



Excess Beyond Excellence: The University Beyond the Balance Sheet

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Abstract

This paper argues that there is an excess beyond the talk of excellence, that the University in its present drive for commodification and corporatisation cannot comprehend. In outlining the conditions and effects of this excess, I will look at the non-symmetrical relation that plays itself out in teaching and learning as one of the sites of ethical practices. The notions adduced to analyse this core relation are those of charisma, transference and sublimation. I will outline the forms of exchange at work in the sites of this relation and analyse their differentiations and transformations. In as much as the teaching–learning relation encapsulates what is demanded psychologically and politically of a modern subject in a democratic order, jeopardising it in the name of efficiency, cost-cutting and an instrumentalised relationship to labour and commodity markets, means striking not only at the core of university education, but at the psychic and political foundations of a democratic order itself.

Résumé

Cette étude soutient qu'il existe un certain excès au-delà de la question de l'excellence que l'université, dans sa campagne actuelle en faveur de sa marchandisation et de sa transformation en entreprise, ne peut comprendre. En soulignant les conditions et les conséquences de cet excès, l'auteur examinera la relation asymétrique qui existe dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage comme un des lieux des pratiques éthiques. Les notions invoquées pour analyser cette relation fondamentale sont le charisme, le transfert et la sublimation. Il montrera les formes d'échange en présence dans cette relation et analysera les différenciations entre elles et les transformations subies. Dans la mesure où la relation enseignement–apprentissage renferme ce que l'on exige psychologiquement et politiquement d'un sujet moderne dans un ordre démocratique, la compromettre au nom de l'efficacité, de la réduction des

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coûts et d'une relation instrumentalisée par rapport aux marchés du travail et à la bourse des marchandises, signifie porter atteinte non seulement au cœur de l'enseignement universitaire mais également aux fondements psychiques et politiques d'un ordre démocratique lui-même.

Tutelage as core academic relation

In critically addressing the attempts to bring the University in line with market forces, Robert Young carves out a critical role of the University in its capacity of generating an 'excess'—'a surplus that that economy cannot comprehend' (1992:122).

Having chosen this as an introductory statement, I am not closing my eyes to the fact that the University has undergone drastic changes in the last two or three decades, as liberal education, being unmoored from national culture and the nation state, has lost its organising centre. The University has become a 'bureaucratically organized ... consumer-oriented corporation' (Readings 1996:11) within a transnational global economy. This change, Readings avers, is expressed in the way in which the University states its mission: from the University of Culture to the University of Excellence (1996:13). At the end-point of Readings' historical typology of the University, it would seem, the University stands emptied of any content, reduced to delivering knowledge-products, accompanied by services to fee-paying clients who provide its market-shares. This would condemn us to wondering how, today, we can still talk of the University.

To this, I would want to respond, with Jacques Derrida, 'how can we *not* talk of the University?' (1983:3). I would challenge Readings' conclusion: for all the reasons adduced in his historical outline, the University has *not* lost its *raison d'être*. Furthermore, I would want to question whether Readings' historical typology is the only ground on which we can make pronouncements about the state of the University. Instead of locating my analysis within the particular historical trajectory of the University outlined by Readings, I would like to take up Young's idea of university education as 'surplus'. What is this surplus/excess that the economy, with its imperatives for the University—job training, vocationalism, outcomes-specification, balance sheets of income and expenditure, teaching as fee-for-service contractual activity, report-backs to 'stakeholders' and 'responsiveness to the market'—cannot comprehend?

To be able to answer this question, I would like to look at some old-fashioned notions from early sociology and psychoanalysis that have attempted to define a peculiar relation at work in magic, artistic creativity and scientific

inquiry. It is a privileged relation that plays itself out in the fields of religious devotion, in the art of healing, and in teaching and learning. This privileged relation, I would argue, is also what has been for centuries at stake in university education for centuries.

It is a very peculiar relation, this. We might ask ourselves why it has withstood democratisation processes. For good reason, I would say, the teaching relation has not come within the ambit of democratic reformers, who have targeted access to higher education for democratisation by demanding increased intake of students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds; class and gender sensitivity and considerations of redress in admission criteria, study conditions, language policy and medium of instruction; financial aid to students from disadvantaged backgrounds; accommodation for students; and demographic representivity within the student and broader academic constituency. Demands for democratisation of the universities have extended to the establishment of more representative structures of university governance, and to accountability of the university to whoever its 'stakeholders' are defined to be.

