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## PUBLIC DEMAND FOR CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP IN UKRAINE

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**ABSTRACT:** *Political leadership remains a key factor in social transformations associated with the transition of newly independent states to democracy and the formation of sustainable state institutions. In both processes, the legitimacy of the government, which initiates transformations and directs national development, is of great importance.*

*For Weber, the legitimacy of government is ensured in three ways: traditional, rational-legal, or charismatic. Charismatic leadership is one of the most common ways of overcoming the difficulties of the transition period in new states. Its feature is a high degree of trust in the head of state or other national leader due to belief in his extraordinary abilities and unique mission. The theory of political charisma had been developed during the 1960s-1990s, mainly in the framework of the functional approach. This approach determined the main criteria of charismatic leadership, the conditions for its emergence, and the evolution of charisma in its routinization. The extent to which external factors condition charisma remains quite debatable. Since most studies concern a charismatic leader's personality and psychological and behavioral characteristics, the problem of public demand for charisma remains insufficiently revealed. This study aims to provide empirical arguments to answer the question of what is primary, the demand for charisma or its offer. Professional sociologists from "SOCIS" group (Kyiv, Ukraine) studied the perception of Ukrainian society of images of leading politicians (presidents and presidential candidates) according to the criteria of compliance with the charismatic type of leadership. The main conclusion from the study is that under certain conditions, society endows all possible virtues of a leader entrusted with the function of charismatic leadership. This high assessment of the leader's characteristics and trust in his good intentions (mission) is irrational due to the need to solve this community's fundamental tasks.*

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**KEYWORDS:** charisma; leadership; trust; newly independent states.

### 1. Introduction

The formation and development of newly independent states are associated with the acquisition of legitimacy by the new government. The tasks facing these communities are large-scale and complex. They include the formation of state institutions, the establishment of new principles of political life, the formation of a common identity, the acquisition of international subjectivity, etc. These tasks can be solved only by a strong government that receives a mandate of unconditional trust

from society. For Weber, such a "belief in legitimacy" is ensured in three ways – traditional, rational-legal, or charismatic.

For obvious reasons, the new government cannot inherit its legitimacy from the previous form of statehood and social order, which is undergoing destruction. Therefore, newly independent states can develop either through the rational-legal legitimacy of power (which is formed, including through liberal reforms) or based on charismatic leadership. With this last way of consolidating society and the political regime, Max Weber associated the phenomenon of political charisma, described him, in particular, in his works *Economy and Society* and *Vocation Lectures*.

In stable societies, people are used to resolving their disputes and conflicts based on legal norms and the search for rational solutions. However, in crisis conditions, people lose trust in institutions, are ready to break the rules, and look for fantastic explanations and justifications for the lack of rational ones. Under such circumstances, the mechanism of charismatic legitimation is activated when the community delegates decision-making and the organization of collective will to a specific person who demonstrates the ability to make cardinal decisions by his appearance and behavior. The "justification" for such delegation is faith in the extraordinary abilities of a charismatic leader and complete trust in his moral qualities and purity of motivation. Weber defines these features as "devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him." (Weber, 1947, p. 358)

In his theory of charisma, Weber draws attention to the leading social aspects of this phenomenon. First, it is the personality of a charismatic leader endowed with a sense of a great mission, accompanied by self-confidence and significant oratorical abilities. Second, Weber draws attention to the reference group of followers of a charismatic leader, who are the first recipients of his ideas and decisions, as well as organizers of social actions that translate the mission of leadership into a practical plane. The third aspect of the phenomenon of political charisma, which Weber studied, is the so-called routinization of charisma, which transforms the impulses of motivation and leadership into stable social structures and practices. The new form of social order is building on this basis. First of all, this concerns bureaucratic organizations, particularly mass parties. (Pfaff, 2002, p. 98)

Interest in Weber's concept of charismatic legitimacy in the social sciences grew in the 1960s-1970s in connection with the spread of research on political leadership. Several collections of works were first prepared on this topic (Gouldner (ed.), 1965; Edinger (ed.), 1967; Rustow (ed.), 1968; Paige (ed.), 1972), and later fundamental monographs were published (Stogdill, 1974; Paige, 1977; Burns, 1978; Tucker, 1981; Bass, 1985; Rejai, and Phillips, 1994; Gardner, 1995). The authors considered the issues of charismatic leadership in the broad context of the problems of the role of the

individual in social processes, but some studies focused on the theory of charisma (Shils, 1965; Tucker, 1968; House, 1977; Willner, 1984; Howell, and Frost, 1989).

