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Charismatic Teaching and the Globalized University

This paper reflects on limits on global innovation in education, dampens fears of opponents of the “globalized university” and reins in exuberance of its visionaries. To begin I want to distinguish 1) “Global University” as an existing institution from 2) “globalized university” as an idea that generates enthusiasm and visions of innovation and transformation of the university as presently constituted. Both have in common a vision of extending the reach of the conventional university globally using the immensely expanded media and networks of communication that have emerged in the past two decades.

1) “Global University” is the name of a variety of institutions patched onto conventional universities that deliver on-line instruction and offer degrees, ordinarily completion BA degrees, MA degrees, and certificates. It appeals to working people in mid-career, especially in education, health care, various forms of business, who want to increase their competence, advance their careers, and raise their salary. While the generic title suggests universality, “Global” means “available to everyone anywhere” much more than it means, “extending the boundaries of knowledge throughout the globe.” At present the Global University is continuing education and university extension mediated by more sophisticated electronic media. It has developed curricula and pedagogy tailored to this mode of delivery. My university, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign, is currently creating its “Global Campus.” The fields offered at this early stage are MA in Education with an emphasis on on-line learning (that is, the global campus

teaching itself)—certificates in “Foundations of e-learning” and “Management of E-Learning”; a Bachelor of Science in Nursing completion program, for nurses currently active who want to advance their career by further academic training. In the planning stage are programs in Business and Finance, Engineering (restricted to “Engineering Project Management”), Healthcare and Medical education (the three programs in the planning stage all relate to patient safety), Labor and Industrial Relations (BA completion program only). The Global Campus is practical training. It in no way wants to or claims to compete with the traditional BA and MA degrees offered by the residential campuses. The University of Illinois model is typical of many others offering practical career training. Upper administrators foresee high profits from such programs.

On-line for-profit institutions not attached to a conventional university are another form of “Global University.” The National University located in San Diego offers the widest range of courses of such institutions known to me. The University of Phoenix is perhaps the best known and long counted as the most successful, the wave of the future and the great conservative hope of a revolutionary change in higher learning. For-profit universities are a 26 Billion dollar per year industry. They are also the site of some of the worst fraud and abuse in American education, as the recent student loan scandal showed (See the editorial, “Profiteering Colleges” in the New York Times, February 23, 2007).¹

2) the “globalized university” is the university as currently constituted extending its curriculum to appeal to foreign students, preparing its own students for overseas studies, and using new media to transmit learning and the results of research. The globalized university at present is not an institution but rather a spectrum of possibilities created by new technology. It uses new media to transmit learning and the results of research, and to facilitate contact among scholars

with common interests. A revolution in the way universities define themselves and the way they disseminate knowledge may appear to some to be just around the corner, rendered possible by the world wide web, by networks like our host, the World University Network, and Universitas 21, by tele-conference seminars, by digitized libraries, in short by the immensely expanded network of global communications, virtually unexploited prior to this decade, or rather only by the old “technology” of visiting professors, journal and book publications, international conferences, government and diplomatic initiatives—all of them limited in their accessibility relative to current levels of connectedness. University of Illinois has initiated a “Center for Global Studies” and an on-line journal with material relevant to the enterprise of this meeting.²

The advantages of global dissemination of university research are indisputable.³ The enthusiasm for the reshaping of the university is high. At a recent UNESCO sponsored conference on Globalization and Higher Education, the organizers declared globalization a “Copernican change” in the way Institutions of higher education operate. Current reality is far from justifying this exuberance. The resistance to curricular innovation based on new technology is excessive in the opposite direction. Peter Scott characterizes the “mainstream university response to globalization as ranging from reluctant acknowledgment that globalization is an inescapable phenomenon likely to overturn many of the existing assumptions about the aims and organization of universities to a determination to resist its alleged corruption of the university’s core academic and public purpose values.”⁴

My purpose in this paper is to see the vision of the globalized university as “Copernican change” within the network of resistances against which it would have to assert itself, its tensions with the local university out of which it arose. That states the dichotomy within which the much wider phenomenon of globalization has arisen: the global vs. the local. It hardly needs instances

in the economic sphere; mention of the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Association) will do. Or in the political sphere: the rise of the European union and the collapse of the Soviet Union both put local vs. global tensions on the world stage.

The global is exhilarating; the potential immense; the sense of living in a time of innovation and transition exciting.⁵ That means that anticipation will overstep bounds, as did for instance, the enthusiasm about the University of Phoenix. This development that seems at present limitless in its possibilities has severe limits.

A standard paradigm of institutional change pits the old against the new. It is certainly loudly asserted in the claim of a “Copernican change” coming over the university, the sense that we are about to mount the evolutionary ladder in the development of higher education. The “great new age” atmosphere leads to overreaching optimism by the advocates of the new and irrational fear by the adherents of the old.

