CHARISMA AND COMMUNITIES OF FEELING

It might seem strange that this paper introduces the topic of charismatic authority yet again in this day and age. However, nearly 100 years since it was defined by Max Weber, the topic of charismatic authority seems impossible to ignore. Today, many people are invoking charismatic authority in an attempt to explain trends in world politics, with unexpected characters becoming presidents of states, prime ministers or ministers of foreign affairs - even in Western democracies. It is true that in academic circles, the term 'charisma' is nowadays mainly confined within the domains of leadership and management studies, in which neo-charismatic theories of leadership are flourishing (see for example House and Aditya, 1997). In these numerous studies, charismatic personality and charismatic authority become quantifiable, and the impacts of charisma on effectiveness or motivation are measurable. Hence House and Aditya (1997: 441) conclude that 'the studies based on neo-charismatic theories clearly show that this genre of leadership results in a high level of follower motivation and commitment and well-above-average organisational performance, especially under conditions of crisis or uncertainty'. It is interesting to note that some describe charisma as a crucial ingredient in the successful leadership of a modern organisation – from small task groups to large multinational companies - yet for others, the concept is not useful in understanding modern, democratic politics (Breuilly, 2011). While neo-charismatic theories construct models for measuring the 'extent and dimensions of person's charisma' (Tkalac Verčič and Verčič, 2011: 12), others can barely find a political figure in modern politics that truly deserves the label of a charismatic leader (Breuilly, 2011). Well, except perhaps for Hitler.

Like any other average addict of History Channel, I have seen almost all of the surviving TV footage of Hitler: I saw him delivering speeches to SA and SS troops; to his *parteigenossen* and nameless masses on Nuremberg relies; on streets of Berlin and Vienna; waving to the packed concert hall in Bayreuth; surrounded with children and women in ecstasy or as a solitary figure in Berghof gazing on

Bavarian Alps. Sometimes I wonder how I would have reacted if I had been there. Would I be carried away by the impact of these mass rallies and by Hitler's personality? Would I be yet another "victim" of Hitler's charisma? Would I also be one of those who just followed orders? I started to doubt myself even more when I read Radkau's (2009: 403) story of how 'Raymond Aron […] admitted in retrospect that, if he was not swept along by the Nazi movement despite his French nationality and Jewish origins, it was due more to his "temperament" than his powers of reason'. Continuing with this line of reasoning, Aron hints that even though today we find Nazi ideas repulsive, the power of reason might not have saved us from waving those flags as enthusiastically as those on the History Channel. My only consolation is that I am of an equally difficult 'temperament' as Aron. But luckily for me, this is merely a small mind game, since *I was not there.*

This small mind game does point to one of the main characteristics of charisma, one that is easily overlooked (for example in Breuilly, 2011). A sound mind is not necessarily adequate protection from the effects of charismatic *authority*. In this paper, I put forward that the reason why some failed to recognise the usefulness of the concept of charisma as defined by Weber lies not in the phenomenon itself, but in misunderstandings by some who attempted to apply the concept to better understand nationalism as a form of modern politics. From the outset, this paper claims that pure charisma has little to do with ideas and ideologies. Charisma is instead a property of a particular type of experience. How a person is experienced, and what goes on between that person and their potential followers is perhaps not a sufficient, but I would claim, is a necessary condition for the creation of 'pure, original charisma'. Hence, a truly useless exercise would be to list all the necessary ingredients in the contender's personality that fit the *charismatic* label and all of the social conditions in which the contender emerged. If a person is experienced by others as a charismatic leader, and if that person is obeyed because he or she is experienced as charismatic, no list of objective criteria would disqualify that person as such. This charisma does not form, create or recreate nations. That might be a consequence, intended or not, of what Weber called *routinisation of charisma*. Rather, in this paper, I argue that, at best, charismatic leaders form social movements

and, in this process, facilitate the formation of a particular type of community. This type of community is characterised by instability and temporality. Charisma, I will argue, creates communities of feelings.

For the sake of clarity, the main ideas in this paper will be examined and illustrated through the case study of Hitler. However, the focus of this paper is not on him *per se*, since charismatic *authority* is not the same as charismatic personality. In other words, it is not about what characteristics a leader possesses, but rather what are the chances that followers will willingly obey him.* For this reason, the focus of this paper will be on the followers and on what emerges between a leader and their followers.

Weberian Charisma

When Weber defined the term charisma, he clearly indicated that it is at the same time an individual trait and an interactional relation (Wasielewski, 1985: 207). It is however not enough for a person to have what we might call a charismatic personality. An individual's abilities and extraordinary qualities must be validated by followers for *charisma* to appear. Hence, in the Goffmanian language, the charismatic leaders-in-making and their potential followers must experience successful social interactions, in which the potential charismatics perform a particular self and the audience validates it. To stay within Goffman's terminology, charisma is the interplay of a leader's demeanour and the audience's deference. Within this interplay, the identities of both are confirmed, or not. Through this interaction, Reinhard Bendix (1962: 300) explains, "[p]eople surrender themselves to such a leader because they are *carried away by a belief* in the manifestations that authenticate him".

The successful interaction that produces charisma thus must have a transformative power and must affect both charismatic leaders and their followers. Leaders' 'personal qualities are derived from, sustained by and publicly confirmed through interaction' (Wasilewski: 1985: 208). Through this

interaction, the leader gains power – power that is bestowed and conditioned by the followers. The followers, it seems, must go through an even more radical transformation: they must cut with their past beliefs in either traditional or legal-rational authorities, and freely give their trust and obedience to the charismatic leader. The interaction with a charismatic leader is supposed to trigger in these followers 'an "internal" revolution of experience' (Bendix, 1962: 300). 'Charisma', Weber (1963b: 1117) says, 'if it has any specific effects at all, manifests its revolutionary power from within, from a central [change] of the followers' attitudes'. In this paper, I will maintain that 'attitudes', in this context, are more emergent properties of emotions than of ideas and ideologies.

This radical transformation, as Weber is well aware, occurs only in specific circumstances, which he describes like this:

- 'born out of suffering, conflicts, or enthusiasm' (1968a: 53);

- 'arises from distress or enthusiasm' (1968b: 1115);

- 'out of the anxiety and enthusiasm of an extraordinary situation' (ibid. 1117);

- arises from 'collective excitement produced by extraordinary events' (ibid. 1121).

Weber does not spend too much time explaining how these emotions and emotional states are generated. But clearly, there are two distinctive issues at stake. First, Weber claims that charisma emerges in 'extraordinary situations'. Yet we find that these situations are depicted differently in various theories of Weber's charisma. We can see them described as macro-situations defined as 'liminal times' when the whole society experiences periods of instability and insecurity. At the same time, an 'extraordinary situation' can be seen as a micro-situation related to an extraordinary event – such as a rally, demonstration, party meeting, or performance in a defined time and space. Second, the term that is repeatedly used by Weber as a key element of charisma is *enthusiasm*. Enthusiasm, just as with any emotional state, is first, by definition, experienced individually, and second, ontologically it is in the moment (Berezin, 2009: 35). Hence, instead of searching for charisma in

macro-structures of a troubled society, it has to be identified in micro-situations that produce specific emotions.

This enthusiasm, on which Weber bases his whole theory, emerges most efficiently if charisma is enacted in face-to-face interactions. For Weber 'the difference [between charisma and other types of authority] is rooted in the manner in which the ruled and led *experience* and internalize [...] ideas' (1968b: 1116). Here, the emphasis is not on ideas, but on *the manner in which they are experienced*. In other words, charisma has to be performed and that performance has to be experienced. Charismatics and their followers, Wasielewski (1985: 211) rightly emphasise, 'may initially share nothing more than the context in which they come together'. Here again 'coming together' seems to be a precondition for charisma to emerge. And as we saw previously, this coming together, this event or performance, has to produce enthusiasm, excitement, ecstasy in both the performer and the audience.

Weber does not spend too much time elaborating on how enthusiasm can be aroused. He just notes that the charismatic leader needs to *sincerely* convey his/her belief (Weber, 1968a: 49). Where Weber might have thought this to be self-explanatory, Rousseau dedicated some space to it. Rousseau was not concerned with a charismatic leader, but the enlightened legislator. On closer inspection, there is little difference between them, since the legislator, just as the charismatic leader, has a mission. He too needs to 'gain the consent of his people to follow' (Kelly, 1987: 322) his mission. 'It is not enough for a legislator to make his people "see objects as they are"; he must also sometimes make them see objects "as they should appear to be"' (Rousseau cited in Kelly, 1987: 323). Kelly explains how Rousseau's legislator '[i]nstead of submitting to judgment, [...] "makes himself the judge" [...]. He does so without recourse to force, however. His audience accepts his judgment willingly'. Rousseau's legislator, just as Weber's charismatic, needs to 'gain consent without using either reason or force' (ibid.: 324). Rousseau doubts the power of reason alone since reasoning 'requires both an audience capable of judging and the time necessary to perform a

laborious demonstration' (ibid.). He also doubts the effectiveness of miracles since 'miracles impress those who are "incapable of coherent reasoning, of slow and sure observation, and slaves of the senses in everything"' (ibid.: 325). Instead, he 'must necessarily have recourse to another order of authority, which can win over without violence and persuade without convincing' (ibid.: 324). So Rousseau concludes that 'people are won over less by the miracles themselves than by the character of those who perform the miracles' (ibid.). In the *Social Contract*, Rousseau concludes: 'The great soul of the legislator is the only miracle that can prove his mission' (Rousseau, 2012: location 562). '[A] great legislator … can make the multitude *feel* rather than see his soul' (Kelly, 1987: 325, emphasis added). Rousseau says: 'One renders one's feelings when one speaks, and one's ideas when one writes' (ibid.: 327). The spoken language, therefore, expresses feelings much more than ideas. 'It persuades, rather than convinces because it expresses feelings' (ibid.: 327).

In Weber's biography, Radkau (2009: 397) reveals how 'Weber himself points to the difficulty of empirically demonstrating charisma by any external indicators'. Hence, he writes, the 'social scientist […] needs to have a feel for this spirit in order to identify charisma as such; and such a feel is best developed through a charismatic experience of one's own'. It seems that Weber found the same non-rational means for feeling charismatics' souls just as Rousseau did.

And this might be a good moment to call on Shakespeare's authority. In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, in the scene of the funeral speeches for Brutus and Mark Antony, we can find the most blatant example of a leader gaining consent without using either reason or force. In his book *Theatre and Politics* (2009) Joe Kelleher shows how oratory works 'on us' through skills and conventions of performance. Brutus speaks first of 'rationalising the assassination of Caesar in patriotic terms ("Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more")' and appealing to the citizens' political interests as 'free' subjects of a republic. Kellaher (2009: 36-7) describes:

> Brutus' speech is a success, the crowd is persuaded, and the contest appears to be over
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> before it has begun. But then Anthony steps up, bringing with him the bloodied corpse of

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the assassinated emperor. He works on the crowd piece by piece, addressing them as they

would want to be addressed ('Friends, Romans, countrymen'). [...] He claims at one point to

be so overcome with grief that words fail him. He claims that he is there only to mourn

Caesar and honour the conspirators. And at the same time, he insinuates suspicion ('Did this

in Caesar seems ambitious?'), playing not to political reason so much as to sentiment ('If you

have tears, prepare to shed them now') and, crucially, drawing the crowd's attention to the

picture of Caesar's corpse, present before them, and to that extent as moving as any picture

can be ('O piteous spectacle'). [...] Mark Antony's speech has worked its trick, winning the

crowd over not through the presentation of the far-sighted political reason that Brutus

attempted in his speech but through a stirring-up and manipulation of violent emotions and

a popular appeal to immediate fears and sentimental attachments'.