The widespread use of charisma in social and political analysis has prompted some theorists to deepen their conceptualization. A similar attempt was made, particularly within the framework of the functional concept of charisma presented in the works of T. Parsons, W. Friedland, A. Willner, etc.

Supporters of the functional approach look for symptoms of charisma not so much in the leader's behavior but in the attitudes of the masses. Willner names the features of the collective consciousness and behavior of the followers of a charismatic leader rather than his own personal characteristics as indicators of charisma:

1. The followers perceive the leader as somehow superhuman;
2. The followers unquestioningly believe the leader's statements;
3. The followers unconditionally comply with the leader's directives for action;
4. The followers give the leader unqualified emotional commitment. (Willner, 1984, p. 8)

The inclusion of political charisma in the logic of socio-political processes and its determination by the social context in which it arises opens the prospect of comprehensive research in this area. Key approaches to understanding charisma as a complex scientific problem were formulated, in particular, in the article by E. Shils, "Charisma, Order and Status," which back in the 1960s caused a significant resonance in the scientific community. (Shils, 1965)

Shils suggests considering the concept of charisma in the context of a relatively wide range of social phenomena, which includes mechanisms of community self-organization in crisis and borderline situations and means of maintaining social order in conditions of stability.

Shiels sees the phenomenon of charisma as derived from the "need for order." This need usually appears in conditions of destroying norms or collective values because meaningful life dilemmas arise even in everyday life, and the search for fundamental values and truths never stops.

The latest media technologies and political practices (crowdsourcing, engagement techniques, targeted political advertising, and big data) are significantly adjusting the perception of charisma and assessing its manifestations in the public sphere. The significant shift in charisma's evolution took place since the sixties due to the use of television, and the tendency to replace classical charisma with media simulacra has received its accelerated development in the digital age. (Hong, 2020)

A new type of leadership is spreading, in which charisma is manifested more in subordination to the expectations of the masses than in domination over them. The modern charismatic leader is not a person obsessed with a specific personal idea or mission (as was typical for the leaders of

totalitarian regimes) but instead tries to be the focus of social expectations and aspirations (intentions and aspirations), which changes and moves in line with the movements of the collective psyche and consciousness.

## **2. Discussions**

The development of the theory of political charisma currently faces several conceptual issues.

First, several empirical studies of the formation and evolution of charismatic leadership in specific historical figures have not given a convincing answer to the relationship between power and charisma: What is primary—power gives charisma, or charisma gives power?

To avoid this contradiction, Bierstedt distinguishes leadership and power: “In a leadership relation, the person is essential; in an authority relation, the person is merely a symbol.” (as quoted in Bendix, 1962) Bendix offers a similar distinction, distinguishing “domination as a result of charismatic leadership... from domination as a result of charismatic authority.” (Bierstedt, 1954)

Willner describes the complex dynamics of charismatic leadership: “If and when a charismatic political leader converts the majority of members of a system into his charismatic constituency, his charisma also becomes the basis for authority in that system.” (Willner, 1984, p. 16)

Secondly, the question about the relationship between natural (innate) and artificial (acquired) charisma in the context of postmodernity and the virtualization of political space arises. (Lee, 2018)

In order to give a satisfactory answer supported by empirical data, it is also necessary to establish criteria for a particular political phenomenon belonging to the category of charismatic leadership. In the classical Weberian concept, these criteria relate to the leader's personality and socio-psychological characteristics. (Camic, 1980; Sica, 1988; Brubaker, 1984; Pfaff, 2002; Barisione, 2023)

However, some modern authors question the relevance of this approach since it does not sufficiently consider the significance of the socio-political context of the emergence of a charismatic leader. Barisione suggests, in particular, to pay attention to metapersonal understandings of charisma that prevailed in Weber's writings before his late Vocation Lectures and series of newspaper articles. In this context, charisma may be not only a relation of trust and devotion between followers and leaders but also a property that may transcend the individual leader. (Barisione, 2023, p. 533)

### **3. Research Objectives**

Ukrainian political history in the period after independence well illustrates the main ways of legitimizing power outlined by Weber.

