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THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADER'S ABILITIES IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Abstract

The article suggests a definition of politics, suggests the key elements of the concept of (political) leadership and a number of its determinants, positions leadership in the notion of politics, and discusses the relationship between social context, personality and ability of a leader. The importance of the set of conceptual and terminological issues related to the notion of leader's ability for comprehensive understanding of leadership is exposed via the analysis of the concept of leadership style, as well as by referring to the problems of typicality, adequacy and effectiveness of the actions of leaders in relation to leadership abilities. Analysis of the relevance of leader style for the theory of leadership led to the conclusion that the effectiveness of leadership depends on the person, and thus on the ability of leaders to make the appropriate choice of styles (strategies/techniques), and implement them properly. Consideration of aspects of leadership also led to the conclusion that it is necessary to strive for the complex, but an open and dynamic, model of leadership style which reinforces the importance of the personality of leaders, including the ability to act towards the realization of his/her functions.

Key words: politics, political leadership, leadership style, leadership competencies, leadership skills.

The positioning of leadership in the notion of politics

Determinations of policy are manifold. Briefly, the policy is the sphere of reality that constitutes teleological activity determined with categories of interests and power. However, the complexity of the political phenomena still requires the formulation of a more comprehensive definition:

Politics is the sphere of reality, which includes activities aimed at regulating social processes through defining the scale of priority of development goals and ways to achieve them, as determined by the influence of actors involved in decision-making (their social and institutional position, as well as a measure of respect for the principle of power, tradition and the prevailing value patterns in society), then the fulfillment of the objectives of harmonization of conflicts arising from the diversity of actors' interests that are publicly and/or secretly implemented within, under the influence and in interaction with the broader (economic, social, cultural, religious) determinants, further changes of regulations and institutional frameworks for operationalization of decisions and the formulation of conceptual structures that require new solutions about the use and distribution of social resources in response to changes in social relations and/or the nature and extent of the influence of external factors¹.

It is evident that leadership closely determines many aspects of political. As holders of the key functions leaders (leadership can also be collective) undoubtedly have a crucial impact on the dimensions of politics: defining the scale of priority development goals, their realization, synchronization conflicts, further changes of regulations and institutional frameworks operationalizing of decisions². As ascertained researchers of leadership: “that leaders fulfill the functions of diagnosing problems, prescribing solutions and mobilizing followers or supporters to solve

1 The definition is synthetic, the author derived it from a large number of sources. Of course, the definition may be objected that in itself does not position the state, but it is estimated that – just in the discourse of leadership – definition is operational. Previously for reasons of which write Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, “Political Leadership in Context“, in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Political Leadership* (2009), Internet, p. 3: “Globalization creates the demand for new forms of international and supranational leadership: as a ‘package of transnational flows of people, production, investment, information, ideas, and authority’ (Brysk 2002, 1; cf. Masciulli and Day 2006), globalization elevates the significance of leadership of international organizations, regional groups of states, and global agencies (Masciulli and Day 2006; Keck and Sikkink 1998)”.

2 In other words, Jon K. Maner and Nicole L. Mead, “The Essential Tension Between Leadership and Power: When Leaders Sacrifice Group Goals for the Sake of Self-Interest”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 99, No. 3, 2010, p. 482: “Throughout evolutionary history, leaders have helped groups manage fundamental challenges such as acquiring and distributing resources, defusing conflicts within the group, and battling rival outgroups... leadership provides a stable strategy for effective group functioning (e.g., Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008). Evolutionary theories of leadership, however, also emphasize a fundamental conflict between the motivations of leaders and followers (e.g., Boehm, 1999; Van Vugt et al., 2008; see also Van Lange, De Cremer, Van Dijk, & Van Vugt, 2007). In helping groups achieve their goals, leaders typically are given power, defined in terms of their relative ability to control group resources (see Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003)”.

those problems and engage in change or preservation through degrees of innovative adaptation (Tucker 1981; Tucker 1995)³.

Or, as Filipe Teles observes:

- “In a democratic society, three broad political leadership functions have been identified (Elcock, 2001; Fenwick, Elcock and McMillan, 2006): 1) *Governing* as a way to improve coordination and to provide strategic leadership – leaders must be capable of generating policy ideas through negotiation and communicating them through the organization; 2) *Governance* as the result of the complexity of the surrounding context of government – government authorities with their wide range of functions are expected to relate with other public authorities and private organization, developing partnerships and networks of policy delivery and deliberation; and 3) *Allegiance* as the commitment seen towards their supporters”;
- “Although several different roles are expected from democratic leaders, according to the political environment in which they are operating, the four main ones are: maintaining organizational cohesion; representing, defending and gaining support from the external environment for the organization; adapting the organization to the changing needs of the context; and defining its tasks and directing it to achieve its ends (Isaac-Henry, 2003)⁴.”
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Thus, in the above definition, leadership found a place as a significant determinant of the processes that make the political reality. Therefore, we will indicate what is included in the concept of leadership.

3 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, op. cit., p. 15. Ibidem, p. 7: “Whatever contextual variations exist, political leadership–followership is always a social process of adaptation and innovation – hence, innovative adaptation – to an environment or context that challenges a group’s way of life and values. The leader’s tasks are to: interpret problems; prescribe ends and means to solve them; propagate personal visions as solutions or, at least, responses to problems; mobilize followers to implement those solutions or responses (Heifetz 1994; Tucker 1995)”.