Kelleher (ibid.: 37) concludes how Mark Antony's 'speech is, in all sorts of ways, in its deployment of

a range of emotive triggers, a masterful performance, or at least a gift for a certain sort of masterful

actor' such as Richard Burton. Kelleher (ibid.: 38) finally describes this scene as a 'charismatic

manipulation in the public arena'.

However, the most important moment in this fictitious example happens *after* the speeches are

performed - the riot, or the mutiny of the audience. What we learn from this example is that

powerful emotions are the best motivators for action. That is the reason why Wasielewski (1985:

208) claims that '[k]nowledge of and ability to manipulate emotions and their guidelines are [...] the

wellspring of charismatic authority'. Since 'emotions [are] the basis of charisma' (ibid.). Weber

himself sees genuine charisma as 'a turbulently emotional life that knows no economic rationality'

(Weber, 1968b: 1120) where 'the acutely emotional faith [...] distinguishes it from the traditional

mold of everyday life' (ibid.: 1122).

Analysing Hitler's speech, Adi Krupski (2012) reaches similar conclusions. He claims that even though

'it helps to have a clear and logical progression through a speech, [...] people respond more to their

emotions rather than logic' and concludes that 'the most emotion can be aroused by the speech giver showing emotion himself'.

Successful interactions between leaders and followers thus generate not merely a cognitive, but more importantly an emotional, relationship between them. Charismatic leaders do not only 'reshape their followers' interpretations of the world', but also 'their emotional responses to it' (Wasielewski, 1985: 213). Only once the leader is successful in establishing this emotional order, charisma becomes a force for a change. The power of social transformation is gained not just by trust in and obedience to the charismatic leader, but the fact that individual followers establish a relationship with each other as well as with the charismatic leader. A successful performance – this emotional interaction between the performer and the audience – creates a community. Weber himself clearly states that a 'political community' derives its force as well as its legitimacy from its 'emotional foundations' (1968b: 903). Moreover, 'the corporate group which is subject to charismatic authority', Weber continues, 'is based in an emotional form of communal relationship' (Weber, 1968a: 50). The result of such a successful interaction Roth and Schluchter (1979: 130) call an *emotional consociation*, Wasielewski (1985) and Berezin (2002) a *community of feelings*, and Victor Turner (1982) *communitas*.

So far, I have argued that charisma is an emergent property of a performance. It emerges in situations of successful interaction between the performer and the audience that establishes an emotional relationship between them. It is also argued that, as a consequence of this interaction, both the performer and the audience form a particular type of community. In order to examine the processes of how this community forms I will use Erica Fisher-Lichte's (2005, 2008) theory of performance and will argue that successful performances might create a type of community which is not based on common beliefs, shared meanings or shared ideologies, but rather on shared experiences. 'Through such experiences, the self of the people who undergo them does not necessarily dissolve but it certainly cannot be conceived of as something stable, permanently fixed

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or rigid. Rather, it is thought of as becoming fluid, undergoing transformations *while the experiences are lived out*' (ibid.: 58, emphasis added). The proverbial instability of charisma forged through these performances rests on the fact that they are based on 'shared, short-lived experiences, emotions or bodily sensations, and dissolved the moment after it happened' (ibid.: 59).

The curious case of Albert Speer

In order to illustrate Fisher-Lichte's ideas, I will use an example of Albert Speer's description of the first moment he heard Hitler speak. In 1931 Hitler was delivering an address to the students of Berlin University at the Institute of Technology. 'My students', Speer (1970: 44) explains, 'urged me to attend. *Not yet convinced, but already uncertain of my ground*, I went along' (emphasis added). This is the moment when the potential charismatic leader meets his potential followers, and when they share nothing but space. Speer continues:

> Hitler entered and was tempestuously hailed by his numerous followers among the students. This *enthusiasm* in itself made a great impression upon me. But his appearance also surprised me [...] Everything about him bore out the note of reasonable modesty [...] Then, in a low voice, hesitantly and somewhat shyly, he began a kind of historical lecture rather than a speech. To me there was *something engaging about it* – all the more so since it runs counter to everything the propaganda of his opponents had led me to expect (ibid.: 45, emphases added).

In this passage, Speer paints a picture of his first encounter with Hitler. The enthusiasm of the audience affects Speer from the first moment. He is then 'surprised' by Hitler's appearance and emotions he projects (shyness) that trigger Speer's response – 'there was something engaging about it'. This interplay between the performer and the audience is for Fisher-Lichte (2008) the main characteristic of a performance. She calls it a 'self-referential and ever-changing feedback-loop'

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which is the reason why 'performance remains unpredictable and spontaneous to a certain degree' (ibid.: 38). The spectators, she claims, 'do not merely witness these situations; as participants in the performance they are made to *physically* experience them' (ibid.: 40). The only condition for these processes to be set in motion lies in the bodily co-presence of actors and spectators. In these situations, she says, 'you cannot not react to each other' (ibid.: 43). Up to this point, Fisher-Lichte's framework closely resembles Durkheimian ritual, that Randall Collins elaborated in his *Interaction Ritual Chains* (2004). This bodily co-presence, the mutual focus of attention and shared mood in a particular moment can erupt into, what Collins calls *collective effervescence*, Jeffrey Alexander (2006) calls *the emotional connection between the actor, the audience and text*, and Fisher-Lichte calls *flow of energy*.

This 'flow of energy' that is created between the performer and his audience is unpredictable. Fisher-Lichte (2008: 59) claims that it depends 'as much on the actors' ability to mobilize energy at any given point during the performance as on every single audience member's level of responsiveness and their ability to physically experience the energy'. Among other factors, she continues, 'the proportion of responsive and resistant spectators played an important role in this context. The audience fuelled the feedback loop and thus the course of the performance through their particular attitude and experience. The audience physically experienced and absorbed energy emitted by the actors and transferred it back to them' (ibid.). And that is where the loop starts again.

Speer (1970: 46) recalls that evening in 1931:

> 'I was carried away on the wave of the *enthusiasm*, which, one could almost *feel this physically* […] It swept away any skepticism, any reservations […] Finally, Hitler no longer seemed to be speaking to convince; rather, *he seemed to feel that he was expressing what the audience, by now transformed into a single mass, expected him*. It was as if it were the most natural thing in the world to lead students and part of the faculty of the two greatest academies in Germany submissively by a leash' (emphases added).

This is the moment when the audience surrenders to the charismatic leader. The whole scene forces us to recall Nietzsche's Dionysian when '[s]inging and dancing, man expresses himself as a member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way toward flying into the air, dancing. His very gestures express enchantment' (Nietzsche, 2000: 37).

The success of Hitler's performance does not depend on ideological uniformity or shared convictions of members of the audience. The performance itself has a rather loose structure in which all that is required is face-to-face interaction between the performer and the audience (ibid: 55).

Speer (1970: 45-6) writes: 'The mood he cast was much deeper than the speech itself, most of which I did not remember for long'. Later on, he (ibid.: 46) continues:

> 'I was not choosing the NSDAP, but becoming a follower of Hitler, whose magnetic force had reached out to me the first time I saw him and had not, thereafter, released me. […] I knew virtually nothing about his program. He had taken hold of me before I grasped what was happening'.

This 'mood', or Fisher-Lichte's autopoietic feedback loop, creates 'an opportunity for actors and spectators to physically experience community' (Fisher-Lichte, 2009: 55). The formation of this community is the product of 'working of the autopoietic feedback loop and the experience of liminality that generates transformation' (ibid.: 67). It is a situation that Victor Turner (1967) describes as 'betwixt and between', the threshold which an audience experiences for the duration of the performance. 'Their position', Fisher-Lichte describes, 'is never fixed; they do not control the performance but their influence can be felt nonetheless' (Fisher-Lichte, 2005: 67). The sense of community in these moments arises through 'very special physical effects brought about by the presence of the masses in the space and by the frequently changing atmosphere' (ibid.: 58). Fisher-Lichte calls it a theatrical community. For Berezin (2002) this is a 'community of feelings'. These communities, Berezin explains, that can be both staged and formed spontaneously, 'serve to

intensify emotional identification with the polity and derive emotional power from their transience. They bring individuals together in a bounded, usually public, space for a discrete time period to express emotional energy' (Berezin, 2002: 39).

Fisher-Lichte (2005: 58) writes: 'As long as the performance lasts it is capable of establishing a bond between individuals who come from the most diverse biographical, social, ideological, religious, political backgrounds and remain individuals who have associations of their own and generate quite different meanings'. The performance does not force them into a common confession; instead, it allows for shared experiences.

Albert Speer (1970: 46) recalls the last moments of the evening:

> 'Others may afterward have discussed that stirring evening over a glass of beer. Certainly, my students pressed me to do so. But I felt I had to straighten things out in my own mind, to master my confusion. I needed to be alone. Shaken, I drove off into the night in my small car, stopped in a pine forest near Havel, and went for a long walk'.

Experience

Even if we doubt the validity of Speer's account, it is nonetheless evident that he had quite an experience that evening. It is truly an experience, as Wilhelm Dilthey defined it, a moment that involve 'the whole human vital repertoire of thinking, willing, desiring, and feeling, subtly and varyingly interpreting on many levels' (Turner, 1986: 35). This is not merely an event since events are 'things that happen [while] experiences [are] things that happen to us or others' (Abrahams, 1986: 55). But the account Speer offers us in his book is a just a memory of that evening, however accurate it might be. It is, first of all, a linguistic expression of a type of experience, those moments for which we rarely find words to describe. What Speer offers is his *interpretation of the experience* – something that was formed once the experience is long gone. The Diltheyian concept of *experience*

clearly distinguishes the reality of the moment from its interpretation, and its expression. Since, 'observation destroys the experience' […] and 'every observed moment of life is a remembered moment and not flow; it is fixed by the attention which arrests what is essentially flow' (Dilthey, 1976: 210).

Fisher-Lichte (2008: 152) warns that every member of the audience is 'far from a *tabula rasa* when attending a performance'. Each individual member of the audience 'brings forth meanings according to their subjective conditions'; 'everyone contributes to it and is influenced by it but no one controls it' (ibid.: 154). In the process of generating meaning in a performance, 'the subjects experience themselves actively as well as passively, neither as fully autonomous subjects nor totally at the mercy of inexplicable forces' (ibid.: 155). Only once the performance is over does this situation change. In retrospect, the spectators can try to relate each perceived and remembered element to the whole in order to understand, or fail to understand, the performance (ibid.: 155-6). Hence, it is not what is perceived that leads to 'an attempt to understand the performance but one's identity and biography' (ibid.: 156). But this type of performance does 'not seek to be understood but experienced' (ibid.: 158). Strong emotions that are awoken in these performances 'bear the largest responsibility for triggering impulses to intervene and create a new set of norms for the acting subject' (ibid.: 177). Speer (1970: 48) writes: 'My feelings probably had nothing to do with political motives. […] The following day I applied for membership in the National Socialist Party and in January 1931 become Member Number 474,481'.

These emotions of enthusiasm, ecstasy, have a double effect: they break the old system of authority – when the subjects cease to perceive either laws or traditions as the legitimate source of authority – and create, confirm and authenticate a new form of authority – the charismatic one, in which the subject freely and willingly surrenders to the charismatic leader.

Fisher-Lichte (2009: 179) writes:

'Whether the experience of the concerned subjects – caused by the destabilisation of the self, the world, and its norms – leads to a reorientation and lasting transformation depends on each individual case. Spectators could also dismiss their transitory destabilisation as silly and unfounded when leaving the auditorium and revert to their previous value system'.

