

Gazette Supplement



Encaenia 2021

Congregation

22 September

1 Conferment of Honorary Degrees

The Public Orator made the following speeches in presenting the recipients of honorary degrees at the Encaenia on Wednesday, 22 September:

Degree of Doctor of Civil Law

SECRETARY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

Nonne et tibi et mihi certum clarumque videtur, Insignissima Vice-Cancellaria, rerum publicarum et loca et tempora turbulente mutata esse? Habet habuitque suas vices forma illa imperii quam ‘democratiam’ vocamus. Ecce tamen socia fida, femina quae cum causae populari fortiter favet tum meminit sibi olim satis placuisse partes alteras ducesque earum leniores. Quam hodie primum honoramus, haec multa observavit post sedem imperii vel iuxta vel etiam ante eam residens. Et artibus loquendi ac scribendi apposite ad persuadendum usa eloquentia praedita est qualem quivis orator desideret. Quae enim hoc mirabile agmen prima ducit revera ‘domina prima’ emerita et praesens adest, legum prompte perita, ‘e pluribus una’. Ad honores ascendit, domui tamen nil minus quam reipublicae ministrans servavit. Quae in libris eis lepidus de Domo Alba nobis memoravit haec legimus ut illum coetum animalium hominumque pernoscamus qui tum eas aedes candidas colebant. Item eis efficienter consuluit quae aetati tenerae debemus, ut nostri iuvenes vita felicitatis ac salutis cives fruantur; necnon videtur intellexisse quantum valeant, quamdiu prosint nobis, venia et patientia. Uno modo loco, ut puto, alii cuidam, vel potius duabus aliis, etsi insigniter secuta, cedit: sed sicut illa prima quae antecessit, et haec intellegit quomodo legationibus susceptis iura civium solum ita conservanda sint dummodo morum instituta teneantur; ubi enim haec respuuntur, ibi vulgi turbatores imminet, respublica deficit. Ne nos praetereat quod iamdudum Thomas quidam, ipse talem magistratum ingressus, dixit: ‘Tanti interdum est potestati repugnare, ut velim ipsam vim repugnantiae in aeternum vivam alamus.’

Praesento senatus columnen et sociam, quae ‘Voces Animatas’ ducit, prolem eorum qui Μεθόδους Ioannis cuiusdam secuti nos monent ut ‘omni modo omnia faciamus quae bona possimus’, Hilariam Rodham Clinton, Cancellariam Universitatis Reginae Belfastiae, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Iure Civili.

Admission by the Vice-Chancellor

Pro pluribus una, quae nationem tuam defendens praestitisti et factionibus obstitisti infestis, pro moribus humanis propugnatrix, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Iure Civili honoris causa.

Paraphrase

It is surely clear, Vice-Chancellor, to You and Me Both, that we cannot deny the political climate changes of our turbulent times. Democracy has had its ups and its downs, but behold now a steadfast ally, a redoubtable Democrat who yet remembers how once she saw virtue in those Liberal Republicans of yesteryear. We start today by honouring one who has witnessed much from behind, beside and before the seat of power. What is more, she is a persuasive writer and speaker, whose rhetoric must be the envy of any orator. For here is the first lady to lead our formidable column, one out of many, a skilled and energetic lawyer, indeed a veritable First Lady Emerita et Praesens. Here is one who has seen high office and has yet served both home and state. Her White House memoirs in those engaging books introduced us to the menagerie, animal and human, that in her time inhabited that gleaming edifice. Witness no less her leadership in protecting children’s health and legal rights, and her understanding of the enduring strengths of forbearance and forgiveness. In one respect, I will say, she cedes place of first, indeed even of second, lady in a distinguished succession. But like that first one¹ to whom she must cede, she understands that diplomacy can protect democracy only if important principle is not compromised, and she also knows that disdain for diplomacy can be a symptom of demagoguery, of decline in democracy. Let us remember what this lady’s more distant predecessor once wrote: ‘The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions that I wish it to be always kept alive.’²

I present a Senator, a leader of ‘Vital Voices’, a descendant of John Wesley’s converts who counsel us to ‘do all the good we can, by all the means we can’, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Chancellor of the Queen’s University, Belfast, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

One for many, representative and defender of your country, humanitarian and scourge of anti-democrats, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

¹ Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State, 1997–2001

² Thomas Jefferson to Abigail Smith Adams, February 22, 1787

Degree of Doctor of Letters

PROFESSOR LINDA COLLEY

Censuit nuper scriptor Oxoniensis historiam, per quam rebus praeteritis enucleatis tempora nostra intellegamus futurisque nos offeramus, genus moriturum inter disciplinas minimo beneficio adficere. Quam tamen meram fabulam aspernati cognovimus nos, qui feliciter superfuimus, historicos nostros insignes cum beneficia afferre tum ante omnes usui nobis esse. Adest erudita quae iam tum clare percepit gravique auctoritate docuit qualia tempora nos participes demerserint hac aetate quam olim molestam, in diem turbidiorem ipsa vocavit. Ex eis quae de hoc regno adhuc unito et de nobis Britannis investigavit, multo melius intelleximus unde orti simus qualesque fuerimus, praecipue quo tempore nonnulli sunt qui nimis, ut puto, se idcirco crucient, quonam modo gens nostra definienda esse videatur. Ecce contra quae ingenium compositum feliciter praestat; se ‘hybridam’ vocat, re ipsa tamen animum trigeminum continet, cui tigridis vires coniunxit. Haud mirum est quod consilia consociata facunde approbat, quamvis confusa sit natio nostra. Et quod etiam nunc saepe iuvat poetice cantare, nos ‘nunquam servitutis iugum passuros’ esse, haec scrutata illustravit, sed etiam, quod interdum incommodum videatur auditu, patefecit Britannos nonnunquam antehac id ipsum iugum acceptum ferre coactos esse. Hoc denique haec femina bene scit, quod nostrorum quidam iam mortuus quondam scripsit, eam quidem historiam vocare oportere quam necesse sit historicis legere. Honoramus igitur hanc cuius opera prorsum legenda esse alii permulti affirmaverunt et studiosi et qui rempublicam capessunt.

