

CONTENTS

- 1 Preparing students for a global economy—The world's leading educators speak out
- 8 Launch of Global Leader Development Program
- 12 Ties and bonds
- 16 Chat in the Den
- 18 Hitotsubashi University in Seoul



**Preparing students for a global economy—
The world's leading educators speak out**

Broadening Minds is the

Mark Damazer

Master of St Peter's College, University of Oxford



Susumu Yamauchi

President, Hitotsubashi University



For this issue we interviewed Mark Damazer, head of St Peter's College at the world-renowned University of Oxford. In the 2012 academic year, Hitotsubashi University instituted a new study-abroad program that will send two students to the United Kingdom to study each year—one to St Peter's College and one to the London School of Economics—with the aim of fostering “smart and tough global leaders.” To mark the launch of our new partnership with Oxford, we invited Mr. Damazer to share his thoughts on higher education and the development of global leadership in the age of globalization.

University's Core Mission

A Hitotsubashi Graduate who Exhibited at the Paris World's Fair

Yamauchi First, thank you so much for your inspiring lecture. I was particularly interested to hear how the ukiyo-e artist Hokusai was influenced by Western painting techniques. As you pointed out, global interaction was taking place even then, despite Japan's policy of national seclusion—a testament to human beings' thirst for knowledge and beauty. It occurred to me that this embodies globalism in the best sense—being able to respect and appreciate one another's culture even while remaining rooted in one's own.

Incidentally, a while back this magazine featured an alumna who now makes her living printing the woodblock prints of ukiyo-e artists like Hokusai.

Damazer That's wonderful. I have prints like these in my home. My wife collects them.

Yamauchi It sounds like your wife is a woman of taste.

Damazer Well, thank you. I'm an enthusiast myself. They're beautiful works of art.

Yamauchi Another graduate we're very proud of is Chuji Fukagawa. He founded Fukagawa Porcelain Co. back in 1894, and it's still famous around the world for its Arita porcelain. In 1900, the company exhibited a vase at the Paris World's Fair and won a gold medal for it.

Fukagawa was something of a pioneer in taking advantage of the Paris exposition to demonstrate what Japanese artisans were capable of and developing that into an international business. To me it's inspiring to think that he was a Hitotsubashi graduate.

Damazer I think Japanese aesthetics have been very important in defining various aspects of Western taste over most of the last 150 years. Of course, Japan's influence on the Impressionists in the late nineteenth century is the most obvious example. But even now, Japanese style—which is derived from Japanese cultural roots—is very important in defining taste around the world.

I'm on the Board of Trustees of the Victoria



and Albert Museum in London, and I can tell you that whenever British museums put on big exhibitions of Japanese cultural artifacts, there's always a big turnout.

Yamauchi Well, of course, the Japanese are also big enthusiasts of Western art and music as well. Exhibitions of artifacts from the British Museum, for example, always attract huge crowds.

Oxford and Its Colleges

Yamauchi I think a lot of people here in Japan are rather baffled by the fact that Oxford has all these “colleges,” such as St Peter’s College. Could you explain the colleges and how they function within the university as a whole?

Damazer Well, Oxford has thirty colleges which admit both undergraduates and graduates. Then it has eight graduate colleges, which admit only graduates. St Peter’s, for example, has 300 undergraduate students and 100 graduate students.

With respect to the roles of the colleges and the university, the colleges are in charge of their students’ learning and living arrangements, and they also choose which students to admit—provided they meet the basic minimum standard for Oxford. On the other hand, it’s the university that sets the exams, grades the exams, and gives the degrees.

Yamauchi I think it’s confusing to Japanese people because here every undergraduate student belongs to a faculty corresponding to his or her major. How do the colleges relate to an academic faculty or department?

Damazer The big lectures that students attend are conducted at the faculty or department level. But the core of an Oxford education is the tutorial, which consists of two or three students taught by a single professor within the college. The two components mesh because most of the academics at Oxford belong both to a college and to a faculty.

Yamauchi In Japan, for students to graduate from a university’s faculty of law, for example, they have to take twenty or thirty specialized law courses offered by the faculty. How do Oxford students specialize in a particular subject under the college system?