That evening that transformed him, Speer (1970: 46) writes, Hitler 'was not yet the absolute ruler, immune from all criticism, but was still exposed to attacks from all directions'. That evening in 1931 is just one of many in which pure, original charisma is validated. It is validated not by the number of new members of the party, but through the emotional energy of the performance created within its feedback loop and experience of liminality. That is what the leader and the followers take with them. It is the emotional reaction of the audience, and not any objective criteria, that validates charisma.

Emerging Pattern?

To what extent could Speer's recollection of and deliberation on an experience that happened 40 years earlier serve as a reliable account of that particular moment, when Hitler's charisma was yet again validated? While Speer's words undoubtedly present a carefully edited version of the event, written for a wider audience, it is intriguing to consider to what extent his recollection resonates with others of a similar type.

Here is what Rochus Misch, Hitler's bodyguard, writes in his memoires. It is interesting to read how he remembers the first time he saw Hitler in 1936 during the Olympic Games in its entirety.

The entry of Hitler made the greatest impact on me. As luck would have it, just at the very moment that my aunt and I stood very close to the carriageway for the guests of honour, Hitler came past […]. He stood up in the open limousine saluting the crowd, surrounded by members of his personal bodyguard, who rounded off the picture perfectly in their black

uniforms with white belts. The crowd was beside itself. Everybody was now looking in one direction, all eyes were on this man. Not ten meters away from us, the limousine slowed. Before it came to a stop, the men of the bodyguard party had jumped off the running boards elegantly and threw their whole weight into holding back the surging throng of spectators. The public pushed and shoved. Whoever managed to get through the cordon clung to the vehicle like a drunkard and had to be dragged away. All was jubilation and cries of joy – it was deafening. *I was completely swept up in the emotion; tears welled up in my eyes*. 'What is wrong with you?' my aunt asked. I was dreaming, imagining myself standing on the running board of the car, a member of the bodyguard squad, in one of those smart uniforms. Man, they were just normal soldiers, how lucky they were. I never considered that my daydream would one day become reality. My ticket allowed me to go much further into the Olympic stadium, but I did not use it. After experiencing the entry of Hitler at such close quarters, I was so full of impressions that all I wanted to do was return home. Go any further into this frenzy? No, I was not in a state to do so. It was simply too much for me. […] Never again did I experience anything comparable to this spectacle. […] For days and weeks after that event I was still totally gripped if I thought back to it. The overwhelming entry of Hitler had not brought me nearer to the Nazis and their policies. What they wanted, to where they were moving our country, who did what within the regime – people talked about it but I never took part in these discussions. (Misch, 2017: Location 411 of 4228, emphases added)

Another author – who in the title of his book claims 'I knew Hitler' (2011) – Kurt G. W. Ludecke had the opportunity to hear Hitler's speech much earlier. Apparently, that was the biggest public demonstration in Munich of 1922. Ludecke had a good position where it seems he was 'close enough to see Hitler's face, watch every change in his expression, hear every word he said' (Ludecke, 2011: Location 335). And this is how he describes the event:

When the man stepped forward on the platform, there was almost no applause. He stood

silent for a moment. Then he began to speak, quietly and ingratiatingly at first. Before long

his voice had risen to a hoarse shriek that gave an extraordinary effect of an intensity of

feeling. […] Critically I studied this slight, pale man, his brown hair parted on one side and

falling again and again over his sweating brow. Threatening and beseeching, with small,

pleading hands and flaming, steel-blue eyes, he had the look of a fanatic. Presently my

critical faculty was swept away. Leaning from the tribune as if he were trying to impel his

inner self into the consciousness of all these thousands, he was holding the masses, and me

with them, under a hypnotic spell by the sheer force of his conviction. He urged the revival

of German honour and manhood with a blast of words that seemed to cleanse. […] It was

clear that Hitler *was feeling the exaltation of the emotional response now surging up toward*

him from his thousands of hearers. His voice rising to passionate climaxes, he finished his

speech with an anthem of hate against the 'Novemberlings' and a pledge of undying love for

the Fatherland. "Germany must be free!" was his final defiant slogan. Then two last words

that were like the sting of a lash: "Deutschland Erwache!" Awake, Germany! There was

thunderous applause. […] I do not know *how to describe the emotions that swept over me*

as I heard this man. His words were like a scourge. When he spoke of the disgrace of

Germany, I felt ready to spring on any enemy. His appeal to German manhood was like a call

to arms, the gospel he preached a sacred truth. He seemed another Luther. *I forgot*

everything but the man; then, glancing around, I saw that his magnetism was holding these

thousands as one' (Ludecke, 2011: Locations 336-358, emphases added).

It seems that for Ludecke and many others gathered at the same Munich square that day, this event

was not merely another public demonstration. It had transformative power:

'I felt sure that no one who had heard Hitler that afternoon could doubt that he was the

man of destiny, the vitalizing force in the future of Germany. The masses who had streamed

into the Koenigsplatz with a stern sense of national humiliation seemed to be going forth renewed. The bands struck up, the thousands began to move away. I knew my search was ended. I had found myself, my leader, and my cause' (ibid., Location 363-366).

Rees (2012:49) notes how Julius Streicher in his International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, testimony describes his own first encounter with Hitler around the same time as Ludecke:

'And there I sat, an unknown among unknowns. I saw this man shortly before midnight after he had spoken for three hours, drenched in perspiration, radiant. My neighbour said he thought he saw a halo around his head, and I experienced something which transcended the commonplace.'

The next three characters, who had a close personal relationship with Hitler, do not describe their first encounter with him, but offer interesting observations on Hitler's effect on those who had met him face to face. Hitler's infamous photographer, Heinrich Hoffman (2014: 42), describes the early days of the rise of the Nazis in the early 1920s:

'Everybody was hearing and reading about him, but nobody had ever seen a picture of him. People were most curious and intrigued, and that was why they flocked to his meetings. They came out of curiosity; but they left as enrolled members of the movement. For Hitler [...] had that gift of making every single member of an audience feel that he himself was being personally addressed'.

Hitler's secretary Christa Schroeder (2009: 51) writes how '[u]ndoubtedly [Hitler] knew how to charm a person under his spell during the conversation. [...] He had the power to relate something so convincingly that he fascinated his listeners. He possessed extraordinary powers of suggestion, and this was no doubt the reason why people who came to him in desperation went away reassured'.

Heinz Linge (2013: 9), Hitler's valet, is telling us how he 'was told spontaneously on a number of occasions afterward that, despite an initial revulsion toward Hitler, a person had mysteriously fallen under his spell and lost his or her resistance. Many came with every outward appearance of unwillingness and of only being there under protest. Of Hitler, who had summoned them, they had no great opinion or none at all. For them, he was an uneducated Austrian upstart for the back streets of Vienna. Yet like all the others, almost without exception, they departed changed men'.

Then he continues:

> 'Visitors often told me that it took their breath away when Hitler looked them in the eyes. [...] simply his personality, bound me to *him*, not to a world-political view or idea [...] Yet how could I not have believed Hitler a genius and unique when every day I saw and heard how the major personalities of the Reich fawned over him and worshipped him with total devotion' (ibid: 22).

These testimonies are not being analysed for the first time, and they are just a drop in a sea of similar post-1945 recollections of those dark years of Nazism. So, it is, of course, rightful to ask what is the purpose of bringing them under scrutiny once again. They are far too few to be representative of anything; they are carefully selected in order to serve a particular purpose. Each described encounter is undoubtfully a performance, a well-rehearsed one at that. Schroeder gives us a glimpse of that performance:

> 'His manner of walking was always measured, almost ceremonial when he went to greet somebody. This tends to induce in the other person a feeling of uncertainty, for it contrasted with the free and unforced approach one expected. Hitler had always to be the controller! He mentioned frequently for example: 'how uncertain it made visitors to the new Reich Chancellery to have to cross the long marble hall, polished like a mirror, and then traverse his large study to get to his desk' (Schroeder, 2009: 48).

But she is not telling us much that is new here either. We have all seen Hoffman's famous pictures of Hitler posing in dramatic rehearsed poses as well as numerous clips of speeches delivered at party gatherings. Hence, it would be easy to dismiss these kinds of experience as obvious instances of manipulating the 'weaker minds' of the masses, as many did in the past.

Yet, we know – since Goffman (1959) – that all our encounters are somewhat staged, well-rehearsed within the safety of our personal backstage. That fact cannot, and should not, be the ground to dismiss the 'authenticity' of the experience. We also know that any qualitative analysis of a text is necessarily subjective and that an analysis of any speech, memoir or interview is to a great extent dependent on the creative mind and objectives of the analyst. Hence, what I have found in those examples, given above at length, is what I was looking for: the birth of charisma.

These excerpts are testimonies of that peculiar moment when charismatic authority is created 'betwixt and between' the leader and the follower. This unique bond is not grounded in shared ideas, values or ideology. It is grounded on shared experience that arouses strong and powerful emotions. And it is created between *particular* individuals.

The audience

In order to understand the dynamics of the creation of charisma we have to keep in mind that while the charismatic leader presents himself as the ultimate judge of social reality in these performances, he also opens himself to the unpredictable judgement of his audience. During this process, he also sets the framework for defining the audience's experience. In the case of a successful, or as Alexander (2006: 55) calls it, an authentic performance that forges a community of feeling, it is the charismatic leader – through his rhetoric and defined mission – that categorises the community, for example, as a nation. The performance at the same time offers an experience of belonging, of the meaning of emotional attachment to that social group. In these liminal situations nations become,

not just imagined communities, but experienced communities, not just cognitively constructed, but physically felt communities. The audience, as Rousseau put it, 'no longer feels except within the whole' (cited in Kelly: 1987: 327), well, at least for that brief period of time.

This micro-structural situation of direct interaction points to the crucial role of the audience in shaping that community of feeling. The members of this audience are not puppets of macro-structural forces or of the charismatic leader himself. The transformation – that internal revolution of experience – that might occur within individual members of the audience is neither predictable nor controllable. The audience cannot be seen as a homogenous social group but is the crucial agency in this interaction. The fact that some members of the audience might get carried away and might willingly surrender to the authority of the leader, does not make them powerless. Hence, as Erica Fisher-Lichte tells us, performance is not a suitable means of manipulation (2005: 110). Spectators are always active participants, and they 'cannot be regarded as innocent victims being manipulated by those who planned and prepared the performance. By taking part in a performance they [...] accept a certain responsibility' (ibid.: 111). And once the lights are switched off, the audience might take a long walk, just as Speer did in 1931 in a pine forest near Havel. Here, the biography and identity of each member of the audience will be responsible for how that individual interprets that experience and which actions that experience might trigger.

As Reese warns us, 'Adolf Hitler's charismatic appeal was not universal. It was present only in the space between him and the emotions of his audience' (Rees, 2012: 2). But not all members of the audience are necessarily swamped by the emotions aroused on that occasion. Ludecke (2011: Locations 359-362, emphases added), for example, *'was ripe for this experience'*. He talks about himself at that time as:

> 'a man of thirty-two, weary of disgust and disillusionment, a wanderer seeking a cause; a patriot without a channel for his patriotism, a yearner after the heroic without a hero. The

intense will of the man, the passion of his sincerity seemed to flow from him into me. I

experienced an *exaltation* that could be likened only to religious conversion'.

Personal history, past experiences and memories, values and political views, are just some of the

factors that influence how each individual member of the audience explains that moment.

Interpreting the experience of mass public protest in 1922 when he heard Hitler for the first time

became for Ludecke the defining moment in his life. Without any doubt, many others who left the

same Munich square that day saw all that ruckus as pure nonsense. For some, Hitler validated

himself as a charismatic leader, but for others on that day, he was a political clown.

