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Charismatic Dimension of Political Leadership: The Case of Serbia

Abstract

The paper addresses the problem of relationship between charismatic political leadership and democracy. In that sense, the charismatic foundation of the present Serbian political leadership is defined through the “de-charismatisation” of cultural codes of malignant charismatic movements, embodied in ideological constructs of “Seseljism” and “Slobism”, and through changes in symbolic charismatic content, expressed by promotion of democratic values and discursive recoding of the enemy and corruption culture. In other words, the scientific paper analyzes metamorphosis of Serbian “charismatic discourse”- from institutional charisma to personal charisma and from charismatic institutions to charismatic personality.

Keywords: Charisma, Charismatic Politics, Charismatic Political Leadership, Democracy, “Titoism”, “Slobism”, Serbia.

Introduction

The war that took place in the territory of the former Yugoslav republics, now independent states, was marked with a specific type of political leaders and, consequently, specific types of political leadership. This specificity can be identified at the analytical level of the examination of the leadership phenomenon in the most extreme

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social context of crisis- war, seen primarily as the culmination of the set of crisis moments, as well as the level of detection of some new attributes of the political leadership *in genere*. This especially refers to the examination of the concept of charismatic political leadership. If we assume that the ex-Yugoslav political leadership was dominantly charismatic by nature, at least in the case of Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman, then the war in the former Yugoslavia can be seen as a unique “collision of charismatic leaders.” This does not suggest an *a priori* assessment of “ethical correctness” or “national usefulness” of a “charisma”, but alludes to the legitimization of political systems of the warring nation states, at least in the initial moments of their separation and “proto-institutional” (re)constitution of the newly formed states, namely in the case of Serbia and Croatia.

The matter gains importance and complexity with the fact that the new charismas arose under the auspices of an earlier routinized or institutionalized charismatic leadership, the one headed by Josip Broz Tito, and that in the territory of Serbia, a sort of a parallel “war of charismas” was led, which was not as extremely characteristic of the other participants in the conflict. The charismatic leadership of Slobodan Milosevic, on one hand, prevailed over at least one potential charismatic opponent- Vuk Draskovic, and, on the other hand, was “charismatically congenial” with another potential Serbian charismatic, Vojislav Seselj. Is it at all possible for several charismatic groups or movements with different charismatic constructs to exist at the same time, in the same territory, the same social and historical context, and even in one and the same “political pole”, i.e. despite the success of a charismatic leader, is it possible for at least one important (opponent or congenial) charismatic leader to exist simultaneously? This implies that the charismatic message is semantically compatible with a given social situation, and that it is affirmatively evaluated by (a part of) social groups, i.e. it is recognized and not considered peculiar or deviant (Friedland, 1964), not at the level of “social pathology”, a self-proclaimed charismatic “eccentricity” unconfirmed by a group (socially).

The foregoing implies several analytical concerns, which will not be the main theme of this paper, but their acknowledgment in the beginning is relevant, for they suggest a remarkable complexity in the characterization of charismatic political leadership. Ergo, the analytical focus of this study will actually be, firstly, the metamorphosis of Slobodan Milosevic’s charisma from its institutional to its authentic

version. In other words, whether the charismatic status of Slobodan Milošević that had emerged in the embrace of the socialist Yugoslavia (institutional charismatic position) was simply “transferred” to a new situation or was it transformed into a new charismatic status (orthodox charismatic position), and if it was transformed, what was the symbolic content of the new charismatic position? Secondly, this paper will additionally deal with the genesis of the charisma of the current democratically elected leadership of the Republic of Serbia, also along the line of distinction and possible transfers between institutional and genuine charisma, i.e. the charismatic process that has been reversed in comparison to the case of Slobodan Milošević. In other words, is it possible for democratic rituals, ceremonies, symbols and iconography—the democratic cultural matrix, to create space for the metamorphosis of operational and executive political (party) figures in the direction of formulating a charismatic political entity? It is important to stress that this kind of charisma refers to the transmission of the system of charismatic attributes to an individual who occupies a particular institutional position, regardless of his/her individual charismatic potential.

At one level, I believe that the charismatic position of the post-Titoist official and apparatchik Slobodan Milošević, with its set of institutionalized charismatic attributes, transformed into a personally profiled charisma, but ideological framework of that transformation has never been described well enough analytically, it has always been implied. At another level, my opinion is that charisma is a social relationship that is generated situationally (contextually), and is not a pre-democratic (anachronistic) or anti-democratic phenomenon (associated with, for example, neo-populism or social radicalism), i.e. it has capacity compatible with the democratic cultural algorithm, and with the apparent role in democratically structured systems. Charisma can therefore be interpreted as an ever-present functional principle as well as a fundamental quality of certain democratic institutions. I will also add that for an examination of charismatic leadership the principal analytic point is the initiation of the charismatic leader, and not the peak of his/her political power, because the former represents the zone where his/her charismatic synthetic code (or construct) can be understood as an amalgam of personal, indirectly structural and ideational, value and cultural factors. As suggested above, this certainly does not mean that the peak of political power does not necessarily coincide with the charismatic initiation.

1. Weber's Concept of Charismatic Political Leadership

Diachronically speaking, the word charisma (*χάρισμα*), the result of St. Paul's semantic innovative intervention in the mid first century AD, is derived from the ancient Greek word *charis* (*χάρις*) that has a wide range of connotative meanings. Most of that etymological constellation is related to the three levels of meaning of the word "grace": the one referring to personal beauty and charm, the one referring to benevolence or love, and the one referring to a gift or favour "under protection" of an entity with divine attributes (Nida and Louw 1992: 62-68; Spicq 1994: 500-503). Religious denotativity of charisma is, therefore, the product of St Paul's (re)conceptualization, and for him charisma, freed from the Hellenic-Hellenistic-Roman system of reciprocal gift-giving between people and gods, is a clearly differentiated concept in relation to *charis*. In fact, it is a direct result of the particular and concrete actualization of *charis*, that is, divine mercy and grace that includes various attributes (supernatural powers), is manifested in ecstatic behaviour or extraordinary abilities, and is predominantly directed to the benefit of the Christian community, rather than to personal reputation of an individual (Potts 2009: 36, 46). And although it seems that the aforementioned would be enough for certain conclusions in the direction of current perceptions of charisma, still, such an attempt would be quite inadequate and parabolic because the modern concept of charisma cannot be understood without the secular-pragmatic reconceptualization of the phenomenon done by Max Weber.

