

schools by both the *THES* and the *SJTU* ranking tables in 2005. Moreover, there were no Belgian universities listed in *SJTU*'s top 100. By contrast, only 1.3 percent of top officials were cultivated in Canadian universities, despite the fact that, respectively, 8 and 12 Canadian universities were ranked in the top 200 by the *THES* and *SJTU*.

The advantage these western European universities enjoy appears related to geography. A considerable number of principal secretariats for international organizations are located in western Europe. Specifically, 60.2 percent of 21,612 principal secretariats were located in western Europe. Of the principal secretariats, 32.3 percent were located in the four western European countries already mentioned—France (11.4%), Belgium (14%), Germany (3.5%), and the Netherlands (3.4%) where 29.5 percent of top officials were educated. By contrast, only 0.9 and 2.2 percent of the principal secretariats were located in Australia and Canada, respectively. Therefore, it can be speculated that these universities located in France, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands seem to be making the most of their geographical proximity to the headquarters of international organizations in supplying human resources.

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#### POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

Because of their common university backgrounds, the high-ranking officials in leading international organizations probably experienced a similar academic ethos and somewhat homogeneous curricula. Their ways of defining and approaching global problems are likely to have much in common. It is thus reasonable to assume that non-Western voices or mindsets may often not be well heard or applied when global issues are confronted by these international bodies. By recruiting key personnel from the same preferred universities, these international organizations are to some degree instilling particular cognitive and cultural norms.

While the common educational backgrounds may be contributing to similar worldviews among global leaders, the results of this research do not necessarily prove that global leaders are excessively homogeneous. Rather, these leaders are not likely to be monolithic in both their private and public lives as are their universities in terms of vision, orientation, modus operandi, intellectual legacy, and academic culture. Nonetheless, the results do reveal which universities are selectively appreciated, preferred, and accepted as most qualified to supply human resources for international organizations. ■

## Sustaining Oxford as World Class

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Let's be forthright in acknowledging the miniherd of elephants now ensconced inside the Oxford University senior common room (SCR), one in each corner and one wallowing by the sherry decanters in the middle of this elegant room. The five are labeled: "Remaining World Class," "Raising Tuition Fees," "Protecting Tutorial Teaching," "Widening Participation," and "Defending Academic Self-Governance" (the last subtitled "Keeping the Lunatics in Charge of the Asylum"). For space reasons we will concentrate on only the first four of those five elephants.

There is, of course, some overlap among these five themes, and much of what is said here about Oxford also applies to Cambridge, the other UK "top ten" global player—an institution similar to Oxford in terms of intensive and expensive undergraduate teaching (via "supervisions" rather than "tutorials"), costly research activity (even more "big science" than in Oxford), and the socioeconomic background of the students (posh!). Parts of this essay relate to other elites such as University College London, Imperial, London School of Economics, Manchester, and Edinburgh. Put simply, if we want to maintain the lucrative export industry that is "UK higher education plc" (worth some £3 billion per annum to gross domestic product on top of UK higher education's ca. £40 billion general contribution within the economy), these flagship universities must be adequately funded. The whole national higher education brand depends on the continued success of these elite subbrands. Hence the presence of the elephants in the SCR needs to be addressed if we are to avoid the mediocre and moribund nature of higher education systems in other major European countries.

#### REMAINING WORLD CLASS

In 2004 the Oxford Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (OxCHEPS) and the Ulanov Partnership costed Oxford, using the methodology developed in the United States for the National Association of College and University Business Officers "Cost of College Project" and hence allowing a direct comparison of metrics with Harvard, Princeton, and Berkeley. The essence of the OxCHEPS message was that Oxford needs another £150 million a year on top of its £500 million budget if it is to remain globally competitive. In the context of a halving of the taxpayer-funded "unit of resource"

within UK higher education for undergraduate teaching over some 20 years, the 2006 increase in tuition fees to £3,000 is too little, too late for either Oxford or universities generally. Government is putting in more money for research, but Parliament at the 2009/10 review of higher education funding must not dodge the lifting of the cap on tuition fees for UK/EU undergraduates to a realistic level of at least £10,000. Such additional monies, along with Oxford's own determined efforts at fundraising from alumni and its exploitation of intellectual property, could mean it keeps pace with its US rivals that currently have three or four times its spending power. It is astonishing that Oxford continues to punch so far above its financial weight, reflecting a combination of praiseworthy academic productivity from underpaid and overworked "dons" compared with their US colleagues and a worrying risk that in living off past investment it is now on borrowed time.