4 Filipe Teles, “Political Leaders: The Paradox of Freedom and Democracy“, *Revista Enfoques*, Vol. X, No 16, 2012, pp. 124-125. Ibidem, p. 127: “A more complete description of leaders’ tasks was presented by Thomas Lenz: “*Involves diagnosing situations, determining what needs to be done and marshalling collective effort to achieve a desired future or avert significant problems [...] It entails the use of power and persuasion to define and determine the changing [...] problems and opportunities [...] of an organization, and the solutions produced and actions taken by individuals and groups both inside and outside an organization to cope with such issues [...]*” (Lenz, 1993: 154-155)”.

The notion of (political) leadership

Leadership is defined: as the center of the group processes; in terms of aspect of personality it is a combination of traits and features that allow an individual to be a leader; in terms of skills; as action (behavior); in the context of power (or influence); as the process of influencing a group to achieve a common goal⁵.

The basic lack of definitions of leadership as the process in which individual influences a group towards a common goal should be noted⁶: definition does not allow for the possibility that the process actually does not have to be directed towards a *common* goal. This phenomenon often occurs in political history. Since the action specified as directed towards a *common* goal, this definition contains a value element. In addition, on the meta-theoretical level, identity is misplaced – rather, process of interaction is a key notion. The place of individual as the bearer of the process essentially is lost⁷. Only continuity of (the process of) action towards objectives remains – that undermines the very function of leadership. The bottom line is, seemingly paradoxically, the question of who really defines goals arises.

Some researchers interpret leadership as one of the two complementary mechanisms of organizational changes aimed “to influence the structure and behaviors of the participants”. Organizational design “involves planned changes using formalized structures, procedures, and rules”, while leadership entails management procedures, including intuition, experience and heuristic judgments. The bounded rationality of organization results in its inability “to completely rationalize environmental uncertainty in terms of organizational design”. Leadership is a finalizing institutional response to the problem of incompleteness of organizational design⁸.

5 See Northouse, G. Peter, *Liderstvo: teorija i praksa*, četvrto izdanje, Beograd, Data status, 2008, pp. 1-10.

6 *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

7 Filipe Teles, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119: “... Machiavelli gave rise to the ‘science of leadership’ looking at its core as an expression of an artistic ability, akin to an innate talent. On the other hand, the ‘sociological’ approach claimed that Weber devaluated the role of followers and of the situational context in which leadership was exercised, arguing an important role for culture and values as key legitimating factors. Accordingly, leadership is seen as more a consequence of the interaction between the individual and his context, rather than a merely individualistic approach to human qualities. This perspective is egalitarian in its assumptions and ultimately recognizes that everyone has the possibility of attaining a position of leadership”.

8 See closer Yeon Choi, Renate R. Mai-Dalton, “On the leadership function of self-sacrifice”, *Leadership Quarterly*, 9(4), 1998, pp. 484-485.

Based on the assessment that lacks conceptualization of leadership from a political perspective, A.P. Ammeter and associates develop a model of political leadership theory using “the definition proposed by House (1995, p. 413) of general leadership, that is, behavior ‘... that gives purpose, meaning, and guidance to collectivities by articulating a collective vision that appeals to ideological values, motives, and self-perceptions of followers...’. House further states that the outcomes of such behavior are heightened awareness of organizational values, unusual levels of effort, and the foregoing of self-interest of followers for the good of the collective... self-serving behavior is not a part of our definition of ‘leadership’...”. While self-interested behavior of certain leaders can be registered is noted, the theoretical prism focuses on leader’s behavior that “intended to be of benefit to the greater collective or organization”⁹.

In our framework for addressing this problem we accept: “a value-neutral definition of leadership that focuses on its instrumental (ability to influence people and effect outcomes), organizational (goal-setting and motivation), strategic-visionary and entrepreneurial (innovative adaptation and creativity) qualities, rather than *post hoc* normative evaluation of its end-results”¹⁰. We shall support those theoretical views that *political* leadership determine through the categories of power and influence¹¹. Also, we ought to recognize the warning of researchers that “the *concept* of political leadership is difficult to define *essentially*, because it is dependent on institutional, cultural and historical contexts and situations”¹². Or: “... ‘even if one definition of leadership were chosen [...] the operational meaning of the definition would change depending on the context in which said leadership would be exercised’ (Hockin, 1977: ix)... the concept of political leadership is particularly difficult to define, since it is often presented as dependent on institutional, historical and cultural contexts (Blondel,

9 A.P. Ammeter et al., “Toward a political theory of leadership”, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 13 (2002), Internet, p. 753.

10 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, op. cit., p. 10.

11 Ibidem, p. 6: “... ‘Political leadership’ overlaps significantly with the higher levels of military, legal, organizational, and religious and ideological leadership, and is a special part of ‘social leadership’... We agree with those who define political leadership as a rather unique set of power relations and influences that is exercised over a broad range of nationally and globally salient issue areas and from a position of authoritative preponderance involving ideologies and ethics... *at least in principle, political leadership is broad and might be all-embracing: decisions that could be taken by the [political] leader might cover any subject* (Blondel 1987, 15). There is an overlap between social and political leadership, but the latter is ‘thicker’ than any other type of social leadership in having a monopolistic or preferred access to coercive and inducing hard power, in addition to attracting, persuasive soft power based on ideology, symbolism, ethical/non-ethical character, and perceptions of followers about leaders”.