Institutional continuity from the former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic enabled the new government in Kyiv to quickly and successfully complete the initial legitimation stage. The main decisions on leaving the USSR were made by the parliament of the former Soviet republic, and the main bodies of the executive and judicial branches, as well as the security sector and, to a large extent, the military units of the new state, were created on the basis of their Soviet predecessors. Also, until Ukraine adopted its own independent laws, most Soviet-era regulatory acts remained in force. The first President of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, was the highest-ranking official of the former communist government of the republic among those who remained in the country and accepted the idea of independence.

The next stage of the formation of an independent state contains elements of rational-legal mechanisms of legitimizing the new government in Kyiv. The first of these steps should be considered a referendum on supporting the declaration of independence, which was held within the administrative borders of the Ukrainian SSR. Subsequently, a person's residence in this territory as of August 24, 1991, became the basis for acquiring citizenship of the new state. The republican basis of the organization of power was strengthened during the early presidential and parliamentary elections of 1994, which, although they led to a certain ideological revenge by the post-Soviet elites, also created a precedent for a democratic resolution of the political crisis.

The subsequent adoption of the 1996 Constitution strengthened the contractual principles of the organization of power and can be considered as a classic "pact of the elites", at least in its formal expression. Thus, the use of traditional and rational-legal methods of legitimizing power enabled Ukraine to establish an institutional basis for statehood and to complete the first stage of the formation of a political nation without major upheavals.

However, by the early 2000s, this base was already insufficient to ensure the country's further development. The country faced several political challenges. Among them: dissatisfaction of the masses and part of the elites with the oligarchic model that developed during the privatization of Soviet industry; the unfinished process of forming a national identity, which produced ambivalent solutions in the symbolic sphere; the simultaneous processes of EU enlargement and reintegration initiatives of the new leadership of the Russian Federation, which required certainty in terms of national strategy and civilizational affiliation.

To solve these tasks, a much higher level of national consolidation and legitimacy of power was required than that which developed in the conditions of post-Soviet transformations. Thus, a

demand for charismatic leadership arose, coinciding with the new parliamentary-presidential election cycle of 2002-2004.

The first contender for the role of charismatic leader was Prime Minister of Ukraine (1999-2001) and former Chairman of the National Bank Viktor Yushchenko. The relatively young, physically attractive politician had among his assets the successful implementation of the national currency, the Hryvnia, in 1996, the rapid overcoming of the consequences of the 1998 financial crisis, and some effective steps to stabilize the country's socio-economic situation at the head of the government.

Viktor Yushchenko also had an unambiguous national-patriotic positioning in the ideological field of Ukrainian politics and an openly pro-Western position on foreign policy issues. The image of a charismatic leader reached its final perfection and conformity with the canon after the scandalous resignation of the most successful head of government, initiated by the team of then-President Leonid Kuchma. The 2004 presidential election was the culmination of the formation of the image of a charismatic leader against the backdrop of opposition to Yushchenko by the entire power system, Russia's interference in Ukrainian politics, and the high-profile poisoning of the presidential candidate.

Yushchenko became the president of Ukraine as a bright national leader with a large reservoir of trust and the willingness of a significant part of society to follow the declared course of reforming the country and pursuing national self-determination. However, at the end of his reign, Yushchenko, already a presidential candidate in the 2009 elections, received only 5.45% of the vote. Such a fiasco can be explained by many objective factors, namely, a split in the political team, the emergence of a charismatic competitor within the "orange" forces in the person of Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, a discrediting campaign and economic pressure from Russia, a pause in the policy of expanding the European Union and NATO, which coincided with Yushchenko's presidency. But it is obvious that Yushchenko, as president, did not meet the expectations of charismatic leadership. He did not show the energy, determination, and ability to "work miracles" that are necessary to maintain charismatic status. Thus, the demand for charismatic leadership in the first decade of the 2000s in Ukraine remained unsatisfied, and the reasons behind it persisted.

As Yushchenko's political charisma waned, public demand for strong leadership shifted to other prominent figures from the turbulent period of the Orange Revolution and post-revolutionary transformations. Yushchenko's former ally, Yulia Tymoshenko, embodied the hopes of a part of the "orange" electorate for more effective and strong-willed leadership. Yushchenko's main opponent, Viktor Yanukovich, became a symbol of their next revenge for the opponents of the national-democratic forces. Both presidential candidates during the 2009-2010 election campaign demonstrated

certain signs of charisma.

In particular, their support in society was built not so much on rational arguments or political interests, but on an emotional reception of the politician's public image. Although this effect of blind trust and willingness to follow was localized in the case of Tymoshenko and Yanukovich in relatively small social groups.