Praesento, Vice-Cancellaria, eam quam novisti Britannam excellere gravis auctoritatis, studiosam callidam, ingenio egregio praeditam, quae nos dubios et ea quae de natione dubitamus recte inter condiciones in rectam rationem revocare potest, Lindam Colley, Excellentissimi Ordinis Imperii Britannici Commendatricem, Academiae Britannicae Sociam, apud Universitatem Princetoniensem Professorem, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris.

Admission by the Vice-Chancellor

Clius dignissima cultrix, quam praeterita et praesentia, iamque status et leges civitatis vel scriptas vel adhuc scribendas explicantem nos sicut captivi acri animo legimus ut ad futura spectamus, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris honoris causa.

Paraphrase

On January 1st 2021 an Oxford historian remarked that history, ‘which interprets the past to understand the present and confront the future, is the least rewarding discipline for a dying species’. It is, of course, a fiction.¹ We fortunate survivors find our distinguished historians not only rewarding but necessary companions. Here is a scholar who already had clear and persuasive ideas about this century of ours – a ‘nasty, increasingly volatile world’, as she once put it – and our place in it. Her studies of our still united kingdom and of us Britons tell us much about where we came from and what we have been, and this at a time when some of us worry, I believe immoderately, about our identity. Herself a happy example of composite identity – she calls herself a ‘mongrel’ but in truth embodies and unites the spirits of Wales, Ireland and Northern England as well as her adoptive American tiger-sanctuary – she argues eloquently for common purpose, however fragmented our nation becomes. Here too is one who has analysed and illuminated the much-loved poetic vow that we would never be slaves, and also revealed some uncomfortable truths of Britons well and truly enslaved in the past. As our honorand knows well, one of our own now departed Souls once wrote that good history should be ‘must reading’ for historians.² But she has been deemed a ‘must read’ by many others too, from the academy to Downing Street.

Vice-Chancellor, I present to you one you already know as an influential Briton, a clever and original scholar, one who can put us and our anguished identity problems in historical perspective, Linda Colley, CBE, FBA, Professor at Princeton University, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Most worthy votary of Clio, whose words on both past and present, and on constitutions written and as yet unwritten we, your captive audience, keenly read as we confront the future, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

¹ P D James, *The Children of Men* (London, 1992), p13

² Lewis Namier, *Avenues of History* (London, 1952)

PROFESSOR ANNA DEAVERE SMITH

*Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto.*¹

Per annales equidem rerum gestarum rationes consideramus; nonne tamen Musis artes agitantibus, et inter eas theatrales, vitam humanam animo attentissimo reputabimus? Quam bene locutus est scriptor ille Romanus et ipse quondam servus. Quae adstat, haec ingenio usa artibusque scribendi vel in scaena agendi vel actores docendi illam reputationem intentissime atque acerrime fovet. Forsitan administrantes nostri Musis auxilio esse debeant, haec tamen institit certe administrationi opus esse Musarum beneficio. Ex verbis revera auditis concepit, prima produxit, nomine appellavit eam societatem qua inaudito ac vivido modo vires vitae cotidianae coniunxit et eas quae in scaena spectatae amplius animantur. Itaque et tempus quoddam prioris ‘Coronae’ revocamus et urbem eo tempore minus angelicam; tum enim civium summa dissensione iactatorum haec omni cuique parti facultatem dabat ut per suam narrationem vox eorum audiretur. Ceterum si volumus res illius populi memorare – immo his res addamus cuiuscumque nationis – necesse est, ut haec dicat, ita disserere ut voces omnium ordinum, omnium generum, civitatis denique omnium partium et virorum et feminarum recipiantur. Nec tamen narratio per se ipsa sufficit, neque ipsa cognitio. Haec et in scaena et in academia ad agendum provocat. ‘Observationibus’ eius notatis efficiamus ut non tantum percipiatur sed tandem evertatur id momentum inexorabile quo iuvenes ex ludis in carcerem adducantur. Eadem in studium linguarum scientiae puella incumberebat, omnemque fere linguam discere volebat ut generi hominum beneficio prodesset; hodie tamen praesento eam iam adultam quae idem sane anglica facundia usa efficit, cuius in fabulis plerumque indignatio iam in exordio percipitur, deinde maestitia nobis oblata denique vim veniae vel etiam amoris sentimus, Annam Deavere Smith, apud Universitatem Neo-Eboracensem professorem, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris.

Admission by the Vice-Chancellor

Melpomene rediviva, quae veras imagines offers ignium multiformium, ex crepusculo novam lucem adducis et ex fortunis hominum nova genera theatrale elicis, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris honoris causa.

