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THE SHIFT OF LEGITIMACY IN SOCIAL CRISES: MAX WEBER'S HISTORICAL ANALYSIS VERSUS THE CONCEPT OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY¹

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Abstract This paper problematizes the ‘unintended consequences’ that come to light out of the very topic of collective trauma. That is to say, in addressing the processes through which the collective trauma is resolved, the well-known authors in this field give us also a glimpse of the general courses of history, its driving forces. There are two competing and opposing conceptualizations of history on which the debate about the collective trauma is based. The first emphasizes history’s cultural significance and it is teleological. According to the (humanist) teleological perspective, history is a meaningful story, or rather drama with historical actors and groups who are part of different and opposed cultural wholes and whose actions bring about the necessary step to the next and higher cultural stage of humanity. Along with this standpoint, the modern sovereign state represents the pinnacle of history’s development. For the first time, by its rule of law and its legitimacy – its internal sovereignty, the undisputed authority over its citizens – the modern state embodied the principle of Reason, according to which the new, rational social order was based on the autonomy of the individual. But the true teleological viewpoint (the concept of universal history) is dialectical. It doesn’t assume the overall development as linear and without retrocessions and setbacks. The modern national state is only (though necessary) an outcome of the contradictions of the previous stages of history and contains its own present-day contradictions which result in crises. On the other hand we have the conceptualization of history which follows the assumption of Max Weber that sociology is a logical precondition of the causal (historical) analysis which formulates type concepts and searches for general uniformities. Although, Weber did not deny the “general cultural development”, he saw it only as a structural differentiation and rationalization on versatile levels, as a development that does not unfolds necessarily according to some law or unstoppable teleological process. The main task of this paper is to confront these two perspectives through the analysis of crises. It begins with the thesis that what is common for every modern society in periods of crises is the “crisis of authority”, the shift of its legitimacy. It is the sociological perspective

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which assists us to see this shift, with its methodology of typologies in the form of generalizations that emphasize the repetitive side of the socio-historical models of authority (traditional, legal-rational and charismatic) which appear in the unfolding of crises.

Key words: collective trauma, social crisis, secular theories, sociological generalization, Universal History.

Social crisis and cultural trauma: a critique

In the most influential sociological work about social crises as collective traumas i.e. “Cultural trauma and Collective Identity” (2004), Hegel’s philosophy plays significant if not a substantial role. In their studies, ‘The Trauma of Social Change’ and ‘On the Social Construction of Moral Universals’, the two major contributors to this collaboratively authored book, namely, Jeffrey Alexander and Piotr Sztompka, use Hegel’s substantial philosophical views on reality and history as a kind of prelude to the conceptualization of social change and history. The only difference between them is in the explicitness of Hegel’s observations. In Sztompka’s essay Hegel’s philosophy is implicit but far more “faithful”. According to Sztompka, “ontologically, society is nothing else but change... constant becoming rather than stable being” (Alexander, Smelser, Eyerman, Giesen & Sztompka, 2004:155, italic in original). Those acquainted with the Hegelian philosophy would immediately recognize the concept of “becoming” in Hegel’s “*Science of Logic*: “the profound Heraclitus proposed the loftier, total concept of becoming and said: being is no more than nothing; or also, all flows, that is, all is becoming” (Hegel, 2010: 60).

Furthermore, Sztompka’s final assumptions given under the subtitle ‘Cultural Trauma as the Means of Social Becoming’ in the end of his essay are also “reconciliatory” in Hegel’s dialectical sense. For Sztompka “within the flow of social change, cultural trauma may appear in a double capacity: as the consequence of some other changes (traumatogenic in character), but also as an instigator of another stream of changes effected by coping actions. This scenario is optimistic, Sztompka claims, *because trauma appears as a stimulating and mobilizing factor of human agency... Cultural traumas in spite of their immediate negative, painful consequences, show their positive, functional potential as a force of social becoming. . . In spite of the disruption and disarray of the cultural order that trauma brings about in a different time scale it may be seen as the seed of a new cultural system* (2004:194, italic in original).

The last remark of Sztompka's essay supports this dialectic using the term "ambivalence": "In this chapter I have outlined a perspective on social change recognizing the intrinsic ambivalence of social change. Change is behind all triumphs of humankind, but is also a source for trauma. Perhaps this reflects a perennial predicament of human condition" (2004:195)

