.' We read that one art critic – not don, I hasten to add – was quite smitten by Ai-Da's lips and eyes, and lamented not being able to write his phone number on her metallic robotic hand.

Zoologists here have mapped out how to protect over a third of the world's oceans, a target that scientists say is crucial in order to safeguard wildlife and help mitigate the impacts of climate change. The Department of Plant Sciences and the Woodland Trust together have calculated the economic cost of the ash dieback crisis – around £15 billion, I understand. Will we ever calculate the economic and other costs of 'language deprivation'? We continue to work with partners in Europe, witness for instance the now up-and-running Oxford-Berlin Partnership, with its workshops and centres jointly planned and funded in both places. Such cooperation may encourage us in our protection of another endangered species, modern linguists, as we watch with concern the provision of language resources in our schools and even here in Oxford. Latin seems to be having, curiously, an easier time.

Artificial intelligence has been applied to healthcare in improving diagnosis and precision treatments, and Oxford will be the home of one of five technology centres working within the Big Data Institute. Cardiovascular diagnostic advances brought by our medical researchers are soon to be matched by our astrophysicists, whose studies will probe the heart of Mars and that celestial body's furious 'Marsquakes'. As Zeus may have suggested earlier this morning, in his own appeal to Mars, we can surely only gain from confronting the anger and strife seething within some of our neighbours.

Oxford's Jenner Institute is to lead the UK's Vaccines Manufacturing Innovation Centre, planned to be in full swing by 2022, defending us all from global pandemic threats. Transplant medical treatment too has been recognised: the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has nicely approved, for NHS use, a technique for preserving donated livers, developed in fruitful collaboration by scientists of our Institute of Biomedical Engineering and Nuffield Department of Surgical Sciences.

Ophthalmologists at the John Radcliffe Hospital, with the support of the Oxford Biomedical Research Centre in a clinical trial sponsored by Gyroscope Therapeutics, carried out the world's first gene therapy operation to tackle the root cause of age-related macular degeneration, the UK's most common cause of sight loss. Meanwhile medical researchers in Oxford and at McGill University in Canada have been looking at the mental health and wellbeing of teenagers and finding evidence that cannabis use among adolescents is indeed associated with increased risk of depression and anxiety in adulthood. A little more reassuringly, we are told by our Internet Institute and the Department of Experimental Psychology, after a large-scale investigation, that links between screen time and social media use and life satisfaction among adolescents are – I quote – 'nuanced and arguably trivial'. Am I right in thinking the jury may still be out?

Now is the moment to thank some of those who have lent us significant support over the year and with a view to years to come. In so doing, we can proudly bring our Humanities back into today's *agenda* and *laudanda*. Simon and June Li, already long-term supporters of the humanities and of international students here, have funded two new graduate scholarships in Chinese art history. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation, also highly generous and longstanding donors in the humanities, have endowed professorships, a senior administrative post, and

research scholarships in Byzantine and Late Antique studies. The Sir John Ritblat Family Foundation has enabled us to establish a Professorship of Mindfulness – the first ever, I believe – in the Department of Psychiatry. Thanks to a gift from Clive Gillmore we are to digitise, and make available online for researchers around the world, three parts of the early botanical collections in the University Herbaria. From the Planethood Foundation, established in 1996 by Ben Ferencz, came support for our Program on International Peace and Security at the Blavatnik School of Government.

Our Department of International Development hosts and leads 'Young Lives', a long-term international research project investigating the changing nature of childhood poverty, and helping to direct future policy, by tracking the development of 12,000 children in Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh), Peru and Vietnam through quantitative and qualitative research over a 15-year period. The project has received a significant, life-sustaining boost from the Old Dart Foundation and the Schwab Charitable Fund made possible by the generosity of the Echidna Giving Fund.

As for sporting news, let us not forget our international engagement in this year's pioneering introduction of the baseball Varsity match. I quote club founder Jae Park: 'We went from being unable to form a team to being the lowest-ranking team in the nation and finally to topping the league table.' As in the Baseball, so on the river we were gentlemanly and gentlewomanly runners-up, and Christopher and Teresa Mahoney have generously helped the Dan Topolski Rowing Fund to see our oarsmen through to further and even greater distinctions.