Paraphrase

Yes, to be sure our historians help us make sense of things, but perhaps it is through art and theatre that we may be made to reflect most deeply on the human condition. Well did a Roman playwright, himself a former slave, say ‘I am human, so I think every human affair is my concern.’ Here beside me is one who has with great urgency and power used her talents as writer, director and actor to nurture such understanding. Whether or not the arts need the help of government, she has stressed that government needs the help of the arts. ‘Verbatim’ is the name, and the concept, she pioneered, bringing real life and the heightened life of the stage into new creative partnership. Through her we remember another ‘Corona’ time², and a less-than-angelic city², when communities fell into violent conflict; but she allowed the words and thoughts of individuals from every quarter to speak through her. To tell the story of her country – but let us so consider any country – she has said that you have to tell it through the voice of many people not just of one race, nor just of one gender. But telling, and understanding, are surely not enough. In her acting and her teaching she gives the call for action. Through her ‘Notes from the Field’ let us first see, then aspire to redirect, the ‘schools to prison pipeline’. When she was a schoolgirl, and an aspiring student of linguistics, she wanted to learn every language and thus make the world a better place, but today

I present to you an adult who can do just that through English alone, one whose plays usually start, as she puts it, ‘with outrage, then go through a form of mourning, and then usually end up with love or forgiveness’. Here is Anna Deavere Smith, Professor at New York University, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Melpomene’s mirror of many fires, who draw new dawn from twilight and new forms of theatre from the affairs of all humans, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

¹ Terence, *Heauton Timoroumenos* 1.1.25¹ The Crown Heights riot in Brooklyn, 1991² The Los Angeles riots, 1992

BARONESS RUTH LISTER OF BURTERSETT

*Haut facile emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat res angusta domi.*¹

Sunt tamen qui vocati se promptos praebeant. Ex agmine succedit femina animo ac manu prompta, quae sedecim annos sociis adiuncta vel etiam praeposita ad egestatem pro iuventute nostra debellandam egregie emersit; quod poeta Romanus scripsit haec ita probatum sensit ut pauci modo potuerant. Ea temperantia quam austero nomine appellatam iactaverunt duces nostri, haec monuit ut nos una conixi ad prosperitatem publicam uteremur. Num tamen aequae omnes tali oneri subiecti sunt? Hodie non praecepta tradere sed officia laudare mihi oratori, saltem Latine loquenti, propositum est; at haec honoranda multa quidem de morum nostrorum, de iurum statu animadvertere potest, neque haec omnino laetos nos audire decet. Ut quae apud academiam agat, scit quomodo ad res definiendas enitatur – paupertatem dico et aequalitatem et humani generis sexus discrimina, et civitatis salutem – et apud conscriptos ordinis superioris et singularis satis bene scit principes nostros et quae edicunt sanciantque lege interrogare. Ne dubitemus quin hoc Thomae illi, quem super revocavi, cordi esset. Sed ante omnia nostra interest hanc honorare quae pro iustitia, pro iuribus aequis, ut ita dicamus, propugnat; iam nunc enim studiosius operam dare volumus quo illi liberalius discipuli educantur *quorum iamdudum virtutibus adeo obstat res angusta domi* ut adhuc etiam cohibiti coerceantur. Legite sultis et quae haec de civibus scripsit, quales simus et quaenam munera nobis iniungantur, etiamque qualesnam ei sint, et qualia eis debeantur, quibus ianua nostra aliquando clausa videatur. Anna enim nostra veris verbis fabularum suarum monet ut hoc rogemus: Quid? Quod tua refert, idem praetermittendum?

Praesento doctorem insignem, scriptorem, vocem rerum publicarum viventem, Margot Ruth Alinam, Baronissam Lister de Burtersett, Excellentissimi Ordinis Imperii Britannici Commendatricem, Academiae Britannicae sociam, apud Universitatem Loughburgensem professorem, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris.

Admission by the Vice-Chancellor

Vitae communis investigatrix diligens, quae magistratus nostros scrutata interrogat et ad iustitiam pro civibus petendam eos et nos provocas, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris honoris causa.

Paraphrase

And the call to action has been answered by some. ‘No easy matter is it, anywhere, for a man to rise when poverty stands in the way of his merits,’ says another Roman poet, and here next in our line is a woman who for sixteen years first served and then led our Child Poverty Action Group, knowing this truth as few others have. ‘Austerity’, as she sees it, should surely mean some collective effort in which we all pull together in the common good, but we can hardly pretend that the burden has been equally distributed. The orator’s purpose here, at least in Latin, is not to preach but to praise, but this honorand has much to tell us about the state of human rights in our nation, and much that should cause us some discomfort. As an academic she knows how to look for definitions – of poverty, of equality, of gender, citizenship and welfare – and as a member of our curious Upper House she knows how to hold our government to account for its words and actions; we may be sure that Thomas Jefferson would approve. But above all let us honour one who fights for social justice especially while we strengthen our efforts at this University to promote the education of those able students who for long have faced formidable barriers that stand in the way of mobility and progress. Read also, and digest, what she tells us of the nature and obligations of citizenship – our own identity and our duties, but further than this the identity and the rights of those often apparently excluded. As Anna Deavere Smith’s ‘verbatim theatre’ bids us ask, ‘How can you mind your business at something you need to make your business?’