Weber's understanding of charisma (see Constans 1958; Dow 1978; Eisenstadt 1968; Kim 2004; Smith 2000; Spencer 1973; Tucker 1968; Turner, S. P. and Factor, R. A. 1994; and Wilner, A. R. and Wilner, D. 1965) is different from that encountered in St. Paul in two respects: it is primarily spiritually individualized (it is distanced in relation to "plural" subjectivity of the community), and includes the "horizontal" and "vertical" dimensions of dispersion throughout history and different cultures. According to Weber, charisma is a term that refers to certain personality qualities (not accessible to "ordinary" people), in terms of special endowment with supernatural, superhuman, or ("at least") exceptional powers or qualities that form the basis for treating someone as a leader (Weber [1922] 1978: 241). In its ideal form, it is totally opposed to bureaucratic organization (it is not rational) and is self-defining and self-limiting (*Ibidem*: 1112). This definition of charisma

does not address the nature and characteristics of charisma, but only states that it is individual and extraordinary. Weber did not limit the use of the concept of charisma to manifestations of the divine, he did not aspire to the essentialist observance of disposal or endowment of an individual with supernatural qualities, what is relevant is the fact that an individual is perceived or defined as someone who possesses these qualities. Consequently, it is someone who does not necessarily believe in his/her divine inspiration, and who, thanks to his/her above average powers imposes himself/herself on his/her environment through extraordinary courage, determination, influence, perspicacity or energy.

One of possible paradoxes in interpreting Weber's idea of charisma is that, on one hand, charisma is clearly a definition of leadership through its psychological and individualized dimensions, and is the result of divine grace that does not require external verification, while, on the other hand, it does not exist at all without social confirmation, that is, it becomes insignificant (*Ibidem*: 241, 242). If we add to it the idea of permanent presence (production) of charismatics and their, proportionally very often unconfirmed charismatic recognition, it creates space for speculation on characteristics of their social validation. In fact, only when the charismatic message is conveyed by the charismatic individual to the social group, we can talk about its significance and importance within the social frame where the authority (power) occurs. In order for real charisma to be understood, that is to be recognized and positioned outside of the bizarre and irrational, it has to be viewed within social context of the charismatic's activity and quality (content) of the charismatic message, that should be "proved" as relevant to the social group in order to be accepted and become the basis for the action, which entails that it must not deviate from the "collective" success determined by the group (Friedland 1964: 25). No less important is the fact, typical for Weber's discourse, that effective and stable political domination, before gaining legitimacy (and supported by a new institutional and legal organization), first needs to be transformed into a certain authentic symbolic system.

In this regard, charismatic politics presupposes the existence of a form of substantial meanings and ethical values, while the existence of conflicting symbolic components, let's say, various charismatic movements, results in competing beliefs for the sake of justifying the establishment of a new order. This indicates that, with Weber,

charismatic movements are not primarily focused on the realization of economic and political objectives, nor are they charismatic solely due to extraordinary or supernatural qualities of their leaders; what makes them charismatic is actually the struggle over control of the symbolic foundation of authority through creating and recreating the current cultural structures that define good or bad use of power in a particular historical and spatial realities of a some political community (Kalyvas 2002: 79). Charismatic movements, therefore, challenge the core value beliefs and the normative foundation on which the legitimacy of the political and legal system of a particular historical instance are based, before replacing them with their own radicalized version of the institutional and legal organization. Charismatic or charismatics, charismatic individual as well as charismatic movement, survive due to loyalty and authority arising from the mission that is believed or perceived that they embody, and the mission does not necessarily have to be revolutionary, but in most cases is oriented towards inversion of values and dismissal of practices (Weber [1922] 1978: 1117). In this context, for a complete understanding of the phenomenon of charisma, the concept of symbolic politics is also important. Namely, according to Alison Brysk (1995: 561), it can be said of symbolic politics that it includes maintenance or transformation of power relationship through the communication of normative and affective representations, it does not approach to interests as fixed needs, but treats them as narratives on the needs, where participants mobilized through the symbolic can create new political opportunities by discovering, examining and transforming narratives on interests and identities.

By expanding Weber's setting, Edward Shils (1975: 127), who is primarily concerned with the phenomenon of charisma in the field of non-ecclesiastical institutions that are conventionally assumed to be completely devoid of charismatic qualities, defines charisma as the quality of individuals, processes, roles, institutions, symbols and material objects that arises in the supposed connection with the necessary, authentic and "vital" powers, or powers crucial for determination of the order; which can be additionally understood as the primordial or the proto, as the essential order of things that stands in relation to the transcendent order. No society can avoid a certain association with the (Durkheimian oriented) sacred, all of societies hold certain standards of evaluation, rules of conduct and opinions as sacred, and forms of activity, value of individuality, truth, and even professional achievements can be marked by varying degrees of presence of sanctity

or of charisma (Shils 1958: 156). Shils believes that Weber is primarily focused on the observation of charisma in its most concentrated and intense forms (via specific roles, actions and occasions), and that he is completely negatively oriented towards its dispersion, that for him it cannot become an integral element of secular institutionalization (Shils, 1965: 202). Shils starts from the assumption that great power is manifested and self-announced through the power of discovery, creation, maintenance or destruction of the order. Certainly, there is a relationship between the highest authority in a society, embodied by kings, presidents, prime ministers, party secretaries, judges or law-makers, as holders of the highest earthly power, and a transcendent order. The existence of this order, for the sake of legitimacy, also means a connection with some transcendent powers, that is with something which is far more important than himself/herself, and by: (1) primordial contact with a charismatic person (hereditary kingship); (2) cumulative and continuous traditional insight into (a) the nature of existence, (b) ethical imperatives or (c) prudential considerations disclosed by long-enduring of existence; and (3) the most interesting for this paper, popular sovereignty, the will of those who constitute a particular political community (Ibidem: 205).

For “charismatic politics” it is not, therefore, necessary to be perceived as a God-gifted (self-proclaimed and accepted) individual (“a great man”), but is enough to be charismatically legitimized by a higher, I would say perfected or idealized, order of things. Thus, in the very democracies, as already noted, the source of charismatic legitimation may be the will of people (that is democratic electorate), charisma is transferred and dispersed to the system of roles that make the order (as an expression of the nucleus of power, authority that is “the power of powers”), that is, to affiliation to corporate bodies or institutions. According to Weber, each transposition of charisma into something that can be defined as institutional leads to its transformation, that is routinization (or objectification), pure or personal (“concentrated”) charisma enters the process of traditionalization, of rationalization, or the process that combines these two possibilities (Weber [1922] 1978: 246). Routinization thus manifests standardization of a unique contact with the “transcendent” in the everyday life. When it comes to the issue of the succession of charisma, two issues can be noted (Allen 2004: 108-109; Weber [1922] 1978: 246-247): (1) the succession can be solved through traditional mechanisms- (a) revelation, implies selection of oracles or sages, (b) appointment, involves the selection of a new leader

by the charismatic leader before his own death and pursuits, involves finding the person (the charismatic) with a specific set of qualities, and (2) charisma can be depersonalized and transferred to blood relations or a separate institution. Charisma is therefore inherently unstable, from the beginning of its life it is decreasing and is under pressure by material interests, and also transient. When economic and organizational, i.e. structural, issues become prevalent, its reversal into a legal-rational legitimization is initiated. Accordingly, charisma is a quality that characterizes political movements in the early stages of their formation, when the control over masses is implemented, it is displaced to the administrative-bureaucratic routinization (Weber [1922] 1978: 246, 252, 1120): pure extract of charisma exists only in the moment of a charismatic “Big Bang”.