I wish I had the time today to say more about each of these donations and endowments and the projects they have realised, but I can at least urge you to read about them, care of the social media and world-beating websites I mentioned earlier – remember these are thought unlikely to damage your health, even in delayed adolescence.

When we wish to feel good about ourselves we can click and scroll through the colourful pages of *Oxford Today*<sup>1</sup> online and see much about the academic and other projects of colleagues and students, as also their distinctions recognised nationally and internationally. And I invite you to do so. But I cannot leave unmentioned now the eight new Fellows of the British Academy, Jane Lightfoot, Carol Harrison, Fiona Stafford, Helen Small, Ian Rumfitt, Ian Loader, Melinda Mills and Ben Ansell, nor the five of the Royal Society, Sarah Darby, Véronique Gouverneur, Marta Kwiatkowska, Anant Parekh and Matthew Rushworth.

Over the year many brave colleagues have stepped up to helms, and we welcomed Helen Moore who takes over from Sir Steven Cowley at Corpus Christi College, Jane Shaw from Ralph Waller at Harris Manchester, Helen Mountfield from Baroness Helena Kennedy at Mansfield, and Steven Gunn as Acting Warden at Merton from Sir Martin Taylor. Neil Mendoza succeeded Moira Wallace at Oriel, Kathy Willis took over from Keith Gull at St Edmund Hall, Nicholas Austin from James Hanvey at Campion Hall, Richard Cooper from Werner Jeanrond at St Benet's Hall. Judith Olszowy-Schlanger has taken over direction of the Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies from Martin Goodman. Charles Conn is followed by Elizabeth Kiss as Warden of Rhodes House. Theresa May of St Hugh's is followed by ... well, another *lacuna obscura* in my text, but I think this might bring us, as so often over the years, to Balliol.

Balliol alumni need no persuading of the value of the Greek and Roman classics. Admittedly, one of those now again under public scrutiny after a period of discreet and uncharacteristic retirement,

<sup>1</sup>now renamed *Quad* ([www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/quad](http://www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/quad))

has often claimed to feel more inspired by Homer than Virgil. Here – one of that galaxy of aspirants to high office alluded to already, those who are, as we were told last week, on a ‘quest for authenticity’ – here is an Odysseus, a man of many wiles, a skilled tactician with a pragmatic approach to truth and how to tell it, one who might tie himself to the mast of the ship of state, or ship of fools, to resist the fateful call of Siren voices, who though blown off course, or more euphemistically ‘much-travelled’, may eventually return home to his Penelope, one who can stand out brightly above his companions – no distractions for him, indeed he may recall his lotus-eating companions back to the ship, and back to reason. We pray for the best outcome, or in the words fresh in our minds from the chorus of this term’s Agamemnon of Aeschylus, ‘May the good prevail’, and Oxford, be it through Magdalen or Balliol, emerge with credit. If we worry about what we have done to prepare our alumni for high office, then a former Master of the Balliol has an observation to comfort us a little, namely that ‘even Socrates was very doubtful whether virtue could be taught.’

As every year on this occasion, we remember, with respect and affection, those valued colleagues who are no longer with us, among whom I now call to mind: Dame Helen Alexander, Geoffrey James Ellis, Ray Guillery and Anne Holmes of Hertford College, Margaret Haswell and Judith Mackenzie of St Hugh’s, Kenneth Warren of Jesus College, Sir Maurice Shock of Lincoln, Jeremy Catto of Oriiel, Ceri Peach and Roger Ainsworth of St Catherine’s, Sir David Weatherall of Magdalen, George Cawkwell of University College, Peter Brown, Caryl Birkett and Sir John Rowlinson of Trinity, Antony Honoré and Sir Guenter Treitel of All Souls, and Walter Eltis of Exeter. *Lux perpetua luceat eis. Barukh dayan ha-emet.*

Death, said a predecessor of mine on such an occasion, must regrettably have the last word. But he might equally have said, with poet Virgil, that words might immortalise and keep that *lux perpetua* shining – his Latin words among others. More simply, though I think we’ll not yet give this one to primary school children, let us remember *ars longa, vita brevis*. And however little credit we ourselves deserve, we may count our blessings and wistfully rejoice in the words of Oscar Wilde, for whom Oxford ‘...remains the most beautiful thing in England, and nowhere else are life and art so exquisitely blended, so perfectly made one. Indeed, in most other towns art has often to present herself in the form of a reaction against the sordid ugliness of ignoble lives, but at Oxford she comes to us as an exquisite flower born of the beauty of life and expressive of life’s joy.’ In the name of humanity and the humanities, let us invite Mr Schwarzman to be with us often here in our earthly paradise, fragile though we sometimes feel it to be – as a colleague of mine put it very recently, it is an open secret that we are not perfect. It is, though, a place where I have no doubt we can rival even the warmest of state visits to those we wish to welcome.