I present a distinguished teacher, writer and active political voice, Margot Ruth Aline Lister, Baroness Lister of Burtersett, CBE, FBA, Professor Emerita of Loughborough University, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Rigorous social scientist, effective interrogator and critic of our officers of state, who urge them and us to seek social justice, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

¹ Juvenal, *Satire* III.164f

JEANETTE WINTERSON

Auctorem nunc produco quae ex verbis solutis vere veniustiora texit, quae cognovit parvulos omnes ad unum divinitus inclinatos esse ad beate vivendum, nostri contra esse docere quomodo in miseria versari possimus. Edixit illam aetatem sermone atque litteris feliciter fructam res humanas ad meliora posse educere. Sed cuique nostrum his artibus recte uso vitae velut materiem latiore extendere licere. Fabulis vel carminibus vel disputationibus lectis tantum abesse ut nobis solum facta appareant. Immo mente atque animo imaginibus adhibitis ad veritatem intellegendam nos adduci; ubi felicissime fabulis excogitetur, ibidem vera maxima quidem inveniri. Haec a primis annis sermone ipso ducente viae longae se commisit, iam parvula a versione regis Iacobi scripturae sanctae profecta; neque unquam sermonis ipsius neque narrationum delectatio eam deseruit - verba enim, ut dicit, fabularum modo militanti usui sunt modo amanti. Nos etiam, cum mira huius librorum arte fruimur, in ea transimus quae elaborata elicit, ubi extra cotidiana parumper commoremur. Oxoniae studiosa ubique libros mirata invenit adesse et, quod etiam magis placuit, animadvertit nil opus esse, si quis ex improvise advenisset, libro statim abdito. Oxoniae eam denuo salutantes atque honorantes haud scio an diceremus illos mores adhuc teneri, nobisque adhuc dari libere legere et scribere, alique alium libere colloquentem audire. Certe illas opes sentimus quae ex libris huius aperiantur; posthac tamen aliis etiam fructibus hac scribente datis, nil timendum est ne mox desinamus tali alimento foveri.

Hanc igitur praesento quae fabulis scribendis velut regiones affectuum et motuum animi conceptas parit, Jeanette Winterson, Excellentissimi Ordinis Imperii Britannici Commendatricem, apud Universitatem Mancuniensem professorem, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris.

Admission by the Vice-Chancellor

Verborum et imaginum creatrix, quae rerum fictarum veritatem et litterarum veras vires praebuisti, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Litteris honoris causa.

Paraphrase

I now introduce a writer, a poet in prose, who knows that children - indeed all children - are predisposed to be happy; it is we who teach them how to be depressed. And she knows that through the experience of literature and language young people may change the world for the better. But art, in her words, presents for all of us an opportunity to stretch the ordinary material and fabric of life. In reading fiction, poetry and philosophy we find so much more than information, she tells us. Through the inventive imagination we may find truth, for 'the greatest truth', as she insists, 'is in the most feigning.' Her own path in life has been a long adventure in language starting from the King James Bible of her youth, and a continuing delight in words - they can be both weapons and love affairs, she says - and the stories they can tell. In reading her highly crafted books we find for ourselves that place that she wants to create - a place outside the confines of our daily lives. Oxford was for her younger self a place not only full of books but one where, when someone knocks on the door, you need not hide your book under the pillow. Welcoming her back here, and honouring her, may we tell her that it is still such a place, where we freely read, write, speak, and listen? Certainly, it is a place where many of us sense that buried treasure that lies at the heart of so many of her books - but we know that these are 'not the only fruits', for in her case we have no imminent 'sense of an ending'.

I present an author who sees, and creates, in fiction a place of feeling and passion, Jeanette Winterson CBE, graduate of St Catherine's College and Professor at the University of Manchester, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Conjurer of words and ideas, who show us the truth of fiction and the Power of the Book, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Degree of Doctor of Science

PROFESSOR DAME SALLY DAVIES

*...crescunt animalia quaedam minuta, quae non possunt oculi consequi...*¹

Cui poeta quidam noster olim assensit; sed investigatores haec consecuti ita clare dispexerunt ut pro certo habeamus parvula non semper omnino diligenda esse. Iampridem enim, ut haec honoranda admonet, hoc observavit maximus ille Ludovicus, quod quantumvis in timorem haec minutula multiplicata nos obnoxios coniciunt, tantundem hoc solacio nobis oportet esse, quod disciplinae nostrae non semper hostibus huius generis cedere cogentur. Quam spem tamen etsi trimuviri olim insignes erexerunt, simul monuit primus eorum ne mirifica quidem medicamenta in aeternum valere posse. Haec enim quae bacteria vocamus cum minuscula sunt tum callide ac constanter militant – ita saltem similia videntur eis quae apud nos ‘viri’ nomine fruuntur – ut nunquam nisi sollertia adhibita munimenta eorum refracturi simus. Ecce incurrit investigatrix artis medicinae perita, quae moleculas falcatas victrix debellavit, quae ingenio ac verbis usa ad hostes gravissimos exsuperandos nobis subvenit. Sicut temporibus ac locis mutantibus obstamus ita cum has moleculas hostiles repugnamus, prospere quidem gerentes, ut dicit, nova pericula solemus allectare. Attamen et officiis functa et peritia scienter freta haec advertit nos omnes una cum peritis nitentes minis huic orbi imminetibus posse obsistere. Ceterum pericula ubique adstantia respicientes et nos et eos qui res nostras regunt, quippe qui sciamus quid iam accidat, animo firmo ac vigilantibus obviam ire debemus. Scilicet hac ducente collegae et discipuli Cantabrigienses semper clarius percipient summi momenti esse salutem ipsorum et reipublicae et populorum omnium, nec quicquam inter bona nostra pluris esse pendendum.

Praesentatam accipe, quaeso, inter fidicines violam, medicam insignem, publici consilii atque administrandorum auctorem, veram denique doctorem, Sally Davies, Honorabilissimi Ordinis de Balneo Magnae Crucis Dominam Commendatricem, Regiae Societatis sodalem, apud Universitatem Cantabrigiensem Collegii Trinitatis Magistrum, ut admittatur honoris causa ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia.

Admission by the Vice-Chancellor

Ictu certa artium Apollinis vel canendi vel sanandi, quae ad medicinam et educationem spem rationemque confers, ego auctoritate mea et totius Universitatis admitto te ad gradum Doctoris in Scientia honoris causa.