In difference to Sztompka, Alexander's "use" of Hegelian philosophy is explicit but far more problematic. Alexander, who takes the Holocaust as an empirical case, claims that after the Second World War there was a construction of a narrative "which *while* coded and weighted Nazism as evil in the most fundamental, *weltgeschichte*, world-historical terms; it was narrated inside a framework that offered the promise of salvation and triggered actions that generated confidence and hope"... This "progressive narrative" proclaims that the trauma created by social evil would be overcome, that Nazism would be defeated and eliminated from the world and whose darkness would be obliterated by a new and powerful social light" (2004:209). But from Alexander's perspective this progressive narrative was not enough in order the mass executions of Jews in the Second World War to become a "Holocaust", a term which denotes "radical evil", sacral mystery, awe-fullness and above all "a symbol that stood for that thing that could not be named" (2004:224). It was precisely this new linguistic identity, according to Alexander, the "non-referentiality of the term" which allowed the mass killings of the Jews to become what might be called a bridge metaphor; it provided the symbolic extension so necessary if the trauma of the Jewish people were to become a trauma for all mankind (ibid.). The latter statement is that which in Alexander's opinion has to do with Hegel's Universal History³ which in original is the "Philosophical World History" (1822-23/2011:15/140). That is to say, in Alexander's view, a different kind of "culture structure" had to be developed causing a substantial change in weighting the Jewish mass killings. This genocide came to be seen as not being typical of anything at all, as a unique, historically unprecedented evil on a scale that had never occurred before. For Alexander, "the mass killings entered into universal history, becoming a "world historical" event in Hegel's original sense; an event whose emergence onto the world stage threatened, or promised, to change the fundamental course of the world" (2004:222).

Under the influence of this new culture structure in place of the progressive narrative (which means of symbolization were held by the state) there began to emerge a narrative of tragedy. In this new tragic understanding of the Jewish mass murder, suffering not progress, become the telos toward which the narrative was aimed (2004:225). For Alexander critically important role in

³ Theodor Adorno claimed exactly the opposite. For him, it was precisely the horror of the Holocaust which proved the non-existence of any Universal History.

the course of constructing and broadcasting the tragic narrative (which enabled the processes of suffering, catharsis and identification with the victims of the Holocaust) played a handful of actual dramatizations – in books, movies, plays and television shows.

But now we must ask the following: why this new culture structure appeared in the first place? As stated by Alexander, what appears crucial in the decline of the progressive narrative were “the critical years” from the mid-1960s to the end of the 1970s. That is to say, in the above mentioned period, the United States experienced a sharp decline in its political, military, and moral prestige. This transformation was intensified by other outcroppings of “the sixties”, particularly the revolutionary impulses that emerged out of the student and other black power movements inside the United States and guerilla movements outside it. These real world problems caused the United States to be identified in terms that had, up until that time, been reserved exclusively for the Nazi perpetrators of the Holocaust... indefensible incidents of civilian killings, like the My Lai Massacre of 1968 were represented, not as anomalous incidents, but as typifications of this new American-made tragedy. This process of deconstruction and symbolic inversion of the progressive narrative according to Alexander, contributed to the universalization of the Holocaust” (2004:238).

But we are facing a paradox here. What if the United States were the most peaceful country in the world after the Second World War? Or generally, what if the world itself were to be a peaceful place for living in the second half of the twentieth century? What kind of status the Holocaust as an event would have had? Following the Alexander’s logic there is only one answer: we were going to be forever doomed to the progressive narrative; incapable and powerless to do the so much needed cultural critique (the processes of deconstruction or symbolic inversion) in order to reach the tragic narrative as the only true perspective. Thus, the paradox, which means that we need new tragedies in order to conceive the older, makes the Alexander’s thesis ‘reflectively historical’, i.e. it belongs to that stage of historical approach which according to Hegel precedes the final speculative-philosophical stage where the concept of Universal history is discussed and demonstrated. When the “reflective historian” attempts to depict the spirit of the age about which he writes it is usually, Hegel says his own spirit that is heard. There is little or no reference to political concerns and general purposes: “the (reflective) historian can, like an amateur psychologist, take up moral questions as concrete representations of universal moral principles” (1822-23/2011:12). But according to Hegel “the fate of peoples and the overthrow of states, occur on a different plane than that of morality, a higher and broader one. . . For this reason, history and experience teach that people generally have not learned from history, and the formative power of history is something other than the reflections derived from it” (1822-23/2011:20). Philosophical world history

shares with reflective history the fact that the universal is its subject, but this is no abstract universal; rather it is what is infinitely concrete and utterly present i.e. the Reason, which is the driving force of history:

What is the purpose of all these singular events, which interest us all? There is more to them than their particular aims. This enormous cost must be for some ultimate purpose. Is that beyond imagining? We are faced with the question as to whether the din and noisy surface appearances [of history] do not conceal an inner, silent, secret working that gathers up the energy of all phenomena and benefits therefrom—something [for the sake of which] all this is happening. This is the third category, that of reason, the conception of a final end within itself. It is a truth that such a final end is what governs and alone consummates itself in the events that occur to peoples, and that therefore there is reason in world history.