And that is probably why many scholars find the concept of charisma useless. More specifically,

'Weber's concept of personal charisma is of little use in understanding modern political domination

generally' (Breuilly, 2011: 487). This is one of the latest, but far from being the only, attempt to

dismiss the concept from the spheres of social sciences and humanities. We heard a similar

argument already in 1960 when Arthur M. Schlesinger argued that the concept of charisma should

not be applied to democratic leaders. It seems that the usefulness of the term charisma is greatly

affected by its unpredictability, temporality, lack of structure and, worst of all, abundance of

emotions.

The End of Charisma?

From the start of his paper, Breuilly acknowledges the main characteristic of charisma as a type of

authority as envisioned by Weber: 'It is not what individual followers believe or official rhetoric

claims that matters but the social relations between rulers and their followings that constrain

everyone to act "as if" they believed such claims' (ibid.: 478-9). What follows this definition is a claim

which could be rephrased something like: Nationalism is a modern phenomenon, and the Weberian

concept of charisma only works for pre-modern contexts. Hence Breuilly suggests that the only way

to save the concept would be to develop two distinctive notions of charisma (ibid.: 479). On the following pages, Breuilly offers an analysis of several case studies of colonial nationalism and effectively tests to what extent the term charisma is useful in explaining national leaders such as Sukarno, Gandhi, Nkrumah, and Kenyatta. To conduct such a test, Breuilly briefly examines the leaders' biographies, social backgrounds, and networks, the structure of political organisation and existence of mass politics, as well as belief system at a given time in the leaders' political climate. Effectively, Breuilly seeks to explain something that is a property of social relations, something that emerges as a result of social interactions between specific individuals, with macro-social structures. He ultimately conflates charisma with routinisation of charisma. Willner's observation can easily be applied on Breuilly's analysis: 'the consequences of a phenomenon are confused with and substituted for the actual phenomenon itself and further projected on the definition of that phenomenon' (1984: 12). It seems that many critiques of the concept of charisma agree with Weber's definition – a type of authority that is mostly temporary, transformative and unstable – and as soon as they are stated, these characteristics of charisma tend to be ignored.

The core of charisma's instability lies not so much in the success of the charismatic leader to fulfill his promises, as Breuilly wants us to believe. After all, we saw many national charismatic leaders, Hitler included, whose charisma has been validated long after their failures became evident. Rather, the instability lies in its emotional nature. As while emotions can be deep and enduring, they are still momentary states of individuals that must be regularly fuelled. There is a very thin line between love and hate, enthusiasm and disappointment. At the same time, it is precisely this emotional base of charisma that makes it a powerful force of social change. It is a source of dedication as much as of fanaticism. It is charisma, after all, that is for Weber the main force capable to elicit re-enchantment with a progressively disenchanting world. And this is why even a small group of followers and their charismatic leaders can overrule and transform both traditional or legal-rational authorities.

One of the popular truths about revolutions is that they devour their children. Playing with the concept of charisma, this sad truth about revolutions seems more understandable. These revolutions are almost as a rule carried out by a small group of extremely dedicated people often united around and led by a personality that is, in retrospect, defined as charismatic. They are the typical historical type of agency that brings dramatic social changes, or to paraphrase Margaret Mead, a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens is the only thing that has ever changed the world. These tight-knit groups are united not necessarily by their shared ideological views, but by their shared experiences and emotions, often directed toward and around one person. They are the main vehicle that leads and organises the movement, revolution, protest, or strike, around the mission defined by the charismatic leader. They become 'the old guard', and often become the epicenter of a social movement. But once such a social movement overturns dominant legal-rational and traditional authorities, the process of codification and routinisation of the new regime starts. At this stage, ideological attunement becomes a crucial issue. This is the stage of ideological cleansing, when 'dissident' ideas are swapped out usually together with those who promote them – like Jacques Danton and Robespierre, Leo Trotsky, Ernst Röhm, Imre Nagy, and many others. But this is not an effect of charisma, this is the *routinisation of charisma* and the building of a *cult of personality*.

There are only a few stories about the birth of a nation without a dramatic figure of the father or, much less frequently, mother, of that nation. In these stories, and indeed against nature, these fathers are those who both plant the seed and give birth to the baby. In these stories, there is, naturally, always some blood and pain involved. There is also something controversial in them. These myths of the creation of a nation usually depict both the father (or mother) of the nation and the nation itself as charismatic. The father of the nation is perceived as being blessed by otherworldly gifts just as is their unique, and chosen, social group. But charisma as defined by Weber cannot be a property of a social group. In his theory, firmly based on the principles of methodological individualism, social groups do not have one will, personality, character or mission

to fulfill. Here, nations cannot be charismatic. In Weber's words, '[o]nly one *person* can be the genuine bearer of charisma' (1968b: 1126, emphasis added). But as we have seen, the life of charismatic authority is short. Of course, not necessarily the life of charismatic leader, but of their authority as soon as that charisma becomes an object of depersonalisation. Charisma is routinised. And it is the routinisation of charisma – of its rhetoric, symbols, and ceremonies – that transforms the charismatic message into a dogma, doctrine or ideology (Weber, 1968b: 1122), a charismatic leader into a cult, and followers into members of a nation, for example. This is when legal-rational authority takes its righteous place.

If such a social group – like a nation – is considered charismatic, it becomes a different type of charisma – that of St. Paul not of Weber. Unlike in Weber's theory, the Pauline charisma is the great social leveler in which 'everyone in the community is infused with the Spirit, each has a spiritual gift' (Potts, 2009: 48). St. Paul was attempting to spread a particular teaching and belief system at a time when the movement's charismatic leader was not walking the world anymore. He took up the task of codifying and institutionalising a religion and in that process a whole community of believers became charismatic. But in this Pauline form of the phenomenon, charisma is not only collective but also routinised. Once such a charismatic social group emerges it soon becomes part of that disenchanted world, where there are only traces of attempts to revive remnants of the charismatic liminality and sense of community, however briefly, through, as Berezin likes to see them, 'state-sponsored rituals'. These performances are 'temporary moments of exit from ordinary life that dramatize emotional commitment to the standard institution of the polity. National holiday, festivals, parades, commemorations are period attempts to fan the flames of institutionalized political passions and commitments' (Berezin, 2002: 44). They are enacted to confirm, not challenge the dominant form of authority. But as the story goes, there is always someone bestowed with a 'divine gift of grace' lurking behind, ready to challenge that authority.

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* For the sake of expediency, in this article I will adopt generic "he" at places where "he or/and she"

is meant.

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CHARISMA AND COMMUNITIES OF FEELING

It might seem strange that this paper introduces the topic of charismatic authority yet again in this day and age. But it is also ironic that just about a hundred years since it was defined by Max Weber the topic of charismatic authority seems impossible to ignore. Many are invoking this term today in an attempt to explain trends in world politics, where unexpected characters are becoming presidents and prime ministers even in Western democracies. True, charisma in academic circles is today the term mainly confined within domains of leadership and management studies where neo-charismatic theories of leadership are flourishing (see for example House and Aditya, 1997). In these numerous studies charismatic personality and charismatic authority became quantifiable and impacts of charisma on effectiveness or motivation something measurable. Hence House and Aditya (1997: 441) conclude how 'the studies based on neo-charismatic theories clearly show that this genre of leadership results in a high-level of follower motivation and commitment and well-above-average organisational performance, especially under conditions of crisis or uncertainty'. It is interesting to see how some describe charisma as a crucial ingredient in the successful leadership of a modern organisation – from small task groups to large multinational companies, yet for others, the concept is not useful for understanding modern, that is, democratic politics (Breuilly, 2011). While neo-charismatic theories construct models for measuring the 'extent and dimensions of person's charisma' (Tkalac Verčič and Verčič, 2011: 12), others can barely find the political figure of modern politics that truly fit the label of a charismatic leader (Breuilly, 2011).

Theories of nations and nationalism have serious problems when dealing with the concept of charisma. Instinctively, these theories know that charismatic authority plays a role in the formation of perennial, primordial or modern nations (depending on one's taste). But the treatment of the phenomenon of charisma in this field is rather confusing and sometimes misleading. The term 'charisma' is often used interchangeably with concepts of the hero or personality cult (Riall, 2012, Doyle, 2012, Zürcher, 2012). Hence, for example, Gotsbachner (2012: 143) writes: 'the personality cult surrounding Jörg Haider […] is a remarkable example of the construction of charisma and its function in public perceptions'. If one equates personality cult with charisma, then by definition every instance of charisma is constructed. Charisma is often bestowed on 'charismatic communities along the same lines as charismatic offices, lineages and individuals' as well as national movements and each individual that follows it (Smith, 2012: 31). Here Pauline and Weberian notions of charisma are combined in such a way that it is reduced to the notion of 'secular authenticity, the "genuine and

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pristine essence" of the community' (Smith, 2012: 34) or, as some would see it, to the concept of identity.

Within the field of nations and nationalism, the concept of charisma is predominantly considered from either the structuralist position or the perspective of psychological reductionism. Structural approaches often start with an acknowledgment of the relational nature of charisma – as a 'relationship between leader and followers that rests upon the followers' perceptions' (Knox, 2012: 104) – and then ignore the social, political and historical conditions in which charismatic leadership of national movements emerge (Breuilly, 2011). Some observed charisma in the context of the creation of nation-states in the post-colonial world (Apter, 1963, Lipset 1963) and some studied the role of charismatic leadership in nationalist, fascist and Nazi movements (Schweitzer, 1984, Willner, 1984, Nyomarky, 1967, Diggins, 1966, Knox, 2012). These analyses of charisma share the notion of historical causation that supposedly explains the emergence of charisma in that particular time and place of social crisis. They, for example, see national cultures, traditions, and military and economic power as having a capacity to 'construct the charisma' (Ibrahim and Wunsch, 2012: 64). Charisma in the structuralist perspective is – sometimes intended and sometimes unintended – a consequence of wider historical forces that produces a situation of instability and crisis in which charisma flourishes. Yet, rarely can these approaches explain why in those situations of social instability it is exactly *charismatic* authority that might emerge, or not.

The other main approach to charisma within studies of nations and nationalism on the whole reduces the issue to the personality of the charismatic leader but yet again, neglectes the relational nature of charisma as a phenomenon. Charismatic leaders are 'innovators and creators' (Shils, 1965: 199), 'personalized symbols of the nation' (Spinrad, 1991: 301), bestowed with authority that 'derives from [their] exceptional personal qualities' (Doyle, 2012: 80). Charisma was sought and found in a leader's morality, vision, sincerity, and, quite often, in their oratory skills. These studies focused on leaders such as Abraham Lincoln, Kemal Atatürk, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Gamal Nasser, and Nelson Mandela (among others, see Ibrahim and Wunsch 2012) and a series of leaders of anti-colonial movements. This approach dissects events in charismatic leaders' formative years in search of the true interpretation of that vision that gains the charismatic the label of 'ideological virtuoso' (Roth, 1975: 151). Yet after all this analysis, charisma might just be seen as another manufactured cult of personality (Riall, 2012: 76).

This paper argues that, first, unlike routinised charisma, pure charisma cannot be explained by focusing solely on the social context or ideas and ideologies. All forms of authority assume acceptance of a set of ideas and beliefs, whether it is an awareness of the bases of the legality of a

system, of the main postulates of dogma or an ideology, or of values and norms understood as traditional. Second, it argues that charismatic authority is a property of a particular type of experience. Experiencing a person and what goes on between that individual and their potential followers might not be sufficient, but is, I would claim, a necessary condition for the creation of pure, original charisma. If a person is experienced by others as a charismatic leader and if that person is obeyed because he or she is experienced as charismatic, no list of objective criteria would disqualify that person as such. This charisma does not form, create or recreate nations. Nation formation is a consequence, intended or not, of what Weber called *routinization of charisma*. Finally, the paper claims that both structuralist and socio-psychological theories of charisma within the field of nations and nationalism neglect in their studies one of the crucial aspects of the phenomenon – emotions. Studying charisma as a property of experience is a step toward understanding the emotional character of nationalism itself.