Damazer Okay, let’s take law as an example. Every year, we admit six students to do law at

St Peter’s College—only six. And more or less every other college at Oxford admits between four and eight students to do law every year. So, you have a total of no more than about 200 students who come to Oxford every year to do law. Those 200 attend basically the same lectures and classes offered by the university’s Faculty of Law. But every week they also have to write one or two serious essays, and that written work is reviewed and discussed by the college tutors in law. At St Peter’s we have two specialists in law.

Now, students have to cover eight major topics in law, including Roman law, contract law, and commercial law. If we don’t have an expert in commercial law at St Peter’s, our students will



go to another college for their tutorial in that area, while the other college will send its students to St Peter’s for our specialties.

Yamauchi That’s . . . certainly interesting.

Damazer The system works . . . just. [Laughter]

The Importance of Professors’ Teaching Abilities

Yamauchi As I understand it, even in the UK this system is used only by a handful of universities, like Oxford, Cambridge, and the University

of London. Is that right?

Damazer That's absolutely right. It's expensive to run a system like this. And if all that mattered were the economics of undergraduate education, you would never dream of instituting a system like this.

To give one example, we have in the college a brilliant professor of organic chemistry, a man in his middle fifties. He's a great researcher, particularly in super-thin materials. He supervises many doctoral students, and he runs a laboratory in the Department of Chemistry. In addition, for eight hours a week he teaches undergraduate students their subjects. Each hour he's only teaching two students at a time, or at most three, so that means no more than twenty to twenty-five stu-

dents altogether. Still, he has to prepare all these tutorials, and that's an incredibly demanding obligation upon him. But that means that the undergraduates have direct contact, in small groups of two or three, with one of the great chemistry professors at Oxford. This is not efficient. But it's brilliant.

Yamauchi I agree it's a brilliant system. Also, from what you say, I assume that in every college, each student is surrounded by other students specializing in various other disciplines. I would think that their interaction would provide a lot of intellectual stimulus.

Damazer That's one of the advantages of the system. In any given year, we have no more than 100 new students in, say, fifteen subjects. And they mix with one another in their extracurricular activities, such as music, sport, drama, and journalism. So, the big advantage of the college system is that it forces people to mix across the subjects.

In an academic context, if you have just six students in one year studying law at a given college, it can be very stimulating providing you have one really, really good student, since the other five will strive to be as good. On the other hand, if you don't have that outstanding student



in any one year, it can drag down the overall level.

Yamauchi At Hitotsubashi University, we have about a thousand students in each year. But Hitotsubashi was originally a single specialized college, a school of commerce. And even though it's grown to the point where we now have four faculties, I think that tradition lives on in that we have quite a bit of interaction among the faculties compared with most universities. In that sense, perhaps we have something in common with Oxford's college system.

The tutorial strikes me as a particularly meaningful and important part of education at Oxford. At Hitotsubashi, we have the seminar system. Each seminar consists of a small number of students carrying out their research under a particular professor's supervision for a period of two years. Hitotsubashi was actually the first univer-



sity in Japan to adopt the seminar system.

Damazer Seminars play a significant role at Oxford in the teaching of certain subjects—for example, engineering and maths. Although the tutorial system is still at the center, it's being supplemented more and more often by seminars. There are some advantages to seminars over tutorials, because in

a good seminar of about ten students, they can learn from one another quite quickly.

The optimum balance between lectures, seminars, and tutorials is the subject of much debate among educators. I think it varies by subject. The most important thing, in any case, is that professors know how to get the most out of a particular class, whether it's a seminar or a lecture or a tutorial.

Yamauchi I couldn't agree more.

Oxford and Globalization

Yamauchi You gave a wonderful lecture on the topic of globalization earlier. I was wondering if you could speak a bit about the significance of globalization for a top UK university like Oxford.





Damazer That's a really good question. Until about twenty years ago, Oxford and Cambridge defined their own excellence mostly in relation to one another. That's no longer good enough, because if you want to be a world-class university at both the undergraduate and research level, you need to get the most talented people that you can, wherever they are. At the graduate and post-doctorate levels in particular, students no longer respect national boundaries, and they will go wherever they can get the most financial support and the best facilities for their project. So, we need to be able to define ourselves as equal to the top universities in the world because now we are really competing with them—most often in a friendly way, but we are competing with them nonetheless.