Such demands for democratisation formed an integral part of the anti-apartheid struggle. In the immediate post-apartheid period, they were the subject of higher education reform, in tandem with the drive to commodification and market-orientation of the University. In strangely twisted responses to such paradoxical demands and directives, academics have had to bow to these pressures by ostensibly becoming more 'professional' as employees of 'the university of excellence' (Readings 1995), that is to say, more client- and service-oriented, outcomes-directed, administratively and technologically competent, and pedagogically attuned and responsive to student needs and demands. In some respects, the modelling of the new academic in South Africa is comparable to the directives of higher education policy in the aftermath of the 1968 student protests in France and Germany, of which Jacques Rancière writes retrospectively:

In the immediate post-'68 period in France, our politicians, with the aid of an army of sociologists and educational theorists, finally discovered that the best means of reducing inequalities in the face of formally transmitted knowledge was to cut back on this knowledge itself (Rancière 1985:101).

This remark is instructive in several respects. It comes close to stating that where the democratisation of higher education touches the core relation entrusted with the transmission of formally organised knowledge; it tends to annihilate that knowledge itself.

That core relation between teaching and learning, while embattled, is still today one of fundamental inequality. I would call it tutelage, a non-symmetrical

relation of obligation that becomes the site, or rather, a network, of ethical practices (Readings 1996:154).¹

Tutelage involves a complex inequality. The asymmetrical obligation in the teaching, helping, and caring professions—those professions that distantly echo a ‘calling’ as one of their admission criteria—has been a carefully guarded social value over the last two and a half thousand years at least. It is so strongly held a value that the constituency ‘served’ by these ‘vocations’ responds with vehemence to any perceived threat to the ‘ethos’ of these ‘vocations’. For centuries, the question of remuneration or fees for services rendered in these ‘vocations’ has been a thorny issue. Not only have the rights to free health care and free education been vociferously proclaimed and/or upheld as social rights; they are often held to be as sacrosanct as the essentially ‘free’ participation in religious worship. Perceived racketeering in health and education is subject not only to legal sanction, but also to moral opprobrium; and today, professional councils regulate the conduct, workload, types and modes of monetary exchanges, and interactions of professionals in these fields. Dedication ‘beyond the call of duty’ is a professional virtue. Health and education are the sectors where unionisation is notoriously difficult. In many countries’ legislations, people working in these sectors have no or only a limited right to strike.

I am listing these generalised attributions to the highly socially valued ‘vocations’ for purposes of exploring the distinguishing features of what I call the ‘core relation’ in university education. This core relation has variously been analysed through the concepts of charisma, transference and sublimation, which I will unravel here, in turn.

Charisma

Charisma is ‘the authority of the extraordinary and personal *gift of grace*, the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership’ (Weber 1967a[1919]:79). Derived from St. Paul’s epistles to the Corinthians, charisma features as a theological concept in Lutheran jurist Rudolf Sohm’s *Kirchenrecht*, Bd. 1: *Die Geschichtlichen Grundlagen* (1892). While Max Weber takes over the term, he transforms it in his account of forms of political domination. Where the theological concept designates charisma as a gift of grace that gives an individual otherworldly power to perform exceptional tasks, making for leaders with quasi-divine authority (Lepsius 1986:53), Weber emphasises charisma as an extraordinary quality attributed to an individual by his followers, that elevates him to the role of a leader with a mission, a calling, a task, thought to be bestowed on him by God through revelation. For the devout, obedience to

charismatic leadership is non-negotiable. But it is not a matter of force. Obedience is determined by the belief in the leader's special personal qualities, by fear of vengeance of magical powers or the power-holder, and by hope for reward in this world or in the beyond (Weber 1967a[1919]:79). However, the personalised attributions of specialness that define charisma are not confined to the realm of magic and religion. Charisma, according to Weber, is 'entirely heterogeneous' (1978[1922]:1111). To account for a variety of contexts within which devotion to charismatic leadership can emerge and constitute the social bond, we would have to look at a genealogy of charisma and its designated bearers.