12 Ibidem, p. 4.

1987; Wildavsky, 1989)¹³. Taking into account the above-quoted statement, we shall now go back to the issue that is relevant to the theoretical framework that we address. Back to the long-present question of political theory: who rules? The modern concept of politics or the political sphere should not and must not reduce to the actions of political elites. Rather, the holders of key political positions are those that crucially affect the definition and achievement of goals. A crucial question here is to what extent the one who governs is able to create the conditions for defining the list of priorities (developmental) objectives, to select optimal goals, to reconcile conflicts and motivate followers to work in the right way towards accomplishing the set goals. Set of conceptual and terminological issues related to leadership abilities is therefore indispensable in the analysis of leadership, especially political leadership. One should bear in mind that the inquiry of political psychology is "... focused on certain aspects of personality and their impact on political behavior. Therefore, the research of personality in political psychology can best be defined as examination of individual differences. Rather than searching for the whole, researchers in this field, selectively focus on a number of individual aspects"¹⁴.

The social context, personality and leader's ability

It is noted that "*The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* defines a 'leader' as 'the person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country'... goal setting and motivation both figure prominently as essential attributes of the notion of leadership"¹⁵. But, researchers of leadership consider contextual influences on political processes¹⁶, with typical remarks: "To understand, explain and predict patterns of political leadership and arrive at normative prescriptions for its 'proper' design and implementation, inquirers need to analyse the beliefs, values, characters, power relations, and ethical/unethical values, attitudes and actions of leaders and followers, as

13 Filipe Teles, op. cit., pp. 115-116. Ibidem: "Since in politics the means, ends and consequences often are not aligned with one another – as intended – requiring an 'active mediation of fate' and an 'unpredictable enterprise' (Gane, 1997)... This combination of passion and responsibility, which a political leader must possess, brings about a concept difficult to unravel... Normative attempts to define leadership, although impossible to avoid, bear the weight of producing diverse and paradoxical results: from the great potential of Neustadt's (1976) 'power of persuasion' in democratic governance to its perversion in tyranny and authoritarianism".

14 Milica Milojević, Milica Mitrović, "Neki od pristupa proučavanja ličnosti u političkoj psihologiji", *Godišnjak za psihologiju*, Vol. 8, No 10, 2011, p. 56.

15 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, op. cit., p. 4.

16 A.P. Ammeter et al., op. cit., p. 756: "The importance of context is that it shapes performance standards and determines the process by which leaders acquire their roles and authority (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001)".

well as their historical situation and cultural-institutional context (Nye 2008)¹⁷. Additionally, emphasis is put on “cultural context matters in giving substantial content to any definition”¹⁸. Relations between culture and leadership are highly valued¹⁹.

It is necessary to bear in mind the following observation: “a growing number of political analysts see leadership as a dynamic, open social system, a coherent process, rather than just a number of sporadic individual acts”²⁰. Theoretical models of leadership rightly emphasize the interaction of leaders and followers as a very important aspect²¹. The research also shows that the interaction of abilities and skills of leaders and followers is expressed in various ways in different contexts²². Even when considering the innovative leadership, individual psychological qualities of a leader have importance only as a prerequisite for realizing a certain degree of social impact and change²³.

17 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

18 *Ibidem*, p. 5: “For example, in a Russian cultural context, a leader with a sentimental, compassionate or weak character would be rejected as a failure (Gorbachev’s weakness versus Putin’s strength as contrasting images) (Wildavsky 2006; House et al. 2004)”.

19 Look closer Northouse, G. Peter, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-227.

20 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

21 *Ibidem*, p. 8: “While traditional studies saw great leaders as creative agents driving political processes for the society at large (Carlyle 1993; Hook 1943), newer research is placing increased emphasis on the necessity to avoid drawing a simple dichotomy between social structures and political agency, including leader–follower groups... The leader–follower relationship exists on a continuum from extreme inequality and asymmetry, whereby strong leaders exercise overwhelming domination over subordinate followers (a significant constant in the past and present), to the opposite extreme of almost total symmetry and equality, whereby strong leaders influence and inspire followers to become strong, autonomous leaders themselves (a rare utopian event, except within elite leadership circles involving leaders, coand sub-leaders and advisers). Leadership at both ends of the continuum, however, is characterized by interaction, whether it is materially ‘transactional’ or morally ‘transformational’ (Burns 1978; Burns 2003)”.

22 Jon K. Maner and Nicole L. Mead, *op. cit.*, p. 493: “Experiment 5 replicates and extends the earlier findings by showing that the decisions of leaders depended upon the presence of intergroup competition. In the absence of intergroup competition, dominance-oriented leaders assigned a highly skilled group member to a role in which he or she would have little influence in the group, even though that person had previously demonstrated a strong ability to perform the task... Participants’ decisions, however, changed considerably when a rival group was present. Under these circumstances, dominance-oriented leaders were relatively more inclined to place the skilled group member into the director role—a role in which that person would have greater influence. Thus, although dominance-oriented leaders otherwise were inclined to protect their power, the presence of a rival outgroup caused those participants to be less concerned with protecting their power and instead to make decisions consistent with a desire for group success”.