Both the winner of the 2010 elections, Yanukovich, and his opponent, Tymoshenko, who was later imprisoned, lacked the traits that would have enabled them to maintain and develop charismatic legitimacy. The dramatic events of the Euromaidan in 2014 became a critical point in this process. Ukraine emerged from this crisis without a clear political leadership, since the representatives of the overthrown government were completely compromised, and the new leaders of the state lacked the personal attractiveness for charismatic leadership.

A new offer of such leadership appeared on the political market in 2019, when Volodymyr Zelensky, who had previously mainly produced comedy television projects, received huge and unexpected support in the presidential elections. The phenomenal trust in a "new" politician with no experience, program, or ideology can only be explained by personal trust, which is the basis of charismatic legitimacy.

Zelensky's electoral success can be explained by the fact that the demand for charismatic leadership in Ukrainian society, in the face of the defeats of Yushchenko, Tymoshenko, and Yanukovich, did not disappear but only grew in urgency and irrationality. To test this assumption, we will examine the trajectories of the public images of the main figures in Ukrainian politics and various aspects of citizens' attitudes towards them.

Our research aims to obtain empirical data useful for answering two key questions:

A) the possibility of "diagnosing" charisma in a specific political leader (and the resulting question of the degree of naturalness/artificiality of charismatic representation)

B) the degree to which factors of social demand and expectations of the masses condition the phenomenon of charismatic leadership.

### ***The Issue of Charisma Diagnostics***

A significant number of theoretical approaches and research programs related to political charisma, on the one hand, allow us to identify a wide range of phenomena and processes with this concept, and on the other hand, they complicate the precise objective localization of charisma and its manifestations. What is charisma in modern political life, and what is not? This question remains controversial and must be resolved in each specific case.

The modern understanding of charisma extends to a much wider range of phenomena than that to which Weber's definition of political charisma is applied. Today, charisma is understood as a

specific characteristic of a person that allows him or her to influence others through his example, words, and behavior. The result of such influence can be sympathy, a desire to imitate, or a desire to follow a charismatic leader to the goals he has indicated.

In such a broad sense, charisma can be a property not only of a politician or a public leader but also of an artist, a spiritual person, an intellectual, or even an ordinary person who attracts others to himself. In the public sphere, the concept of charisma has significantly expanded, which has led to the widespread use of this concept. In particular, it has denote a specific function of social interaction necessary for a politician's success. On this basis, classifications of charisma types have been formulated, and the possibility to "measure" the strength of charisma and other ways of its instrumentalization appears.

In these approaches, the concept of charisma is maximally blurred, and the question of charisma's presence/absence gives way to determining its "measure" or intensity. Therefore, charismatic legitimation as a mechanism of sociogenesis and charismatic leadership as a means of social self-organization lose their clear criteria and research objectivity.

#### ***The Relation between Demand and Supply in Charismatic Leadership***

Another methodological problem that arises in the context of a functional approach to the phenomenon of political charisma is the question of the extent and nature of its determinism.

If charisma is a function of social self-organization, then its emergence can be interpreted as a natural result of the coincidence of necessary circumstances. Therefore, this mechanism's starting point is not the charismatic leader's personality but the institutional and cultural prerequisites that model the type of charismatic behavior.

A functional understanding of charisma naturally leads to the conclusion that the presence or absence of a social demand for innovation determines the emergence of appropriate leaders. Moreover, establishing an appropriate type of rule is possible only if the mission proposed by the charismatic and the means of his influence on the audience are adequate for the tasks that objectively face this community and the circumstances in which the corresponding transformation is carried out.

In this case, the individual's role is called into question. Is the power of charisma the factor that stimulates transformation? Who leads and shapes whom, in this case – the mass of the leader or the leader of the mass? Depending on the answer to this question, we can determine ourselves in a more general problem area – the degree of determinism and voluntarism in sociogenesis and political self-organization.

#### **4. Research method**

Our research assumption is that the key to understanding the role of charisma in the processes of social transformation is the question of how critical and adequate the mass perception of the personal characteristics of a charismatic leader is. By definition, such an attitude is deeply emotional and, to a large extent, devoid of rationality. Charisma is a mechanism for establishing trust at an instinctive level, outside the action of critical reflection and the associated reactions of doubt and distrust. However, it is important to establish the scale and depth of this refusal to be critical.