Hence, this paper will focus on what, in my view, is the defining characteristic of charisma – its relational character. It argues that without understanding the nature of interactional relations between the leader and the followers we cannot really understand this type of authority. This paper, therefore, combines understandings of interaction maintained by certain theories of sociology of emotion and theories of performance, especially Erika Fischer-Lichte's (2005) analysis of political theatre. Building on Goffman's work, this approach helps us to understand the importance of both the performer and the audience in creating an experience. Following these views, the paper argues that the performance of charisma facilitates the formation of a particular type of community that becomes a truly moving force behind a national movement. Ian Kershaw (1991: 13) called this 'charismatic community', the 'immediate following', that forms 'the initial agency of transmission of the personality cult surrounding' the charismatic leader. This type of community is characterised by instability and temporality. Charisma, I will argue, creates communities of feelings that disperse in the process of the routinization of that charisma.

For the sake of clarity, the main ideas in this paper will be examined and illustrated through the case study of Hitler's charisma. There are numerous works already published on Hitler's charisma, and there is probably no other case of charisma more deeply examined. Probably one of the most thorough works on that issue is that of Ian Kershaw, specifically his book *Hitler* (1991), and then his two-volume long encyclopaedic biography of Hitler (Kershaw, 1998, 2000). In the chapter entitled *Power of the "Idea"* (1991), Kershaw explains his theoretical understanding of the concept and elaborates on the source of Hitler's charisma. Here, Kershaw claims that Hitler's charisma 'was rooted in the power which flowed – for those already open to it – from his "idea", his political credo'

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together with his ability to sway masses (1991: 16). Kershaw, therefore, understands charisma mostly as a set of *ideas:* discussion on the development of Hitler's ideology is presented as a discussion on his charisma. But when he tries to explain the power of the idea he writes:

> [Hitler's] political creed and the conviction with which he expressed it transformed him into a personality of quite extraordinary dynamism (1991: 17).

And then a few lines later:

> The simplicity of his dualistic world-view of a Manichean struggle between good and evil in which everything was reduced to absolutes – all or nothing – was matched by the fanatical ferocity and unyielding tenacity with which his views are upheld (1991: 18).

Would Hitler's credo manage to sway masses and form a 'charismatic community', would these ideas gather around Hitler his 'true believers', his 'own sort' (1991: 31) in 1922-23 if his ideas were not expressed with a 'fanatical ferocity and unyielding tenacity'? Would Hitler's ideology find as many followers if it was not expressed with the same level of conviction? In this fascinating account of the rise and fall of one of history's most notorious charismatic leaders, Kershaw follows Western tradition and ignores what he has already observed: the power of emotions in the formation of charismatic authority. This paper attempts to break with that tradition of ignoring emotions when examining the role of charisma in national movements in general.1

Its findings are based on the qualitative content analysis of memoires of those close to Hitler. The memoires are chosen as a primary source of data created by those who considered themselves as his followers. The sampling method was, hence, purposive and focused on those first account descriptions of the first face-to-face meetings with Hitler. The analysis includes memoires of Hitler's photographer, chauffeur, valet, bodyguard, an early supporter, secretary and, as perhaps expected, his architect. The focus of this paper is on what emerges between the charismatic leader and the followers.

Weberian Charisma

When Weber defined the term he clearly indicated that charisma is at the same time an individual trait and interactional relation (Wasielewski, 1985: 207). It is therefore not enough that a person might have what we call a charismatic personality – self-proclaimed prophetic and visionary skills – or that the person is perceived as endowed with a mission by Providence itself (Kershew, 1991: 30). An individual's abilities and extraordinary qualities must be validated by the followers for charisma to appear. Hence, in the Goffmanian language, the charismatic leaders-in-making and their potential followers must experience successful social interactions where the potential charismatics

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perform a particular self and the audience validates it. To stay within Goffman's terminology, charisma is the interplay of the leader's demeanor and the audience's deference. Within the interplay, the identities of both are confirmed, or not. Through this interaction, Reinhard Bendix (1962: 300) explains, "[p]eople surrender themselves to such a leader because they are *carried away by a belief* in the manifestations that authenticate him".   Would 'a belief' be a sufficient condition of that surrender? Or is it necessary that people 'are carried away'? While many analyses of charisma are focused on beliefs, Weber was aware of the importance of being 'carried away'.

The successful interaction that produces charisma thus must have transformative power and must affect both charismatic leaders and the followers. Leaders' 'personal qualities are derived from, sustained by and publicly confirmed through interaction' (Wasilewski: 1985: 208). Through this interaction, the leader gains power – the power that is bestowed and conditioned by the followers. The followers, it seems, must go through an even more radical transformation: they must cut with their past believes in either traditional or legal-rational authorities, and freely give their trust and obedience to the charismatic leader. The interaction with the charismatic leader supposed to trigger in these followers 'an "internal" revolution of experience' (Bendix, 1962: 300). 'Charisma', Weber (1963b: 1117) says, 'if it has any specific effects at all, manifests its revolutionary power from within, from a central [change] of the followers' attitudes'. In this paper, I will maintain that 'attitudes', in this context, are more emergent properties of emotions than of ideas and ideologies.

This radical transformation, Weber is well aware, occurs only in specific circumstances that he describes like this:

- 'born out of suffering, conflicts, or enthusiasm' (1968a: 53);
- 'arises from distress or enthusiasm' (1968b: 1115);
- 'out of the anxiety and enthusiasm of an extraordinary situation' (ibid. 1117);
- arises from 'collective excitement produced by extraordinary events' (ibid. 1121).

Weber does not spend too much time explaining how these emotions and emotional states are generated. But clearly, there are two distinctive issues at stake. First, Weber claims that charisma emerges in 'extraordinary situations'. Yet we find that these situations are depicted differently in various theories of Weber's charisma. We can see them described as those macro-situations defined as 'liminal times' when the whole society goes through periods of instability and insecurity. At the same time 'extraordinary situation' can be seen as a micro-situation of an extraordinary event – a rally, riot, demonstration, party meeting, a performance defined in time and space. Second, the term that is repeatedly used by Weber as the key element of charisma is *enthusiasm*. Enthusiasm, just as

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any emotional state, is first, by definition, experienced individually, and, second, ontologically is in the moment (Berezin, 2009: 35). Hence, instead of searching for charisma in macro-structures of a troubled society, it has to be identified in micro-situations that produce specific emotions.

This enthusiasm, on which Weber bases his whole theory, emerges most efficiently if charisma is enacted in face-to-face interactions. For Weber 'the difference [between charisma and other types of authority] is rooted in the manner in which the ruled and led *experience* and internalize […] ideas' (1968b: 1116). Here, the emphasis is not on ideas, but on *the manner in which they are experienced*. Hence, following Weber's claim, internalisation of the same idea in a different manner would produce different types of authority. In other words, charisma has to be performed and that performance has to be experienced. Charismatics and their followers, Wasielewski (1985: 211) rightly emphasize, 'may initially share nothing more than the context in which they come together'. The context – political, cultural or personal – is a crucial condition for 'coming together' to occur. And then this 'coming together' is a precondition for charisma to emerge. And as we saw previously, this coming together, this event, the performance, has to produce enthusiasm, excitement, ecstasy in both the performer and the audience.

From Weber's analysis of charisma, it is clear that experience is crucial for its emergence. An experience has to 'stand out from the evenness of passing hours', it has to be a 'distinguishable, isolable sequence of external events and internal responses to them' (Turner, 1986: 35). Wilhelm Dilthey defines *Erlebnis*[3] - *an experience* - as that which 'has been lived through', a unit held together by a common meaning. These are not mere events since events are 'things that happen [while] experiences [are] things that happen to us or others' (Abrahams, 1986: 55). Experience means participation. This Diltheyian concept of *experience* clearly distinguishes the reality of the moment from its interpretation, its expression. Since, 'observation destroys the experience' […] and 'every observed moment of life is a remembered moment and not flow; it is fixed by the attention which arrests what is essentially flow' (Dilthey, 1976: 210).

In his search for a life philosophy, Dilthey saw experiences as inwardly related to each other. Since 'every particular experience refers to a self of which it is a part; it is structurally interrelated to other parts' (ibid.: 211). These experiences are followed by 'judgments about what has been experienced in which this becomes objectified' (ibid.: 210). The meaning of such experiences 'emerges through "reliving" the original experience' (Turner, 1982: 18).

Therefore, the Diltheyian concept of experience assumes the temporality of an event in which the experience is 'both "liv[ed] through" and "[thought] back". It is also "willing or wishing forward", i.e., establishing goals and models for future experience' (Turner, 1982: 18). While these moments are necessarily experienced individually, experiences can still be shared. The sharing of experience occurs only once the experience is a moment of the past. It takes place 'at a degree removed from any immediate individual experience. The various concepts, constructs, and typifications, that are engaged in the action of sharing experience are about experience, integral to its comprehension and understanding rather than to the experience itself' (Kapferer, 1986: 190). At the moment when an individual experience is objectified and rendered meaningful, it becomes a *narrative*, an expression, framed and understandable only within the whole narrative of one's personal history. Only once transformed into a narrative, might an experience become 'incorporated into individual biography as significant experience and memory' (Eyerman, 2005: 45).

D'Aquili and Laughlin illustrate the potency of an experience when they define it as a 'brief ecstatic state and sense of union … [which] may often be described as no more than a shiver running down the back at a certain point' (cited in Turner, 1986: 43). The same emotional reaction is what might 'authenticate both the actors and the group simultaneously' (Abrahams, 1986: 45). These authentic experiences do not automatically or necessarily form our personal histories or our identities. An experience has to be cognitively categorised and objectified in order to acquire a meaning formative of our selves. This objectification occurs once a past experience is not lived, but re-lived.

The same performance can acquire a variety of meanings for those who experienced it. Elevated emotions, ecstasy and felt excitement might be categorised as a formative moment in one's life, just as it can be categorised as a moment of loss of control or embarrassment. But the success of a performance is authenticated within this experience, through the emotional reaction of the audience, their enthusiasm, at the moment when its audience lives though a particular quality of experience.[4]

Weber does not spend too much time on elaborating how enthusiasm can be aroused. He just notes that the charismatic leader needs to *sincerely* convey his/her belief (Weber, 1968a: 49). Where Weber might have thought this to be self-explanatory, Rousseau dedicated some space to the same problem. Rousseau was not concerned with a charismatic leader, but the enlightened legislator. In closer inspection, there is little difference between them. Since the legislator, just as a charismatic leader, has a mission. He too needs to 'gain the consent of his people to follow' (Kelly, 1987: 322) his

mission. Kelly explains how Rousseau's legislator '[i]nstead of submitting to judgment, […] "makes himself the judge" […]. He does so without recourse to force, however. His audience accepts his judgment willingly'. Rousseau's legislator, just as Weber's charismatic, needs to 'gain consent without using either reason or force' (ibid.: 324). Rousseau doubts the power of reason alone since reasoning 'requires both an audience capable of judging and the time necessary to perform a laborious demonstration' (ibid.). He also doubts the effectiveness of miracles since 'miracles impress those who are "incapable of coherent reasoning, of slow and sure observation, and slaves of the senses in everything"' (ibid.: 325). Instead, he 'must necessarily have recourse to another order of authority, which can win over without violence and persuade without convincing' (ibid.: 324). So Rousseau concludes that 'people are won over less by the miracles themselves than by the character of those who perform the miracles' (ibid.). In the *Social Contract*, Rousseau concludes: 'The great soul of the legislator is the only miracle that can prove his mission'(Rousseau, 2012: location 562). '[A] great legislator … can make the multitude *feel* rather than see his soul' (Kelly, 1987: 325, emphasis added). Rousseau says: 'One renders one's feelings when one speaks, and one's ideas when one writes' (ibid.: 327). The spoken language, therefore, expresses feelings much more than ideas. 'It persuades, rather than convinces because it expresses feelings' (ibid.: 327). It seems as Rousseau, just like Weber, sees the manner in which ideas are experienced as the crucial factor that triggers the possible internalisation of those ideas.