Note also in this orientational and conceptual “croquis” of charismatic and charismatics, that Robert J. House and Jane M. Howell divide charismatic leaders into personalized (“bad”) charismatic leaders, those characterized by an enhanced need for power, authoritarianism, selfishness, exploitation and disregard for the rights and feelings of others, and socialized (“good”) charismatic leaders, those who are in the service of collective interests, willing for two-way communicate, follow the moral standards of followers, support them and respect their rights and feelings (House and Howell 1992: 84), and that as elements of charismatic leadership the following can be defined (Starratt, 1993: 44): (1) vision; (2) understanding of the purpose, identity and mission of groups or institutions and commitment to these; (3) persuasive articulation of the vision and purpose of the institution; (4) routinization of the vision and mission in administrative and organizational structures, services or offices, and institutional procedures; and (5) the use of imagination (imagery), language, stories and symbols related to the institution that is the basis of the message of the charismatic leader. Here, too, should be emphasized that although charisma can be analytically distinguished as a separate form of government, it remains present in other types of authority, that the hallmarks of charisma are subject to change in relation to the transformation of features of the social structure, that is, in relation to contextual angle, a charismatic fully functional in one situation can become completely dysfunctional in another situation (Oommen 1967: 87-88).

For explanatory balance, there are opinions such as Pierre Bourdieu’s view that the concept of charisma does not represent anything other than a mere theoretical construct with a function of an apologia or

justification of certain power relations, and that individual leadership is the result of social influence on an individual, the charismatic leader not being the one who “pulls the strings” but the one who interprets the existing (typically- crisis) situation (Bourdieu 1987: 129-130). According to Carl Friedrich, the explanatory potential of charisma is insignificant, given the fact that in the modern world belief in the transcendent is insufficiently general or intense to be characterized as a foundation for the legitimization of any political leadership (Friedrich 1961: 23), whereas for Anthony Giddens the influence of a charismatic leader “attacks” the regressive side of the personality, which ends with the suppression of independent moral evaluations (Giddens 1985: 305).

Weber’s view of charisma implies (Trice, H. M. and Beyer J. M. 1991: 151-152): (1) exceptional qualities of the charismatic leader, (2) a crisis situation (a kind of social disbalance), (3) followers who believe that the charismatic leader is connected with transcendent powers; (4) the existence of certain radical vision and mission, manifested to the followers through emotionally profiled ideas, the expression of some “cultural substance”, (5) the existence of the administrative structure and activities for the realization of the charismatic mission, (6) the transfer of charisma to others through rituals, symbols, narratives and other cultural forms, (7) the inclusion of charismatic vision and mission in the oral and written tradition of the organization (potential for building a cult). I would like add some implicit corrective or new elements to the existing ones: (1) clearly visible “analytical corollary”, connection of charisma with myths by rewriting the existing ones (interpreting in relation with the charismatic) and creating (the charismatic takes the central role), charisma, therefore, cannot be treated as a universal model free from cultural peculiarity, it is always “passively or actively mythologizing”; (2) for “charismatic politics” a person does not need to be perceived as a God-gifted (self-proclaimed and accepted) individual (“a great man”), but it is enough to legitimize him/her charismatically by direct connections and centrality of his/her position, with a higher, I would say, perfected and idealized order of things, and while in the first case, the mystique is “socially exogenous”, in the second one it is “socially endogenous”; (3) charismatic message is always associated with the promotion of certain values that are collectively perceived, and expressed as an autonomous symbolic structure with its own logic at the cultural level, and a narrative of redemption with a structural distinction between good and evil is actually imposed (Smith 2000: 101, 103), a man needs the concept and participation in the symbolic order,

manifested in the idea of a “good society”, which results in structural focus on charismatic activities, group symbols and institutions (Eisenstad 1968: XLI), that is the charismatic community is always self-perceived as some kind of moral community that is constantly fighting for a transcendent (ideological) setting; (4) radicalism of a charismatic mission may not necessarily be manifested by the ultra-revolutionary, but it certainly has to be more significant values reprogramming of the society; and (5) there is a separate question to what extent the need of the followers for “charismatic symbolic acknowledgment” may interfere with, alter or compromise their unconditional commitment to “charismatic duty” (once recognized as charismatic, a charismatic should always be charismatic), that is to what extent may self-declared exceptional powers or qualities of charismatic leaders be distorted, altered or affected by the action, which, by default, is interpreted as evidence of their own charismatic eligibility (Bendix 1967: 344).

I believe that Shils unlike Weber finds the sovereign will of people, embodied in democratic elections, automatically qualified as the source of the charismatic, that is I consider that in Shils’ works the triadic setting of the charismatic can be registered: (1) “primary” charisma that allows the existence of institutions at the level of the original (proto) social and political integration (this even applies to the institution of civil society) and is oriented towards the transcendent order, that is towards the socially perceived proximity and the nucleus of the highest (“living”) power, and, based on it, charismatic attribution of power in large mass societies for the preservation and stabilization of the system itself (with charisma not evenly distributed to the whole society, but with tendency to); (2) “secondary” charisma, a special “charismatic political division”, manifested in the need for performers of the transcendent order, representatives of the earthly order, and the people themselves, despite the fact that they need each other for the verification of their own charisma, to participate in the process of constant competition for their “version” of charisma, that is for its position that is not socially petrified but constantly fluctuates to one of the above listed centers of gravity; and (3) “tertiary” charisma that is positioned as an individual charisma, and can be (a) “static or inert” charisma- extracted from the primary charisma, that is from an affiliation to an institution or a role (rank) in an institution, making it socially conserving, or (b) an authentic, Weberian oriented, “dynamic and mobile” individual charisma- that, by the perception of others or

self-perception, proclaims connection with the supernatural (divine) or transcendent, with something that can initiate, maintain or destroy something that is formative for human existence, thus ends in the top position that opens up opportunities for the creation of new institutions. It turns out that in a complex democratic situation we can talk about someone who has larger or smaller amount of charisma by a mere act of belonging to a particular institution, position or role he/she occupies in a particular institution and, regardless of the previous two moments, by his/her declared and accepted charismatic specificity. Institutional ascertainment of charisma certainly does not mean that the “charismatic of charismatics” necessarily obtains characteristics of a progressive and positive historical force in the service of human freedom, while the “charismatic of routinization (or institutions)” represents something retrograde and negative: for charisma, however, it can be said that it is an ever-present historical opportunity that in any case needs to be investigated separately (Bendix 1977: 328-329), and not only and exclusively as a form of resistance to capitalism and bureaucracy (Gerth and Mills 1946a: 72-73).