It is possible to see the dichotomy—global vs. local—as one of a series of schisms, both great and small, which were/are critical turning points in the development of western culture. They would include Christian culture in its opposition to Roman; Protestantism vs. medieval Catholicism; early modern science vs. medieval science (the “Copernican Turn”); Enlightenment vs. Romanticism; Romanticism vs. empirical modern science. Lesser schisms fit the pattern of the old superseded by the new as well: Platonism vs. Aristotelianism; medieval humanism vs. scholasticism. A schism close to the present state of university disciplinary debates: the “two cultures” as defined by C.P. Snow, an older “literary culture” vs. the progressive culture of the “natural sciences.” And finally, the fundamental changes in communication media in their

historical stages: from oral to written culture, from manuscript to print, from print to electronic culture.

Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is a brilliant framing of transformations based on a "schismatic" breaking off of a new from an old mode of thought. While Kuhn focused on method and the development of new ideas in scientific thought, his system was quickly applied by social and political scientists and by historians. It appeared applicable to a wide variety of institutional and philosophical transformations. Last but not least the opposition central to our topic: the local vs. the global. Within a Kuhnian framework, the local university with its campus, its faculty, its more or less culture-exclusive disciplines, its library, and its classrooms is "normal science," or varying to fit the context, "normal higher education." The advent of the internet, of a global economy, the sense of vital issues shared world-wide (ecology, **global** warming) work in the development of institutions of learning the way "anomaly" works in scientific revolutions. Change, transformation, revolution crystallize around the new, which after hard-fought conflicts between old and new eventually establish new theories, approaches, institutions around the givens of the new media.

This model insists on a sharp and radical historicizing of institutional and theoretical evolution. Embedded in it is the presumption of **progress** which renders the old passé. In scientific change this is generally true: an Aristotelian model of the universe is useless, nothing more than a historical curiosity, after Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler. In some models of radical political change, the revolutionary model also works. The discarding of the old rather than its assimilation is the result of revolution: America's break with England in the 18th century represented a rejection of monarchy. The elimination of monarchist modes of thinking and acting from the regulating of the state was decisive. By contrast, The protestant reformation and

the various new modes of thought that arose from the sixteenth century on were far from eliminating Catholicism, just as the secularization of thought in the 19th century had an initially dramatic, ultimately shallow impact on religion. (The evangelical, revivalist religious movements in the US of the past decades show this abundantly.)

Could there be a better illustration of the, if I may put it that way, non-historical character of dichotomies of cultural change than the persistence of the humanities in western education? After some forty years of teaching the humanities, I find myself scratching my head at their survival. Since I began university teaching in the '70's I and my colleagues have imagined ourselves as facing a "crisis of the humanities," or even "the end of the humanities." We seemed to stand in an ever-deepening shadow cast by the sciences and the professional disciplines, which could claim with varying legitimacy to prepare students for careers, at least equip them with usable skills, and with dead certainty show superiority in fund-raising. Gloomy prophets of cultural decline like George Steiner issued Jeremiads⁶ which spoiled the moods of thousands of teachers of the humanities teaching tens of thousands of students and of administrators who firmly maintained undergraduate requirements in the humanities while feeling badly about their "crisis" and "decline." Very recently a highly distinguished literary critic enjoying a tenured, distinguished named chair in the humanities at one of the most distinguished American universities (Stanford) renewed the warning of crisis and decline in the humanities, complained of their loss distinction, of stature, and of numbers. She also claimed that the sponsoring institutions no longer know what the humanities are.⁷

Are the humanities in decline? Hardly. The major teaching in undergraduate university education in the US happens in humanistic fields. I imagine that the same is true for the UK. We have no major donors like business schools, but we have an overwhelming majority of

tuition payers drawing on our services. C. P. Snow's *Two Cultures* model may have predicted the role of the sciences in a wide range of **applications**, some of which have a far-reaching implication, but those dramatic successes are far from dislodging the humanities from their major role in undergraduate education. Snow thought such a revolutionary displacement of the "literary culture" was inevitable.

The "crisis of the humanities" existed and exists mainly in the minds of humanists frightened of new things springing up around them. It can join a variety of ideas of historical change forged with optimism and enthusiasm, which the course of history has proved flat-out wrong: Christianity was destined to supersede Judaism; the dictatorship of the proletariat was a dialectical inevitability; history is at an end now that the US and the capitalist system has triumphed over communism. It may be that the victors (or those who in the fever of the moment think they've won) write history, but they don't write reality.

Here are two cases of survival of the humanities that I take to be paradigmatic for their unremovability from higher education:

Case 1: Tulane University (New Orleans, Louisiana) suffered devastation from hurricane Katrina. It was forced by the ensuing financial crisis to release faculty in large numbers, including tenured faculty. A faculty of 1162 pre-Katrina was cut by 33%.⁸ The emergency became an opportunity to remodel the university, as the president, Scott S. Cowen, himself announced. The university would cut back to its core mission, terminating "non-essential" faculty deemed not "mission-critical." While some humanities and fine arts faculty members chose to leave, the mandated cuts were concentrated in three areas: the medical school (which had suffered the greatest physical damage), the business school, and engineering. The program

in mechanical engineering was eliminated. President Cowen referred approvingly to opinions of higher education experts describing the Tulane reforms as “the most significant reinvention of an American university since the civil war.”⁹ With so sharp a focus on fundamental priorities, the areas generally perceived as most valuable and “relevant,” i.e. wealth- and job-producing, were shed; the core mission continued in the form of undergraduate arts and sciences.