In Weber's genealogy, charisma emerges with the figures of the magician and the prophet on the one hand, and the elected war lord, the gang leader and the *condottiere* on the other hand (Weber 1967a[1919]:80). The qualities imputed to the prophet and to the warrior are transferred respectively to the priest, and to the king as leader of the army in conditions of a chronic state of war (or to the war hero). Charismatic education was classically carried out by the priest or the warrior. It came to be monopolised by wealthy, economically inactive educators, indicating a transformation from a charismatic into a plutocratic elite. Charismatic communities sprung up around a prophet, an artist, a philosopher or a scientific innovator to form a church, a sect, an academy, or a school. While some non-modern societies were characterised by ideal-typical conditions of charismatic leadership, devotion and community, charisma finds its political role also in parliamentary democracies, where parliamentary party leaders command devotion and loyalty from followers on the basis of a sense of 'calling' tied to their personalities. For 'politics as vocation', the pre-eminent qualities are 'passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion' (Weber 1967b[1919]:115). Even for the modern politician, this means 'passionate devotion to a cause', and Weber is quick to tell us the not-so-distant sources of that 'cause': 'the god or demon who is its overlord' (115). 'Living for' politics as an internal calling, which is the definition of politics as vocation proper (as opposed to 'living off' politics), entails the pursuit of meaning in the search of a cause (Weber 1967a[1919]:84).

Charismatic leadership is opposed to bureaucracy, and traditional, patriarchal privileges, rules and regulations, rank and titles. The charismatic leader is not chosen according to traditional determinants of social standing, but according to his personal qualities. The 'calling' rules out other paraphernalia of leadership. Thus, the charismatic leader typically does not pursue a career, salary, privileges, or promotion. His conduct is not governed by a job description. The charismatic leader and his disciples typically abdicate all bonds of family, profession, and friendship. New commandments and norms are derived ultimately from divine

judgement, by appeal to revelation, intuition, and oracle. It is thus no coincidence that charisma potentially evinces revolutionary effects, toppling dearly held values, custom, law, tradition, family ties and piety (Weber 1980[1922]:141, 145, 658).

Charismatic leadership is opposed to economic principles and monetary exchanges, which are rejected as being undignified. Magicians, diviners, prophets or in any other sense charismatic leaders are inclined to dispense their gifts of prophecy, teaching, divining and healing free of charge. Rejecting equivalent exchanges, they scorn the ethos of contract and fee-for-service interactions. In the same vein, they also frown upon a regular and regulated income, promoting donations, endowments, bribery, theft, gift or begging instead.

Charisma's opposition to money also becomes explicable if we consider that money, as universal equivalent, has a levelling function. It dissolves differentiated qualities into quantities. Monetary transactions produce impersonality and anonymity in the transactions involved, wiping out any trace of personalised character (see Simmel 2003[1889]:274).

This explains why a professionalised bureaucracy and equivalent exchanges are anathema to charisma. It also explains the waning and transformations of charismatic leadership and devout discipleship under conditions of economic rationalisation and disciplinarisation, that is, under conditions captured in Weber's famous phrase of 'the disenchantment of the world' (see e.g. 1967b[1919]:155). Rationalisation and modernity have transformed societies, undermined the sacred sources of charisma and dispelled ethical qualities of honour and obligation.

Nevertheless, while charisma is more 'at home' in certain non-modern social formations in so far as charisma is integral to their structures, it is also transhistorical.² As Weber notes, 'Charismatic leadership has emerged in all places and in all historical epochs' (Weber 1967a[1919]:80). And even in its transformations, it has indelibly left its mark on social relations and symbolic transactions, especially in those normative spheres that have remained unevenly intransigent or resistant to the economic and cultural logic of the market. It is the spheres of teaching and healing that have remained least differentiated and detached from the sacred sources of charisma, insofar as they are entailed in the very definition of charisma *ab initio*.