2. Antebellum- Yugoslavia- Institutionalized Charismatic Code of Josip Broz Tito

Slobodan Milosevic was one of the bearers of the institutionalized charisma of Josip Broz Tito. It can be said of Josip Broz Tito that at the beginning of his rule from 1941 to 1948, he was a part of Stalin's institutionalized charisma (Kuljic 1995: 63) with elements of a revolutionary war commander's charisma. This suggests the possibility that the institutionalization of charisma may have supranational, international features, especially if certain international institutions (the Comintern, later Cominform, i.e. Informbureau) stand behind it. The phenomenon gains further momentum with the advent to power of a charismatic who was “institutionalized” in this way. At the same time, Stalin's charisma directly resulted from the “divinization” of Lenin and the “canonization” of his works as the chief means of the succession struggle and the subsequent political disputes of his direct (closest) followers, among whom, more broadly, non-Soviet communist leaders can also be included.

In the second phase, from 1949 until the death of Josip Broz Tito in 1980, his authority was marked by the creation of a distinct personal charisma and a parallel construction of a personality cult (*Loc. Cit.*). The turning point, the sign of a genuine charismatic leader was his “big No” to the Informbureau as a concentrated symbolic-ideological charismatic code, it is the point of “charismatic epiphany”, “inaugural charismatic promotion” from which he will emerge as an orthodox charismatic leader, definitely dissociating his charismatic position in comparison to other war heroes and global carriers of the ideas of socialism, with a clear general acknowledgment of charisma, decoding of charismatic codes or a designation by close associates and “class-national” plebiscitary approval. Thus, at the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz said (according to Stanojevic and Markovic 1981: 294): “I, comrades, here underline that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia has also honorably performed its historical mission to date and it will, I am deeply convinced, perform it in future by means of its victory in the construction of socialism in our country, and that it will, by its firmness and unity, its unwavering loyalty to learnings of Marx-Engels-Lenin in action, prove that it has not strayed from the path of these learnings.” In any case, the existence of a charismatic movement before the appearance of charismatic leadership, in this case the movement with clearly accepted Stalin’s charisma, usually results in a schism (Tucker 1968: 738), schism to those who accept the charismatic leader, that is, followers of the newly created charisma of Josip Broz Tito, and those who do not accept the charismatic leader, that is, those who remained loyal to Stalin’s charismatic authority. His messiahship thus received an integral, “triune” form, it absorbed: (1) the salvation from the suffering by the hands of Nazi Germany and traitors; (2) the salvation from the “Stalinist scourge”; (3) the salvation from “immanent” injustice of life and the world. Each of the constituent elements had a clear setting of evil against which it fought.

From that moment on, Josip Broz Tito, will record various political moves (“miracles”) to his “charismatic account”, as links of his “charismatic continuity and credibility”, the most prominent one (in addition to the introduction of the concepts of workers’ self management, associated labor and market socialism, and the most important lesson of the “Titoist agathology”: brotherhood and unity) being the position of the most important political figure of the first Conference of Non-Aligned heads of state and government held in Belgrade in 1961. In this regard, his charismatic qualifications were also shown in the plane of completely

“authentic” Titoist interpretation of the transcendent communist-socialist ideal of salvation or redemption. Titoism was marked by certain moral imperatives, determinism, urgency, conceptual inclusivity (answer to all questions) and social exclusivity (its acceptance signified its elitist positioning), thus representing the “only way” to the specific method of transformation (Lalich 2004: 226). That “authenticity”, Tito’s *qualitas occulta*, will be his particular mark of giftedness, it will in the best possible way reflect his mystical knowledge of the “higher” transcendent set of values, the proto operational principles of the world, and will be, at regular intervals, time and again, “served” to his followers as a new confirmation (“palingenesis”) of his charismatic talents (“proskynesis” of his followers was never questioned), to the point where the existence of followers is equated to the existence of a beloved leader.

Charismatic-cult omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of Josip Broz Tito was, of course, accompanied by the omnicontrol of the totality of formal structures that were created in the way he wanted and that existed only up to the moment he wanted. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia- SKJ (i.e. the Communist Party of Yugoslavia- CPY) as an institutional constant of the regime was standardized so that Josip Broz Tito could always do whatever he wanted; improvisation was the only organizational standard. Although he controlled everything, he was not subject to any control, no one could limit Josip Broz Tito, neither the party, nor the elite stratum of his closest “associates”. After all, the party functioning coincides with the definition of the cult given by Janja Lalich according to which a cult, either as a sharply bounded social group or a diffusely bounded social movement is characterized by shared commitment to a charismatic leader, that is a certain transcendent ideology (not always religious in nature) and a high level of personal commitment from its members in words and deeds (Lalich 2004: 5).

I believe that the institutionalization of the charisma of Josip Broz Tito, its transfer into organizational and administrative structure and institutional procedures, its clichéization in the everyday life, was followed by two processes. On the one hand, it essentially marked the fall of intensity of his personal charisma, by the fact that the whole combination of operations and actions had to be transferred to certain institutions that were difficult to control directly, the entire system was viewed through the lens of instrumental rationality: it became bureaucratized. On the other hand, the process of objectification, raising of charisma to the level of impersonality and abstraction (Friedrich

1961: 13), also included the recruitment of a range of hierarchized party “managers” who were at the forefront of all major economic as well as public institutions, and not only had the institutionalized charisma at their disposal, but were also sorted in relation to their proximity to the charismatic center- Josip Broz Tito. It was possible therefore to compensate or strengthen the institutional position by frequency of contacts with the charismatic leader, where the transfer of charisma was “immediate”. In this sense, mere act of photography with the “beloved President,” was a “magical” social act treated as a reference *par excellence*. Demagogic-apologetic narratives were imposed as the structural quality of public action, formal loyalty and servility to the undisputed party and the leader were positioned as a higher duty and a moral imperative. On the one hand the system of “cadre-craic” benefits was built on that loyalty: it was implicit that each ideological zeal had its counterpart or “price” in status, while, on the other hand, the whole “code of desirable social immorality” was built, embodied in denunciations, scheming, foisting and stealing of public property. The logic by which the whole charismatic system in itself is an expression of an authentic Marxist-Leninist critique of the entire reality has resulted in that only public panegyrists could be treated as of legitimate value, while the very official criticism had a hallmark of a strictly supervised small ideological play of “straying from the right path”. Criticizing the critique meant being automatically classified into the ranks of an “evil enemy”.

