

Lord Oxburgh of Liverpool
Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*
Citation

Lord Oxburgh of Liverpool, whom we honour today, is no stranger to strenuous challenges. His achievements are many. They are also remarkably varied. It is impressive, but not unprecedented, for someone to excel in science, or in academic administration, or in business management. But it is highly unusual for someone to excel in all three, as Lord Oxburgh has done. His many gifts are matched only by his formidable energy.

Born in Liverpool, England, in 1934, Ernest Ronald Oxburgh experienced as a young man the destruction of war at first hand. Liverpool was one of the cities devastated by German bombing. Unlike many British children who were evacuated from war torn cities, young Ronald stayed with his family. His own grandfather's printing works was reduced to rubble after one air raid. With peace restored, Lord Oxburgh began his adult academic career by reading Classics (Latin and Greek) at the University of Oxford, before switching to Geology which he pursued further at Princeton University in the United States. At Princeton, Lord Oxburgh received his PhD; it was there that he married his fiancée, Ursula. The couple then returned to Oxford where they raised their three children (two daughters and a son), and where Lord Oxburgh spent the next 18 years teaching Geology and Geophysics. His academic career spans appointments at Cambridge, Cornell, Stanford and the California Institute of Technology. Lord Oxburgh is especially interested in the thermal behaviour of the Earth's crust; recently he has turned his attention to energy consumption and climate change. And in tandem with his research, Lord Oxburgh has played a significant role as an administrator. During the 1980s he was Head of the Department of Earth Sciences and President of Queen's College Cambridge; from 1993 until 2001, he was Rector of Imperial College.

University positions, as academic and administrator, have not stopped Lord Oxburgh from making major contributions to government and business. From 1987-1993, he was Chief Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Defence, while in 2004, as Chairman of Shell, Lord Oxburgh oversaw its unification with Royal Dutch to form a single company. The job completed, he then stepped down from the Chairmanship. A strong advocate of tax policies and tougher laws aimed at the reduction of CO₂ emissions, Lord Oxburgh helped initiate Shell's ongoing strategy of expanding its expertise into such environmentally-friendly technologies as wave and tidal power.

His love of nature is by no means purely academic, however. When Lord Oxburgh finds time to relax, he enjoys nothing more than mountaineering. He has climbed in Scotland, the Alps and the Andes – and also traversed the peaks and ridge walks of Hong Kong Island and the New Territories! And Lord Oxburgh has another Hong Kong connection too, serving as a University Grants Committee member for most of the 1990s. Indeed, it was as a UGC panel chair, that he first came to Lingnan University in 2002. He now advises the Government of Singapore on research in the field of energy and the environment, and is also an adviser to Climate Change Capital, Low Carbon Initiative, and Chairman elect of D1 Oils. It is less well known that Lord

Oxburgh is keenly involved in charity work. He chaired the Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics Network, an organization aimed at promoting these subjects among young people.

Many honours attest to Lord Oxburgh's reputation as a scientist:

- He is a Fellow of the Royal Society, and a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering and the US Academy of Sciences.
- He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Cambridge.
- He is Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Natural History Museum, London
- In the 1999 Queen's Birthday Honours List, his services to science were recognized when he was made a life peer and took the title Lord Oxburgh of Liverpool in the county of Merseyside.
- In that capacity, he chaired the House of Lords' Select Committee on Science and Technology.

The great German sociologist, Max Weber, once wrote: "To be overtaken in science is not only the fate of every one of us, but also our common goal. We cannot work without hoping that others will get further than we do. Such progress is in principle infinite, and here we come to the problem of the meaning of science. For it is simply not self-evident that something which is subject to such a law of progress is in itself meaningful and rational. Why should one do something which in reality never comes to an end and never can?" Weber, writing at the end of the First World War, championed science against its romantic detractors who craved "experience" more than knowledge or wisdom. But what is the answer to the question he posed? What is the meaning of an activity that has no end? We find at least a partial answer in the man we celebrate today. Lord Oxburgh lives his life not only as a scientist but as someone for whom science is a form of service to the wider community. He uses the rigour of his scientific training to enhance standards, bridge academic divides, and raise awareness of vital issues of public concern - such as global warming and the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. His is an example truly worth emulating.

Lord Oxburgh is, of course, a native of the city of Liverpool. Fans of Liverpool Football Club will remember, and doubtless have sung, the famous anthem which culminates in the lines "You'll never walk alone". Lingnan's university anthem is not as catchy, Lord Oxburgh, as the one that enthuses the crowds at Liverpool's football stadium. Still, take home with you the message that you will always be an honoured guest here - and that, should we be lucky enough to spot you on our campus, you'll never walk alone.