Charisma in teaching, in science and in art

Weber hints at the transhistorical persistence of charisma when he points out that prophets and priests are the ancestors of philosophy without priests (1980[1922]:275). The most extraordinary and rare gifts that define the divine grace of charisma are prophecy and teaching (see Smith 1998:37). Weber

remains close to his source on this point. Rudolf Sohm, from whom Weber took over the notion of charisma, stresses

... that charismatic “rulers” are, in fact, above all teachers. Teachers convey a truth they have not invented, and they lead without being elected; this is why, for Sohm, the charisma of the follower is the charisma of the disciple, the pupil who embraces the “discipline” demanded by a master [...] (cited in Smith 1998:46).

Weber insists that even in modernity, teaching and learning at tertiary level require a sense of ‘calling’—a ‘personal experience’ of science (*Wissenschaft*):

Without this strange intoxication, ridiculed by every outsider; without this passion, this ‘thousands of years must pass before you enter into life and thousands more wait in silence’ – ... without this, you have no calling for science and you should do something else. For nothing is worthy of a man unless he can pursue it with passionate devotion (Weber 1967b[1919]:135).

In this respect, there is no difference between science (*Wissenschaft*) and art; in both, inspiration plays a central role. While the orientation and the result are different,

the psychological processes do not differ. Both are frenzy (in the sense of Plato’s ‘mania’) and ‘inspiration’. ... whether we have scientific inspiration depends upon destinies that are hidden from us, and besides upon ‘gifts’ (Weber 1967b[1919]:136).

Weber’s elaboration of the concept of charisma and its genealogy has suggested its close association with teaching and learning at tertiary level. Its incommensurability with bureaucracy and monetary transactions explain much of the resistance of academics defending their cause against incursions of the state and the market. The transhistorical nature of charisma tells us that it is not about to go away. In as much as it is closely tied up with teaching, its resilience will mean that it will continue to pervade the core relation that defines teaching and learning. Upholding ‘science (*Wissenschaft*) as vocation’ would then necessarily entail protecting that core relation.

Charisma differentiated

This core relation enabling the symbolic exchanges that we call teaching and learning, however, demands closer scrutiny and differentiation. After having emphasised the indispensability of charisma for the establishment of that core relation, there are also important senses in which charisma demanding obedience is not the ideal teaching frame. There is an important sense in which teaching is not and should not be prophecy, and less still, demagoguery. In

keeping with his repeated call for a distinction between fact and value, Weber insists, ‘... the prophet and the demagogue do not belong on the academic platform’ (1967b[1919]:146). Posturing in the manner of a prophet or a demagogue in the academy is proscribed not only in the name of an ethical relation between teaching and learning; it is proscribed also because it is deemed detrimental to the pursuit of knowledge and truth. In a move that initially opposes Kant’s idea of the place of the scholarly in the public sphere, in order then to return to Kant’s fundamentals of the ‘conflict of the faculties’, Weber elaborates:

To the prophet and the demagogue, it is said: ‘go your ways out into the streets and speak openly to the world’, that is, speak where criticism is possible. In the lecture room we stand opposite our audience, and it has to remain silent. ... The task of the teacher is to serve the students with his knowledge and scientific experience and not to imprint upon them his personal political views. It is certainly possible that the individual teacher will not entirely succeed in eliminating his personal sympathies. He is then exposed to the sharpest criticism in the forum of his own conscience. ... whenever the man of science introduces his personal value judgment, a full understanding of the facts *ceases* (Weber 1967b[1919]:146).

The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his students to recognize ‘inconvenient’ facts – I mean facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions (147).

Looking for leaders in teachers is misguided, as the two roles are distinct (Weber 1967b[1919]:149). Weber states, ‘... the qualities that make a man an excellent scholar and academic teacher are not the qualities that make him a leader to give directions in practical life, or, more specifically, in politics’ (149-150). Weber is adamant about this distinction: academic teachers have a ‘vocation’ different from that of ‘seers and prophets’. Academic teachers should pursue their respective disciplines ‘in the service of self-clarification and knowledge of interrelated facts’, and refrain from ‘dispensing sacred values and revelations’ (152). The reverse is true as well: devotion in the sphere of religion demands intellectual sacrifice (to the prophet or to the church) (154).

A practical ethics of teaching, in contrast, would aim to assist the student in the process of self-clarification and lead him/her to develop a sense of responsibility.

Transformations of/in charisma

What Weber provides here, is an account of the transformations of charisma, structured by the ‘disenchantment of the world’, which differentiates normative

spheres to the effect of allocating different roles to the charismatic leader and the charismatic teacher, respectively. Consequently, he has to rigorously delineate the distinction between ‘politics as vocation’ and ‘science as vocation’.