#### RAISING TUITION FEES

Any talk of raising tuition fees immediately unites the cunning self-interest of the wealthy middle classes with the naïve residual socialism of Old Labour backbenchers and hence the furor around the 2004 higher education bill that proposed fees of £3,000 and that Prime Minister Blair got through by a mere 5 votes despite a theoretical Commons majority of some 150. Lord Desai, an academic economist Labour peer, has commented: "For 35 years I have heard the same argument: if we charge anything, the poor will not get access. The middle classes are clever; they always use the poor to justify their own subsidies. . . . What is happening now is that by charging a single [low] price we have to ration. Such rationing results in bad education. . . . Who gets such bad education? People from lower income classes and ethnic minorities. . . . The problem is that people around the country, and especially in another place [the Commons], mistake uniformity for equity. . . . The higher education system in this country has been the biggest robbery the middle classes have perpetrated on the welfare state."

High(ish) fees combined with generous grants and loans carefully targeted at students from the lower socioeconomic groups create a higher education system that is far more socially equitable than the supposedly fair free public good systems. On grounds of both social equity and also a good business sense Oxford should be charging annual undergraduate tuition fees of about £10,000 to those students and their families who can afford to pay (and many of them will anyway have been paying private school fees of around that amount or even higher). In charging such fees Oxford must, of course, be utterly needs blind in selecting students, operating a rigorously fair and methodologically robust student financial aid system of grants and loans so that no applicant is unable to take up a place for financial reasons. At the same time annual increases in fees clearly need to be kept within reasonable bounds (unlike the runaway hikes characterizing UK independent school fees and US private universities) by applying firm cost-control, maximizing alumni giving, utilizing corpo-

rate bond cheap debt, achieving full economic cost recovery of overheads on research projects, managing endowment investment with flair, and generally earning income wherever possible from conferences, tourism, and other sources.

#### PROTECTING TUTORIAL TEACHING

Oxford and Cambridge, unlike many elite universities in the United Kingdom and United States, still take undergraduate teaching seriously. Notably, the Oxbridge colleges as teaching machines, countering the weight of the academic departments as primarily research operations, protect the institutional commitment to education, in contrast to other elites where teaching has been shortchanged to free resources to pursue "the kash & kudos of research." That said, tutorial teaching is under pressure in Oxford: it is an expensive commodity at 1:2 rather than the 1:12/15 seminars norm elsewhere; it is dependent on both tutor and tutee making the best of it. The Oxford tutorial has an almost mystic, cult status. But is it also an anachronism, a sacred cow to which Oxford pays mere lip service as it quietly shifts to "small-group teaching"? Or is it to be preserved at

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all costs as a pedagogical gem, the jewel in Oxford's crown as the best way to challenge, stimulate, and truly educate young minds in the crucial "lifelong-learning" skill of a liberal education, and as sound analysis and critical thinking, to the wider benefit of society and the economy? Is the added value of demanding from students more written work than their counterparts at other universities get the opportunity to submit—and then putting them on the spot to discuss the work in a way that now rarely happens at other elites—worth the expense and duly appreciated by the students and their future employers? A proper market in tuition fees may answer at least the question of whether the student or family is really interested in intensive undergraduate education.