23 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 9: “Innovative leaders frequently demonstrate exceptional (‘charismatic’) leadership which seems to emanate

*Attitudes among researchers toward the specific weight of leadership as a factor in the political process are found (with significant oscillations) along a broad continuum*²⁴, although some more precise claims can also be noted: “This exercise of control over others is highly dependent on the leader’s ability to accomplish it and on the followers’ tacit approval; in fact, the way to attain an objective is often through other’s actions. Therefore one must consider both dimensions of power: the leader’s capacity and the follower’s consent”²⁵.

Theoretical models of leadership hence emphasize: the essence of leadership is being perceived as a leader by others (Lord and Maher 1991); leadership is “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (House *et al*, 1996) – that exceeds expected roles tied to a particular position in an organization; leadership is “special mix of qualities that include integrity, vision, the ability to inspire others, a deep awareness of self, courage to innovate, and an instant and impeccable sense of judgement” (Brosnahan, 1999)²⁶. Individual characteristics (of leader) are determined with (his) abilities, as for example: “Cognitive complexity is another individual characteristic, which is considered to have a significant impact on decision-making, leadership style, risk assessment, and the nature of the global information processing. Cognitive complexity generally refers to the ability to differentiate the environment (people, places, ideas, objects)”²⁷. Certainly, the set of leadership abilities should not be understood as

from the personality of a leader... Sheffer’s summary refers to ‘fuzzy’ concepts such as vision, inspiration and risktaking. These concepts seem to be of a subjective nature and refer to individual psychological qualities of a leader. However, none of those qualities would be of any interest to us, if not for their lasting social importance.”

24 Ibidem, p. 12: “To the critics of a leadership-focused approach in political science, ‘it is not at all clear that leadership requires any remarkable talents, or that major differences in the success of organizations reflect differences in the capabilities of their leaders, or that history is the product of leaders’ actions’ (March and Weil 2005, 97). Citing such evidence as King’s (2002) quantitative study of the relation of leaders’ personalities to election outcomes in six countries, some scholars conclude that, in view of the study’s uneven results, the judgments, decisions and actions of leaders in modern democratic societies do not matter much (Grint 2005). However, King contends that despite particular national elections not being a leaders’ ‘beauty contest’, leaders always matter in developing party platforms before and during elections, pursuing electoral strategies, and later governing with one leadership style or another. We agree with King (2002) that both the leadership approach and the organizational and impersonal forces’ approach are needed to understand and explain political outcomes and develop policies”.

25 Look closer Filipe Teles, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

26 According to Filipe Teles, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

27 Milica Milojević, Milica Mitrović, *op. cit.*, p. 62: Otherwise, about the terms cognitive complexity and integrative complexity seen closer Ibidem, pp. 62-63.

a straightforward sum of certain personality traits that a leader possesses that, with the factor of social support, directly define the leader's position, his/her actions and their outcomes. Leadership abilities are interacting with leader's personality traits (such as pronounced sense of mastery and self-esteem or self-efficacy²⁸). A set of personality characteristics that can be identified abilities, builds complex relationships that define politically active person. As it is concluded in one study:

“In Table 1, both skills and knowledge satisfaction make significant contributions to leadership competence. Of the two personal resource variables, self-esteem makes a highly significant contribution, but mastery has no significant contribution... Table 2 is similar, but there are important differences. Satisfaction with knowledge and skills learnt makes no significant contribution to the dependent variable, policy control. Both personal resources, self-esteem and mastery, make significant contributions”²⁹.

The previous discussion suggests the importance of abilities for realizing functions and effectiveness of political leaders that are expressed through a social context. The interdependencies of leadership abilities and the context determine the different political consequences.

This point is related to the insight from Zimmerman and Zahniser (1991): “Leadership competence may show initiative and skills, but not necessarily the ability (or the belief in that ability) to influence policy decisions. Thus, those who believe that they have leadership ability want theoretical knowledge as well as practical skills, they are satisfied by their self-esteem and do not necessarily need to be masters of their destiny... the ability to control policy is a political aptitude... self-esteem is important but needs the backing of a feeling of mastery of the political situation... Leadership competence is, apparently, more internal, more intellectual, and more concerned with the potential leader's psychological feelings. Policy control is more external and social, closer linked with the activist's social skills and ability to manage... Community activists should have both attributes, both initiative (leadership competence) and political know-how (policy control)...”³⁰.

28 See Haya Itzhaky and Alan S. York, “Leadership competence and political control: The influential factors”, *Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 371–381, 2003, p. 373.

29 Ibidem, p. 376.

30 Ibidem, pp. 378-379.

The set of problems related to the leadership abilities appears in the aforementioned model of leadership that explores the concept of self-sacrifice³¹. It indicates that the *competence* is “an indispensable attribute of leadership (e.g., Bass, 1981; Hollander, 1978; Katz & Kahn, 1978)”. Construction of this model departed from widely accepted propositions that indicate the importance of this concept for researches of leadership³². We notice Proposition 9. of model that the effects of self-sacrificial leadership “will be significantly stronger when followers perceive the leader to be competent than when they perceive the leader to be incompetent”, and that the effects mentioned in the above formulated propositions (4, 5 i 6) that claim that self-sacrificial leadership will be positively associated with three variables: the followers’ perceptions of the leader’s charisma, with the followers’ attribution of the leader’s legitimacy, and with the followers’ intentions to reciprocate the leader’s self-sacrificial behaviors³³.