As already suggested, in the case of the matter of the succession of charisma two problems may be identified (Allen 2004: 108-109; Weber [1922] 1978: 246-249): (1) it may be solved through traditional mechanisms- (a) revelation, implies the selection of a charismatic by oracles or sages, (b) appointment, involves the selection of a new leader by the charismatic leader before his own death, and (c) search, involves finding the person (a charismatic) with a specific set of traits; and (2) *through the depersonalization* of charisma and its transfer on the principle of kinship, or to a separate institution. In the former Yugoslavia, the entire system was operated in such a way that the issue of charismatic succession was permanently postponed so that the cult of Josip Broz Tito was tendentiously built during his life. This process was set so that his mystical eruditeness, monumentality and deification, manifested in various “hagiographic” writings, were not taken as optional guidelines but as a duty, it was presumed that his prospective successor will have to apply Tito’s revolutionary ideological postulates. In that sense, mandates for supporting party and state

functions were constrained, the emergence of new of charisma had to be obstructed. Tito's "totemization", monuments across the city, city names, photographs in schools and public institutions, it culminated even in pop-art iconography (t-shirts, badges, dishes and the rest of kitsch production).

The posthumous state of affairs in terms of "indisturbability" of the charisma of Josip Broz Tito was expressed in the most obvious and pregnant way by the worn-out maxim of the public discourse of the time: "After Tito comes Tito". More or less, if we assume that there is a difference between ideologized bureaucracy as a result of charismatic routinization, and neutral bureaucracy, positioned as an element in legal-rational orders within a democratic (pluralistic) power structure (Constans 1958: 400-401), my opinion is that the whole combination of succession activity was set up to displace the charisma to the level of the Yugoslav bureaucracy, with the "spirit" of Josip Broz Tito as the "personalized social and integrative content of the fragile multi-ethnic unity" (Kuljic 2009: 330). However, that non-Weberian bureaucracy torn between the level of normative prescription and the level of means-end, as features of everyday life, oriented towards itself and not enough (or nearly at all) bounded, charismatic bureaucracy as a ruling class, not only did it not accept its programmed charismatic status, but it played a key role in the breakup of Yugoslavia.

3. Metamorphosis of Serbian "Charismatic Discourse"- From Institutional Charisma to Personal Charisma and from Charismatic Institutions to Charismatic Personality

Slobodan Milosevic, born on 20 August 1940 in Pozarevac, was, as previously mentioned, one of the members of an elite stratum of the "charismatic bureaucratic class" of the former Yugoslavia. His personal qualities were not the crucial moment that would qualify him as a charismatic leader, which proves the fact that the personal traits alone, abstracted from the social and political context and personal strategies, are not a decisive factor of the charismatic "enthronement" (Smith 2000: 105; Pappas 2005: 194). After all, some of his moves, such as personal risk-taking that will be identified later in the text, can be treated as a consequence of his "moderate" disposal of certain qualities and behaviour characteristic of a charismatic leader (Riggio and Riggio 2008: 38). He was not too good an orator, nor was he bestowed with

charm or a sense of humour (LeBor, A. 2004: 30), but he had a sense of fabricated partisan determination and vigor, and also rigor, dishonesty and stubbornness of an archetypal party apparatchik (he had become a member of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in January 1959).

The metamorphosis of Slobodan Milosevic, his charismatic initiation from a standard overly ambitious party “practitioner” to a charismatic leader took place in April 1987 after his famous line spoken in Kosovo Polje: “No one can beat you,” which would represent his version of Tito’s “big No,” his own concentrated symbolic-ideological charismatic code. Kosovo Polje is a town and a geographical area of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo, referred to as the site of the Battle of Kosovo, that resulted in the loss of the medieval Serbian state and fall into slavery under the Ottoman Empire for a period of five hundred years. The myth of Kosovo was constructed around this historical event, and in addition to the myth of Saint Sava, it makes an extremely important, formative instance of the Serbian identity. In order to fully understand the profile of the swift political career of Slobodan Milosevic, we should note that in 1983 he became involved in politics professionally, that in 1984 he became the Head of the City Committee of the League of Communists of Belgrade, and that in 1986 he became the Chairman of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia. Before his “crucial charismatic turning point”, the most important moment of Serbian political life was the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts published by *Vecernje novosti* in two parts on 25 and 26 September 1986, and it is considered a strategic act of Serbian intellectuals. Pursuant to the Memorandum, the base of the Yugoslav social crisis was located in the irresponsible and nationalist-tinged politics of the leaders of the Yugoslav communists, especially Edvard Kardelj and Josip Broz Tito (Memorandum Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti 1986: 20), which resulted in the preferential treatment of Slovenian and Croatian national interests and had represented a continuation of the Cominternian fight against the alleged Serbian hegemony over other “Yugoslav” nations (*Ibidem*: 18).

To this should be added decisions from the Constitution of 1974 that reduced the jurisdiction of Serbia to its territory without provinces, assigning a pseudo-republic status to the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. This means that: “In order to satisfy the legitimate interests of Serbia the revision of the constitution inevitably arises. The autonomous provinces must become real integral parts of the Republic

of Serbia, by giving them the degree of autonomy that does not violate the integrity of the Republic and facilitating achievement of the general interests of the wider community (*Ibidem*: 31). The Memorandum states that the Kosovo Serbs had been subject to a genocide (*Ibidem*: 18), that resulted in a mass exodus of more than 200 000 Serbs during the postwar period (*Ibidem*: 24). The Memorandum ends with an observation that a solution to this situation should be sought within the principles of AVNOJ but that “Serbia must reckon with the fact that it depends not only on her, that others may have some other alternatives (*Ibidem*: 31)”; and that “because of that it has been set a task of seeing its economic and national interests clearly so that it would not be surprised by events” (*Ibidem*: 31-32).