Exceeding his own stated aims and theses, Weber provides much more than that, though. He inadvertently provides the ingredients of an internal differentiation and transformation which teaching, derived from grace-inspired leadership, has to undergo on the path which transforms love into, and connects love to, the ethical injunction that governs the relation between teaching and learning at its best.³ In this transformation, the affective structure of charisma is maintained, but it is channelled toward a different aim.

There are two psychoanalytic concepts that allow us to theorise these transformations and differentiation: transference and sublimation. In drawing out the relationship between charisma on the one hand, and the psychoanalytic transference and the process of sublimation on the other hand, I am taking some liberties—though liberties not unmotivated by Weber’s own gestures in that direction. Charisma is closely linked to a psychoanalytic notion of the unconscious. According to his sister Marianne, after reading Freud, Weber stressed the ‘altogether unconscious and seldom fully conscious’ sources of charisma (quoted in Camic 1980:24). Weber became ever more convinced of this link. ‘There can be no doubt’, he is reported to have stated, ‘that Freud’s thought *can* become a very significant source for the interpretation of a whole series of phenomena in cultural history’ (Marianne Weber quoted in Camic 1980:6).⁴

Charisma and transference

In the psychoanalytic transference, unconscious wishes and psychically experienced childhood conflicts are actualised in the relations with specific persons encountered later in life, who are construed in analogy to infantile prototypes. Such persons are typically charismatic leaders, teachers, and most importantly for psychoanalysis, the analyst him/herself. The analysand, disciple or student tends to transfer unconscious wishes and ideas onto the analyst, healer, leader or teacher, respectively. Psychoanalysis works with precisely this ‘false connection’. It reproduces the same affect of the original unconscious wish, thus re-editing the former conflict. Freud talks in no uncertain terms about this ‘battle between doctor and patient, intellect and drive, recognition and wanting to act out’ (Freud 1958[1912]:108). The task for both analysand and analyst then becomes invoking, and ideally working through this ‘other scene’ in the process of the analysis, overcoming resistances (Freud 1958[1915]:159-168; see also Laplanche and Pontalis 1973[1967]: 455, 458).

The task of the teacher, and especially the charismatic teacher, I would argue, is a similar one. S/he would have to draw the strong affect that characterises charisma through the ways in which s/he is being construed by the student in analogy to the latter's infantile prototypes, often stylised through the idealised hero of the family romance. But the teacher must know that the affect evoked concerns him/her only vicariously; s/he has no reason or right to be proud of such 'conquests' (see Freud 1958[1915]:166). S/he must invoke the affect of charisma, for a negative transference means the end of the possibility of psychoanalytic/intellectual work; but s/he cannot rest content with that, however personally gratifying it might be.⁵ The responsibility of the teacher or analyst/healer is to maintain the charisma or transference in the interests of analytical work (see Freud 1975[1915]:166). This involves redirecting the affect from the personalised figure to the work of (re)cognition, a daunting task.⁶

While the analysis of the transference and of resistances is embedded within particular psychoanalytic techniques mediating between love and an ethical relation, the analogy between the transference in the analytic situation and the transference in the teaching relation on a more general level is so close that Freud views them as 'not differing in nature' (quoted in Laplanche and Pontalis 1973[1967]:458). Both are indispensable to cognition.

The regulation of charisma

To maintain the force of love and charisma and, at the same time, to allow it a formative role in an ethical relation enabling the work of cognition, certain techniques (analytic techniques and regulations of exchanges) come into play. The transference involves a criss-crossing between two different forms of exchange, those of bond and those of contract. In as much as it re-edits the Oedipal situation and elicits transference love, the transference activates bond relations, that is, primary relations that are characterised by hierarchy and dependence. But ultimately, it has to rely on mechanisms to structure and direct these exchanges in the mode of contract. A determinate sum of money and a strictly delimited psychoanalytic hour (50 minutes) supervenes upon the gift of love in the psychoanalytic transference, to force the exchanges initiated in the structure of bond relations into the logic of exchanges in the contract, thereby creating and maintaining the distinction between contract and bond: money cannot buy love.