In Weber's biography Radkau (2009: 397) talks how 'Weber himself points to the difficulty of empirically demonstrating charisma by any external indicators', hence he writes, the 'social scientist […] needs to have a feel for this spirit in order to identify charisma as such, and such a feel is best developed through a charismatic experience of one's own'.

And here it might be a good moment to call on Shakespeare's authority. In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, the scene of the funeral speeches of Brutus and Mark Antony we can find the most blatant example of the leader gaining consent without using either reason or force. In his book *Theatre and Politics* (2009) Joe Kelleher shows how oratory works 'on us' through skills and conventions of a performance. As we know, Brutus speaks first 'rationalising the assassination of Cesar in patriotic terms ("Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more")' and appealing to the citizens' political interests as 'free' subjects of a republic. Kellaher (2009: 36-7) describes:

> Brutus' speech is a success, the crowd is persuaded, and the contest appears to be over before it has begun. But then Anthony steps up, bringing with him the bloodied corpse of the assassinated emperor. He works on the crowd piece by piece, addressing them as they would want to be addressed ('Friends, Romans, countrymen'). […] He claims at one point to be so overcomed with grief that words fail him. He claims that he is there only to mourn

Caesar and honour the conspirators. And at the same time, he insinuates suspicion ('Did this in Caesar seems ambitious?'), playing not to political reason so much as to sentiment ('If you have tears, prepare to shed them now') and, crucially, drawing the crowd's attention to the picture of Caesar's corpse, present before them, and to that extent as moving as any picture can be ('O piteous spectacle'). […] Mark Antony's speech has worked its trick, winning the crowd over not through the presentation of the far-sighted political reason that Brutus attempted in his speech but through a stirring-up and manipulation of violent emotions and a popular appeal to immediate fears and sentimental attachments'.

Kelleher (ibid.: 37) concludes how Mark Antony's 'speech is, in all sorts of ways, in its deployment of a range of emotive triggers, a masterful performance, or at least a gift for a certain sort of masterful actor' such as Richard Burton was. Kelleher (ibid.: 38) finally describes this scene as a 'charismatic manipulation in the public arena'.

The most important moment of this fictive example happens *after* the speeches are performed: the riot, mutiny of the performance's audience. What we learn from this example is that powerful emotions are the best motivators for action. That is the reason why Wasielewski (1985: 208) claims that '[k]nowledge of and ability to manipulate emotions and their guidelines are […] the wellspring of charismatic authority'. Since 'emotions [are] the basis of charisma' (ibid.). Weber himself sees genuine charisma as 'a turbulently emotional life that knows no economic rationality' (Weber, 1968b: 1120) where 'the acutely *emotional faith* […] distinguishes it from the traditional mold of everyday life' (emphasis added, ibid.: 1122).

Analyzing Hitler's speech Adi Krupski (2012) reaches similar conclusions. He claims that even though 'it helps to have a clear and logical progression through a speech, […] people respond more to their emotions rather than logic' and concludes that 'the most emotion can be aroused by the speech giver shoving emotion himself'.

Successful interactions between leaders and followers thus generate not merely a cognitive, but more importantly emotional, relationship between them. It is not enough that those followers have *faith*, but that faith has to be *emotionally charged*. Charismatic leaders do not only 'reshape their followers' interpretations of the world', but also 'their emotional responses to it' (Wasielewski, 1985: 213). Only once the leader is successful in establishing this emotional connection, charisma becomes a force for a change. The power of social transformation is gained not just by trust in and obedience to the charismatic leader, but the fact that individual followers do not only establish a personal relationship with the charismatic but between each other as well: a successful performance – this emotional interaction between the performer and the audience – creates a community. Weber himself clearly states that a 'political community' derives its force as well as its legitimacy

from its 'emotional foundations' (1968b: 903). Moreover, 'the corporate group which is subject to charismatic authority', Weber continues, 'is based in an emotional form of communal relationship' (Weber, 1968a: 50). After all, terms such as a *sense* of belonging, loyalty, solidarity, and empathy that are often used in the description of such communities are all in the domain of emotions. The result of such a successful interaction Roth and Schluchter (1979: 130) call an *emotional consociation,* Wasielewski (1985) and Berezin (2002) a *community of feelings*, and Victor Turner (1982) *communitas*.

So far, I have argued that charisma is an emergent property of a performance. It emerges in situations of successful interaction between the performer and the audience that establishes an emotional relationship between them that facilitates the internalisation of ideas. Charisma is grounded in 'the manner in which the ruled and led experience and internalize [...] ideas' (Weber, 1968b: 1116). While the literature on charisma, such as Kershaw (1991), has been mostly focused on the issue of which ideas are internalised, it neglected the manner in which these ideas are experienced. Hence, charisma is both cognitive and an emotional relationship, in which the emotional connection between the leader and the followers is, if not a sufficient, then definitely a necessary factor for a charismatic authority to arise. It is also argued that, as a consequence of this interaction, both the performer and the audience form a particular type of community.

In order to examine the processes of the formation of this community and its properties, I will now use Fischer-Lichte's (2005, 2008) theory of performance and will argue that successful performances might create a type of community which is not based on common beliefs, shared meanings or shared ideologies, but rather on shared experiences. 'Through such experiences, the self of the people who undergo them does not necessarily dissolve but it certainly cannot be conceived of as something stable, permanently fixed or rigid. Rather, it is thought of as becoming fluid, undergoing transformations *while the experiences are lived out*' (Fischer-Lichte, 2005: 58, emphasis added).

The curious case of Albert Speer

To illustrate Fischer-Lichte's ideas, I will use an example of Albert Speer's description of the first moment he heard Hitler speak. In 1931 Hitler was delivering an address to the students of Berlin University at the Institute of Technology. 'My students', Speer (1970: 44) explains, 'urged me to attend. *Not yet convinced, but already uncertain of my ground*, I went along' (emphasis added). This is the moment when the potential charismatic leader meets his potential followers, and when they share nothing but space. Speer continues:

> Hitler entered and was tempestuously hailed by his numerous followers among the students. This *enthusiasm* in itself made a great impression upon me. But his appearance also surprised me […] Everything about him bore out the note of reasonable modesty […] Than, in a low voice, *hesitantly* and somewhat *shyly*, he began a kind of historical lecture rather than a speech. To me there was *something engaging about it* – all the more so since it run counter to everything the propaganda of his opponents had led me to expect (ibid.: 45, emphases added).

In this passage, Speer paints a picture of his first encounter with Hitler. The enthusiasm of the audience affected Speer from the first moment. He is then 'surprised' by Hitler's appearance and emotions he projected (shyness) that triggered Speer's response – 'there was something engaging about it'. This interplay between the performer and the audience is for Fischer-Lichte (2008) the main characteristic of a performance. She calls it a 'self-referential and ever-changing feedback-loop' which is the reason why 'performance remains unpredictable and spontaneous to a certain degree' (ibid.: 38). The spectators, she claims, 'do not merely witness these situations; as participants in the performance they are made to *physically* experience them' (ibid.: 40). The only condition for these processes to be set in motion lies in the bodily co-presence of actors and spectators. In these situations, she says, 'you cannot not react to each other' (ibid.: 43). Up to this point, Fischer-Lichte's framework closely resembles Durkheimian ritual, that Randall Collins elaborated in his *Interaction Ritual Chains* (2004). This bodily co-presence, the mutual focus of attention and shared mood in a particular moment can erupt into, what Collins calls collective effervescence, Jeffrey Alexander (2006) calls it the emotional connection between the actor, the audience and text, and Fischer-Lichte calls 'flow of energy'.

This 'flow of energy' that is created between the performer and his audience is unpredictable. Fischer-Lichte (2008: 59) claims that it depends 'as much on the actors' ability to mobilize energy at any given point during the performance as on every single audience member's level of responsiveness and their ability to physically experience the energy'. Among other factors, she continues, 'the proportion of responsive and resistant spectators played an important role in this context. The audience fuelled the feedback loop and thus the course of the performance through their particular attitude and experience. The audience physically experienced and absorbed energy emitted by the actors and transferred it back to them' (ibid.). And that is where the loop starts again.

Speer (1970: 46) recalls that evening in 1931:

> 'I was carried away on the wave of the *enthusiasm*, which, one could almost *feel this physically* […] It swept away any skepticism, any reservations […] Finally, Hitler no longer seemed to be speaking to convince; rather, *he seemed to feel that he was expressing what the audience, by now transformed into a single mass, expected him*. It was as if it were the

most natural thing in the world to lead students and part of the faculty of the two greatest academies in Germany submissively by a leash' (emphases added).

This is the moment when the audience surrenders to the charismatic leader. The whole scene forces us to recall Nietzsche's Dionysian when '[s]inging and dancing, man expresses himself as a member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way toward flying into the air, dancing. His very gestures express enchantment' (Nietzsche, 2000: 37).

The success of Hitler's performance did not depend on ideological uniformity or the shared convictions of members of the audience that might have been held prior to the performance. The historical and cultural context in which these students and teachers gathered are indeed shared, but it would be wrong to assume that this gathering in 1931 attracted only those already converted to Nazism. It would be equally wrong to assume that all members of the audience left the event as good Nazis.[5] But for any transformation to occur, a face to face interaction between the performer and the audience seems crucial, since it creates that flow of energy that we know at least one of the audience members felt. Speer (1970: 45-6) writes: 'The mood he cast was much deeper than the speech itself, most of which I did not remember for long'. Later on, he (ibid.: 46) continues:

> 'I was not choosing the NSDAP, but becoming a follower of Hitler, whose magnetic force had reached out to me the first time I saw him and had not, thereafter, released me. […] I knew virtually nothing about his program. He had taken hold of me before I grasped what was happening'.

This 'mood', or Fischer-Lichte's autopoietic feedback loop, creates 'an opportunity for actors and spectators to physically experience community' (Fischer-Lichte, 2009: 55). The formation of this community is the product of 'working of the autopoietic feedback loop and the experience of liminality that generates transformation' (ibid.: 67). It is a situation that Victor Turner (1967) describes as 'betwixt and between', the threshold which audience experience for the duration of the performance. 'Their position', Fischer-Lichte describes, 'is never fixed; they do not control the performance but their influence can be felt nonetheless' (Fischer-Lichte, 2005: 67). The sense of community in these moments arises through a 'very special physical effects brought about by the presence of the masses in the space and by the frequently changing atmosphere' (ibid.: 58). Fischer-Lichte calls it a theatrical community. For Berezin (2002) that is a 'community of feelings'. These communities, Berezin explains, that can be both staged and formed spontaneously, 'serve to intensify emotional identification with the polity and derive emotional power from their transience. They bring individuals together in a bounded, usually public, space for a discrete time period to express emotional energy' (Berezin, 2002: 39).

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The meaning of experience

Fischer-Lichte (2005: 58) writes: 'As long as the performance lasts it is capable of establishing a bond between individuals who come from the most diverse biographical, social, ideological, religious, political backgrounds and remain individuals who have associations of their own and generate quite different meanings'. The performance does not force them into a common confession; instead, it allows for shared experiences. But how this experience will be interpreted, what kind of meaning it might gain will depend on what kind of narrative it was formed around it.