Case 2: Shortly after the fall of the Berlin wall the city of Berlin faced a huge financial crisis, and its abundance of universities in the reunited city was a large part of the crisis. The province of Brandenburg suddenly became the administrator of three major universities (Humboldt U., Free University, and the Technical University). It could not afford it, and knives were sharpened. A serious and, for many, sensible proposal redistributed the disciplines: to Free University the social sciences; to Humboldt the Humanities; to Technical University the sciences and technical fields. The fatal hindrance came from the Technical University. Its charter, redrawn in 1948, established a faculty of humanities as an essential element of the university, inseparable from its core mission, its courses required for all students. The TU had been one of the most distinguished institutions from the 19th century through the Nazi period, when it had cooperated fully in the development of war machinery. The re-founders of 1948 saw in the previous all-technical training an education of automatons available to diabolical enterprises, lacking a sense of humanity and morality. The humanities must stay in place to “humanize” an area susceptible to dehumanization when it operates in isolation (see note 20 below).

The humanities in their pairing with the sciences are for whatever reason hard to sweep aside. They do not participate in contemporary university education the way, say, the Hapsburg family participates in Austrian politics—a lost cause still atavistically alive with nostalgic followers pressing futile claims of legitimacy. The humanities still form the foundation of higher

learning. That role does not depend on the perception of their practical usefulness by students, their parents, and those enthusiastic advocates of the new superseding the old. Less students major in humanistic subjects now than in the previous century, because of the practical motivation. And yet even careerism has not triumphed over the English departments, over literature and composition, over foreign language departments.

Let's posit a model of **evolutionary** change in which the old is an indissoluble part of the new, the two live side by side or completely integrated, enforcing each other, their vitality dependent on their collaboration. The basic metaphor of an evolutionary model that fits innovation in the contemporary university is "operating system and updates." The humanities joined to the sciences, a union forged in Greco-Roman humanism, are the operating system of higher education. They are now and with minor fluctuations they always have been in the west. The humanistic program that Cicero formulated joined eloquence to wisdom. That translated into language arts and the knowledge of things—the sciences. **Update by Martianus Capella:** The model of the seven liberal arts, consisting of the trivium and the quadrivium (the language arts and the study of nature) developed out of Graeco-Roman humanism. **Update by Renaissance Humanists:** The study of the classics and of poetry renewed after neglect in the institutions of medieval Scholasticism. (Leibniz was working on a new edition of Martianus Capella when he died in 1716). **Update 20th Century America:** The major college division of my university is called LAS, "Liberal Arts and Sciences." Many others have this or a similar title.

The programs that run on top of that operating system have varied widely, are open to constant change, shift with new research. Current disciplines actively seek and willingly open spaces to make room for the new. The humanities and basic science instruction are not in that

shifting position. No humanistic discipline will arise anew as Nanotechnology arose among the sciences, however much emphases shift among their disciplines. Nanotechnology is curricular software, not operating system. The current university is in other words a stable, flexible system, welcoming innovation. The fact that factions of the faculty, especially in the humanities, regularly resist change and predict the “twilight of the humanities” does nothing to alter the remarkable combination of stability and openness.

We might ask why the humanistic gloom-sayers never prove right? Why isn't this relic of Greek and Roman humanism, this scheme of Cicero, enriched by medieval and renaissance humanists, swept aside? What is it they do that maintains their role? What is it that Oxford and Cambridge, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Berkeley, and University of Illinois know that allows letters or liberal arts or humanities to retain their firm connection to sciences? What is it that that education provides that University of Phoenix or other for-profit strictly distance-learning universities cannot provide? Or any institution based exclusively on job-competences, the transmission of knowledge and skills?

The answer to that question is located at least in part in the category of the “local” as opposed to the “global.” From the point of view of curriculum, the obvious local element tied indissolubly to higher learning is language. While at a certain level of culture, science and commerce, this limit on globalization is overcome by English as a global language, the persistence of local language is obvious.

Language is a single instance of a wider category, which I'll call “local knowledge.” The term is resonant and multi-valent, but what it comes down to is patterns of behavior, cultivated mannerisms, customs and rituals, mental habits, that do not cross cultural boundaries (and if they

do, then not by transmission but by some mysterious, unexplainable commonality), that are more or less exclusive to communities circumscribed by them, therefore are only and exclusively available to those present and absorbed in them. What local knowledge is can be captured in a single word, culture. Local knowledge can be learned and appropriated (anthropologists and merchants live from it and cannot ply their trades without it) but it is extremely difficult for an outsider to assimilate, as hard as it is to speak a foreign language perfectly and accent free, actually, probably even harder. Described by an anthropologist, it is like the stage directions of a drama without the dialogue. It can be transmitted well in literature, which we can define as “fictionalized local knowledge conveyed in effective language.” And finally there is a level of the local even less transferable and hard to formulate. Some of its components are practical intelligence and personal authority. The student educated in the broad sense practiced by most major universities in the US speaks well, argues well and persuasively, thinks both critically and imaginatively, and is enspirited by a sense of intellectual independence.