(1822-23/2011:144)

Here, we have arrived at the issue that Alexander has totally overlooked it in his interpretation of the universal history. It is about Hegel's claim that the final embodiment of Reason as a driving force of history is the State. For Hegel, the state is the embodiment of 'concrete freedom' because the personal individuality and its particular interests, as found in the family and civic community have their complete development in the state. Only in the state the rights of personal individuality receive adequate recognition (Hegel, 2001:198). But the peculiarity of the idea of the modern state, according to Hegel, is that it is the embodiment of freedom, not according to subjective liking, but to the conception of the will, that is, in its universal and divine character (2001:199). This, objective will, is the Spirit "which abides in the (state) and there realizes itself consciously; while in nature it is realized only as the other of itself or the sleeping spirit. Only when it is present in consciousness, knowing itself as an existing object, is it the state" (2001:197). This metaphysical subject, called by Hegel the "World Mind" (Weltgeist), is the final subject of History. But what does Hegel really mean by the conception of world mind?

For Hegel the universal history is a history which has as its principle the progress of *all mankind* towards the self-consciousness of freedom. Therefore, the universal history transcends the particular or individual states as socio-political and cultural wholes called *Volkgeist* or "national spirits" and judges their contribution to the overall progress (1955: 237).

The various nations do not contribute equally. Some are active promoters of this progress. These are the world-historical nations (welthistorische Volksgeister, *ibid.*). But not every nation is a candidate to be world-historical. Why? From Hegel's point of view it seems that they can be only those which

“internal policy is based on laws and thought-out regulations, those whose societies are “systematized realities” (1822-23/2011:267) and those who “bind together the universal interest and the full freedom of particularity, including the welfare of individuals” (1822-23/2011:199). Hence, sociologically speaking, Hegel praises the “rational-legal type of authority” because it is an order based on ‘thought’, (which for Hegel is the vehicle of the course of history), that is to say, it is a social and political reality which is created when the individuals become conscious of their potentialities and organize their relations in accordance with their reason (Marcuse, 1955:239). But is the relation among nations also rational? Hegel categorically says it is not: “as states are particular, there is manifested among them a shifting play of internal particularity of passions, interests, aims, talents, virtues, force, wrong, vice, and *external contingency on the very largest scale* (Hegel, 2001:266). But if the relations among states are in a ‘state of nature’ how can Reason be the driving force of History?

According to Hegel, because of its particularity, the nation is limited and the destinies and deeds of states in their connection with one another represents the visible dialectic of the finite nature of these spirits. But out of this dialectic the universal spirit, the spirit of the world, the unlimited spirit, produces itself: *It has the highest right of all, and exercises its right upon the lower spirits in world-history* (ibid.). Undoubtedly, Hegel is referring here to the political events of his time, the conquering campaign of France under Napoleon. He called Napoleon “the world spirit on horse” in whom the universal task of the time was embodied. It was not his admiration of Napoleon as a person, his greatness as a military genius etc., but the quality of expressing the historical need of the time. Napoleon, as many others ‘historical individuals’, was guided by his passions and personal ambitions but these, Hegel claims, are the very means by which the truth and freedom proceed. To put in Hegelese, it was “the cunning of reason” that through Napoleon’s enthusiasm, consolidated and preserved the achievement of the French Revolution - the new form of society that stood for the principle of reason.

But now a big controversy allegedly comes out. It seems that Hegel suggests a moral indifference to the actions and deeds of the world-historical nations and the historical individuals when he claims that they, as embodiments of the World Spirit, have “the highest right upon the lower spirits”. But this controversy is purely methodological. Namely, what Hegel implicates, by his final definition of the universal history and the World Spirit – “the history of the world is the world’s court of judgment” – is that universal history cannot be approached from any moral standpoint because the latter as such is subjective and therefore limited. Such approach as we saw above belongs to the reflective history. The truth can become visible only from the world’s spirit point of view.

Hence, the way of overcoming the “naturalistic fallacy” (that events are traumatic by itself) by the “procedure” of separating the “ontological reality” of the traumatic events and the concern primarily with the epistemology (under what conditions the claims, the narrations about the events are made, (2004:9), is nothing else but another epistemological fallacy as far as the reference to the universal history is concerned. For Hegel, as we saw above, the true subject of world history is Reason which is always dialectical, and it is not just a feature of our minds *but of reality itself*.

Thus, Jeffrey Alexander analysis of Holocaust by locating the Universal History in a presupposed culture structure as a new moral order and judging the involvement of the USA as a dominant world-historical nation in Vietnam or elsewhere from within this moral order is, to say at least, a partial view on Universal History. Not to mention the obvious dialectic he himself is aware of, namely, that the new culture structure itself is an outcome of the very involvement of the United States in Vietnam which can be judged as we mentioned above only from the Universal History’s perspective. But on the other hand Alexander is absolutely right: *there was a change* in the USA. There was a general institutional crisis of the western countries in the 1960s and the 1970s when the students, workers, middle strata, transgressed the boundaries of power, taking the streets, taking over buildings at the universities in Frankfurt, London, Paris, New York; what become the most widespread issue in the USA and Europe in this period is the concept of decentralized government epitomized through the rhetoric of “let the people decide” (Sayres, Stephanson, Aronowitz & Jameson, 1984:2-3). This turbulent period contributed to the fundamental change in the public discourse in the West, that is to say, it was a new stage of historical consciousness which in Hegel’s philosophy is always equated by the progress of the consciousness of freedom. This higher level of Spirit that appeared in the West, which in new-leftist terms like those of C. Wright Mills, fought alienation, anomie, and authoritarianism, is the legacy by which not only the Holocaust but every similar ethnic cleansing or genocide today is universalized.