Paraphrase

‘The microbe,’ said an Oxford poet of a bygone age, ‘is so very small you cannot make him out at all.’ But scientists have made him out all too clearly, and have seen that small is not always beautiful. Long ago, as our honorand reminds us, the great Pasteur observed: ‘If it is a terrifying thought that life is at the mercy of the multiplication of these minute bodies, it is a consoling hope that science will not always remain powerless before such enemies.’¹ But such hope, so signally reaffirmed by Fleming, Florey and Chain, carried a warning from the first of that Oxford trio, that even wonder-drugs might come to be ineffective. For all their minuteness, bacteria are cunning and steadfast tacticians – this much at least they have in common with viruses – and human ingenuity will always be needed to break their defences. Here is a researcher and clinician, a tested warrior against the sickle cell, who has used both intellect and persuasion to assist our struggle with formidable foes; antimicrobial resistance, she tells us, is like climate change in that we are victims of our own success. Nevertheless, as public officer and scientific authority she has counselled us that with action on the part of scientists and of every one of us, we can confront the global threat. But in the face of danger we and our governments must react vigilantly and decisively when we ‘know what is happening’ in the world around us. We may be sure that Cambridge students and colleagues will be increasingly appreciative of their own health, and that of public and the world, as the most precious of human assets.

I present a violist, a doctor, a guide in public and government policy, a true educator, Sally Davies, Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, Fellow of the Royal Society, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, to be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

Sure-aimed adjutant of Apollo’s musical and healing arts, voice of reason and hope in medical and educational progress, I on my own authority and that of the whole University admit you to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

¹Varro, *De Re Rustica* I.12

¹*Germ Theory and Its Applications to Medicine and Surgery*, 1878 (Transl. E C Ernst)

2 Encaenia

The Public Orator delivered the Creweian Oration:

Public Orator: Insignissima Vice-Cancellaria, licetne anglice loqui?

Vice-Chancellor: Licet.

Public Orator: Gaudeamus igitur!

*Wundor is tó secganne
hú mihtig god manna cynne
þurh sidne sefan snyttru bryttað
eard ond eorlscipe- hé áh ealra gewæld.*

Who will deny me this interpretation of our Vice-Chancellor's generous *licentia*? For here our native hero Beowulf is reminded by a foreigner of the ways of good fortune; long may we treasure such words, and long may we be mindful of our need to deserve them. We may read them transformed, 'Englished', as we once used to say, by an Irishman and European, one of our recent Professors of Poetry, Seamus Heaney: 'It is a great wonder How Almighty God in his magnificence / Favours our race with rank and scope / And the gift of wisdom; / His sway is wide.' But I urge us all to read on - for a most judicious Old English caution - out with you notebooks, for the lines are those following 1724.

Here, then, we find ourselves, by the grace of all our gods, reduced in numbers but not in spirit, to honour our guests and record our thanks to those who have remembered us, believed in us, trusted us, and in that trust supported our endeavours. It is the 352nd year of the Sheldonian Theatre, and something like that of the Creweian Oration itself. Our ceremony has emerged from the mothballs. Last year your orator was unable to stand, or rise, above these strange *fascies* of the Proctor's Box to pose his risky request to the Chancellor. Among so many other sadnesses of that year we were deprived of the company of these our distinguish *honorandae* - note the proud and unapologetic Latin feminine plural - who were to help us celebrate another Sheldonian anniversary, namely the hundredth year since women first collected degrees in this fine building.

It is a centenary we may mention with somewhat muted pride if we consider, as I believe we should, that many women had, by all reasonable criteria, already qualified in this University for the degrees they were not formally awarded until that year. I pass over in silence - well, in near silence, as I think a wider context is interesting and instructive - the fact that on January 17th this year the Magic Circle (admittedly not an Oxford Faculty) celebrated another centenary, namely that of the first sawing in half of a woman, an illusion as iconic, according to the present-day President of the Circle, as pulling a rabbit out of a hat. I quote him: 'For every person who thought it was great that women were getting the vote there were other people who thought it great that a woman was being put in a box and sawn in half.'

In what I hope is a more constructive, restorative spirit, we welcome our honorands in another year in which gender is noticed in many arenas and forums - forgive me, I mean *fora*, neuter plural - not least the international and the epidemiological. As a joint male-female-authored article in the *Guardian* delicately put it not so long ago, 'Plenty of countries with male leaders have also done well. But few with female leaders have done badly.'

Now one of our recent honorands, Dame Mary Beard, has advised us all not to be so 'fixated' on Oxford, or Cambridge for that matter. I take this on the chin, and I acknowledge without any reserve that there are other places, while I remain happy to be where I am. Meanwhile our own reporting of our University's concerns and achievements has often fallen into the broad and stark classification: 'COVID-19' and 'Beyond COVID'. Just after my last Creweian Oration was printed, we heard that our own Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science had conducted an exhaustive study and confirmed the effectiveness of face coverings in reducing virus transmission and protecting ourselves and each other. Since then, satisfyingly prominent among those of our researchers who were distinguished in the New Year and Birthday Honours lists over the last year were leaders of teams that helped to tackle the pandemic and its ravages; their names are legion, and as true leaders they have been quick to point out that their teams contained numerous brilliant and heroic members whose honours are yet to come.