It is proposed that such empirical data be collected by comparing several arrays of information on public opinion regarding politicians who can be considered in the current context as candidates for charismatic leadership. This research plan involves establishing the following:

- 1) the level of trust in the specified personalities;
- 2) the presence of traits in them that are considered signs of charisma;
- 3) specifying the ideas about the possession of these traits by politicians in the context of the "specification" of their charisma and determining its typological features.

Some of these questions require a certain level of reflexivity and competence, so we addressed them to expert community representatives. Others aim to establish mass stereotypes of the perception of political reality, so we formulated them for a representative sample of respondents.

The empirical basis for the study is data from sociological surveys conducted by the sociological company SOCIS in 2024 as part of a special program examining political leadership in Ukraine.

The idea for the study belongs to Igor Gryniv, head of the company "Janus", who formulated the questionnaire and commissioned the survey. Hryniv also proposes a concept of a politician's charisma (*Charisma Index*).

Maxim Rozumny (Maksym Rozumnyi) is the author of the theoretical part of the article, the scientific interpretation of the research results in the context of the theory of charismatic leadership, and the formulation of the conclusions. He proposes the concept of "faded charisma" and describes its features.

#### **5. Research results**

In 2024, the Institute for Strategic Research and Forecasts "Janus" (Ukraine), together with the sociological company "SOCIS" conducted a series of studies to diagnose the charisma of politicians who currently, or in the recent past, had the support of the majority of Ukrainians during the presidential elections. As part of the quantitative study, 2,000 respondents (representatives of the adult population of Ukraine) were interviewed using the F2F (Face-to-face) method. The sample is

representative in terms of gender, age, and region of residence.

This survey aimed to establish a connection between recognizing a particular leader's charismatic nature and identifying individual traits that generally correspond to the canon of charismatic leadership.

A concomitant goal of the study was to establish the importance of individual traits that can be considered clear indicators of a charismatic type of leadership, independent of the criteria of its effectiveness, influence, and trust that can be applied to leadership in common sense.

The characteristics of charismatic political leadership were formulated based on numerous theoretical sources.

They were also refined and adapted to modern Ukrainian realities in the "SOCIS" survey in September 2024. Respondents were asked: what, in their opinion, were the main motives for voting for each of the proposed politicians when they ran for the position of President of Ukraine? The list included the winners of the presidential elections in Ukraine in 2004, 2010, 2014 and 2019.

It is important that the survey was conducted using a representative sample of Ukraine's adult population (2000 respondents); that is, it reflects the motives of not only his/her supporters but also opponents and neutral citizens for voting for the former presidential candidate (Table 1).

Public opinion polls were conducted by SOCIS, one of Ukraine's leading sociological services. The company has been present on the sociological services market since 1988, and its services are used by state bodies, politicians, and corporations. Survey technologies meet sociological standards, as confirmed by membership in the GALLUP International Association and by cooperation with the world leader TNS (<https://socis.kiev.ua/ua/istorija/>).

For the purposes of this study, data from three surveys conducted in 2024, on the same methodological basis and with a similar sample of respondents, were used. This provides grounds for evaluating data on trust in politicians, assessments of their charisma, and voting motives in the presidential elections as a holistic phenomenon of public opinion. In addition, for the purposes of the study, the absolute values of the indicators were less important than their ratios and proportions.

Difficulties in conducting surveys using F2F technology under martial law stem from access to occupied territories and from significant migration, both within the country and abroad. However, for the study of general patterns in the perception of images of politicians, these complications did not have a significant impact. In general, in the period 2022 and especially 2023-2025, sociological research in Ukraine is regularly conducted by a significant number of companies. Their results show a high degree of repeatability and reproducibility, which indirectly confirms the high reliability of the techniques and methods used.

Table 1

**Voting motives**

Answers to the question: What were the main reasons for voting for each named politician when they were candidates for President of Ukraine? (As a % of the total number of respondents)