But this change viewed from the angle of Universal History was also part of the general law of history. That is to say, the state also cannot escape *being subject to thought* especially in those states which constitution is based on freedom and reason. In these states *thought* was the element which gave the state its (rational) form but in time it turned into also the same element that ultimately lead to its destruction. Why? Because the social and political reality cannot for any length of time, conform to the demands of reason. The state wants to maintain and to perpetuate the interest of that which *is*, i.e. the given order, and to fetter the forces that strive for a higher historical form (1955:239). Sooner or later, the free rationality of thought must come into conflict with the rationalizations of the given order of life. But in the end all changes and

developments, the general progress, can reach its concrete manifestation only in the State. Precisely the “critical years” of the 1960s are the prime example. The revolutionary demands for establishing new social and political conditions in the length of time took a course more and more towards anarchy. And this is, as we transit to the next part of this paper, by the same token, the general pattern of every crisis. It would lead either to the dissolution of a given form of the state or to its higher form, more universal than the preceding form.

The 1960s set free an “uncontrolled natural will”. The history of the world is, according to Hegel, the discipline (Zucht) of this natural will to universality and the subjective freedom (1955:241). The state in the end won the battle against the ‘natural will’ unleashed by various civic and political movements of the 1960s. But now it was the “new State”, the new and higher conscious union with the whole, which was a prerequisite for the universalization of the Holocaust. It is true that the tragic narrative empowered the “identification with the victims” but the true “universalization” means “reconciliation”. In other words, from the standpoint of the Universal History as a progressive interpretation of the historical course, the final and true narrative must be the “progressive” narrative of the State because the latter is the yardstick of the progress itself, the agency by which the freedom is concretized. To paraphrase Sztompka: “it is the change which is behind all triumphs and traumas of the humankind”.

Thus, the concept of universal history in essence represents a historical generalization based on the “destructive dynamics of thought” which becomes a kind of general, ontological law of social change. It subverts the traditional forms of culture until the final goal of historical development, that is, to a “state” in which the freedom of the subject is in the conscious unification with the whole.

Weber’s analysis: the sociological generalization of historical sociology

We are turning now to the opposite historical discourse, which according to Weber “in no case it refers to an objectively “correct” meaning, or one which is “true” in some metaphysical sense” (1978:4). It is about the historical analysis which in essence represents a sociological generalization. The latter, as a methodology of historical sociology, goes beyond the subsequent chain of events and aims at the internal contradictions of the economic, political, legal, and religious structures. The sociological generalization rejects any teleology in the social change and transcends the historical events as manifestations of those internal contradictions. We are going to apply this methodology, that is to say, to abstract the events as part of processes that represent aberrations from the

“strictly rational” type of action, i.e. rationally purposeful action as a basic element in the course of history which for Weber was nothing but the gradual rationalization of various social structures. Weber’s historical analysis, in other words, renders visible the configurational character of the crisis, that is, it allows a typological analysis of the direction of the institutional change towards variety of forms of domination in times of crises.

By putting a strong emphasis on social action and the ‘individualist method’, Max Weber introduced new criteria in sociology for interpreting social change, namely, a methodological reorientation according to which sociology was to provide a preparatory work for the causal explanation of historical phenomena (Roth & Schluchter, 1979:121). In Weber’s substantive work history and sociology are not clearly separated (Ritzer, 2011:113). Weber’s historical analysis involves three logical steps; configurational, developmental and situational. The first step consists in construction of historically grounded sociologically typologies or models; the second, in the formulation of developmental theories that is, the description of the course and explanation of the genesis and consequences of particular phenomena. The third step consists in analyzing a given situation in terms of its causes and consequences, actual or potential. We will concentrate on the first and the third (the developmental theory will be the conclusion of this paper). That is to say, by concentrating on the first two steps we are going to do a causal analysis of similar empirical cases of recent social crises.

The first step consists in the construction of socio-historical models such as bureaucracy, patrimonialism, feudalism or charismatic community because they are useful in organizing the historical knowledge in a specifically sociological way, that is, in the form of generalizations that emphasize the general and repetitive side of history without assuming the existence of laws in any strict sense (1979:126). These models according to Roth’s interpretation can spell out a range of variations so that in terms of causal analysis can open up possible tendencies of the crises towards either reintegration, disintegration or transformation. In other words, we have to keep in mind that the models provide us with generalized experience for the study of the past, present and future, while secular theories attempt the explanation of the rise and fall of major historical configurations (ibid.).