We are also delighted that five of our colleagues in divers fields have this year been elected Fellows of the British Academy, and six as Fellows of the Royal Society; and we heartily congratulate Sir Roger Penrose on his Nobel Prize for Physics. I would set him and his life's work, in stark contrast, alongside a press statement I have been shown, which reports the findings of a study on the history of our Earth, conducted by our Mathematical Ecology Research Group. 'New Oxford University research,' states the report, 'suggests that is quite unlikely that intelligent life exists in the University.' Caveat lector.

Mathematics is indeed wonderful, as was clear from the student broadsheet, *Cherwell*, which has taken a very reasonable interest in the ontology of the Cecil Rhodes statue. Last year, defying the advice of my 'sensitivity reader' (I believe the student newspapers have their own such advisers), I advised that whatever of Cecil Rhodes' actions and achievements may be lauded or deplored, we must acknowledge his function in 're-enlivening the High Street', and we may recognise his ongoing obligation to focus our minds on improving both our knowledge of history and our record of equal opportunities for all. That will be a legacy 'more enduring than bronze', as a Roman poet once said, and one that 'will not wholly die'.

Opinions are still regularly solicited and clearly voiced, and *Cherwell*'s report informed us on May 28th that 'of the 982 members of the general public who submitted their views, 996 were opposed to moving the statue.' I have read, incidentally, that in Rhodes' bedroom, which was left unchanged for a time after he died, there was a copy of the *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*. One passage at least was marked, and it read: 'Take care always to remember that you are a Roman... Have a care that you are not too much of a Caesar.' Outside, says a biographical essay, stretched the heroic landscape of Capetown, with its Roman pines.

Now gradually we reacquaint ourselves with what we fondly remember as 'normality', cautiously masking our faces, our fears and griefs, and with these our happy expressions as we note that in our preferred sources we are again ranked number one in the world. We have many reasons to give thanks, and many persons and foundations to receive our thanks, both in Oxford and in the world that laps up more and more urgently against the walls of the ivory tower, the world with which it is

our business to engage. As always, Nathaniel Crewe, one-time Rector and all-time friend of Lincoln College and its students, bids us note and praise the generosity of our benefactors.

Let me, then, start with some of the most obvious areas of health and welfare. The Huo Family Foundation has enabled us to establish a Coronavirus Research Fund in the Medical Sciences Division and a programme at the Oxford Internet Institute. Lest COVID should eclipse all other concerns, I may add that the second of these grants has been awarded for the next three years to support the institute's team that conducts studies into the effect of social media and gaming use on adolescent wellbeing. Meanwhile a major donation from the Peter Bennett Foundation will establish the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science, with the aim of improving use of data, evidence and digital tools in healthcare and policy. The foundation itself was formed in 2013 to promote equity and reduce poverty through direct donations and institutional support. Working in Hong Kong, China and South East Asia, the foundation supports NGOs and other organisations in health, education and welfare in countries of greatest need.

The Kavli Foundation is no more fixated upon Oxford than the Huo or the Bennett. There were already four Kavli Institutes in flourishing existence, conducting research in astrophysics, nanoscience, neuroscience and theoretical physics. But in its twentieth year the foundation has chosen Oxford for its fifth, a new Kavli Institute for NanoScience, where collaborative and 'cross-pollinating' work will be done in structural biology, biochemistry, pathology, chemistry, physics, physiology and engineering. Many scientists will, openly or confidentially, admit that the greatest motivator of all for productive research is the sheer excitement of the work, but it is clear that institutes such as these will aim to strengthen the connection between science and society.

Laymen like me are used to seeing nanoscience described as 'thinking big, working small'. Not quite so small are the viruses and microbial pests of a kind that perhaps Varro and Belloc intuited in their respective former ages. But they are small enough to demand meticulous attention. Dame Sally Davies will, I trust, rejoice with us in the munificence of INEOS, and the establishment of the Ineos Oxford Institute, which will create collaborative links across the sciences to focus on drug discovery for humans and animals, and raise awareness and promote responsible use of antimicrobial drugs. The institute will also contribute to research on the type and extent of drug-resistant microbes across the world and will seek to attract and train very bright minds in science to tackle this 'silent pandemic', as it has been called.

Bright minds. Well, what better moment to introduce some that we have with us here at the start of their careers. Each year our four University divisions are invited to submit a selection of names from their longer lists of stellar students. Happily now we see those from 2020 as well as this year. Their names and prizes are listed in your booklets, but I feel I cannot just leave it at that. As I looked admiringly at the rich and international array of surnames of those coming to join us today, they seemed to fall nicely into two (almost) Latin hexameters, for which I must assume the Vice-Chancellor's second *licence*. So now, arise, and hear our congratulations,

*Henderson et Szelogowski, Godard, Ayyar, Wolstenholme, Durston,
Krishnan et Mayer-Jacquelin, Stapleton et Canas Correia!*

You may now sit down and relax, though I know that comfort cannot have been uppermost in the mind of our revered Sheldonian architect. More modern buildings tend to show different priorities. Our newest college has been of considerable interest to all of us, and my own interest has been partly linguistic. When asked how to Latinise its earlier, preliminary name of 'Parks College' I naturally thought of Paradise – Parks and Paradise being in the ancient world often closely related in word and concept. The 'College on Parks Road', or rather 'on Paradise Way' became 'Reuben College' last year, following the Reuben Family's and the Reuben Foundation's magnificent core endowment. The new baby is a boy, for Reuben is Hebrew from 'Behold, a boy!' The formal name of the college will thus show a happy alliance of Rome and Jerusalem. But there is now more to say, for in a further donation this year the Reuben Foundation has enabled the construction of an accommodation block on Winchester Road, and, at the back of its gardens, a Reuben Graduate Centre.