It is necessary to find a right balance: “The debate about whether particular leaders with their personal attributes, characters, beliefs, values and skills should be considered as important historical, causal agents in their own right remains at the centre stage of leadership studies (King 2002; Post 2004)... We suggest that individual leadership approaches in conjunction with contextual and situational approaches are indispensable for understanding causality in international relations and comparative politics today”³⁴. When aiming to acknowledge and highlight the issues that need to

31 Yeon Choi, Renate R. Mai-Dalton, op. cit., p. 493: “Considering that self-sacrificial leadership could be unconventional in the eyes of most people, we expect that followers will try to make sense of such unconventional leadership... We propose that followers will respond to self-sacrificial leadership positively only when such leadership makes sense in terms of the given situational and leader characteristics. The relevant situational characteristic in this theory is conceptualized as ‘organizational uncertainty’, and the relevant leader characteristic as ‘leader competence’...”

32 Ibidem, pp. 494-495: “All of the variables in the Model of Followers’ Responses to Self-Sacrificial Leadership are individual-level variables... Concerning the trait variable, only “competence” has been incorporated in the model. This kind of simplification seems not only inevitable for most followers, given the inherent limitation in their cognitive capacities, but also strategically practical for leadership information processing (Lord & Maher, 1990)... Therefore, what we propose in our model is that the average followers will consider situational and leader-specific characteristics in their responses to leader’s behaviors and, given earlier research findings, organizational uncertainty and leader competence seem to be the most likely variables to be considered”.

33 About the manner of execution of the assumptions on which Choi i Mai-Dalton developed model look closer Ibidem, pp. 485-494.

34 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, op. cit., p. 11. Ibidem: “... there are also those who opt for the primacy of social structures and reject the usefulness of theorizing at the level of the actions and personalities of individual leaders (for example, Waltz 1959; Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer 2001)”.

be taken into account when defining leadership³⁵ the researchers notes: “We know that all leadership occurs in social situations and contexts, which endow followers with certain cultural characteristics, and which permit leaders to utilize certain personal characteristics: inherent qualities, socialized habits, learned skills; intelligence of various types, including especially emotional intelligence and contextual intelligence, including social insight; but also power-wielding, organizational and communication skills (cf. Greenstein 2004; Greenstein 2006; Bose 2006; Nye 2008)”³⁶.

Most of theoretical models of leadership formulate their own perspective about leadership abilities, or at least those aspects of it that can be seen as potentially significant. Models of leadership, observed from the perspective of organization and theory of management, are:

- *trait approach*: examines which traits are most suitable for leadership – though not capable of entirely avoiding subjectivity in the selection of traits and not able to design their final list – indicates the key traits (intelligence, confidence, determination, integrity, sociability). It can be seen that intelligence is positively correlated with the leadership and the self-confidence is defined as an ability to be confident in one own's competences and skills³⁷;
- *skills approach* emphasizes the competence of leaders, places leader at the center of the model and highlights the importance of his abilities, while effective leadership performances are substantially determined by learned skills (hence the cognitive ability of a leader – intelligence and intellectual capacities acquired by experience – are given an important place in the model)³⁸;

35 Ibidem, pp. 5-6, inter alia, refer to: “... the personality and traits of a leader or leaders, including her or his ethical and cultural character; the traits and ethical-cultural character of the followers with whom the leader interacts. ...; the societal or organizational context in which the leader–follower interaction occurs – general culture, political culture, political climate, norms, and institutions; the agenda of collective problems or tasks which confront the leaders and followers in particular historical situations; ... the effects or results of leadership (whether real or symbolic, long lasting or transient)”.

36 Look closer Ibidem, p. 14-15. Spotlight: “How and why do particular individuals gain power in a particular organization or society or state? ... What are the instruments by which this power is exercised (Blondel 1987)? ... How do leaders and followers relate (Kellerman 2004; Kellerman 2008; Burns 1978; Burns 2003)? What functions do leaders serve in what situations and contexts? ... How do leaders and followers realize their ‘vision’ (Bennis 2003; Greenstein 2004)? What motivates leaders and followers, and how do leaders motivate followers and followers motivate leaders (Lane 2003)? ... How do leaders move history or does history move them (Hay 2002)?”.