After the “crucial charismatic turning point” political moves aimed at consolidation of power occurred at an astronomical speed. Slobodan Milosevic acquired full control of the Serbian Communist Party, emerging victorious in the duel with Dragisa Pavlovic, the leader of the Belgrade party organization, and annihilating his political mentor Ivan Stambolic, the President of Serbia. These were followed by solidarity rallies in Vojvodina that turned into a public manifestation of discontent with local elites and acclamation of the charismatic politics of Slobodan Milosevic, and the rally of Brotherhood and Unity held in November 1988, that, according to Susan Woodward, by leaving room for a liberal, Europeanist and pro-Yugoslav option (Woodward 1995: 97), brought together a wide range of nationalists of all strata, ranging from communists and anticommunists, skilled and semiskilled workers, police, junior officers of the Yugoslav People’s Army of predominantly Serbian nationality, anti-Titoist victims of various purges, country people and local party bosses (*Ibidem*: 92-93). The following year, on 28 March 1989 in Belgrade, the amendments to the Constitution of Serbia were adopted, that stripped the provinces of the veto power over constitutional changes in Serbia and part of the legislative, administrative and judicial functions, including control of the police, education, economic policy and the choice of an official language. The constitutional amendments were accompanied by conflicts of Albanians with the police that killed 22 protesters and 2 policemen in Kosovo.

Although the events “of the charismatic apparition of Slobodan Milosevic” in Kosovo Polje can be evaluated as a product of chance, as the absence of awakened charismatic self-promotion, they were

perceived as a higher transcendental turn that determined his true charismatic habitus. The symbolic context was more than indicative: where the suffering of the Serbian people began in 1389, a revelation also occurred: the inauguration of a new Serbian messiah. Salvation was finally offered to the Serbian people, along with the simultaneous process of divinization of Slobodan Milosevic and the demonization of all those forces that opposed his political project. Although at the beginning of his political career he was more a communist operative, Slobodan Milosevic slowly started to become a charismatic tribune, his charismatic rhetoric not only able to rule emotions of the masses, but also the masses. Here his ability of public simulation of all dimensions of the charismatic leadership should certainly be pointed out, from the manifestation of extraordinary giftedness of the leader to unconditional devotion, worshipping of followers, full occupation of all communication channels, that is, the mass media, so that no one can escape the charismatically programmed message (Bendix 1967: 348; Pappas 2005: 204). Although “media hagiographies” can be a double-edged sword, as they can initiate strategies for their avoidance by end consumers, they still remain an exceptionally powerful tool for validation and affirmation of high charismatic results even without the existence of miracles. Slobodan Milosevic confirmed the ability of the functioning of charisma under circumstances of high media manipulation. His charismatic credibility was consistently built and/or renovated by forcing testimonies of his extraordinary achievements and by projecting his own steadfastness into the promoted charismatic mission (Bendix 1967: 349), that is, even when media manipulation became a factor of disruption of his charismatic credibility, his charisma survived thanks to the formed charismatic relationships (*Loc. cit.*)

With this in mind, the last part of this paper will be dedicated to the “charismatic breviary” of Slobodan Milosevic (1989), his book *Godine raspleta (The Years of Unraveling)*. Leaving aside the position of Aleksa Djilas that it argues for narrow intellectual horizons and limited vocabulary of its author (Djilas 1993: 81), in my opinion its “martyric” simplicity and terseness, rituality in the construction of sentences and oscillating rhythm of the text and platitudes is the perfect stylistic backdrop for a “classic” charismatic narrative. It finally confirms that the charismatic “Slobism” was a specific abstruse ideological blend, a complement of Titoism with national elements; the ideals of equality, non-alignment, market socialism, avant-garde, equality, principles of AVNOJ, class justice and anti-bureaucratic revolution were adjusted or

replaced with national suffering, national fear for existence, national justice and national predestination. It was a confusing, at times absurd, intellectual setting, a world view politicized by the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (cf. Mihailovic and Krestic 1995), with the addition of a fanatical devotion to the cult of Josip Broz Tito. In this sense, the charismatic *differentia specifica* of Slobodan Milosevic lies in the fact that he is a self-proclaimed successor of the charisma of Josip Broz Tito and his charismatic community the successor to Yugoslavism.

Although the crisis situation is cited as the structural position that best favors the emergence of charismatic leadership, it is essentially a special form of crisis. In fact, it is a generalized crisis, acute crisis of full intensity, the one (Pappas 2007: 9; Tucker 1968: 743-744): (1) that endangers the whole of the population; (2) that has already occurred or is imminent; and (3) whose expected or actual consequences are substantial or material damage. In this sense, Takis Pappas identifies (*Loc. cit.*) as examples of such a crisis context: regular wars, sudden and violent changes of the political regime and a global economic crisis. About the crisis that he will permanently perpetuate and deepen, in his pre-charismatic stage Slobodan Milosevic said: “The economic crisis has undoubtedly strained the current, and caused new and more pronounced social problems. They are known. They are expressed by a large reduction of both personal and collective consumption; dramatic drop in the standard of some social classes in particular; unemployment; more widespread social differences with reasonable and alarming suspicion that they were not formed on the basis of work and work results, and finally- as in such situations almost regularly happens - by the visible erosion of morality and legality and confusion of moral values (Milosevic 1989: 49)”. But in his post-charismatic stage, in addition to continually accentuated crisis, he envisions Serbia “with 10 000 dollars per capita (*Ibidem*: 316)”, because “we cannot, either as individuals or as a society, be constantly poor and remain so in the prospects (*Ibidem*: 266).”

Furthermore, Slobodan Milosevic believes that: “Every nation has that eternal love that warms its heart. For Serbia it is Kosovo. That is why Kosovo will remain in Serbia (*Ibidem*: 275)”, and that Serbs, Albanians and Montenegrins will continue to live in Yugoslavia (*Ibidem*: 343). At the same time, “Serbs should return to Kosovo from Smederevo and Kraljevo, and from other regions where they moved to, but they should

also return to Serbia and from Frankfurt and Vienna. They cannot develop their country by building German and Austrian roads and hospitals (*Ibidem*: 245). Democracy “in both historical and theoretical meaning” is the establishment of the authority of the working class and all working people (*Ibidem*: 197). It is certainly contributed to by the fact that “in revolution and war the Serbian people was not led by nationalists, informers and cowards, but communists, members of SKOJ, heroes (*Ibidem*: 183).” Enemies and evil are always at work because dissatisfaction with the Conclusions on Kosovo was expected from separatists, not the participants of the 8th Session of the League of Communists of Serbia (*Ibidem*: 170).