Reason to vote "for"	V. Yushchenko	V. Yanukovich	P. Poroshenko	V. Zelensky
He had a good program	<b>22,6</b>	<b>16,1</b>	<b>16,5</b>	<b>19,1</b>
He knew better than others what to do as President	<b>11,6</b>	6,1	<b>11,6</b>	5,1
He understood the problems of ordinary people	<b>14,4</b>	<b>10,5</b>	4,3	<b>10,8</b>
He is a man of action who can lead the country	7,2	4,0	<b>11,7</b>	5,2
He was the most professional and competent	<b>12,5</b>	2,5	<b>15,1</b>	2,6
He was better at persuading and speaking	<b>13,0</b>	8,9	<b>19,5</b>	<b>18,8</b>
He has an attractive appearance	1,6	6,8	4,2	9,6
He has a reliable and strong team	5,8	<b>14,1</b>	<b>12,7</b>	7,6
He is new, not like everyone else	5,8	4,2	3,6	<b>41,4</b>
He was the lesser evil	<b>14,4</b>	6,1	<b>15,1</b>	<b>14,2</b>
He is a patriot	<b>12,4</b>	1,3	7,0	6,5
He has strategic thinking, clear goals	5,5	5,1	7,6	5,4
Refusal / Do not know	24,0	40,1	21,2	13,9

Respondents' formulations show signs of rationalization of choice, reflecting a desire to "justify" their choice rather than recreate the real motivations. Evidence in favor of such an assumption is the high scores of all former candidates according to the criterion of having a "good program." After all, in reality, election programs in Ukraine traditionally remain unknown or uninteresting to the voter.

However, those positions that show more than 10% agreement (highlighted in the table) are very indicative of the average voter's ideas about what an ideal political leader should be like and what features can cause not only a desire to vote "for" but also to delegate their trust and will to transform the country. These features indicate charismatic leadership.

The framework of a survey of 50 experts, including professional sociologists, psychologists, journalists, political technologists, and, in fact, politicians themselves, has been aimed at clarifying the characteristics of charismatic leadership. We asked the respondents to identify the most important

characteristics of charismatic leadership, resulting in 16 essential qualities of a charismatic leader. In the second stage, we asked the same experts to assess the degree of their importance in assessing the level of "charismatics." As a result, the highest significance coefficients were given to indicators such as purposefulness, mission, and ability to lead people (1.2), self-confidence, organizational skills, persuasion and determination, and readiness for radical changes (1.1). Next, competence, professionalism, integrity, decency, understanding of ordinary people's problems, intelligence, team presence, benevolence, and humanity (1.0) were selected. Attractive appearance, ability to self-sacrifice, and the presence of an action plan, programs received a coefficient of 0.9. Experts consider modesty and honesty (0.8) to be the least important for assessing the charisma of a political leader.

Applying these coefficients to determine the final assessment of a politician's degree of charisma (Charisma Index) allowed for a more balanced interpretation of the quantitative results of the study (Table 2).

Table 2

**Charisma Index (CI)**

Answers to the question: To what extent are each of the following traits present in each listed politician? The indicator "1" means the least degree of charisma, and "10" - the greatest.

Signs of charisma	Significance coefficient	Yushchenko	Tymoshenko	Poroshenko	Zelensky	Zaluzhny
1. Competence and professionalism	1,0	4,09	4,19	4,45	5,20	7,16
2. Purposefulness, mission	1,2	4,63	5,23	5,40	7,14	8,53
3. Ability to lead people	1,2	4,51	5,16	5,26	7,05	8,75
4. Self-confidence	1,1	4,45	5,54	5,64	7,09	8,10
5. Integrity, decency	1,0	3,94	3,10	3,30	5,24	7,08
6. Attractive appearance	0,9	3,18	4,14	3,46	5,21	6,19
7. Oratory skills, ability to persuade	1,1	4,68	5,74	5,48	7,12	7,35
8. Understanding other people's problems	1,0	3,75	3,41	3,42	5,13	6,79
9. Modesty	0,8	3,16	2,41	2,52	3,83	5,42
10. Intelligence	1,0	4,91	4,99	5,09	5,97	7,52
11. Having a strong and reliable team	1,0	3,42	4,06	4,26	4,83	6,26

12. Determination, readiness for radical changes	1,1	3,74	4,31	4,43	6,10	7,62
13. Ability to self-sacrifice	0,9	2,93	2,62	2,73	4,44	5,92
14. Benevolence, humanity	1,0	3,88	3,21	3,34	5,21	6,89
15. Having a program and action plan	0,9	3,10	3,43	3,60	4,69	5,73
16. Generosity	0,8	2,79	2,38	2,55	3,90	5,15
Total Charisma Index		61,17	63,90	64,95	88,15	110,48
Average Charisma Index (CI)		3,82	3,99	4,06	5,51	6,90

Indicative is the direct correlation (for example, points 2, 3, 4, 7, 12 for Zaluzhny) between the following indicators:

- the high general level of charisma of a person;
- high index of charisma according to individual characteristics of the same person;
- high coefficient of the significance of the same characteristics.