Academics have always had a relatively high degree of movement across national borders, particularly amongst professors and researchers. But that competition has become more intense, not only for technological reasons but also for political reasons. Two very obvious examples are China and Russia. Twenty years ago, there were very few Russian and Chinese students at Oxford. Today, half of the postgraduate maths students are from East Asia. And, of course, Russian students can now travel, so we have hundreds of Russian students.

So, to summarize, globalization means that Oxford has become a much more international institution and more outward facing. But it also increases the pressure on Oxford to maintain its competitiveness against the best institutions in the world, both at the undergraduate and particularly at the graduate level.

Thinking Globally and Acting Locally

Yamauchi You mentioned in your lecture that it's important to value regional identity in the midst of globalization. Given that a university belongs to a particular nation-state and a particular community, I'd like to hear your thoughts on reconciling globalization with a university's national and regional role.

Damazer That's a brilliant insight and an excellent question. In the UK, Oxford still relies on



the taxpayer for part of its operating costs, and for that reason there is an obligation to ensure that Oxford is giving something back to the United Kingdom. At the moment, this question can be answered relatively easily, because 80 percent of the undergraduates at Oxford are from the UK. So we can say that we provide the best education for the best students in the United Kingdom, and that represents value for the taxpayer and for the United Kingdom as a whole.

But we don't have a national quota. If the number of international students grows a great deal, the tension between Oxford as a UK institution and as a global institution will increase. At the graduate level, on the other hand, it's already understood that the need to be at the top of the world university hierarchy means that you really have to let in the best, and that will very often mean fewer British students than was the



case twenty years ago. Because if you don't have the best students, you soon find that the best teachers and researchers will go off to another university. And that would be a disaster both for Oxford and for the United Kingdom.

Finally, let me address the issue of the local community. Oxford is a small city, unlike Tokyo, with only 115,000 people. Of course, Oxford University is also the dominant institution in the city. It employs the most people, it's the reason people come to Oxford, it's what makes Oxford famous. But it's very important that we realize we have a responsibility to the whole of the city, including the many people who don't work in the university. Otherwise the university will appear arrogant and will become unpopular. In short, a complex institution like a university needs to maintain various relationships at the global, national, and local levels. It's a very demanding business, but it has to be done.

L language and Culture

Yamauchi One of the big challenges that Japanese universities are facing in attempting to respond to globalization is the language problem. From the Meiji Restoration on, Japan put a lot of effort into making sure that it could provide people with a higher education, entirely in the Japanese language. As a result, virtually all of our courses are taught in Japanese. But nowadays, when there's so much emphasis on the need for internationalization, that's become a stumbling block. We know we need to incorporate English, the language of international communication, into the curriculum, but we're not sure of the best way to go about it.

In science and engineering it's not quite so bad, because those fields use international symbols and formulae, and Japanese scientists have been writing papers in English for some time. But in the social sciences, it's quite a dilemma. For example, if you're speaking of Japanese law, you can hardly avoid using Japanese, but now we have to ask ourselves whether that's sufficient. If not, what are our options?

Many of the problems currently facing Japanese society are issues that other developed countries are confronting as well. Demographic aging, for example, has advanced more quickly here in Japan than anywhere else. We're aware of the need to communicate our experiences with the rest of the world and pool our resources to solve these problems, and we realize that English is essential for that purpose. When it comes to research, I don't think this is going to be a big problem, but teaching Japanese undergraduate students in English would present a big challenge. At present, about 10 percent of Hitotsubashi students come from other countries, and this is an issue we're still grappling with.

Damazer First I should just say that it would be a tragedy if the world only communicated in English. But what you've said raises very serious questions about the nature of the transfer of

knowledge. I suspect that you're completely right when you suggest that there is valuable Japanese expertise about problems—for instance, the demographic issue—that haven't escaped the border because of the language barrier.

There is also a danger of Anglo-Saxon arrogance because of the tremendous position that the English language occupies around the world. I get very upset with the decline in the number of British students who are learning foreign languages, such as French, German, and Italian. They're becoming lazy because they know that so much is done in English. Learning a language isn't just about learning how to communicate in another culture. It's a disciplined and difficult exercise in logic and memory and structure that can be applied in other areas.

English is now the primary language for the global communication of ideas. But we need to stop the homogenization of culture and ensure that very rich cultural traditions belonging to various regions or nation-states are allowed to flourish in a global economy.