Similarly regulated exchanges also operate in medical and educational practice, albeit less rigorously delimited. Although there is no requirement, for the sake of the definition of the educational relation, for money to pass hands in order to enforce the boundary between bond and contract, the regulation of exchanges in these fields is expressed in the statutes of professional councils

in codes of ethics and codes of conduct. This ‘internal bureaucracy’, if we want to call it that, is part of the process that Weber designated as ‘rationalisation’, which, I would argue, derives its motivation in relation to the professions from the conditions of modern power. The subject in premodern social formations remains within the hierarchically structured relations of bond for the duration of his/her life. The socialisation of the modern subject, in contrast, demands a double and discontinuous procedure: the modern subject has to differentially negotiate the relations of bond and contract. S/he has to transfer and transsubstantiate his/her earliest identifications, to cathect impersonal relations of formal equality, in the process of his/her socialisation. S/he has to sustain both the direct and unequal exchanges of bond (love, obedience and honour), and the idealised, formalised exchanges of contract (making and keeping promises and agreements; treating others as equals), but in different places (see van Zyl 1990:9). This outcome of the socialisation process is ideally achieved in teaching at secondary level. It has to be re-edited, maintained and its capacity extended at tertiary level. In Weber’s terms, the operations taking place at these two levels would involve a combination of charisma and responsibility. In Freud’s terms, the combined effect would be the formation of the Ego in conformity with the reality principle, rendering it capable of operating in the present with a rational relation to the past and an orientation toward the future. It would equip the young adult with the capability of judging, and of entering into and honouring promises and agreements.

‘Internal’ and ‘external’ rationalisation and bureaucratisation

The bureaucratisation and rationalisation internal to the genealogy of charisma is not to be confused with the bureaucratisation and managerialising of higher education that we have seen over the last twenty years. While the first is deemed a necessary ingredient in the enculturation and education of the modern subject, that harnesses the indispensable primary affective ties, the latter is intent on stripping the teaching relation of any personalised, charismatic, transference qualities and hence of any psychological dimension of power, in the name of (vocational) training, (manpower) development, skills acquisition, serving the labour market, etc. Weber does not as yet fully distinguish ‘internal bureaucracy’ from externally imposed bureaucracy and managerialism; in fact, he ropes the ‘American model’ into his schema in order to explain the ‘internal bureaucracy’ that arises in the process of rationalisation, which he accords some legitimacy in differentiating the roles of academic scholar and political leader.⁷ He does not see in what he describes as the ‘American model’ an externally imposed process of rationalisation and managerialism that threatens the very teaching relation.

If higher education policy today does indeed not show any regard either for the core teaching relation subsuming a reference to a transcendental source revealed in charisma, or to the process of sublimation, the commercialisation, market-orientation, and training-focus of current higher education does indeed strike at the core of university education. In as much as the teaching-learning relation encapsulates what is demanded psychologically and politically of a modern subject in a democratic order, jeopardising it in the name of efficiency, cost-cutting, and an instrumentalised relationship to labour and commodity markets, means striking at the psychic and political foundations of a democratic order itself.

Charisma and 'social value'

However, the commercialisation of higher education has opponents other than old-fashioned academics fighting it, opponents whose force it has not reckoned with. One of its strongest and most militant opponents is the unconsciously held idea of social value that remains relatively immune to 'external' rationalisation, 'streamlining', cost-cutting, and managerialisation in the higher education system.⁸ It is an unconsciously held notion of social value that lies at the heart of both sublimation⁹ and charisma and that has secured their longevity. Both derive their force from the conviction of the import and value of religious, ethical, artistic, scientific, political inspiration emanating from heroes, from revelation, wisdom or grace. This conviction, Weber stipulates, revolutionises society 'from within', as opposed to the relatively ephemeral effect of 'external' bureaucratisation and managerialism. It draws its revolutionary force from what Weber terms 'a central *metanoia*', exemplified in St. Paul's letter to the Philippians by the statement, 'Whatever was valuable to me, I now consider them rubbish for the sake of Christ' (Philippians 3:7). *Metanoia* is defined by Weber as the complete reversal of the individual's central attitude toward the value and meaning of life and the world (1978:1117).