Mr Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to ask you to confer on Lord Oxburgh the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

奧斯栢勳爵

榮譽法學博士

贊辭

今天，嶺南大學要表揚的奧斯栢勳爵，無懼艱鉅挑戰，在多方面皆取得顯赫的成就。自古以來，能夠在科學、大學管理或商業管理的其中一個領域表現卓越，雖非絕無僅有，但已是很難得；然而，能像勳爵一樣在這三方面同時具有鉅大成就的，真的是非常罕見。勳爵的才華及孜孜不倦的精神，令人欽佩。

奧斯栢勳爵於1934年在英國利物浦出生。戰時，利物浦是其中一個遭德軍嚴重破壞的城市，因此他在少時即親歷戰爭的禍害。年輕的勳爵有別於大部份被撤離戰區的英國兒童，他選擇了與家人一起留在戰區。在一次空襲中，其祖父的藝術畫像珍藏更遭摧毀殆盡。戰亂過後，勳爵首先在牛津大學研讀拉丁及希臘古籍，從此開始其學術研究生涯。之後，他遠赴美國普林斯頓大學轉攻讀地質學，在那裡考取博士學位，並與厄斯拉小姐結連理。二人其後返回英國牛津，把他們的三名子女（兩女一子）教養長大。其後的十八年，勳爵在牛津大學教授地質學及地球物理學，並先後於劍橋大學、康奈爾大學、史丹福大學及加州理工學院等院校擔任各項學術上的工作與職務。勳爵對地殼的熱能變化尤其感興趣，近來更轉研能源耗量及氣候變化。除了研究之外，勳爵在管理方面亦展現其才華。在80年代，他曾擔任劍橋大學皇后學院院長及地球科學系主任，並在1993年至2001年期間出任倫敦大學帝國學院院長一職。

儘管勳爵同時兼顧教學和行政職務，仍然無礙他對政府及商界作出貢獻的熱誠。1987至1993年間，他曾任國防部首席科學顧問。於2004年出任蜆殼公司主席時，成功將公司與荷蘭皇家公司合併，功成後便退下主席一職。勳爵一直積極推動以徵稅及立法管制減低二氧化碳的排放量，更協助蜆殼公司發展潮汐發電等環保科技的長期策略。

勳爵對大自然的關愛並不限於學術上的鑽研，他的最愛是登山，因此會在空暇時間登山為樂，以鬆馳精神。他曾攀登蘇格蘭、阿爾卑斯及安第斯等山脈上，並攀越香港港島及新界的萬山峻嶺。勳爵與香港的因緣還包括於90年代出任大學教育資助委員會(簡稱教資會)委員；更於2002年以教資會嶺大小組委員會主席的身份首次訪問嶺南大學。勳爵現為新加坡政府能源及環境研究顧問，同時擔任投資機構Climate Change Capital及Low Carbon Initiative顧問，以及D1石油公司主席等職。勳爵較鮮為人知的另一面，是其對慈善活動的積極投入。他曾任「科學、工程、科技及數學網絡組織」主席，銳意向青少年推廣有關科目的知識。

奧斯栢勳爵在科學界榮獲下列各項殊榮：

- 英國皇家學會、英國皇家工程學院及美國科學學院院士；
- 劍橋大學榮譽教授；

- 倫敦自然歷史博物館信託董事會主席；
- 1999年英女皇壽辰時獲頒終身貴族勳銜，並同時成為默西塞德郡利物浦勳爵，表彰他在科學領域的卓越服務；
- 受委為英國上議院科技特別委員會主席。

偉大的德國社會學家馬克斯·韋伯曾說：「科學發展超越人類發展，不單是我們每一個人的命運，而是我們的共同目標。前進的動力在於希望有超越自己的人。這個發展定律本來應無窮無盡，但隨即我們又要面對如何解釋科學的意義的問題；因為似乎受制於發展定律的事情本身，它不一定是有意義和理性的。如我們明知某些事情在現實情況下是沒有終結和不可能終結的話，那我們還為什麼要去幹這些事？」韋伯在第一次世界大戰後曾論述，他擁護科學，反對浪漫主義者指「經驗」比知識和智慧更重要的理論。可是對於上述他自己提出的問題，他又如何解答？沒有終結的行動意義又何在？其實，我們在勳爵身上已可以找到部份答案。勳爵一生不僅從事科學研究，而是希望以科學服務社會。他利用其嚴謹的科學訓練，不遺餘力地努力提升學術質素、融滙整合學術上的分歧，並喚起公眾關注全球暖化及核武危機等與他們息息相關的問題。奧斯栢勳爵實在是我們學習的好榜樣。

勳爵生於利物浦，擁戴利物浦足球會的球迷想必會記得及曾經唱過球會的會歌，其中深具代表性的一句是「你決不會單獨而行」("You'll never walk alone")。奧斯栢勳爵，嶺南大學的校歌，可能不會好像利物浦足球會的會歌那樣能振奮處身球場的萬千球迷，可是我們希望您帶回家一個訊息，您永遠是嶺南大學的尊貴嘉賓，在嶺大的校園內，您決不會獨行。

我謹此恭請主席先生頒授榮譽法學博士予奧斯栢勳爵，以資表揚。