Opposition to post-titoistic bureaucracy was best manifested in Vojvodina, that was “an example of how this step was performed at the last moment, how the growing democratic forces of the society stopped, broke the bureaucratic-aristocratic circle that had a tendency towards the strong concentration of economic, political and every other authority in the decreasing circle of individuals (*Ibidem*: 303).” It is, therefore, important to know that: “In Serbia, unity was not established on hatred towards innocent people, but on solidarity with victims of violence (*Ibidem*: 334)”, and in that sense “it is a positive, progressive, humane and historically justified unity not only of one nation, but most citizens, and it usually happens when a nation or a society is faced with the need to rectify this injustice (*Ibidem*: 334).” Finally, Slobodan Milosevic sees the solution to the crisis of Yugoslavia in the following way: “On our common future, and particularly the present, we need to agree calmly and friendly, without accusations, without suspicion and without inferior intolerance. There is no doubt that we can. But as long as anyone lives under delusion that someone can impose something on somebody through the so-called balance of power and coalitions, we will not move from a standstill in solving the crisis in Yugoslav society. For solving it through the so-called balance of power ignores the important fact that we are a federation (*Ibidem*: 329-330).”

It did not take long to get from such a formulated pacified narrative to the transparent war discourse. In addition to the clearly discernible transfer of the principle of peaceful coexistence of the Nonaligned Movement to the internal political sphere of self-management agreement, it also contained a latent, rhetorical announcement of an unbridgeable conflict hotspot. The idea of the protection of the socialist-Yugoslav idea, converted to the idea of the protection of Serbian nation, was always

accompanied by a “higher” quasi-antinationalistic, that is quasi-class and quasi-socialist, ideological matrix. Essentially related to this was the conceptual formulation of the enemy that was substantially built around the Kosovo myth, and the related set of ideas about the abstract “ultimate” enemy – a high mounted national metaphor of an anonymous, non-concretized enemy (in terms of its perceptual sublimated timeless model), that has to be resisted or Serbian identity will necessarily be lost. As main implications of Milosevic’s interpretation of the Kosovo myth on this level I determine: (1) the idea of “heavenly enemy” based on the idea of “heavenly people”; (2) “heavenly enemy” represents something more unjust, making a higher, “diabolical or great injustice” an important prerequisite of all Serbian enemies, they are morally positioned as evil *per se*; (3) “heavenly enemy” is not only a national enemy, it is also evil in general, to beat the enemy would mean to restore justice to the whole Christian world; (4) regarding the fact that Serbian “heavenly people” fights against a “heavenly enemy”, it is also a “people of liberation”, “liberation people”, and a “just people” *a priori*. Let us add to this: (1) the idea of self-importance- due to the fact that Serbian living space has always been in the field of interest of the dominant global powers in the region that have always tended to take away its freedom, Serbs have essentially been at “permanent” war, and have developed a strongly based collective identity; (2) the idea of the importance and sacrifice- Serbs do not wage wars with small, “epigones and satellites” of the great powers, but always with the most powerful, and every victim is justified if it leads to its preservation or struggle for independence; and (3) the idea of “civilization amalgam” and ingratitude of neighboring nations- Serbs always represented the Occident for the Orient and the Orient for the Occident, while those to whom they brought freedom always found reasons to declare them tyrants.

The authoritarian charismatic order of Slobodan Milosevic, regardless of its nationalistic basis, was actually based on instrumentalized mythological constructions of war as an “armageddonic” collision between “capitalism and socialism,” “liberalism and social-democracy of the Swedish type”, and the final showdown with the new world order, which resulted in treating the nations in the region as indirect champions of great evil who thus became enemies against whom everything is allowed and against whom ruthlessness is asked and requested. The ideal of Milosevic’s enemy was an absolute enemy, materialized in the United States and the European Union, clearly marked as global and ultimate evil in a binary moral code, the pole

of “Milosevic’s Serbian good” marked by ideological populist premises based on selective use of history and metaphors of fight against class and neo-colonial oppression, typical of the discourse of the second Yugoslavia. Milosevic’s narrative of hatred was made up of emotional pathos, that on symbolic level always inclined toward being anational in explaining all actions that have been taken in the direction of the war (he only protected the rights of Serbs), while his dramatics always implied vengeful rhetoric of a man unfairly attacked by domestic traitors, ustasha-like² elements and Islamic fundamentalists. Finally, the path that began at the celebration of 600 anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1989 ended with the loss of that same Kosovo, 11 years later, in an environment defined by mortal enemies.

Things changed with the democratic transformation that took place in Serbia. These transformations can be interpreted from the Weberian and Shilsian perspective. In fact, in modern (mass) democracies, status and functioning of political parties is perhaps the most striking example of possible Weberian installation (institutionalization) of the charismatic principle in the political life of a community. Due to the fact that the position of a party as opposed to an administrative bureaucracy is marked by the absence of coercion, it must win the elections in order to achieve its own goals through extrapolation (appropriation) of state funds and power. Agents of change in the setting of political values of a particular democratic system are, therefore, political leaders and their parties, they are the only ones able to control and alter a particular institutional structure. Those who take an electoral victory are able to legitimize the proclaimed values, first at the charismatic level and later at the legal-rational level, those who fail must wait for the next election cycle. The participation of masses in the political process results in two political arrangements: “democracy with a leader” and “democracy without a leader”. The contemporary Serbia can be seen as “democracy without a leader”.

Liberal “democracy without a leader” annuls the competition for fundamental political values, symbolic (political-cultural) frame of a regime, the electoral process is in a “political hibernation”, reduced to a public applause, adulation to or manipulation with masses for the sake of state functions or, in other words, of authority, and the problem of

2 Ustaša – a member of Croatian Revolutionary Movement, fascist and terrorist organization which was active before, during and after World War II.

accountability is significantly increased. On the one hand, the template of such a position of political charisma implies that every time a (liberal) value structure of a democratic leadership (that is far below the threshold of a revolution, but certainly above the threshold of political reformism) is overlooked, when it is taken as unquestionable in the architecture of democratic systems, the entire democratic model is in danger of bureaucratization, i.e. the value treatment of the bureaucratic system *per se* (this certainly implies the view of democracy as a constant inquiring value and normative concept). On the other hand, this suggests the co-existence of democratically profiled charismatic value and symbolic templates that are in a state of constant competition and even conflict of different charismas in democratic institutions—the one that has yet to enter the process of routinization and the one that has already been institutionalized, and also the possibility of the emergence of charisma not only in crisis situations but also in the regular functioning of the democratic system.