37 See Northouse, G. Peter, op. cit., pp. 11-19.

38 See closer Ibidem, pp. 27-46.

- *style approach* is based on the behavior of leaders and explores what leaders do and how they do it, combining the above two types of behavior: one centered on the relationships within the organization, and another on its tasks, as well as how they act. This approach possesses a heuristic value because it provides a broad conceptual map for understanding leadership behavior. Although researchers are not able to establish appropriate style for all situations (and thus effective style), neither to link style with performance results (it is worth asking whether maybe here arises a possibility to determine the importance of leadership)³⁹;
- in *situational approach* the basic theoretical premise is that different situations require different types of leadership. This approach also deals with the styles of leadership – as patterns of behavior to exercise influence. This approach incorporates analytical skills of leaders – since a leader should possess the ability to recognize situations in the organization (competence and dedication to work) and adapt his/her personal style to requirements of the situation⁴⁰;
- *contingency theory* provides a framework for the effective alignment of leadership styles in accordance with given parameters and requirements of the situation / context. Since it is necessary that the leader of the organization should be positioned to provide maximum results in accordance with his style – which gives rise to the requirement to adapt the situation to the leader, not the other way around – this model is not particularly operational for research of political leadership. Also, the criticism that this theory does not explain why the leaders of a particular style of leadership are in some cases more effective than others raises questions related to particular leadership abilities⁴¹;
- *path-goal theory* analyzes the way that leaders motivate subordinates, establishing the style of leadership that responds to the motivational needs and duties of subordinates (which, it should be noted, means the ability to choose the right option). From the aspect of the importance of leadership abilities can be seen that achievement-oriented leadership where leader encourages subordinates to perform their work at the highest possible level (sets a high standard), which itself presumes that leaders own capacity to fulfill the very same standards⁴²;
- *leader-member exchange theory* (LMX) sees leadership as a process of interaction of leaders and followers. Within this approach effective leadership depends on adequate exchange between leaders and members – thus the im-

39 Look closer Ibidem, pp. 47-61.

40 Look closer Ibidem, pp. 62-76.

41 See in particular Ibidem, pp. 77-81.

42 See in particular Ibidem, pp. 87-95.

portance of communication – and communication skills leaders are crucially important⁴³;

- theories dealing with *transformational leadership* ranges between personal predispositions (with the notion of charisma) and behavior (which indicates competence)⁴⁴;
- within *team leadership* we can recognize the importance of leadership abilities, when read that effective teamwork performance starts with the leader and its mental perception of the situation... leader creates the picture of the team-related problems, and propose solutions considering the given parameters, internal and external constraints, and resources⁴⁵;
- *psychodynamic approach*, which includes several models and theories, is based on personality and suggests that certain personality types more or less correspond to certain specific leadership positions or situations. The advantage of this model, among other things, is that it highlights the the capability of leaders to understand the actions and respond to them so as to control them⁴⁶.

Looking at the complexity of the above perspectives, we can support the intentions of the aforementioned *Multiple-Level Analytical Model of Leadership*, because: “Second, this analytical model can be reduced to various perspectives of leadership that have appeared in the literature, such as the trait, behavioral, attributional, transactional, contingency, and leadership substitute approaches... This framework is general enough to facilitate comprehensive analyses of leadership phenomena”⁴⁷.

43 Look closer Ibidem, pp. 103-111.

44 See in particular Ibidem, pp. 119-133.

45 Ibidem, pp. 142. (Translated by author form the Serbian edition of monograph. Please see bibliography for further details)

46 Look closer Ibidem, pp. 163-177.

47 Yeon Choi, Renate R. Mai-Dalton, op. cit., p. 484: More precisely, Ibidem, pp. 483-484: “This model is based on the proposition that leadership involves an interaction between the leader, the followers, and the situation (Hollander, 1978). At the Macro Level, organizational level variables such as organizational culture, institutional characteristics (e.g., history, type of organization, etc.), organization-specific contingencies, organizational design, leadership, etc. are presented... This model contains two important features. First, leadership is conceptualized as a multiple-level concept. At the macro level, leadership is seen as an institutional mechanism of organizational change. It refers to the organizational practice of conferring general authority or discretion in decision making (Jacobs & Jaques, 1990) on its officers to complement the organizational design... At the micro level, leadership is seen as the process of influencing followers (i.e., their values, visions, goals, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors) through interactions with them. In this process, followers can also influence leaders. Second...”.

Leadership style and terminological framework for understanding leadership abilities

Often we read statements like those that “the followers affect the leader’s style”⁴⁸. But what does leader’s style actually mean, and what about the relationship of style and terminological framework for understanding leadership abilities.

Note that in the earlier period, the research framework applied to the style of political leadership, according to the findings of Herman and Margaret Thomas Preston (1994), was primarily determined by the following factors: involvement in the policy process, readiness to tolerate conflict, motivation or reason for inclusion in the policy and taking a given function, strategies that are used to meet the information and those used in resolving conflicts⁴⁹. Leadership style is defined as the usual way of acting⁵⁰.

In the leadership model developed by A.P. Ammeter and associates, concept of style is assigned a significant role, and is defined as “the manner in which leaders express particular behaviors”⁵¹. Leader’s (interpersonal) style (as we will show further in the paper) is treated “as a potentially important factor in leader’s effectiveness”, while it is important to recall the other theorists’ insights that „with no empirical research to date, conclusions about its role and effectiveness are unknown”⁵². Within this model several aspects of leadership style are considered, as well as their relation with the problems related to leadership abilities. Within this approach, it appears important to firstly emphasize interaction of leader interpersonal style and General mental ability, within the discussion on the mediating role of leader interpersonal style.

48 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

49 According to Milica Milojević, Milica Mitrović, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

50 *Ibidem*, pp. 59-60: “Barber (Barber, 1985, by Cottam et al., 2004) argues that a person should not be viewed as a set of idiosyncratic traits that are unique to each president, where some presidents possessed a particular trait, while others did not. According to Barber, certain traits should be observed in all presidents, but so as to allow that they are expressed in varying degrees and in different combinations. He deduces three components of personality president: character, worldview and style of the president. Style reflects usual way of acting of a president in the performance of his political role and function”.