Let us begin with the following example which throws a lot of light on the transitional types of authority during a crisis. It is about Boris Yeltsin’s presidency described by the Kremlinologist Lilia Shevtsova:

“It was a strange and disturbing mixture of continuity and change, this fusion of governance à la Old Russia with elements of liberal democracy. The

degeneration of Yeltsin's presidency and the crumbling of his power that accelerated after the financial collapse revealed the essence of the regime that Yeltsin had created to be an elected monarchy. In fact, Yeltsin, a revolutionary of a sort, who had delivered a fatal blow to the Soviet empire and to communism helped preserve – without meaning to – aspects of the Russian system that, had perpetuated itself down through the long centuries surviving tsarism and the Bolshevik Revolution. The Russian system is a specific type of governance structure whose characteristic include paternalism, the state domineering over the individual, isolation from the outside world and ambitions to be a great power. The heart of the system was the all-powerful leader above the law and a law unto himself, concentrating in his hands all powers, without a balancing accountability, and limiting all other institutions to auxiliary administrative functions” (Shevtsova, 2005: 16).

The socio-historical model here is described as “the Russian system”. The author defined it as a “specific type of governance structure” which includes “paternalism, the state domineering over the individual, isolation from the outside world and ambitions to be a great power”. This governance “à la Old Russia” in sociology is known as *personal authority*, that is to say, *patrimonialism* which in difference to the preceding types of traditional authority (gerontocracy and patriarchalism), tend to arise “whenever the traditional domination develops an administration and a military force which are purely personal instruments of the master” (1978:231). The other type is basically the authoritarian principle of the charismatic legitimation, or the charismatic authority based on the extraordinary qualities of the person. Now, the question is not only why the types of personal authority are yet present in a country with a modern constitution, that is to say, with a system based on formal rules and abstract legal principles (as a result of the process of rationalization), but the real problem is whether every state with established rational-legal order, that is, ruled by the *legal* (impersonal) *authority*, i.e. by the objective and “intellectually analyzable rules”, is utterly provisional and unstable? Weber was quite aware that the process of rationalization produces reversible and irrational processes through his analysis of authority types. The analysis shows that the “rational” and the “irrational” are bound as the two sides of a coin. Patrimonialism, for example, was a result of the process of rationalization of the previous types of traditional domination (the patriarchal and the gerontocratic) i.e. the advent of administration, the staff etc. But in the same time, there is/was always a possibility of an extreme development of the ruler's discretion extending the range of his arbitrary power at the expense of the traditional structures. That is to say, there is a tendency towards *sultanism* (1978:232). The latter type of authority is according to Weber the most irrational one because its tendency is to be completely unrestrained by tradition or by any rules. It represents a pure

arbitrary will of the master. But precisely this type of personal authority is what rests in the core of the “Russian system”. According to Shevtzova, “the heart of the Russian system was the all-powerful leader above the law and a law unto himself, concentrating in his hands all powers, without a balancing accountability, and limiting all other institutions to auxiliary administrative functions”. Weber on the other hand does not allow existence of pure sultanism. There must be at least some rational policy or agenda.

Now, the most important moment in the above example is, of course, the claim that the shift of legitimate authority from a democratically elected president to “an elected monarch” started during the constitutional *crisis* of 1993 which was a political deadlock between the Russian president Boris Yeltsin and the Russian parliament that was resolved by using military force. The relations between the president and the parliament had been deteriorating for some time. The constitutional crisis (followed by the economic crisis) reached a tipping point on September 21, 1993, when President Yeltsin aimed to dissolve the country's legislature (the Congress of People's Deputies and its Supreme Soviet), although the president did not have any longer the power (to issue presidential decrees) to dissolve the parliament according to the constitution Yeltsin used the results of the referendum of April 1993 to justify his actions. The parliament which announced Yeltzin’s impeachment was attacked by the army with tanks. Officially 187 people had died in the attack (Wikipedia, 2017). This is the first example of a shift towards personal authority in period of crisis i.e. to the patrimonial style of ruling, when the military force becomes “a personal instrument of the master”.

Before this shift Yeltzin was also a kind of charismatic leader. By losing his charisma with his neo-liberal policy which was approved by the West but brought misery in Russia, a referendum was initiated by the Congress of People's Deputies, which required that Yeltsin would need to obtain 50% of the electorate, rather than 50% of valid votes (Wikipedia, 2017). However, the Constitutional Court ruled that the president required only a simple majority on two issues: confidence in him, and economic and social policy; though he would still need the support of more than half the electorate in order to call new parliamentary and presidential elections. Three of the four questions were approved by a majority of voters (*ibid.*).