While our No. 10 classicist, taking a much-needed break from his Homeric studies, turned to Rome and remembered Cicero's assertion that 'the health of the people should be the supreme law', one of our theologians said in a Thought for the Day that 'lockdown' was not only a law, but a state of mind. It was indeed a state of mind at one time pining for the outside world and its fresh bluebells, such as those around Barnard Castle. George Orwell commented in his wartime essay 'The Lion and the Unicorn' that, after the battle of Waterloo, the opening battles of all subsequent wars have been lost on the playing-fields of Eton. I have it on some authority that one battle broke out some decades ago in the Junior Common Room of Exeter College, in which the contemporary undergraduates, ancient historian Cummings and Hancock – PPE man with a great future behind him – first squared up to each other. History, however rewritten – and is it not, in a sense, the job of historians to do so? – tells us of the mutual destructions of war; though some wars have been worth the fighting. But I believe the sentence immediately following Orwell's Etonian observation is less often remembered. It is as follows: 'One of the dominant facts in English life during the past three quarters of a century has been the decay of ability in the ruling class.'

I am not sure – nor, as far as I can tell, is anyone else – who first commented that making predictions is especially difficult about the future, though I feel almost sure that someone will soon tell me, rightly or wrongly. But some of our serious fears for the future seem well grounded on evidence and experience. And I dare say that sustainable finance will be a requirement for any alleviation of our greatest fears about our environment and about social and economic conditions around the world. That is surely an assumption underlying the establishment of a senior academic post in sustainable finance in our Social Sciences Division, based at the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment within the School of Geography and the Environment. It is, I am told, the first such endowed post at any major university anywhere, and we owe its establishment to an endowment from Bank Lombard Odier. We are also deeply grateful to Alan and Gill Gray Philanthropies for financing a new programme at the Oxford Martin School to identify how international development can deliver meaningful work and livelihoods for all citizens. The programme – I quote here what seems eminently quotable from our excellent engines

of publicity – ‘aims to reframe development away from the preoccupation with aggregate growth and focus on shared prosperity in the face of global challenges including climate change, technological advancement and demographic shifts. It will also provide an agenda for action in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely derailed the development agenda.’

We aim to be good at anniversaries. One of the most important of our own I have already mentioned, though it was in fact last year’s, and, as I write (this was indeed on Saturday the 11th) I know that we join our American friends and colleagues in heartfelt remembrance of the events of that September day 20 years ago. I pass respectfully over this year’s centennial of the Communist Party of China, though I join those who congratulate it on discovering the acceptable face of capitalism. I had better not dwell on the 300th year of the South Sea Bubble and, regretfully, I must do no more than nod at the 75th birthday of my childhood hero Dennis the Menace. But I must draw attention to two more. The 400th of our ancient Botanic Garden was celebrated by a multinational meeting of health ministers to mark the end of the G-7 Health Ministers’ Meeting here in Oxford. The bluebell season was over, but trees were planted, notably 10 Japanese cherry blossoms, one for each minister. In Japan these trees are sometimes seen as a metaphor for the transience of human life, beautiful and fleeting, while the Botanic Garden into which they have been planted started its own life, perhaps more optimistically, as a place where medical students from the University were taught how to identify medicinal plants. We may thus reflect on our losses especially through the last 18 months, and at the same time on our hopes and thanks for remedies, healing and protection.

And so to the septcentenary of the death of Dante Alighieri, whose life and works we are about to celebrate in various programmes you may see described on the TORCH website. One or two friends of mine in Italy are even prepared to make him an Oxford man, though it seems hard to trace our influence on him; his influence on us is a different matter. Not so long ago we were told by a European leader, who perhaps had relevant personal knowledge, that there was a special place in Hell for some of us in Britain. I find it sometimes a little odd and perverse that the Inferno seems to exert more of a pull-factor than does Paradise, but although I have no special expertise I feel sure that there are special places in that happier realm – maybe even somewhere in the fourth sphere (notebooks out again) – for many of our friends and colleagues and Honorary Fellows who passed away over the last 12 months.

I call to mind Roger Hood, Edward Mortimer and William St Clair of All Souls; Malcolm Green and Donald Harris of Balliol; John Davies and Richard Totterman, Brasenose; Chris Butler, Peter Matthews, David Buckingham, Jack Ellis Paton, Jan Morris, Sir Brian Urquhart and The Rt Hon Lord Robert Armstrong of Christ Church; Robert Guy, Corpus Christi; Sir James Gowans, Ian Michael, Peter Sleight, Cyril Mango, Dominic Donnelly and The Revd Graham Shaw of Exeter; Clark Brundin, former President of Templeton College, and David Millard, Gerald Truscott Warner, Jennie Turner and Godfrey Hodgson of Green Templeton; Ann McDermid Mann, Sandy Stewart and Yvonne Pye of Harris Manchester; Lord Ashburton, Gerald Stone and John Torrance of Hertford;

Michael Woolfson, Clark Brundin, Victor Wood, Peter Esnouf, Tony Downs, Anthony Pilkington and Michael Fenwick, Fellows of Jesus; Angus Hawkins of Keble; Chris Day of Kellogg; Jane Day, Susan Reynolds, Elizabeth Mackenzie and Alain Viala of Lady Margaret Hall; Lincoln’s Michael Furmston, David Kenning, David Cornwell (also known as John le Carré) and Sir James Gowans; Frederick R Whatley and Gordon Claridge of Magdalen; Mansfield’s former Principal Donald Sykes and former Bursar Allan Dodd; J Peter Neary and Jim Coulton of Merton; David Raeburn of New College; Thomas Symons of Oriel; Peter Neumann, Allen Hill and Bill Frankland of the Queen’s College; Ann Waswo, David Washbrook, Geoffrey Elliott and Nemir Kirdar of St Antony’s; William Miller and Philip Morsberger, St Edmund Hall; Margaret Christie, Jane Minto (also known as Jane Struthers), Jane Mellanby, Mary Wagley, Dame Fiona Caldicott and Toni Morrison, all of St Hilda’s; Patrick John Fitzgerald, Trinity; Marcus Banks and Bryan Sykes, Wolfson; The Rt Revd Alec Graham, Raymond Franklin and Francis John Lampert of Worcester. Though there will be omissions of names that I have not received, I thank our Heads of Houses for the names I do have. And to all our late lamented colleagues: *Lux perpetua luceat eis*.