51 Look closer A.P. Ammeter et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 752-753, also 763.

52 *Ibidem*, p. 763: “... Bolman and Deal (1991) argued that the effectiveness of leaders ultimately is judged on the basis of their style, and Yukl and Van Fleet (1992) discussed the manner or style with which power and influence is demonstrated by leaders as being critically important... We suggest that leader interpersonal style essentially is captured in a set of social effectiveness constructs that share some common domain space, but maintain sufficient uniqueness to exist as independent constructs”.

Intelligence, cognitive ability, or what Schmidt and Hunter (1998) refer to as general mental ability (GMA) is suggested to be the single most valid predictor of future job performance and learning, which has been noted by others as well⁵³. Leader interpersonal style interacts with GMA to affect leader's actions and their outcomes. As noted by Ferris, Witt, and Hochwarter (2001), social skill and GMA represent largely independent but complementary constructs, essentially equipping individuals with behavioral and cognitive flexibility, both of which enhance effectiveness. It should be noted that "Under conditions of high interpersonal style and low GMA, leaders may be socially impressive but lack the cognitive resources to generate a sufficiently large repertoire of effective solutions to issues and problems, thus generating lower target reactions. Also, when leaders are high on GMA but low on interpersonal style, targets may be unimpressed by the decisions and actions the leaders take if they are unable to frame and present such actions in an accessible and convincing way"⁵⁴.

We note a prominent place in this theoretical framework is obtained by notion of (social/political) *skill*⁵⁵. The authors indicate that the "focus specifically on political skill as one particular operationalization of leader interpersonal style that might bear more serious examination in a political theory of leadership"⁵⁶. In the context of related discussion, political skill is determined "as an interpersonal style construct, which combines interpersonal perceptiveness or social astuteness with the capacity to adjust one's behavior to different and changing situational demands in a manner that inspires trust, confidence, and genuineness, and effectively influences and controls the responses of others"⁵⁷.

53 Ibidem, p. 759: "However, the direct influence of GMA has been called into question when noncognitive variables have been proposed to challenge its predictive effectiveness (McClelland, 1993; Ree & Earles, 1992; Sternberg & Wagner, 1993). Indeed, instead of posing arguments promoting a single predictor, contemporary thinking seems to favor consideration of predictors that can supplement the contribution of GMA, which might include personality measures and social skills (Guion, 1983; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998; Wagner, 1997). Because skilled political behavior depends so heavily on interpreting social situations and then enacting proper responses, it is likely that GMA will interact heavily with personality and social skill to produce individuals with more or less capability to engage successfully in political behaviors".

54 Ibidem, p. 780.

55 Ibidem, p. 763, about *leader social capital*: "Social capital includes the resources available to an individual through that person's social or interpersonal ties, where these resources can be used to one's benefit in an organizational setting (e.g., Coleman, 1988). Individuals with good social and political skills build up extensive stores of social capital through their adeptness at developing and using diverse networks of people (e.g., Baron & Markman, 2000)".

56 Ibidem, p. 763.

57 Ibidem, p. 764.

Within the context of this paper, it is important to note some insights from this literature. “We suggest that people high in political skill not only know precisely what to do in different social situations (e.g., selecting the most situationally appropriate political or influence behaviors), but exactly how to do it with a sincere, engaging manner that disguises any ulterior motives and inspires believability, trust, and confidence, and renders the influence attempt successful... Leaders can then realize a set of interpersonal dynamics that enables them to reach higher levels of personal and career success through the appropriate selection and execution of political behaviors (Ferris et al., 2000)”⁵⁸. Also, Hogan (1991) and Hogan and Shelton (1998) argued that personality is an essentially inactive component but needs to be brought to life by social skill (we would say, political skill). The suggestion is that “leader interpersonal style is the energizing component that activates personality, and thus helps to unleash its potential effects on outcomes”⁵⁹.

On other hand, Filipe Teles notes that “success depends on the quality and accuracy of the style of leadership chosen. How does the leader exercise power, through which strategy, who is involved and tools used, are decisive in understanding contemporary political leadership. Even more decisive is understanding the mechanisms guiding the political leader to adopt a particular style”⁶⁰. Likewise:

- “A leader must, then, select “a particular course of action and then in some way gets others to go along; or more subtly, the leader encourages the led to choose the course that the group will follow” (Kellerman, 2004: xiii). These *strategies chosen by leaders in order to be successful set what we will subsequently call ‘leadership styles’*”⁶¹;
- “Scholarship must distinguish *role*, as the normative pattern, from *style*, as the actual behaviour (the consequence of performing a role)” – with additional findings concerning leadership capabilities⁶²;

58 Ibidem, p. 764-765.

59 Ibidem, p. 781.

60 Filipe Teles, op. cit., p. 118.

61 Ibidem, p. 116, italics PP.

62 Ibidem, p. 126: “Storey’s (2004) three meta-capabilities are interesting when drawing the big picture. The first role of a leader is a result from his capacity to ‘make sense of the big picture’. The second role derives from the ability to make change happen. The third one is inter-organizational representation. The first two capabilities can be summarized as resulting from leaders’ *awareness* and *sense of autonomy*. In fact, the ability to ‘understand’, ‘read’, and ‘translate’ the complex context where he lives in – *being aware* – is a fundamental role of the leader, at least it is something that is expected from leaders... His capacity to translate this into change is only possible if the leader has the real possibility to do so and if he believes he can do it: therefore, it boils down to if he feels that he has the autonomy to actually implement change”.