According to Weber the validity of charismatic authority rests entirely on recognition by the ruled, on "proof" before their eyes (1978:266) in the sense of permanent successfulness of the charismatic leader. But when the charismatic organization starts facing stagnation it undergoes a progressive rationalization, and instead of recognition being treated as a consequence of legitimacy, it is treated as the basis of legitimacy: *democratic legitimacy*. Then, the designation

of a (charismatic) successor is usually accomplished: 1) by an administrative staff (the impeachment of Yeltzin) or "preselection"; 2) by the predecessor himself (the nomination of Vladimir Putin by Yeltzin in 1999) or "nomination"; 3) recognition by the group or "election" (The referendum of April 1993). The example Weber gives us in *Economy and Society* is France under Napoleon III who after the coup d'état of 1851 resorted to the plebiscite because of a severe loss of his prestige (1978:267). For Weber, the plebiscite has been the specific means of deriving the legitimacy of authority from the confidence of the ruled, even though the voluntary nature of such confidence is only formal or fictitious.

This transitional type of charismatic authority i.e. *plebiscitary leadership*, is the most important type of "Führer Demokratie" (1978:268). It is a variant of charismatic authority, which hides behind a legitimacy that is formally derived from the will of the governed. The leader (demagogue) rules by virtue of the devotion and trust which his political followers have in him personally. In the first instance his power extends only over those recruited to his following, but if they can hand over the government to him he controls the whole polity. This power model of "Führer Demokratie" is the type of authority which is recognizable in the most populist regimes today.

The classic example for this transition of charisma is the political turmoil in Venezuela which has been going on since 1998 when the charismatic leader of the Fifth Republic Movement, the Lieutenant colonel Hugo Chavez was elected president. His "rule by decrees" was challenged in 2004 following a deep *economic crisis* over the years and the coup d'état attempt in 2002, when a recall referendum was announced on 8 June 2004 by the National Electoral Council after the Venezuelan opposition succeeded in collecting the number of signatures. Despite the result of the referendum in favor of Chávez, the plebiscite already marked the beginning of transition of the "classic" charismatic model towards the transitional model of "democratic legitimacy", and reached its peak when the successor of Chavez, Nikolas Maduro lost the parliamentary election in 2015 (due to his continuation of Chavez's economic policy causing serious deterioration of the living standards). Again, as in the Russian example the president took violent steps against the mass protests (killing 163 people in 2017) who opposed the decision of the Supreme Court's to null the recall referendum for Maduro, initiated by the opposition-led National Assembly (Wikipedia, 2017). Instead, the president called for a new constitution which would be confirmed in the new constitutional assembly, in other words, it meant new elections. This is the third step of transition that we mentioned above, namely, *nomination* – "recognition by the group or election" As we saw, for Weber, the plebiscite is the specific means of deriving the legitimacy of personal authority from the confidence of the ruled, *even though the voluntary nature of such confidence is only formal or fictitious*. Precisely this fictiveness of confidence is

what happened the National Electoral Council (controlled by Maduro), announced that 8,089,230 persons voted, with a 41.53% turnout. The truth was something else. According to the independent analysts the turnout was somewhere between 11.3% and 21% (Wikipedia, 2017)

So far we have seen two examples with almost the same outcomes. In countries in which dominant type of authority is the personal authority (traditional and charismatic) the shift of its legitimacy in crisis leans towards plebiscitary leadership or Führer Demokratie. Does this mean that the shift of legitimacy in crisis necessarily led to the types of legal-rational authority?

In order to cope with the departure of the charismatic leader, (as in the Chávez's case), the staff (as well as the followers) may adopt a variety of strategies to create a more lasting organization. The staff may search out a new charismatic leader, but even if the search is successful as in the case of Chávez's successor Maduro, the new leader is unlikely to have the same aura as his or her predecessor. Then, a set of *rules* also may be developed that allows the group to identify future charismatic leaders. But such rules rapidly become tradition, and what was charismatic leadership is on the way toward becoming traditional authority (Ritzer, 2011:135). In any case, this means that the nature of leadership is radically changed and the initial, purely personal character of charisma is eliminated.

Weber also believed that in the modern world we are more and more likely to see charisma routinized in the direction of rational-legal authority. His perception on the rational systems of authority was that they are stronger and progressively impervious to charismatic movements. Weber ultimately contended that rationality, not charisma, is the most irresistible and important revolutionary force in the modern world (ibid.). Whether we agree or not with these statements the fact is that in periods of crisis there is another and final transition to a specific legitimacy.

Namely, in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution (as a culmination of the political crisis in 1979), a charismatic domination was established by the Ayatollah Khomeini. We saw in the previous examples that the inevitable routinization of charisma after the death of the charismatic leader, might have produced either traditional form of domination or rational-legal form may arise (Adams & Sydie, 2001:184). But (as it is often the case) after the death of the charismatic leader and the consequent rationalization, a mixture of both is to be found today in Iran. The regime is a theocracy led by *elected* supreme religious leaders which means that there was a process of transition (as part of the routinization of charisma) as in the above cases of charismatic domination, through the basic elements of rational-legal domination – formal rules and laws.