Let me give one example from my career in the BBC that illustrates how the language factor can distort one's understanding. Back in



the 1990s, we were putting together a film about Russia under President Boris Yeltsin. We ended up interviewing mostly Russians who spoke good English—as one does, because it's so much easier and quicker. All the Russians we interviewed who spoke good English said that everything was going fine under Boris Yeltsin. But once I went out with interpreters and interviewed ordinary Russians

on the street, without the time pressure of having to make a film, I found out that Yeltsin was terribly unpopular. The good English speakers were completely unrepresentative.

I can't argue with your overall assessment of the situation—which is that, as things stand at the moment, the English language has an obvious competitive advantage for certain students

and professors in certain subjects. But as my own example shows, over-reliance on English has its pitfalls as well.

Yamauchi That's a very instructive story.

Keys to Global Leadership

Yamauchi You were talking about your career in the BBC, and I find that interesting because, from a Japanese perspective, it's hard to imagine someone from NHK, for example, becoming the dean of a college or university. Could you talk a bit about how you came to be appointed as Master of St Peter's College?

Damazer I'm sure the fellows who chose me



asked the same question. *[Laughter]* It's a secret vote, and they never told me how they made this mistake. But from their point of view, I think they wanted somebody with a variety of connections with the outside world. And although it's true that I'm not an academic, during my long career in the BBC, I built

many relationships with academics and had many contacts with academia in connection with the creation of various programs. Furthermore, I believe passionately in the value of higher education, particularly higher education as provided by great institutions like Hitotsubashi and Oxford.

I'm also interested in building the strength of public institutions, whether it's the BBC or St Peter's. That involves providing a focus and a strategy and encouraging all the people involved to feel solidarity with one another. At Oxford, as at the BBC, you're dealing with clever, creative people. And I've found that at both places, creative people can be very difficult. My BBC training was quite useful in teaching me not to be too anxious if people don't immediately do what I tell them to do. *[Laughter]* Creativity can be very



messy, and my job is to try to minimize the mess.

Yamauchi It makes me realize what an amazing institution Oxford is, to recruit that kind of talent.

Damazer That's very kind, but they may now be wishing they had done something different. *[Laughter]*

Yamauchi Oh, certainly not. But to return to our main topic, I'd like to hear your thoughts on the attributes and qualities people need to compete in a global economy and society.

Damazer First and foremost, they need an understanding that all of us have multiple identities. For example, I have an identity as a citizen of Oxford, and I also belong to St Peter's. I'm a citizen of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom belongs to the European Union. So, I feel loyalty to many different institutions and cultures, and I don't want to limit myself too quickly by choosing one set of obligations over all others—except when choosing a soccer team. *[Laughter]*

Globalization requires intellectual flexibility about identity. If you're not receptive to the outside influences that are available to you through global integration, you'll end up with a much more limited world view. That's why I believe the role of the university is to encourage students to be intellectually open and flexible.

Yamauchi Thank you for those insights. I'd like to end with the question I ask everyone I interview: What advice would you give to Japanese university students, and particularly students at Hitotsubashi University?

Damazer It's very flattering to be asked. First, I would say to them that this is an experience which won't be repeated. Unless people are extremely fortunate, they never get more than one chance in a lifetime to study at a very high level for a period of three or four years, surrounded by very good people. I would say to them, No matter what you do with your time, the most important thing is that, when you leave, you don't look back and think, I wish I had applied myself more seriously; I've wasted my time. Because that would be a tragedy.

From a wider perspective, speaking to the university as a whole, I would say that the abil-

ity to draw from a wide range of cultures and perspectives when providing evidence for various theories could be of enormous value in the social sciences. Hitotsubashi can define itself as a university grounded in the Japanese tradition yet at the same time be committed to going beyond the confines of that tradition in the way it structures its courses and the examples that it uses in teaching the social sciences.

For example, suppose, instead of just focusing on a specific problem facing Japanese society, one asks oneself on the one hand, why the American political system is now so badly gridlocked, and on the other hand, why the Japanese political system is finding it so hard to break free of the notion of consensus when a decision needs to be made. Studying two such interrelated topics over a period of three or four years can illuminate the bigger picture and deepen one's understanding of both issues.

Yamauchi That's wonderful advice—specific and also profound.

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts with us today.