#### CONCLUSION

The United Kingdom is a world leader in financial services (the City of London) and in higher education (Oxford and Cambridge). The former was saved from oblivion by major deregulation in the 1980s; the latter now needs to be liberalized by way of a much higher fees cap (if not uncapped fees) from 2010 onwards. Along with other sources of increased income, enhanced tuition fees will enable Oxford to keep up with its global competitors. It would be a bonus to do all this while remaining a self-governing academic community; and it might anyway be wasted effort if Oxford were to damage itself by becoming corporatist and managerialist. It would be a pity if Oxford's exceptionalism is not allowed to thrive at a time

when another major European country (Germany) is, at last, beginning to reform its higher education system by granting greater autonomy to institutions, introducing tuition fees, and funding 10 of its universities as elites to compete with Oxford, Cambridge, and the US Ivy League. Life in the top echelon of globalized higher education is not going to get any less competitive (not least as China's universities develop), and the best chance of survival lies in being as free as possible from the dead hand of government interference in pricing the product—a freedom, however, that rightly demands in return that Oxford remains an open and accessible academic meritocracy.

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## Mass Higher Education and the Super Research University

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Worldwide, two major transformations in higher education are simultaneously under way. Many scholarly and media accounts of these two changes present them as polar opposites, creating more conflict than harmony within the university. The first trend, often considered pedestrian, is the unprecedented expansion and massification of higher education in most nations, not only in wealthy nations such as the United States. This expansion follows an educational revolution that has already seen enrollment rates in elementary and secondary schooling skyrocket over the past 60 years. The second trend is the rise and flourishing of what can be called the “super research university,” mostly in the United States but increasingly now a model aspired to by many research universities throughout the world.

Counter to the usual assumption of a conflicting relationship between these two trends, at their roots they are actually so symbiotic that each would likely not be happening if not for the other. Recent analysis of both the expansion of education and the growth of the super research university indicates that mass enrollments and completion of higher education lead the way toward greater societal support for a larger and wealthier higher education system that can include the expensive super

research universities.

### MASS HIGHER EDUCATION

Only a few decades ago as wealthy nations were completing expanded secondary schooling, many pundits predicted either a death of educational expansion at the university's gate or even a social crisis because of too much expansion of higher education. Instead, higher education ascended into rapid expansion. In the United States, for example, every decade sees a substantially larger proportion of students going on to higher education. For example, the National Center for Education Statistics recently reported that the percentage of all high school graduates enrolling in higher education increased from 49 percent in 1972 to 69 percent in 2005, and completions of the bachelor of arts and associate in science degrees grew by 33 percent and 46 percent, respectively, from 1989 to 2004. At even a faster rate similar growth is occurring worldwide, where currently around a fourth of all youth enroll in higher education, a nearly 10-fold increase since the middle of the 20th century.

Schooling everyone across the lifespan is a truly revolutionary idea in the development of human society with substantial implications for how we think, work, and live. This idea has become so incorporated into modern culture that mass higher education, often thought of in the past as a mere fantasy, is rapidly spreading across the world.

### THE AMERICAN SUPER RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

The advent of the super research university in the United States over the past several decades is an equally stunning educational development. The small but growing number of these institutions are able to produce unprecedented levels of science, technology, and knowledge about human society. In spite of the unprecedented founding and recurring expenses, these institutions continue to expand and increase in the United States. However, other wealthy nations, such as Germany, are having a difficult time producing even one such university.

The model for the American super research university has become attractive to many other nations. From this model, policymakers identify factors to mimic—including faculty working conditions, competitiveness-based governmental support for research, a large private sector, and so forth. What is frequently missed in this approach is the exceptional societal support the United States has been able to generate for education—particularly in general and higher education. The United States has achieved this model, first through a comprehensive system of secondary education that provides graduates with aspirations and expectations for more education and, second, through a relatively open and comprehensive higher education system. This has led to the belief in American society that the university, particularly the super research university, is not an elitist or esoteric enterprise but rather a remarkably democratic and useful institution. The fact that so many Americans attend and have deep connections to institutions of higher edu-