There is a hint in Weber's account, to the effect that this 'internal force' is all the more powerful, as it is radically out of synch with the 'external' realm; furthermore, Weber implies, it asserts itself all the more forcefully, as the bureaucratised order closes in on it. However, it is not simply a re-orientation toward a past order that demanded pious deference to the holy. The intuition of the Divine arises without precedent:

The bureaucratic order merely replaces the belief in the sanctity of traditional norms with rationally determined rules and by the knowledge that these rules can be superseded by others, if one has the necessary power, and hence are not sacred.

... whereas charisma ... manifests its revolutionary power from within, from a central *metanoia* [change] of the followers' attitudes. ... charisma, in its most potent forms, disrupts rational rule as well as tradition altogether, and overturns all notions of sanctity. Instead of reverence for customs that are ancient and hence sacred, it enforces inner subjection to the unprecedented and absolutely unique and therefore Divine. ... charisma is indeed the specifically creative and revolutionary force of history (Weber 1978[1922]:117).

A curious statement by Weber. Having insisted on the necessity of taming and tempering charisma with responsibility and regulation, he elevates charisma to an innovative force in history. It is innovative and revolutionary in so far as it brushes the Divine, the unique and unprecedented, against the Holy, hallowed tradition and custom.

The transformative power of charisma and, in a derivative sense, of the transference and sublimation serve as a reminder that there cannot be a self-instituting social order. Its manifestation in artistic creativity and in scientific inquiry pursued in university teaching are its prime exemplars in the realm of social practice, working as they do, to keep the system from closing in on itself, and from dying from its own consequences.

Notes

1. While I disagree with Readings' postulate of de-centering the teaching relation, freeing it from the task of the transmission of knowledge, I would like to hold onto his notion of teaching and learning as sites of obligation (1996:154).
2. This much is conceded even by sociologists critical of Weber's notion of 'charisma' as being too diffuse, ill-defined, and non-specific to serve as an explanatory concept. The residual element of charisma that is adduced to account for its re-surfacing in social orders that have structurally and historically superseded it, poses particular problems for sociologists. But it turns out that in mounting this critique, sociology hits and hints at its own disciplinary boundaries and limits.
3. Love is and remains fundamental in this transformation, which introduces an inhibition and redirection of its initial aim (see Freud 1958[1915]).
4. In this respect, it is also interesting to note that Weber turned his attention to the phenomenon of charisma (1918, 1919) at more or less the same time that Freud began to articulate his innovative stance on group psychology (1919), later to be published under the title 'Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse' (1921).
5. The history of psychoanalysis prior to the theorisation of the transference in the analytic situation is pervaded with anecdotes of analysands falling in love with analysts, placing the analyst before three impossible choices: marriage, a casual affair, or the termination of the analysis. It turns out—in retrospect, we

can say, predictably—that termination will only induce a repeat: s/he will fall in love with the next analyst with whom she seeks treatment. Freud does not promote this solution. Instead, he advocates invoking the affect of love, as a condition for the possibility of analytic work. But in the interests of the psychoanalytic cure, the analyst would have to refuse the desired satisfactions – both to him/herself and the analysand. He cautions against a countertransference (Freud 1958[1915]).

6. Freud talks about the dangers of working with ‘the most explosive forces’, which demands extreme caution and conscientiousness (Freud 1958[1915]:171). The corresponding term in Weber, invoked to check charisma, would be ‘responsibility’ (Weber 1967a[1919]:115).
7. Weber imputes to ‘The American model’, ‘a grain of salt’ to illuminate his postulate of mitigating charisma through responsibility and ‘self-clarification’. ‘The American model’ is personified in ‘the American boy’, who envisages a commercial transaction between teacher and student: ‘he sells me his knowledge and his methods for my father’s money, just as the greengrocer sells my mother cabbage ... And no young American would think of having the teacher sell him a Weltanschauung or a code of conduct’ (Weber 1967b[1919]:149–150)
8. This kind of ‘external’ rationalization, imposed from without by technical means, solicits only relatively superficial adaptations, geared to practical interests, from those subjected to it (see Weber 1978[1922]:117).
9. Sublimation is defined by Freud as the process which inhibits the aim of the sexual instinct, and redirects it to figures, activities, and processes endowed with higher social value.

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