These elements of local knowledge are learned by its learners in a process of such complexity that I wouldn't begin to touch on its range in the 5000-8000 words that Ian Wei has allotted to me. (And, I confess, of such complexity that I withdraw the suggestion in the previous sentence that I understand it enough to lay it out in its full complexity). I will leave these two elements of this very stable substrate of university learning ill-defined as above, and move to my main topic: charismatic teaching. It is one form of the transmission of local knowledge, even more restricted “locally” than language, but so stable in its role as to appear as a fundamental form of human relationship, only one step above the child-parent relationship in its psychic rootedness.

Charisma is a force of extraordinary importance in the relations of political and religious leaders to their followers, of film and rock stars and other celebrities to their fans, and of teachers to their students.¹⁰ There is a good argument to be made from history of education that charismatic teaching is **the** primordial form of pedagogy.¹¹ It thrives most in a close personal relationship of student to teacher, one governed much more by irrational attractedness than by reason. While admiration is an element of this attachment, it is directed as much at the person of the teacher as at his/her knowledge, distinction, standing as scholar. A charismatic attachment is mimetic: charisma stimulates the urge to imitate. That student's imitation of the teacher becomes part of the process of learning. Some texts from the medieval cathedral schools express the student's urge to "transform himself completely into the master." The psychological engagement is obviously far more intense than in relations based merely on the conveyance of knowledge. Love between teacher and student is useful in the pedagogic relationship. This also has a tradition that stretches from the ancient world to the modern.¹² A formulation of the Roman philosopher Seneca to his young pupil Lucilius had resonance in the Middle Ages and Renaissance and beyond: "We must attach ourselves through love to some good man and hold him constantly before our mind's eye, and we should live as if he observed us constantly and do what we do as though he were observing."¹³ The mere physical presence of a charismatic figure has a pedagogic force. His/her composure and bearing, conduct of life, posture, gesture, diction, themselves constitute a form of discourse, intelligible and learnable. Pierre Hadot has shown in various studies that that charismatic teaching is the foundation of ancient philosophy and pedagogy.¹⁴ The cult of the Pythagoreans is a good example, in which the study of the universe was an adjunct to the personal attachment to the master, the "software" to its "operating system," if I can recur to that metaphor. How "local" such teaching was is shown by the elitist, esoteric

character of the cult. The person of the teacher is the lesson; the teacher's presence is the curriculum. A good study of this phenomenon is still to be written. A twelfth century monk and statesman, Wibald of Stablo, wrote to a schoolmaster at the cathedral school of Trier: "Let your mere presence be a course of studies for your students..." This same humanistic monk and advisor of kings waxed enthusiastic about the remarkable Bernard of Clairvaux, because "Just to look at him is an education; just to hear the sound of his voice is to learn; just to follow him is to be made perfect."¹⁵ A later admirer of a similarly imposing figure was Johann Peter Eckermann, the author of *Conversations with Goethe*. Eckermann noted in his diaries at the beginning of his stay with the aged Weimar Olympian, "What all I will gain by merely keeping his company, even in moments when he speaks about ordinary things! His person by itself, his mere presence seems to have an educating effect, even when he isn't saying a word."¹⁶ Emerson turned the "representative man" into a culture-bringer, saw personal "greatness" or "excellence" as a virtually messianic force. For Emerson, one heroic character raises all in his spell to heroism; a single great writer exalts armies of mediocrities. In its educating effect, it transforms society at large:

Mankind have in all ages, attached themselves to a few persons, who, either by the quality of that idea they embodied, or by the largeness of their reception, were entitled to the position of leaders and law-givers. These teach us the qualities of primary nature,—admit us to the constitution of things.¹⁷

This kind of learning happens as a natural process. We absorb the "lesson" of this kind of teacher "without effort, and almost through the pores of the skin." The "knowledge" they infuse passes by osmosis from its source to its target: "We catch it by sympathy..." (p. 627), or as we catch a disease: "There needs but one wise man in a company, and all are wise, so rapid is the contagion" (p. 626), or by osmosis: "This is the key to the power of the greatest men—their spirit

diffuses itself” (p. 631). “Greatness” was for Emerson a power of genius to impart itself to others, which raised them up to some approximation of itself. But subtract the extravagant idealism of Emerson, and a diminished but powerful remainder of this force is at work in many teachers. It certainly is excellent pedagogy, if students admire and are inspired by teaching.