The Irish poet’s countryman, our Vice-Chancellor, has said, ‘Poetry has the power to enlighten, enrich and move us by making the ordinary extraordinary and reminding us what it means to be human.’ We have been so reminded by our own Professor of Poetry on many occasions over these last few years. While warmly welcoming Alice Oswald as his successor, we now salute a laureate among poets; Simon, we congratulate both you and those who have conferred the laurel.

#### CREWIAN ORATION 2019

The Professor of Poetry delivered the Creweian Oration ‘in commemoration of the Benefactors of the University according to the intention of the Right Honourable Nathaniel, Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham’.

I’d like to endorse the remarks made by the Public Orator, though that would be somewhat disingenuous of me, because like many people in this hall, I suspect, I only understood a small fraction of them. A cheat-sheet has been supplied, but it felt rude to be reading the programme rather than enjoying and witnessing the actual occasion, like one of those annoying people at a film or concert with their eyes glued to their phone or their head buried in a nosebag of popcorn. In my last year as Oxford Professor of Poetry I’ve used the platform to make one or two practical suggestions regarding the way the University functions, and given that this is my final appearance in any formal capacity I feel emboldened to make one or two more. Officially I am allocated ten minutes for this second instalment of the Crewian Oration, but my real window of opportunity is the time it takes for someone to sprint down to Wellington Square, print out a copy of my P45 then gallop back and stick it in my hand. Not that I have anything especially controversial to say, but given that small window of opportunity I’ll get on with it, and my first suggestion, at least until the evolutionary development of the Babelfish as Douglas Adams first envisaged it, would be some kind of simultaneous translation at Encaenia, perhaps in the style of the European Parliament. Cost shouldn’t be a problem, since presumably at some point in the near future the UK market will be awash with cheap microphones and headsets brought back from Brussels by redundant MEP’s looking for alternative means of income. Or if that idea sounds too much like the thin end of the technological wedge, a second suggestion would be a screen projection of the translated text with a little ball bouncing from one word to the next, which I’m sure would be appreciated by all of us not fortunate enough to be fluent in the tongue of Caesar. That said, I know Dr Katz to be a man of honour and dedication, a man who once rose at 7am in the morning to read to me down the telephone just so I could get a sense of the poetic metre in one of Horace’s *Odes*. And if today he was only talking directly to a handful of people in the language that he loves and excels at, then I sympathise. Over the course of about 15 years and for the purpose of translating medieval poetry I have been learning Middle English, and although this linguistic acquisition has gone very well, it’s frustrating that most of the people I can now communicate with have been dead for about 600 years. Medieval poetry being something of an academic pursuit I was going to add that the opportunities for practising conversational Middle English are particularly limited in my hometown of Huddersfield, although it was seeing and recognising ‘dialect words’ in the original *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* manuscript that made my ears prick up in the first place. These were words like ‘bairn’ for child, ‘layke’ for play, ‘thole’ for suffer, ‘threpe’ for battle or beat, ‘carp’ for speak, and ‘samen’ for bring together or tidy, words that are the subject of great scholarly relish, though considered to be the vocabulary of the uneducated when used in everyday conversation, as they still are sometimes in my neck of the woods. Just on that point, I’d like to applaud the University for its current and forthcoming attempts at reconfiguring its admissions process. Over these past four years I’ve met many people at Oxford who are determined to change the social profile of the undergraduate body into something that more closely resembles the social profile of the country we live in, and I’ve come to understand and sympathise with the difficulties associated with that issue, especially in terms of systemic problems at earlier moments in a student’s educational pathway. That said, when I was

explaining today's proceedings to a friend at home, he responded, 'Ah, there's nothing like half an hour of Latin to bring the state school kids flocking from the provinces.'