As mentioned above, Shils' setting suggests that in a complex democratic situation we can speak of someone who gets a larger or smaller amount of charisma by the very act of belonging to a certain institution (and it expresses its closeness to the "transcendent" state of affairs), by the position (higher or lower) or role (significant or more marginal) he/she takes in a certain institution (at that: charisma tends to be spread across the whole institutional distribution of a socio-political order) and, independently of the previous two elements that position charismatic principle as value, symbolic and ideological connective tissue of a social-political order, by his/her individually proclaimed and collectively accepted charismatic singularity as a generator of institutional (social and political) changes. In my opinion, such conceptual positioning of charisma in democracies cannot be marked as "obfuscation" of the balance of powers, but as inevitable trait of a democratically acquired authority. When extreme, the state force (coercion) is a democratic legitimate power, if it was partly charismatically (valuably) verified by the will of the people. For Shils, if my interpretation is correct, there is a difference between being charismatic and a charismatic, that is, someone is charismatic for being, for example, a holder of the role of the state president, because the institution of the state president is already charismatic, and because he/she won the votes of the charismatic electorate or the people (citizens). Anyone who is institutionally charismatic may not be a charismatic,

in terms of special giftedness and the change of institutions. For Weber, if we accept the previous distinction, a charismatic precedes being charismatic, that is, the institutionalization or routinization of charisma; charisma is partly cyclical: it ranges from one charismatic to another, with declines in intensity through the process of routinization or institutionalization, but never so it completely disappears as an institutional element.

The current political leadership of Serbia draws its charismatic background almost entirely from the realized democratic metamorphosis on the line of Shils' systemic charismatic matrix. Ergo, the separation of the Serbian Progressive Party from the Serbian Radical Party, led in September 2008 by Tomislav Nikolic, the President of the Republic of Serbia, and Aleksandar Vucic, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Serbia, and also the European "turn" of Ivica Dacic, the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the Republic of Serbia and the former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia in the Government of Mirko Cvetkovic, shouldn't actually be treated as charismatic turning points, acts of individual charismatic "inauguration". The idea is that in the above cases it is the case of the final shift away from "bad" charismatic leaders, negation of radicalistic premises of the "Seseljism" of Vojislav Seselj and the "Slobism" of Slobodan Milosevic, than of promoting new and authentic charismatic figures, of distancing that was more or less a mere political survival tactic. More precisely: it was more of a process of a unique "de-charmatisation", of subversion of charismatic movements whose followers they were, in the direction of the inversion of a personal charismatic potential with the charismatic background of an emerging democratic socio-political context. Such political moves implied a new historical instance in the Serbian political space. It is about a democratic value matrix that axiomatically profiled and postulated a possible cultural and symbolic content of their "pseudo-charismatic" manifestation determined by a democratic institutional structure, that is by a democratic political system. At play, therefore, is not a personal charisma or institutional charisma of Weberian provenance, but the identification of a potential personal charismatic code with the democratic systemic charismatic code, Shils' systemic charisma manifested through two narrative, content interventions.

On the one hand, a discursive recoding of enemies is taking place. All efforts for full political consolidation of the former Yugoslav region

are associated with the redefinition of the cultural code of the enemy, subject to promoting national iconography, as a result of persuasive action of still dominant elites of the war era. However, the Serbian political elite, that for the most part accepted the democratic value postulates, has, since the collapse of the regime of Slobodan Milošević, been focused on the ways for founding relations among the nations of the former Yugoslavia on new assumptions. For this process, that is significantly burdened with war crimes, bombing of Serbia, the departure of Montenegro from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the proclamation of the independence of Kosovo, it can be said that as far as the attribute “evil” appears in the definition of an enemy as a part of the national identity profiling, the likelihood of violence increases, while the syntagm “dangerous enemy” objectifies risk. Ergo, malice, as “pure malice” is deterministic and risk is probabilistic. Danger also creates space for non-violent engagements, and the newly established Serbian perception of the constituent nations of the former Yugoslavia as “absolute or natural enemies” goes toward “normal enemies” or opponents (rivals) with whom it is possible and necessary to negotiate, regardless of any potential disputes and disagreements.

On the other hand, a discursive recoding of corruption is taking place. Even before the authoritarian regime of Slobodan Milošević Serbia was burdened with the problem of corruption, and the problem has, since the collapse of the former Yugoslavia to the present day, in addition to even more harmful and dangerous phenomenon of the criminalization of politics (most powerfully manifested by instrumentalization of the state for privately profiled objectives-usually through cryptic, parallel power structures located around the very top of the political establishment, and for the sake of a wide range of privileges and illegal preferential treatment), escalated to the level of a widespread trait of daily cultural functioning and cultural transactions of its citizens. When corruption is so widespread, whereby it is known that it is impossible to completely eradicate corruption even in the most organized societies, when it receives the status of a “cultural code” (an “implied public-operative norm”), then the interaction between the state and society, that is maximally freed of corruption and manifests benefits to all, may be slowed down by the fact that individuals fighting against corruption can consider their actions counterproductive- a government freed of corruption can have a negative impact to their employment and status. More or less, the “cleptocratic” setting of the functioning of the Serbian state became a public defect that does not

characterize only the nominally powerful, thus associating one of the most important forms of systemic charismatic manifestation with the symbolic deconstruction or “de-culturization” of corruption as the default transactional norm of institutional functioning and everyday life.

Conclusions

It is my opinion that in the case of Slobodan Milosevic there should be no talk about the process of ideological and symbolic creation of genuine charisma, but of the process of ideological and symbolic authentication of charisma. By this process I imply: (1) the possibility that someone who is not a non-institutional figure becomes a truly charismatic leader in the context of an institutionalized charisma; (2) the composition of a new symbolic structure, that will, if not “symbolically destroy”, certainly reconstruct the symbolical complex of the routinized charisma that is abandoned; (3) the utilization of institutions with a declining intensity of the institutionalized charismatic authority of Josip Broz Tito, by Slobodan Milosevic, for the purpose of their “reintensification” in the sense of creating a new authentic charismatic leader; (4) the release of “the war charisma” of the apparatchik Slobodan Milosevic through the syncretic ideological merger of nationalism (of low or high intensity) with Titoism; (5) the perpetuation of charismatic qualities, ceremonies and rituals by persistent media manipulation.

Placing the current political leadership of the Republic of Serbia into spotlight, I think that if we accept the general democratic and charismatic foundations as the transformed integrative base of the Serbian society, we cannot register neither the generating of authentic charismatic leaders, nor the appropriation, inheritance of the institutionalized charisma, but the phenomenon of the charismatic stylization of the political leadership. Under the previous I include: (1) the initial “de-charismatisation” of personalized (malignant) charismatic movements to which they belonged; (2) the acceptance of the democratic value and symbolic complex and the rejection of the authoritarian radicalistic charismatic apperception of “Seseljism” and “Slobism”; (3) the inversion of the individual element with the systemic “charismatic” code, the attempt of taking the position of the interpreter of the transcendent charismatic order as democratically charismatic; (4) the social and political mobilization of actors by proclaiming a “peace charisma”

manifested through the symbolic and cultural recoding of the narrative of the enemy and the narrative of corruption; and (5) the simulation of a genuine personal charisma, a “pseudo-charismatic” status usually oriented toward the charismatic legitimization extracted from the will of the electorate and supported by media manipulation.

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