It would be a mistake to assume that this element of pedagogy has weakened in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This form of teacher student relationship is alive and well in contemporary America, and I assume, England. My own experience as a teacher brought this home to me. While I had felt the influence of charismatic teachers (though few and far between) at high school and university (Berkeley), I experienced charisma, not exactly institutionalized, but integrated and central to the teaching mission of a college when I taught for nine years at Bryn Mawr College, a small, private liberal arts college for women (undergrad). Students became powerfully attached to their teachers, particularly a fairly small group of strong, impressive women faculty. The role model effect, transformation in the image and likeness of the teacher, was at work; faculty and administration were chosen in part for their ability to generate this effect. (The men on the faculty were far less important in this regard.) The effect that an immense reverence for one’s teacher, tinged with fear, can produce on the student is astonishing—if I weren’t afraid of losing my audience I’d say more boldly: miraculous. In my years at Bryn Mawr I observed the metamorphoses of students that were for my eyes nothing short of miraculous. Highly intelligent, nerdy, geeky, socially awkward young girls fresh from high school left Bryn Mawr as strong and assertive women. Lest this sound like advertising from the public relations office of the college, I hasten to add that alongside the positive shaping of students, the negative effects of charismatic teaching were in evidence: authoritarian relationships, irrational attachments that went far beyond mere admiration, love including and

excluding desire ordinarily unhappy. Discovery of one's incapacity to be Mabel Lang or Brunhilde Ridgeway, to come up to their standards both personal and intellectual, to enjoy their love and admiration, could lead to depression, abandoning study, in the worst case (which I also experienced) attempted suicide. (*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* is a great formulation of the exaltations and absurdities of charismatic teaching.) Learning ancient Greek and studying Hellenistic sculpture were goals intensely pursued, but so mixed up with the intense absorption in the person of the teacher that the two melted together. I would welcome empirical studies of the value to the memory and to the understanding of an emotional attachment to the teacher. I assume that that value is high.

My move to a large state university (University of Washington) underscored the fundamental difference of an education with charisma built into its operating system, and another which was fundamentally about transfer of knowledge and skills, where charisma only intruded as an individual, personal experience, not one encouraged by the nature of the institution.

This kind of transformative charisma is strictly local, requires close and personal contact. It is weakened at a distance. It is a force like personal authority, which cannot be exercised outside the force-field of the person who possesses it (unless it forms a psychological dependence from its local influence, as the authority of the parents is carried into life). It occurs in its most intense form in small private colleges like Bryn Mawr, which tend to have a strong personality institutionally and to seek faculty who fit, or shape them to fit.

But of course charismatic teaching works in other ways. It is certainly not gender bound (as the example of Bryn Mawr vs. University of Washington might suggest). It happens in any educational setting. The professor's reputation, the distinction of his/her scholarship, generate

aura; the way his teaching integrates with his experience—or if I may put it more dramatically, the way he or she lives the subject.¹⁸ Inherent interest of the subject matter joined to a sense of commitment, enthusiasm, love of the subject on the part of the teacher, are charismatic effects which reinforce teaching and create the incentive to learn beyond the promise of material reward, job preparation and advancement in a career. This kind of charisma is available to professors who teach lecture classes of hundreds. These elements of charismatic teaching, less intense, less emotionally involving than the Bryn Mawr model, are part of the operating system of the university. Every university I have worked at is at pains to recreate the conditions in which these pedagogic skills can join with transformative charisma: freshman seminars taught by select senior faculty or by any faculty who have distinguished themselves for their teaching; small seminar-type honors courses; courses taught in honors living groups; small summer seminars with a distinguished faculty member. The UK has the utterly unique arrangement of the required tutorial. Individual tutorials are always available to students in major US universities, though never required.

The unreproducible effect of an admired teacher in a classroom has the potential to generate enthusiasm for the subject, the ability to inspire, the potential to generate aura and the sense of the teacher's commitment. These are valuable elements of education whether at a small elitist institution or a large public one. They don't depend on the institutional character, but they do depend on the atmosphere generated by a classroom teacher.

The way that the globalized university or the Global University globalizes charisma has not yet been discovered, in spite of the sophisticated technology which might be able to some extent to do it. I'll state this as a challenge to enthusiasts of the global university in all of the instantiations mentioned above: unless you can instill these elements of personal effectiveness

into teaching mediated by the internet, by CD-rom or DVD, the teaching of the global university will be restricted to the flat and sober transmission of knowledge. The main motivation of students will remain the ambition to get jobs or advance their careers. And if it remains at that level it will always be a narrow adjunct to university teaching and learning, no matter how many people it attracts.

The globalized university and the Global University as they stand at present lack the indissoluble substrates of university learning, its operating system. That sets very severe limits on them. They can never compete with learning mediated by a teacher in a classroom. They convey a knowledge stripped of any personal element. I notice that the advertising of University of Illinois's "Global Campus" appropriates the language of face-to-face teaching, classroom teaching, charismatic teaching. Teaching is "interactive" (quoting from the Global Campus website): "We believe that interactions between students and faculty are paramount to effective learning. Global Campus students will participate in dynamic online dialogues and collaborate with classmates on projects and assignments in order to promote meaningful interaction within their courses." This suggests that the conditions of face-to-face teaching can be reproduced by media. "Interactive," "interactions between students and faculty," "dynamic dialogues," the online community constitutes a "Campus," students will have "classmates"—the terms are appropriations aimed at conveying the idea that personal contact and dynamism can be reproduced when mediated electronically. The suggestion that the benefits off the campus will be available online shows the value of the local campus. The designers of Global Universities, however, have not yet discovered how to reproduce it electronically.