This result indicates that the charismatic criteria were formulated correctly and can be applied for research purposes in the future.

Another clear pattern demonstrated by the survey results concerns the degree of expressiveness of individual charismatic qualities in the general image of a politician. If, for Tymoshenko and Yushchenko, the range of assessments fluctuates between indices of 2.38 and 5.74, then for Zaluzhny, the index does not drop below 5 for any of the criteria, and most of the indicators are in the zone from 6 to 9.

Thus, the higher the absolute values of the charisma index for a particular politician, the less these indicators differ among themselves in individual parameters (signs of charisma). It means that a respondent who perceives a politician as charismatic is ready to recognize the presence of all possible virtues in him to almost the same extent.

Weaknesses and the lack of certain leadership qualities become more visible to the public only when the effect of charisma weakens. In this case, the respondent can already assess the politician's personal characteristics more critically and differentiatedly.

In this example, we see the effect of "faded" charisma in politicians who have either ceased active activity or remain in big politics in secondary roles. Furthermore, their activity or passivity does not play a significant role in this case. According to the charisma index, Viktor Yushchenko, who left politics in 2010, 2024 is not much inferior to Petro Poroshenko, who was defeated in the 2019 elections and, at the time of the survey, was positioning himself as the main political alternative to the incumbent President Zelensky.

The peculiarities of the evolution of the perception of politicians who lose signs of charisma are especially indicative when comparing their charisma indexes (CI) with their trust indexes (TI), which are presented in Table 3.

The question about the level of trust in politicians was also included in the study by the "SOCIS" in September 2024, conducted on a representative sample of 2,000 respondents (representatives of the adult population of Ukraine) using the F2F (Face-to-face) method. Generalized trust indexes were determined by the formula:

$$TI = \frac{A+B \times 0,75+C \times 0,5+D \times 0,25+E \times 0}{n}, \text{ where}$$

A – number of respondents who completely trust this politician

B – rather trust

C – undecided about the politician

D – rather a distrust

E – not at all trust

n – total number of respondents

Table 3

**Trust index (TI)**

Answers to the question: How much do you trust the following leaders?

Category	Answer	Yushchenko	Tymo-shenko	Po-roshenko	Zelensky	Zaluzhny
A	Trust	105	86	99	358	673
B	Try to trust	274	140	207	538	757
C	Not sure	154	87	89	93	137
D	Difficult to trust	299	341	338	288	134
E	Do not trust	1168	1346	1267	723	299
Trust index		0,22	0,15	0,18	0,40	0,59

The correlation between the level of trust in a politician and his endowment with traits corresponding to the signs of charisma is reasonably expected and natural. However, it is noteworthy that the ratio of the indicators of the "hot" charisma of an active politician who is the focus of public expectations to the "faded" charisma of a politician who has long since withdrawn from the activity and lost popularity (for example, V. Zaluzhny and V. Yushchenko) is less than 1 to 2 (3.82 to 6.90). At the same time, the ratio of the indicators of the trust index for the same leaders is almost 1 to 3 (0.22 to 0.59). This means that, despite losing trust in a politician, respondents still recognize that he/she has certain traits characteristic of a charismatic leader. That is why it is appropriate to speak

not of a "lost" charisma, but rather of a "faded" one, that is, a de-actualized one.

## 6. Conclusions

The presence or absence of charisma in a particular politician is a question that can be solved technologically by comparing a standard set of characteristics with a specific person. In this case, it is about the perception of a leader's image by a specific community in which the function of charismatic leadership is to be implemented.

Charismatic traits are, first of all, the expectations that a given community places on the person of a leader. There may be significant differences between them and the actual characteristics of a person.

When public opinion endows a potential community leader with all possible virtues, attributing to him or her both exceptional organizational skills, compassion for people, oratory skills, and professionalism, this indicates an uncritical, mythologized perception. In Ukraine, at different times, a similar attitude of supporters characterized the images of Yushchenko, Tymoshenko, Yanukovich, and Zelensky.

Today, such a profile of public perception presents Valeriy Zaluzhny in a similar positive light. It is noteworthy that respondents attribute to him those qualities that society definitely does not and cannot have confirmation of, given the limited information about the person in the public space. Regarding Zaluzhny, such unconfirmed data include his own political team, oratory skills, generosity, and understanding of other people's problems.