Albert Speer (1970: 46) recalls the last moments of the evening:

> 'Others may afterward have discussed that stirring evening over a glass of beer. Certainly, my students pressed me to do so. But I felt I had to straighten things out in my own mind, to master my confusion. I needed to be alone. Shaken, I drove off into the night in my small car, stopped in a pine forest near Havel, and went for a long walk'.

Even if we doubt the validity of Speer's account, it is still evident that he had quite an experience that evening. It is truly an experience as Dilthey defined it, those moments that involve 'the whole human vital repertoire of thinking, willing, desiring, and feeling, subtly and varyingly interpreting on many levels' (Turner, 1986: 35). But the account Speer offered us in his book, is a just a memory of that evening, however accurate it might be. It is, first of all, a linguistic expression of a type of experience, those moments for which we rarely find words to describe. What Speer offered us is his *interpretation of the experience* – something that was formed once the experience is long gone weather in a solitary walk through woods or in a discussion with friends around a glass of beer.

Fischer-Lichte (2008: 152) proposes a similar idea when she warns that every member of the audience is 'far from a *tabula rasa* when attending a performance'. Each member of the audience 'brings forth meanings according to their subjective conditions'; 'everyone contributes to it and is influenced by it but no one controls it' (ibid.: 154). In the process of generating meaning of a performance 'the subjects experience themselves actively as well as passively, neither as fully autonomous subjects not totally at the mercy of inexplicable forces' (ibid.: 155). Only once the performance is over this situation changes. In retrospect, the spectators can try to relate each perceived and remembered element to the whole in order to understand or fail to understand, the performance (ibid.: 155-6). Hence, it is not what is perceived that leads to 'an attempt to understand the performance but one's identity and biography' (ibid.: 156). But this type of performance does 'not seek to be understood but experienced' (ibid.: 158). Strong emotions that are awoken in these performances 'bear the largest responsibility for triggering impulses to intervene and create a new set of norms for the acting subject' (ibid.: 177). Speer (1970: 48) writes: 'My feelings probably had

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nothing to do with political motives. […] The following day I applied for membership in the National Socialist Party and in January 1931 become Member Number 474,481'.

These emotions of enthusiasm, ecstasy, have a double effect: they break the old system of authority – when the subjects cease to perceive either laws or traditions as the legitimate source of authority – and create, confirm and authenticate a new form of authority – the charismatic one when the subject freely and willingly surrenders to the charismatic leader.

Fischer-Lichte (2009: 179) writes:

> 'Whether the experience of the concerned subjects – caused by the destabilisation of the self, the world, and its norms – leads to a reorientation and lasting transformation depends on each individual case. Spectators could also dismiss their transitory destabilisation as silly and unfounded when leaving the auditorium and revert to their previous value system'.

That evening that transformed him, Speer (1970: 46) writes, Hitler 'was not yet the absolute ruler, immune from all criticism, but was still exposed to attacks from all directions'. That evening in 1931 was just one of many in which pure, original charisma is validated. It is validated not by the number of new members of the party, but through the emotional energy of the performance created within its feedback loop and experience of liminality. That is what the leader and the followers take with them. It is the emotional reaction of the audience, and not any objective criteria, that validate charisma.

Emerging Pattern?

To which extent Speer's recollection and deliberation on the experience that happened 40 years after the event could serve as any reliable account of that particular moment when Hitler's charisma was yet again validated? While Speer's words undoubtedly present a carefully edited version of the event, written for a wider audience, it is intriguing to read to which extent his recollection resonates with other recollections of a similar type.

Here is what Rochus Misch, Hitler's bodyguard, writes in his memoires. It would be interesting to read his way of remembering the first time he saw Hitler in 1936 during the Olympic Games in its entirety.

> The entry of Hitler made the greatest impact on me. As luck would have it, just at the very moment that my aunt and I stood very close to the carriageway for the guests of honour, Hitler came past […]. He stood up in the open limousine saluting the crowd, surrounded by members of his personal bodyguard, who rounded off the picture perfectly in their black

uniforms with white belts. The crowd was beside itself. Everybody was now looking in one direction, all eyes were on this man. Not ten meters away from us, the limousine slowed. Before it came to a stop, the men of the bodyguard party had jumped off the running boards elegantly and threw their whole weight into holding back the surging throng of spectators. The public pushed and shoved. Whoever managed to get through the cordon clung to the vehicle like a drunkard and had to be dragged away. All was jubilation and cries of joy – it was deafening. *I was completely swept up in the emotion; tears welled up in my eyes*. 'What is wrong with you?' my aunt asked. I was dreaming, imagining myself standing on the running board of the car, a member of the bodyguard squad, in one of those smart uniforms. Man, they were just normal soldiers, how lucky they were. I never considered that my daydream would one day become reality. My ticket allowed me to go much further into the Olympic stadium, but I did not use it. After experiencing the entry of Hitler at such close quarters, I was so full of impressions that all I wanted to do was return home. Go any further into this frenzy? No, I was not in a state to do so. It was simply too much for me. […] Never again did I experience anything comparable to this spectacle. […] For days and weeks after that event I was still totally gripped if I thought back to it. The overwhelming entry of Hitler had not brought me nearer to the Nazis and their policies. What they wanted, to where they were moving our country, who did what within the regime – people talked about it but I never took part in these discussions. (Misch, 2017: Location 411 of 4228, emphases added)

Another author – who in the title of his book claimed 'I knew Hitler' (2011) – Kurt G. W. Ludecke had the opportunity to hear Hitler's speech much earlier. Apparently, that was the biggest public demonstration in Munich of 1922. Ludecke had a good position where it seems he was 'close enough to see Hitler's face, watch every change in his expression, hear every word he said' (Ludecke, 2011: Location 335). And this is how he describes the event:

When the man stepped forward on the platform, there was almost no applause. He stood silent for a moment. Then he began to speak, quietly and ingratiatingly at first. Before long his voice had risen to a hoarse shriek that gave an extraordinary effect of an intensity of feeling. […] Critically I studied this slight, pale man, his brown hair parted on one side and falling again and again over his sweating brow. Threatening and beseeching, with small, pleading hands and flaming, steel-blue eyes, he had the look of a fanatic. Presently my critical faculty was swept away. Leaning from the tribune as if he were trying to impel his inner self into the consciousness of all these thousands, he was holding the masses, and me with them, under a hypnotic spell by the sheer force of his conviction. He urged the revival of German honour and manhood with a blast of words that seemed to cleanse. […] It was clear that Hitler *was feeling the exaltation of the emotional response now surging up toward him from his thousands of hearers*. His voice rising to passionate climaxes, he finished his speech with an anthem of hate against the 'Novemberlings' and a pledge of undying love for the Fatherland. "Germany must be free!" was his final defiant slogan. Then two last words that were like the sting of a lash: "Deutschland Erwache!" Awake, Germany! There was thunderous applause. […] I do not know *how to describe the emotions that swept over me as I heard this man*. His words were like a scourge. When he spoke of the disgrace of Germany, I felt ready to spring on any enemy. His appeal to German manhood was like a call

to arms, the gospel he preached a sacred truth. He seemed another Luther. *I forgot everything but the man*; then, glancing around, I saw that his magnetism was holding these thousands as one' (Ludecke, 2011: Locations 336-358, emphases added).

It seems that for Ludecke and many others gathered at the same Munich's square that day this event was not yet another public demonstration. This one had transformative power:

'I felt sure that no one who had heard Hitler that afternoon could doubt that he was the man of destiny, the vitalizing force in the future of Germany. The masses who had streamed into the Koenigsplatz with a stern sense of national humiliation seemed to be going forth renewed. The bands struck up, the thousands began to move away. I knew my search was ended. I had found myself, my leader, and my cause' (ibid., Location 363-366).

Rees (2012:49) notes how Julius Streicher in his IMT testimony described his own first encounter with Hitler around the same time as Ludecke:

'And there I sat, an unknown among unknowns. I saw this man shortly before midnight after he had spoken for three hours, drenched in perspiration, radiant. My neighbour said he thought he saw a halo around his head, and I experienced something which transcended the commonplace.'

The next three characters, who had a close personal relationship with Hitler, did not describe their first encounter with him, but they offered interesting observations on Hitler's effect on those who had met him face to face. Hitler's infamous photographer, Heinrich Hoffman (2014: 42), describes early days of the rise of Nazis in the early 1920s:

'Everybody was hearing and reading about him, but nobody had ever seen a picture of him. People were most curious and intrigued, and that was why they flocked to his meetings. They came out of curiosity; but they left as enrolled members of the movement. For Hitler […] had that gift of making every single member of an audience feel that he himself was being personally addressed'.

Hitler's secretary Christa Schroeder (2009: 51) writes how '[u]ndoubtedly [Hitler] knew how to charm a person under his spell during the conversation. […] He had the power to relate something so convincingly that he fascinated his listeners. He possessed extraordinary powers of suggestion, and this was no doubt the reason why people who came to him in desperation went away reassured'.

Heinz Linge (2013: 9), Hitler's valet, is telling us how he

'was told spontaneously on a number of occasions afterward that, despite an initial revulsion toward Hitler, a person had mysteriously fallen under his spell and lost his or her

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resistance. Many came with every outward appearance of unwillingness and of only being there under protest. Of Hitler, who had summoned them, they had no great opinion or none at all. For them, he was an uneducated Austrian upstart for the back streets of Vienna. Yet like all the others, almost without exception, they departed changed men'.

Then he continues:

'Visitors often told me that it took their breath away when Hitler looked them in the eyes. […] simply his personality, bound me to *him*, not to a world-political view or idea […] Yet how could I not have believed Hitler a genius and unique when every day I saw and heard how the major personalities of the Reich fawned over him and worshipped him with total devotion' (ibid: 22).

These testimonies are not analysed for the first time. And these are just a drop in the sea of similar post-1945 recollections on those dark years of Nazism. So, it is, of course, rightful to ask what is the purpose of bringing them under scrutiny once again. They are way too few to be representative of anything; they are carefully selected in order to serve a particular purpose. Each of these described encounters is undoubtfully a performance, a well-rehearsed one as well. Schroeder gives us a glimpse of that performance:

'His manner of walking was always measured, almost ceremonial, when he went to greet somebody. This tends to induce in the other person a feeling of uncertainty, for it contrasted with the free and unforced approach one expected. Hitler had always to be the controller! He mentioned frequently for example: 'how uncertain it made visitors to the new Reich Chancellery to have to cross the long marble hall, polished like a mirror, and then traverse his large study to get to his desk' (Schroeder, 2009: 48).

But she is not telling us much new here either. We have all seen those famous Hoffman's pictures of Hitler posing in dramatic rehearsed poses as well as numerous clips of those speeches delivered on some party gatherings. Hence, it would be easy to dismiss these kinds of experiences as obvious instances of manipulations of weaker minds of masses, as many did in the past.

Yet, we know – since Goffman (1959) – that all our encounters are somewhat staged, well-rehearsed within the safety of our personal backstage and that fact cannot, and should not, be the ground to dismiss 'authenticity' of the experience. We also know that any qualitative analysis of a text is necessarily subjective and that an analysis of any speech, memoir or interview is to a great extent dependent on the creative mind and objectives of the analyst. Hence, what I have found in those examples, lengthy given above, is what I was looking for: *the birth of charisma*.

These excerpts are testimonies of that peculiar moment when charismatic authority is created 'betwixt and between' the leader and the follower. This unique bond is not necessarily grounded in a shared ideology. It is grounded on shared experiences that aroused strong and powerful emotions.