I believe that it is possible to reproduce to some extent the experience of face-to-face teaching artificially, to "mediate charisma," to create a medium in which the global and the local

coincide. But the present level of pedagogy has not yet discovered the means. It is not to be done by a dry intellectualized conveyance of knowledge, methods and skills or in the form of internet dialogues.

How is it possible to transfer good, even charismatic, even passionate teaching via media? The process was at work when the students of Socrates and the disciples of Christ set about to convey the teachings of their masters. They did it in vivid narratives, dramas, dialogues in which the charismatic teacher regained his voice in mediated form. Socratic learning is saturated with the personality of Socrates. Imagine how much drier, intellectualized, desiccated his teaching would be if Plato or Xenophon had written systematized summaries of the thought of Socrates. They wrote “dynamic dialogues,” in which the personality of the teacher was present, because the character of the narrative evoked him in the imagination of the reader. The narratives had tremendous drama, not only because of the Socratic irony that allowed Socrates to pose as ignorant and eccentric, and to emerge from that role as the victor in high-stakes issues, but also because of the intellectual tragedy towards which the dialogues moved. It was not just the thought that counted; it was the personality, wit, and above all, the sense of living in ideas inseparable from the person, so inseparable that he died defending them. The same applies to Christ (except wit).

The university has at its disposal the most sophisticated media ever devised, including film. It has made wretched use of them, at least from the point of capturing dynamism of teaching via media. There is a serious commercial venture called “The Teaching Company,” which has hired some of the most distinguished academics in America to produce “The Great Courses.” I have one “Great Course” on my desk as I write, “Great Artists of the Italian Renaissance” a series of 36 lectures, each a half hour in length by Professor William Kloss,

associated with the Smithsonian Institute. I managed to look at about ten minutes of one lecture. Prof. Kloss stands behind a lectern and speaks, his lecture interspersed with slides—edited into the film, not projected in the classroom. The result is near parody in its flatness. The only idea of art- and set design at work is “Let’s have a luxurious looking classroom, something like a rare- book room, a 19th century gentleman’s library.” The main actor is an unprepossessing middle aged professor with no memorable qualities of person or voice. This is a high-class university course with a grand subject with very appealing visual quality, and the producers of the DVD thought that it was enough to transfer the givens of the academic environment directly into the film. They made no attempt to adapt the subject to the medium. This doesn’t work. The actual event of the lecture is recorded, and the result is a flat production, closer to reality TV and home movies than to a scintillating lecture.

This translation of Professor Kloss’s lectures into media shows the problem of the modalities of one medium transferred onto another where they don’t apply. It is a problem like the transition from stage acting to film acting. The first generation of film actors were stage actors by training. As a result they transferred the techniques appropriate to the older medium to the newer. Their grimacing, mugging and exaggerated gestures now look absurd. It took a while for actors to adapt to the big, close-looking, magnifying and mercilessly observant eye of the camera. But they eventually did. Actors acted to the camera instead of to imaginary pairs of eyes and ears distant from them and in the dark.

The media-driven global university has to adapt to the media driving it also. Prof. Kloss spoke his lecture on great artists to an imaginary audience sitting there with eyes trained on him, forgiving his pauses, accepting his monotone, as classes do. But it was a camera that was watching, and so the artifice of pretending to lecture to students was magnified. We of course

are free to continue to appear in tele-conferences as the boring ghosts with muffled voices into which the medium transforms us. We'll get our message across, stripped of personality. As long as we are just transmitting information, it doesn't much matter. But for an ambitious program that wants "dynamic" presentation, more is required. The English are evidently closer than Americans to knowing how to transfer academic presentation to film/TV media. The gap between the two lands is evident by comparing "The Great Courses" to the *Monarchy* series by David Starkey.

In order to teach well in using the new media, the teacher must become a writer, the lecture hall a studio. It requires special talent, and it's expensive. But then our administrators have dollar signs dancing (or Pounds Stirling pirouetting) in their heads at the thought of the Global Campus. They should be willing to risk anticipated profits for the pedagogic advantage of cinematic aesthetics. They should hire producers, art directors, script-writers, lighting technicians. They should look into Entertainment Technology, get lectures heightened by "augmented reality" techniques and "image surgery." They should find charismatic teachers and discover, or receive advice, how to translate classroom charisma into film and other media. The globalizers of education should be transforming classrooms and subjects into experiential worlds, rather than taking a medium exquisitely able to reproduce experience (film), and shrinking its capacities to recording devices for real classrooms and real teachers, the result being "reality education" with all the dynamism and aesthetic charm of reality TV shows. The huge advantage of new media, one of them, is that instruction can assimilate to entertainment—not in a cheap and pandering way, but in a way that enhances the inherent interest, the drama, the network of tensions in any subject.