The typological features of charisma, for which there is a "demand" at a particular historical moment, depend on the tasks facing the community in search of a leader. The demand for a specific type of leadership (transformational, crisis, stabilization, etc.) involves actualizing different models of charismatic self-realization. However, at the same time, there is a list of traits necessary for charisma. These universal characteristics determine the essential function of charismatic leadership – creating trust between the community and the leader.

At the same time, the endowment of a specific person with the necessary virtues and exceptional abilities is derived from the effect of trust and often has a mythological nature. The emergence of charisma is more a matter of time and place than, in fact, a matter of the abilities and virtues of its potential carrier. The loss of the focus of criticality in the perception of the person of a politician is the most convincing evidence of the presence of charisma.

In this context, the question of natural and artificial political charisma transforms into the

question of natural and artificially constructed situations of demand for charismatic leadership. Modern political technologies solve this question in most cases.

Almost all examples of charismatic leadership in Ukrainian politics in recent decades have been associated with the use of political technologies of “artificial charisma”. Special image tools and suggestive narratives worked to create the appropriate image. In the case of Yushchenko’s 2004 election campaign, these were specially selected colors of visual aids (the famous “orange” vibe), the style and atmosphere of public events, and the behavior of support groups that resembled religious practices more than political gatherings.

In 2019, Zelensky’s campaign already included a full-length political simulacrum in the form of the TV series “Servant of the People,” in which a popular comedian reincarnated as a political leader. However, these tools are not a new acquisition for Ukrainian politics. Similar techniques are used today by almost every Western politician in their public representation.

The element of “charisma” is an obligatory ingredient of a personal image in modern political communication. However, the effectiveness and scale of these efforts still raise many questions. Probably, the success of artificial charisma technologies depends, first, on the politician's personality, and second, on the media resources used to shape his image. But the political context in which this construction of a charismatic image takes place is also important.

Quite indicative in this regard is the correlation between a politician's charisma and his audience's awareness. Comparing the survey data on the degree of physical presence of Zaluzhnyi in politics and the media with those for Zelenskyi or even Tymoshenko, we can, in particular, state that the more pronounced the charismatic component in the perception of a particular politician, the more schematic and detached from reality this perception is.

Paradoxically, the less the public knows about a potential leader, the more they are inclined to “believe” in him and his extraordinary leadership potential. This circumstance prompts us to reconsider traditional ideas about the role of media factors in shaping a political image. When it comes to a charismatic personality type, detailed information is superfluous, since the audience is ready to supplement the image of a politician with the desired characteristics through their imagination.

Thus, the problem of “media simulacra”, which is considered in the theory of charisma as a consequence of the development of communication technologies, actually arises from the psychology of the masses themselves. In conditions of high demand for charismatic leadership, the trigger for the process of identifying a leader is the achievement of a certain level of recognition, and further, the imagination of the masses “finishes” his image according to canonical patterns in conditions of information deficit even more successfully and persistently than with significant information. Political charisma often spends its incubation period in informational silence, as we can observe in the

formation of Zaluzhny's image.

Thus, the phenomenon of charisma as such and political charisma, in particular, consists, first of all, in the voluntary removal of filters and barriers in the perception of positive information about the leader's personality, and sometimes even the generation of ideas about his/her extraordinary virtues by the masses themselves, on their initiative.

As a result, the transfer of political charisma to the plane of its practical implementation (for example, the election of its bearer as the President of the country) leads to the effect of "faded" charisma when society begins to evaluate the politician more critically and often refuses to trust him.

In Ukraine's political history, we see the "fading" of some politicians' charisma and the emergence of other contenders for leadership. This permanent process is accompanied by disappointment in the leadership qualities of those politicians who receive power and a relentless search for a new candidate. Assessments of former leaders become more critical and realistic, while new contenders for power receive a mythological halo of perfection. This means that, despite repeated disappointments, the demand for charismatic leadership persists and encourages society to new experiences of uncritical admiration for new idols. This process continues until the key contradictions of national political development are resolved.

In the context of the problems of public demand for charismatic leadership, the question of the connection between expectations of the arrival of a new leader and assessments of the current situation in society requires in-depth study. In particular, it would be advisable to impose the indicators of politicians' charisma proposed in this article on such parameters of public expectations as optimism-pessimism, stability-instability, and satisfaction-dissatisfaction with the status quo.

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