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* resists all attempts at a simple interpretation, but the notion that pride comes before a fall is certainly part of its moral programming. For both honourable and egotistical reasons the callow knight Gawain rises to a challenge thrown down before King Arthur's Court, and very quickly has to wonder if he has bitten off more than he can chew. And the stakes are high; quite literally his neck is on the line, and even if he avoids decapitation he will return to Camelot with his head hung low, his flesh nicked by the glancing blade of the Green Knight's axe and his cheeks scarlet with humiliation. To add insult to injury and indignity, he will also wear the green girdle or sash of untruth for the rest of his life, even if his fellow knights adopt it as a badge of comradeship and integrity. So in one sense Gawain is a hero, a mere mortal who has done his best as a human being, under impossible and unjust circumstances, and has triumphed in the face of supernatural adversity. Seen in another light he trudges home like the British representative of the Eurovision Song Contest, a plucky, likable and foolhardy loser, the words *nul points* ringing in his ears.

In 2015 when I put myself forward for election to this professorship, Gawain's experiences were a cautionary voice in the background, a warning against hubris, overreaching ambition and misplaced confidence. Undoubtedly I've made mistakes in my lectures: errors of fact and judgement, the mispronunciation of words outside my usual register, the use of words beyond their agreed dictionary definitions. I have also been slapdash in my with engagement with University bureaucracy – in fact I only found out last week I had an Oxford email address, which turns out to have over 6,000 unread messages in it, so apologies to anyone who has tried to contact me and thought me rude or remote when I haven't replied. And in an institution built on tradition and ritual there have been the inevitable social blunders. At a reception at Trinity College after my inaugural lecture I decided self-assurance was the best approach, so walked confidently up to the first well-dressed man in the room, introduced myself and put out my hand. He leaned towards me and whispered in my ear, 'I'm the wine waiter'. A useful acquaintance, as it turned out. I also feel as if I need to confess to an incident at All Souls College the same year, since it is presumably, captured on CCTV camera and stored on a hard drive. On the morning after the Chichele Dinner, I woke up in some inner residential area of the college but could not manage to open the door onto the quad, despite the sets of keys and electronic fobs I had been issued with. It was 5.30am and I was

determined to beat the traffic on the M1, but didn't want to wake anyone up by knocking on doors or tapping on windows. Instead, I walked to the bottom of a narrow passageway, shinned up onto a wheelybin, threw my bag over the wall, climbed gingerly over the barbed and greased defences on the top of said wall, then wriggled onto the pavement courtesy of the laddered windows of nearby telephone box. Then walked back along High Street to the lodge to a sleepy and somewhat bewildered porter to hand my keys in.

I'm going to end with one final infraction of etiquette, by reading one of my own poems, a practice rightly considered vulgar and immodest in terms of the unspoken rules of this post, but allowable on this occasion, I hope, on the basis of it being a translation, and taken from the poem I have been discussing. I don't offer this passage as a direct reflection of our circumstances here today, though the parallels are interesting: in a circular configuration and in a congratulatory and celebratory mood all the nobles and notables of the court of King Arthur are gathered together to revel and feast. Our presence at this event suggests we have all felled giants and outwitted fiends of one type or another at some stage in our lives, and are therefore entitled – obliged even – to wear the sash or baldric or lace of humbleness alongside our multi-coloured costumes and dream-coats of ceremony and success.

Now, on the subject of supper I'll say no more  
as it's obvious to everyone that no one went without.  
Because another sound, a new sound, suddenly drew near,  
which might signal the king to sample his supper,  
for barely had the horns finished blowing their breath  
and with starters just spooned to the seated guests,  
a fearful form appeared, framed in the door:  
a mountain of a man, immeasurably high,  
a hulk of a human from head to hips,  
so long and thick in his loins and his limbs  
I should genuinely judge him to be a half-giant,  
or a most massive man, the mightiest of mortals.  
But handsome, too, like any horseman worth his horse,  
for despite the bulk and brawn of his body  
his stomach and waist were slender and sleek.  
In fact in all features he was finely formed  
it seemed.

Amazement seized their minds,  
no soul had ever seen  
a knight of such a kind –  
entirely emerald green.