So, summing up: a “globalized university” without living teachers—or the virtual equivalent—has severe limits on its curriculum. Global in reach, it will remain narrow in scope and minor in intellectual pitch. A small niche of career training, specialized research, and advanced courses like International Human Rights Law, are what the present state of thinking facilitates. Developing the present state of the art will be helpful to professional schools and valuable for the dissemination of knowledge. The liberal arts joined to the sciences remains for the present the foundation of university undergraduate teaching. A teacher able to inspire students is part of that foundation. Until the ingenuity of leadership and of technology is able to reproduce that kind of teaching, the Global Campus will remain an add-on to a university, not a university.

Now, I’m not saying, “we’ve got it right now, so what need to change? What need to innovate?” We can patch on new technology to the unshifting base of traditional campus-based, discipline-based learning. Traditional universities can successfully train mid-career people to improve their skills. But a transformation of the traditional university in terms of the new technology is unlikely. Such a transformation in the direction of Global Campus as presently conceived and practiced would be a catastrophe. It would represent a shift in thinking of students as free, creative citizens and imaginative leaders to thinking of them as a work force.

The reform of higher education in post-apartheid South Africa is an interesting case. A national effort to found learning on specialized skills using new technology, proved unpracticable, because it created narrow specialists. It amounted to educating students for limited skills which innovation could quickly render redundant. It was rejected in favor of a discipline-based system branching out into specialized skills, and that means a system very much like the current one in the US. In other words, the South African Commission on Higher

Education and the Department of Education, given the mandate that very few universities and educational systems have—to rethink higher education—tried a radical, knowledge and skills-based, technology-mediated system, which failed its students.¹⁹

We may well be in the midst of a historical transformation of communications-technology as far-reaching as the shift from manuscript to print produced by Gutenberg's new technology. But I would point out that the technological revolution of the fifteenth century was accompanied by a flourishing of the humanities. Their banishment or subordination by late-medieval scholastics was overcome by the humanists of the 15th and 16th centuries, and the printing press was in part responsible.

Though the new technology will be a huge boon to researchers of all disciplines, to scholars collaborating on projects on the one hand, and to college drop-outs and working people on the other, the limits of Global University education are severe. The thought that humanities learning at Ivy League universities, the major state universities, and the major English universities have anything to fear from this minor adjunct to their enterprise is exaggerated, the exuberance and anxieties about a revolution in university education just around the corner, highly exaggerated.

I want to end with an anecdote that seems to me to solidify that prediction, if only anecdotally. I heard it in a lecture by Danielle Allen, classics scholar, currently dean of humanities at University of Chicago, winner of a McArthur Fellowship in part for advocating and instituting the "Odyssey Project at U. of C." The Odyssey Project offers humanities courses to students living near or below the poverty level. The average age tends to be 35-45, though 17 is the minimum. Five areas are offered: philosophy, history, literature, art history, writing and

critical thinking. The courses are tuition-free; books, materials, and child-care are provided; college credit is available. Funding is by local humanities councils and universities, which provide regular university faculty, course release and normal salary. These courses are popular. The students often have had no or little education (the only entrance requirement besides poverty is the ability to read a newspaper in English). Danielle Allen, on the way to promote the project at another university, struck up a conversation with her taxi driver. She saw he was an intelligent fellow and asked whether he hadn't tried for another profession than taxi driver. He had. He had studied graphic design at a community college, got a job based on that preparation, but the program he had learned was out of date two years into his job, and he was let go. So, Allen asks, why aren't University of Chicago, Yale, etc. not offering graphic design and other forms of career preparation for their students. Why do they continue to insist on this old program including her (Allen's) own antiquated field, classical studies? What do they know that the community college and state college evidently did not know, at least was not telling its students? Allen's taxi driver is a paradigm case of someone caught in the transition from an "industry-manufacturing based society" to a "knowledge-based society." The Humanities will not lose in that shift. It is the source of "life-long learning" as opposed to highly specialized technical learning. What the Ivy's, Oxford and Cambridge—and the Berlin Technical University²⁰—know is of course that a humanities class taught by an excellent teacher that provides the student with the basics of expression, creative thinking, local cultural knowledge is a prerequisite to success in a society. Skill training, however mediated, is perishable.

NOTES

¹ The official response of the University is available at

https://mycampus.phoenix.edu/secure/Fact_Fiction_In_NYT_Article.doc

Bad news about University of Phoenix is available on the website <http://www.uopsucks.com>

There is also a satirical website taking “Global Universities” as its target: the “Oxford Global

University: A Degree Mill for the 21st Century.” See <http://www.angelfire.com/nb/oxfordglobal/>

² <http://www.global-ejournal.org/index.php/global-e/index>

³ See the studies in *Creating Knowledge, Strengthening Nations: The Changing Role of Higher Education*, ed. Glen Jones, Patricia L. McCarney, and Michael L. Skolnik, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005),

⁴ Peter Scott, “The Opportunities and Threats of Globalization,” in *Creating Knowledge, Strengthening Nations*, p. 43.