We saw also that such rules in time become tradition. Iran is an “Islamic republic”. The latter means, that the charisma, in the absence of the original leader, was *institutionalized* through the adoption of separation of power: the President of Iran, the Islamic Assembly and the judiciary based on the Islamic (sharia) law.

But this new distribution of power became a source of potential crises in Iranian society because of this shift or alteration of legitimate domination –from the belief in the sanctity of person (the charismatic leader) to the belief in the sanctity of the rule of law. This immanent shift of legitimacy as part of the process of charismatic routinization progressively resulted in the 2009 Iranian election protest of millions Iranians, led by the oppositional presidential candidate Mousavi, who opted for reformations in terms of institutionalization of justice, equality and fairness, freedom of expression, rooting out corruption and of speeding up privatization. And this is the moment in every crisis where the latest shift to the specific legitimacy emerges. Namely, the protests in Iran were suppressed violently by the Basij militia, a paramilitary group under control of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). At least 72 people were killed (Wikipedia, 2017) and thousands tortured by this special branch of the Iranian army. The latter is also a multibillion-dollar business empire financing the current Iranian nuclear program which is causing a permanent tension between Iran and USA. In the Iran’s case, society was reintegrated (by force) but the same did not happen in Syria. What happened there and what is still going on, is what Weber called it the “specific legitimacy of violence”, or the institution of “man’s house”, a total absence of the functions of the state as we know it (the legislative function, police, the administration of justice, military administration etc.) and the performance of these functions by *ad hoc* groups, voluntary associations formed for specific purpose (1978:905). Basically, it is a return to the rudimentary stage of the formation of the “territorial political organization” – the State. According to Weber, the violent social action is obviously something absolutely primordial (1978:904). On the other hand, the monopolization of legitimate violence by the political-territorial association (Weber’s definition of the state) and its rational consociation into an institutional order is nothing primordial, but a product of evolution (1978:905).

This has been, for Weber, at all stages of economic development up to the formation of the rational state, the typical way in which aggressive wars were initiated in sedentary societies. The most warlike members of a group on their own initiative consociated through personal fraternization to organize marauding raids. The freely selected leader is then normally legitimated by his personal qualities – charisma (1978:906). Through the cultivation of military prowess and war as a vocation such a structure, according to Weber, develops into a coercive apparatus able to lay effective and comprehensive claims to obedience. These

claims will be directed “*against the inhabitants of conquered territories as well as against the militarily unfit members of the territorial community from which the warriors' fraternity has emerged. The bearer of arms acknowledges only those capable of bearing arms as political equals. All others, those untrained in arms and those incapable of bearing arms, are regarded as women and are explicitly designated as such*” (1978:906). This is the most recognizable feature of authority in territories ruled by the terrorist organizations today – from Boko Haram to Isis. The transition from the (latest) types of personal authority in the West, i.e. from the parliamentary monarchy to the *man's house*, was epitomized in the fascist regimes or the fascist style of charismatic authority in Germany, Italy and Spain, (following the variety of *crises* after the First World War). The Nazi Germany, still remains today as a synonym for the greatest “consociation of marauders” in history.

Because of the paper's limitation, we cannot describe the *man's house* in detail as Weber did. In any case we cannot leave out some very important and familiar features, for example: “*depending on the social regulations in question, the warriors steal or purchase girls in common, or demand as their right the prostitution of all the – girls of the territory dominated*” (1978:907). This was exactly done by Boko Haram terrorists in April 2014, when they kidnapped 276 schoolgirls from Chibok. There are also reports about forced prostitution on non-Muslim women and girls who did not manage to escape Isis controlled territories.

But from his analysis of the *man's house*, Weber derived the general characteristics of the political community and here we find the topic of collective trauma absorbed in that analysis. The political community is one of those communities whose action includes, at least under normal circumstances, coercion through jeopardy and destruction of life and freedom of movement applying to outsiders as well as to the members themselves. The individual is expected ultimately to face death in the group interest. This gives to the political community its particular pathos and raises its enduring emotional foundations. The common feature of today's populist regimes in Russia, Iran, Turkey, Hungary, Belorussia etc., as well as the pure authoritarian regimes (North Korea) is that their political leaders evoke a configuration of political community based on a *collective memory* of “political struggle of life and death which had a deeper impact than the ties of merely cultural, linguistic, or ethnic community. It is this “community of memories”, according to Weber, which represents the ultimately decisive element of “national consciousness” (1978:903). In other words, whatever the origin of the collective traumas (economic, political, natural etc.), they are all eventually routinized and reconciled through their incorporation in the “political destiny of community” (ibid.).