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The audience

In order to understand the dynamics of the creation of charisma we have to keep on mind that while in these performances the charismatic leader presents himself as the ultimate judge of social reality, he also opens himself to the unpredictable judgment of his audience. In the process, he also sets the framework for defining the audience's experience. In the case of a successful, or as Alexander (2006: 55) calls it, an authentic performance that forges a community of feeling, it is the charismatic leader – through his rhetoric and defined mission – that categorizes, labels the community, for example, as a nation. The performance at the same time offers an experience of belonging, of the meaning of emotional attachment to that social group. In these liminal situations nations for these participants become, not just imagined communities, but experienced communities, not just cognitively constructed, but physically felt communities. In these situations, the audience, as Rousseau put it, 'no longer feels except within the whole' (cited in Kelly: 1987: 327).

This micro-structural situation of direct interaction points at the crucial role of the audience in shaping that community of feeling. The members of this audience are not puppets of macro-structural forces or of the charismatic leader himself. The transformation – that internal revolution of experience – that might occur within individual members of the audience is neither predictable nor controllable. The audience cannot be seen as a homogenous social group but is a crucial agency in this interaction. The fact that some members of the audience might be carried away and might willingly surrender to the authority of the leader, does not make them powerless. Hence, as Erika Fischer-Lichte tells us, performance is not a suitable means of manipulation (2005: 110). Spectators are always active participants, and they 'cannot be regarded as innocent victims being manipulated by those who planned and prepared the performance. By taking part in a performance they […] accept a certain responsibility' (ibid.: 111).

And once the lights are switched off, the audience might take a long walk, just as Speer did in 1931 in a pine forest near Havel. Here, the biography and identity of each member of the audience will solely be responsible for how that member interprets that experience and which actions that experience might trigger. Kershaw himself points to this issue when he examines Hitler's 'early little band of devotees' (1991: 14) and demonstrates the diversity of relationships that the inner circle formed with their charismatic leader. Göring, Goebbels, Himmler, Höss, Röhm, Streicher, of course, identified themselves as true Nazis but they also formed their own unique narratives of Hitler's ideology and pursued rather different actions, all in full conviction they were each following Hitler's

vision – which Kershaw's term 'working toward Fuhrer' perfectly summarises. Yet, probably the clearest expression of what bonded them into a *charismatic* community of the inner circle could be found in a line from Joseph Goebbels' diary on 19 April 1926: "Adolf Hitler, I love you" (in Kershaw, 1991: 33).

Reese warns us, 'Adolf Hitler's charismatic appeal was not universal. It was present only in the space between him and the emotions of his audience' (Rees, 2012: 2). But not all members of the audience are necessarily swamped by emotions aroused on that occasion. Ludecke (2011: Locations 359-362, emphases added), for example, '*was ripe for this experience'*. He talks about himself of that time as

> 'a man of thirty-two, weary of disgust and disillusionment, a wanderer seeking a cause; a patriot without a channel for his patriotism, a yearner after the heroic without a hero. The intense will of the man, the passion of his sincerity seemed to flow from him into me. I experienced an *exaltation* that could be likened only to religious conversion'.

Personal history, past experiences and memories, values and political views, among others, will influence how every individual member of the audience explains that moment. Interpretation of that experience of mass public protest in 1922 when he heard Hitler for the first time became for Ludecke the defining moment in his life. When defining charisma, Kershaw (1991: 16) implies that the power of the performance can only be felt by those who are 'already open to it'. But this assertion it tautological and cannot be truly validated. Whether a member of the audience was really 'open to it' prior to the experience can only be asserted if that 'internal revolution of experience' occurred during or after the event. If a member of the audience has not felt the 'power of the idea', then Kershaw can just claim that the member of the audience has not been 'open to it'. These authentic experiences can be transformative regardless of how open to change the members of the audience are. That is the power of performance. Without any doubt, many others who left the same Munich square that day as Ludecke saw all that ruckus as pure nonsense. For some that day, Hitler validated himself as a charismatic leader, and for others as a political clown.

Not all Germans who participated in these events and joined NSDAP in the 1920s and 30s saw Hitler as a charismatic leader. Not all of those who voted for Hitler held positive emotional links with the Nazi leader. They might have followed Hitler either as the leader of a legitimate political party or as a legally elected chancellor who could be the answer to all German social problems of that time, yet still felt strong animosity toward Hitler as a person. They might have strongly identified with Hitler's ideology, yet still felt strong animosity toward Hitler as a person. They might have followed Hitler because they found a purpose in their life and yet still, they could have felt a strong animosity toward Hitler as a person. All of them could have accepted the authority of Hitler yet still, they could

have felt strong animosity toward Hitler as a person. While they could have been his followers, they were not necessarily followers of a charismatic leader. If followers do not authenticate charisma, for them, that charisma does not exist. What distinguishes a follower from a follower of a charismatic leader is not their ideology, but the bases of their relationship with the one they follow.

And that is probably why many scholars find the concept of charisma useless. More specifically, 'Weber's concept of personal charisma is of little use in understanding modern political domination generally' (Breuilly, 2011: 487). This is one of the latest, but far from being the only, attempt of dismissal of the concept from the spheres of social sciences and humanities. We heard a similar argument already in 1960 when Arthur M. Schlesinger argued that the concept of charisma should not be applied to democratic leaders. It seems that the usefulness of the term charisma is greatly affected by its unpredictability, temporality, lack of structure and, worst of all, way too many emotions.

The End of Charisma?

From the start of his paper, Breuilly acknowledges main characteristics of charisma as a type of authority as Weber envisioned it: 'It is not what individual followers believe or official rhetoric claims that matters but the social relations between rulers and their followings that constrain everyone to act "as if" they believed such claims'(ibid.: 478-9). What follows this definition is a claim which could be rephrased something like this: Nationalism is a modern phenomenon, and the Weberian concept of charisma only works for pre-modern contexts. Hence Breuilly suggests that the only way to save the concept would be to develop two distinct notions of charisma (ibid.: 479). On the following pages, Breuilly offers an analysis of several case studies of colonial nationalism and effectively tests to which extent the term charisma is useful in explaining national leaders such as Sukarno, Gandhi, Nkrumah, and Kenyatta. To conduct such a test, Breuilly briefly examines leaders' biographies, social backgrounds, networks, the structure of political organizations and the existence of mass politics, as well as belief systems at a given time in leaders' political climate. Effectively, Breuilly seeks to explain something that is a property of social relations, something that emerges as a result of social interaction between specific individuals, with macro social structures. He ultimately conflates charisma with the routinization of charisma. Willner's observation can easily be applied to Breuilly's analysis: 'the consequences of a phenomenon are confused with and substituted for the actual phenomenon itself and further projected on the definition of that phenomenon' (1984: 12). It seems that many critiques of the concept of charisma agree with its definition as Weber stated it – a type

of authority that is mostly temporary, transformative and unstable – and as soon as they state it, these characteristics of charisma tend to be ignored.

The core of charisma's instability lies not so much on the success of the charismatic leader to fulfill his promises, as Breuilly wants us to believe. After all, we saw many national charismatic leaders, Hitler included, whose charisma has been validated long after their failures became evident. Rather, the instability lays in its emotional nature. Since, as we know, while emotions can be deep and enduring, they are still momentary states of individuals that must be regularly fuelled. There is a very thin line between love and hate, enthusiasm and disappointment. At the same time, it is precisely this emotional basis of charisma that makes it a powerful force of social change. It is a source of dedication as much as fanaticism. It is charisma, after all, that is for Weber the main force for re-enchantment of the progressively disenchanting world. And that is why even a small group of followers and their charismatic leaders can overrule and transform both traditional or legal-rational authorities.

One of the popular truths about revolutions led by various national movements is that they devour their children. Playing with the concept of charisma, that sad truth about revolutions seems more understandable. These revolutions are almost as a rule carried out by a small group of extremely dedicated people often united around and led by a personality that is, in retrospect, defined as charismatic. They are the typical historical type of agency that brings dramatic social changes or to paraphrase Margaret Mead, a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens is the only thing that has ever changed the world. These tight-knit groups – these charismatic communities – are united not necessarily by their shared ideological views, but by their shared experiences and emotions, often directed toward and around one person. They are the main vehicle that leads and organizes national movements, among others, around the mission defined by the charismatic leader. They become 'the old guard', that often takes the role of an epicenter of a national movement. But once such national movements overturn dominant legal-rational and traditional authorities, the process of codification, routinization of the new regime starts. At this stage, ideological attunement becomes a crucial issue. This is the stage of ideological cleansing, where 'dissident' ideas are swapped away usually together with those who bare them – like Jacques Danton and Robespierre, Leo Trocky, Ernst Röhm, Imre Nagy, and many others were. But this is not the effect of charisma, this is the working of the *routinization of charisma* and of the building of *cult of personality*.

There are only a few stories of the birth of a nation without a dramatic figure of the father or, much less frequently, the mother of that nation. In these stories, and indeed against nature, these fathers are those who both plant the seed and give birth to the baby. In these stories, there is, naturally,

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always some blood and pain involved. There is also something controversial in them. These myths of the creation of the nation usually depict both the father or mother of the nation and the nation itself as charismatic. The father of the nation is perceived as being blessed by otherworldly gifts just as the unique, the chosen social group is. But charisma as Weber defines it cannot be a property of a social group. In his theory, firmly based on the principles of methodological individualism, social groups do not have one will, personality, character or mission to fulfill. Here, nations cannot be charismatic. In Weber's words, '[o]nly one *person* can be the genuine bearer of charisma' (1968b: 1126, emphasis added). But as we saw the life of charismatic authority is short. Of course, not necessarily of charismatic leaders, but his/her authority soon becomes an object of depersonalization. Charisma is routinized. And it is the routinization of charisma – of its rhetoric, symbols, and ceremonies – that transforms the charismatic message and mission into a dogma, doctrine or ideology (Weber, 1968b: 1122), a charismatic leader into a cult, and followers into members of a nation. This is when legal-rational authority takes its righteous place.

If such a social group – like a nation – is considered charismatic, it is a different type of charisma – that of St. Paul not of Weber. Unlike in Weber's theory, the Paulin charisma is the great social leveler where 'everyone in the community is infused with the Spirit, each has a spiritual gift' (Potts, 2009: 48). But in this Pauline form of the phenomenon, charisma is not only collective but also routinized. Once such a charismatic social group emerges it soon becomes a part of that disenchanted world, where the only remnants of the charismatic liminality and sense of community are desperately tried to be revived, however briefly, through, as Berezin likes to see them, 'state-sponsored rituals'. These performances are 'temporary moments of exit from ordinary life that dramatize emotional commitment to the standard institution of the polity. National holidays, festivals, parades, commemorations are period attempts to fan the flames of institutionalized political passions and commitments' (Berezin, 2002: 44). They are enacted to confirm, not challenge the dominant form of authority. But as the story goes, there is always someone bestowed with a 'divine gift of grace' lurking behind, ready to challenge that authority.

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[1] While there is no space here to expand on this view, it has to be noted that this paper follows the predominant views in sociology with regards to emotions, in that rationality and emotion are seen as 'intricately connected on all levels', where 'emotions guide decisions, both consciously and unconsciously' and are seen as 'a gyroscope of human behaviour' (Turner and Stats, 2005: 22). It adopts Randall Collins' (1993) view that 'emotions are the common denominator of rationality'.

[2] For more about the performance theory and its application on the analysis of national rituals and ceremonies, see Alexander (2006), Tsang and Woods (2013), Uzelac (2010).

[3] For more about the concept of *Erlebnis*, see Carr (2009) and Lash (2006).

[4] For a more detailed examination of the meaning of authentic performance, see Uzelac (2010).

[5] Goodfellow (1992) gives us an interesting account of an ideological shift among Alsatian communists who turned into 'well-done nazis, brown all the way through' (p.231). He demonstrated that even direct ideological opponents of that time could share the cultural capital of nationalist rhetoric. Orientation toward the interests of the German *Volk* is something many ideological opponents had in common.

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