⁵ The rhetoric of tomorrow’s conference (“Realising the Global University: Developing Effective International Strategies in a Rapidly Changing World”) radiates the conviction that great change is just around the corner and we must prepare for it: “This conference addresses the challenge of restructuring higher education; outlining needs for transformational change; re-envisioning roles of universities in the 21st Century; and determining what institutional leaders need to do in order to compete effectively.”

⁶ George Steiner, "The Humanities—At Twilight?", *P.N. Review*, 25, nr. 4 (March-April 1999), 18-24.

⁷ Marjorie Perloff, "Crisis in the Humanities," (1999),

<http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/perloff/articles/crisis.html>

Against this sentiment, James Simpson, "Crisis in the Humanities? What Crisis?", in *Off the Page: Harvard University Press Authors' Forum* (June 8, 2007):

http://harvardpress.typepad.com/off_the_page/2007/06/crisis_in_the_h.html

⁸ A detailed report by the AAUP is available at <http://www.aaup.org/NR/rdonlyres/98041E72-D445-42F7-92E4-D2D4325E08CE/0/KatTulane.pdf>

⁹ Reported at http://www.bestofneworleans.com/dispatch/2007-07-10/cover_story.php referring to Cowen's article in Tulane's *Trusteeship* magazine.

¹⁰ A flurry of recent interest in Charisma: Philip Rieff, *Charisma: The Gift of Grace, and How It Has Been Taken Away from Us*, (New York: Pantheon, 2007), C. Stephen Jaeger, "Aura and Charisma," *Eadem Utraque Europa* 2 (2006), 125-154; William Clark, *Academic Charisma and the Origins of the Research University*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), Joseph Roach, *It*, (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2007), and, specifically in the context of teacher/student relations: George Steiner, *Lessons of the Masters* (Cambridge MA, 2005) and C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950-1200*, (Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1994).

¹¹ See Brian Warnick, *Learning from the Lives of Others: An Examination of Role Models and Human Exemplars*, Diss. Univ. of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign, 2005.

¹² See my study, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility*, (Phila: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), esp. pp. 59-81. Also William Deresiewicz, “Love on Campus: Why we should understand and even encourage a Certain Sort of Erotic Intensity between Student and Professor,” *American Scholar*, 76 (2007), 36-46.

¹³ Seneca, Epistola ad Lucilium 11, 8.

¹⁴ Pierre Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* Trans. Michael Chase, (Cambridge MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002).

¹⁵ Both passages cited in *Envy of Angels*, p. 80.

¹⁶ Johann Peter Eckermann, *Conversations with Goethe*, September 18, 1823.

¹⁷ Ralph Waldo Emerson, Essays and Lectures, (New York: Library Classics of the US, 1983), p. 624.

¹⁸ The sad case of Joseph Ellis, historian at Mt. Holyoke college (which I assume, like Bryn Mawr, has charisma in its operating system). Ellis taught a popular course on the Vietnam war, but he invented stories of his own combat role and wove them into his lectures. The stories were riveting fabrications, made up in order to dramatize the points of his lectures. The professor with a strong ego senses the effect of personal anecdotes. He feels the admiration of the students and how it translates into personal prestige. Warmed by adulation, he need only give some content to

the aura forming around him of the man who not only tells, but embodies history. Plausible stories, true or false, seem licit as illustrations of the impersonal truths they convey. They supply the want and need of his listeners for embodied history, and they magnify the teller. They raise him to the heroic. When Ellis's claims were exposed by an article in the Boston Globe, he fell from favor, was stripped of his named chair, but returned to the classroom after a year's suspension.

¹⁹ See the study by George Subotzky, "The Contribution of Higher Education to Reconstructing South African Society: Opportunities, Constraints, and Cautionary Tales," in *Creating Knowledge, Strengthening Nations*, 127-154.

²⁰ The statement of the "educational Mission" of the TU in a recent formulation (<http://www2.tu-berlin.de/presse/doku/leitbild/auftrag.htm#>): "Die TU Berlin orientiert sich in ihrem Bildungsauftrag an den Grundsätzen einer wissensbasierten Gesellschaft. Sie verbindet Fragen der gesellschaftlichen Teilhabe und Gerechtigkeit insbesondere mit technologisch/technischen Problemlösungen, dem Lernen des Lernens und dem Handeln in komplexen beruflichen und sozialen Kontexten.

Dem Bildungsauftrag einer technischen Universität entsprechend sind Forschung und Lehre interdisziplinär eng vernetzt, da das Zusammenspiel der verschiedenen Disziplinen den Nährboden für Kreativität und Innovation darstellt. Dieser Grundsatz wird ergänzt durch den Willen aller Lehrenden, die Persönlichkeitsentwicklung der ihnen anvertrauten Studierenden nach bestem Können zu unterstützen.

Die TU Berlin fühlt sich in ihrem Bildungsauftrag ebenso verpflichtet, Inhalte und Strukturen für das lebenslange Lernen zu schaffen, um damit den Herausforderungen einer dem ständigen technologischem Wandel unterworfenen Gesellschaft mit sinnvollen Lösungen zu begegnen.