In view of that, what ultimately the charismatic leaders of the populist regimes today really stand for, is the implicit promise that every member of the community one day can participate in exercising his/her “uncontrolled natural will”. The executions almost on a daily basis performed by the Isis Fighters, or the permanent “state of war” in North Korea in which everyone is obliged to participate regardless of his/her age (including small children), are some of the examples.

With the last socio-historical model, the shift of legitimacy of authority types is closed. The change of these structural types in crisis represented a description of the gradual deviation from the rational social action. But, as we mentioned earlier, Weber believed that no matter how much a certain type of authority is irrational, rationality always wins in the end. The political communities as pure consociations of warriors, for example, the rule of Khmers Rouges in Cambodia, the Islamic state – or to take an example of popular-history, namely, the pure “sultanism” of Nero and Caligula – are short-lived. They crumble because of the weight of its own irrationality. The reason is because *they lack the obedience that can only exist in a “system of consciously made impersonal rational rules (which may be either agreed upon or imposed from above), which meet with obedience as generally binding norms, whenever such obedience is claimed by him whom the rule designates. In that case every single bearer of powers of command is legitimated by that system of rational norms, and his power is legitimate insofar as it corresponds with the norm. Obedience is thus given to the norms rather than to the person (1978:54)*

Thus said, for Weber it is the impersonal authority of the modern, sovereign state which is the final and necessary outcome of all those shifts of personal authorities we hitherto discussed. Thus, we have arrived at the moment where the Weber’s historical analysis comes across with the principle of universal history according to which in essence (ontologically), reality is rational⁴ and sooner or later the Reason manifest itself.

Conclusion (secular theory)

This “cyclic reversal the socio-historical models, in the sense of their tendencies towards either rational or irrational modes, is what the history appears to be made of according to Weber’s historical analysis. These structural types transcend the task of the historian to explain causally a given event. Model construction synthesizes the historical observation of many individuals. For

⁴ Of course, this principle is epitomized in Hegel’s famous dictum “what is real is rational, what is rational is real”.

Weber, as we know from his principle of interpretative sociology, we should try to understand the ideas and intentions of historical actors rather than search for the laws of social evolution as Hegel and Marx did. But Roth also recognizes that on the level of both model and secular theory history provided many lessons in unintended consequences.

As we saw, if successful, charisma almost immediately moves in the direction of routinization. But once routinized, charisma is en route to becoming either traditional or rational-legal authority and once it achieves one of those states, the stage is set for the cycle to begin all over again (Ritzer, 2011:135)

We also mentioned from the beginning that, according to Roth, Weber's theory of the inevitable routinization of persistent charisma is part of the model whereas his secular (developmental) theory about the course of charisma is part of the history of Western rationalization" (1979:126). Thus, according to Roth, Weber's most famous secular theory the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism i.e. the transition of protestant ethic to the spirit of capitalism, and in turn to the "iron cage" of advanced capitalism, was one of the secular developments, fateful for Western history. If we apply Weber's developmental theory analysis, for example, on what is currently going on in the global politics (the contemporary tensions between the "world-historical nations") is in essence a manifestation of a two different modes of the charismatic domination, its different historical course. Put differently, the antagonisms of modern political history are consequence of the ongoing process of the historical impersonalization (1979: 134) in regard to the charismatic model. In the West, the charismatic legitimation came to depend more and more on ideas and less on the qualities of the person. According to Weber, the abolishment of the ancient regime in the French Revolution marked the beginning of "the charismatic glorification of *Reason*, which found characteristic expression in its apotheosis by Robespierre, is the last form charisma has adopted in its fateful historical course" (1979: 134). The latter statement is very important. It represents the main breach between the Weber's anti-evolutionism and the universal history. Moreover, we can even say that Weber is actually forced to make Reason (the principle of universal history) a part of the principle of secular theory i.e. the *rationalization* as the driving force of history. In the same way, he reduced the value action as just "one of the types" of social action.

But this last form of charisma, the "charisma of reason", was politically transfigured by proposing a direct, unmediated relationship between citizens and a state conceived as a republic of individuals: "a law passed by the Assembly in 1791 – the *Loile Chapelier*, (named after its author), declared illegal any intermediary organization that represented subsections of the citizenry and thereby interfered with its direct relationship with the state. Modern liberalism,

both political and economic, abolished all forms of intermediary organization that intervene between the individual and the state or the market (Streek and Kenworthy 2001:442). This opened the way for resolving the social and economic crises of modernity – the relations of cooperation, competition and exchange that made up the industrial economy by returning them to the political control, to the State (ibid.).

Thus, the historical sociology arrives at the same result as the theory of the universal history. But unlike the “iron cage” pessimism of the former, the optimism of latter consists in the view, that the modern, sovereign state is the realm of freedom which would remove the destructive competitive element from the individuals, and make competition a positive interest of the universal; it would be capable of dominating the conflicting interests of its members. (1955:172).

History itself will tell us which perspective is the right one, unless we ourselves finally take the steer of history. This is what Hegel, Marx, as well as Weber agreed with.

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