My colleague Bodley’s Librarian has turned part of his attention to book-burning, that is to say, to the frequent and multifarious episodes of the destruction of humanity’s written records – what some might call attempted erasures of history. The good guys in these histories have often been the librarians themselves, who heroically saved and preserved books and manuscripts, often at great, even mortal, risk to themselves. We owe them much, but we in our own various disciplines we can play some role too, and resist what seems to me a rising call to ‘erase’ books that may have connections, through authorship or otherwise, with persons and agencies who are no longer the flavour of the day.

On that note, or at least a consonant one, surely the adding of names, like that of information, will in the long run tell us more about history than their removal. The history of our distinguished chair in German studies enters a new phase at a time when German language studies are clearly under threat in universities across Europe, and many departments have closed in the UK in the last ten years. Not for the first time, this University is greatly indebted to the Dieter Schwarz Stiftung; in 2018 the foundation made a generous donation in support of students of German here, and this year it has securely endowed what was from 1907 the Taylor Chair, and henceforth becomes the Schwarz-Taylor Chair of the German Language and Literature.

Difficulty, we must never tire of saying, should be one of the greatest pull-factors for well-motivated students.

*Oh God! How long is art,
Our life how short!*

says the student Wagner to the immortal Goethe’s Professor Faust, who seems at this point less troubled by the contrast.

*Oh God! How long is art,
Our life how short! With earnest zeal
Still as I ply the critic’s task, I feel
A strange oppression both of head and heart.
The very means how hardly are they won,
By which we to the fountains rise!*

Come to Oxford, young Wagner, and your efforts will be fostered, redoubled, and amply rewarded. The English translation, by the way, is that of the Liverpool-born Anna Swanwick, fine scholar, translator and feminist. Do look her up; hers is one of the important names in the foundation and early history of our Somerville College. We may feel some retrospective jealousy of the University of Aberdeen, for I believe it was there alone that she was awarded her honorary doctorate.

Immortality, I admit, is a difficult subject to speak of with any authority, unless you are a poet. But there are glimpses of it in some of our museums, which continue to look after, and instruct us about, their collections while increasingly addressing the question of what belongs where. Mr Hiroaki Shikanai and Mrs Atsuko Shikanai seem happy for the Ashmolean to continue to look after its splendid Japanese holdings – happy enough, in fact, to safeguard them through their generosity and vision. They have, say my sources, ensured that Japan shall always be at the heart of the museum, recognised through the naming of the Shikanai Galleries, dedicated to Japan from 1600 to the present day. I also urge you to visit the exhibition the Shikanais have sponsored, ‘TOKYO: Art and Photography’, which has been equally and unequivocally praised by those twin pillars of our world order, the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph*.

In his last years in exile Dante received a Latin letter from his friend the Public Orator of the University of Bologna. The letter urged the poet to turn back from Italian, to write about more weighty subjects than those that had been his recent concerns, and be a proper poet, i.e. a Latin poet. Dante cleverly replied in near-perfect Vergilian Latin to explain why he could not comply. His last poetic words thus appear to have been in Latin, but his magnum opus, the Divine Comedy, was in the vernacular, or something like it. To return for a last moment to Paradise, Vice-Chancellor, may Dante speak in Italian?

*La gloria di colui che tutto move
Per l'universo penetra, e risplende
In una parte più, e meno altrove.*

And without any sense of fixation I give you the translation of Oxford's Dorothy Sayers and Barbara Reynolds of Cambridge, University College, London and Nottingham.

*The glory of him who moves all things so'er
Impenetrates the universe, and bright
The splendor burns, more here and lesser there.*

We have often felt, and praised, the beauty of our buildings and our grounds and gardens, in which I think God's glory is particularly present and manifest. But our lifeblood is of course in our men and women, our teachers, researchers, students and administrators. And our lifeblood is mixed. And part of the mix comes from those who have fled from tyranny and chaos elsewhere and found peace, freedom and opportunity in our country. I owe my existence to one such immigrant, my father, who escaped from oppression and found here what he first thought was a political paradise, though later he came to question this assessment.

We are now to welcome, I hope, many more newcomers. Some who come to our shores may one day become football or tennis stars, entrepreneurs, even political leaders to restore George Orwell's confidence, if perchance he may be

sitting somewhere and looking down or up at us. And some will be excellent students and academics and contribute to our University's future life and prosperity. I suppose we do not need to be told it, but it was nicely put by St Paul (or someone else whom we now call Paul) in his letter to an Israelite community now simply known to us as the 'Hebrews'. In that letter the writer seems to acknowledge a time-honoured tradition in recommending hospitality. As the Vulgate puts it, *charitas fraternitatis maneat in vobis. et hospitalitatem nolite oblivisci, per hanc enim latuerunt quidam angelis hospitio receptis*. 'Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.' (Heb. 13.1,2.) Well, Amen to that!