- “In fact, in politics, Paul Joyce says, “it is important to recognize the capacity of politicians in creating strategic visions” (Joyce, 2003). They are expected to articulate and offer vision to their followers. These patterns are useful to understand expectations around the work of leaders, and the reasons behind their roles. However, as a consequence of the – almost exclusive – normative approaches to these previous issues, we claim that further developments in political leadership theory are more prone to happen as a result of delivering better understanding on leadership styles, rather than continue to explore leaders’ roles”⁶³.

Regardless of whether analytical models can be regarded as comprehensive, the concept of leadership style as thoughtful application of strategies and techniques – understanding of style as a means of action that is not related to the personality of the leader – does not take into account broader setting: the style is relatively permanent feature (of the action of the) personality, because style represents the unity of expression of the individual characteristics. It is necessary to reconsider the perspective that draws attention to the style as dependent on the personality of the leader – particularly of his ability to make the right choice regarding the strategy for a given situation at a given moment. Also, whether a leader will properly apply the strategy so that it would be effective depends on the capacity of the leader. Psychodynamic approach reminds us of the relevance of the uniqueness of personality, and consequently the relative durability of determinants related to the mode of action of individuals: “... theorists of personality argue that for a person it is difficult to focus on the expression of different forms of behavior, especially when they are under stress... An important assumption of the psychodynamic approach is that the personality traits of individuals, due to the fact that these are deep-rooted, are difficult to significantly change”⁶⁴. It is possible, therefore, to assert that the style reflects the complex attributes / characteristics of individual behavior, that is, the typical reaction of the leaders.

63 Ibidem, p. 128. With previous findings, Ibidem pp. 127-128: “Dennis Kavanagh (1990: 63-65) contrasted *reconcilers* with *mobilizers*... Whenever *mobilizers* appear – as they must present a different style from that of the *reconcilers*, whom people often see as mere ‘managers in government’ – great expectations and general hope are more visible: Barack Obama’s political campaign might constitute a good example of this transformation”.

64 Northouse, G. Peter, op. cit., p. 164. (Translated by author from the Serbian edition of the monograph. Please see bibliography)

Typicality, adequacy and effectiveness of the leader's actions

In the process of comprehending the notion of leadership the following problem is encountered: the of divergence dimensions of ethics and effectiveness⁶⁵. However, since the contemporary civilization define effectiveness as a supreme value, so is effectiveness recognized as an inevitable factor within the conceptual framework for understanding leadership, and even as the most important factor in some theoretical constellations.

Let us closer consider a model already mentioned – A.P. Ammeter *et al* – in which we notice the connection of the several concepts related to the *social effectiveness*: ability (independent of General mental ability – GMA), capacity, capability, (practical, emotional, social and/or sociopolitical) intelligence, (social and/or political) skill, (social) competence, interpersonal acumen, ego resiliency, functional flexibility⁶⁶. In segment “*leader interpersonal style X influence behavior interaction*” we read: “As Jones (1990) argued over a decade ago, we have studied influence tactics quite extensively, but we know very little about the social style component that likely explains the effective or successful execution of influence attempts. *Leader interpersonal style (i.e., measures of social effectiveness like political or social skill)* should facilitate the success of leader political behaviors by ensuring that the particular political behavior selected for demonstration is executed in an effective way that

65 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, op. cit., p. 10: “Some theorists argue that leadership by definition is ethically good (Northouse 2004). It is ‘a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’ but without using coercion (Northouse 2004, 3; cf. Burns 1978). Kellerman (1999; 2004) and Bass (1990; 1998; 1985) have correctly pointed out that the Northouse-Burns approach has a fundamental weakness, which is the problem of the so-called ‘Hitler’s ghost’. Kellerman argues that not only was Hitler’s impact on the twentieth century arguably greater than any other state leader’s; Hitler was skilled at inspiring, mobilizing and directing his followers. Notwithstanding the indiscriminate use of coercion against followers and adversaries alike, and despite the evil of his racist and Social Darwinist ends, Hitler’s leadership was unusually effective in a purely instrumental sense of the word (Kellerman 2004, 11)”.

66 A.P. Ammeter et al., op. cit., p. 764: “The ability to effectively read, understand, and control social interactions has been of interest to behavioral scientists for quite some time... Argyle (1969) suggested that social skill is reflected in the effective exercise of persuasion, explanation, and other influence mechanisms that reveal the ability to control others... Hooijberg, Hunt, and Dodge (1997) illustrate the importance of the combination of cognitive, social, and behavioral complexity in their comprehensive “Leaderplex” Model... Argued (and empirically demonstrated, in many cases) to reflect a separate set of abilities independent of GMA, social effectiveness has been found to be essential for managerial effectiveness (Kilduff & Day, 1994; Luthans et al., 1988)”.

disguises any ulterior motives and/or allows the behavior to be interpreted in a convincing, sincere, and genuine manner”⁶⁷.

More precisely:

- “4.5.3. Political scripts and strategies... Leaders with superior social skills may be adept at making subtle but effective changes in the political script that reflect an understanding of the target’s goals and interests”⁶⁸;
- “Although persons who are instrumental in constructing the coalition typically play critical leadership roles within the coalition, it is important to recognize that these roles are never formalized. As such, effective social skills and persuasive abilities are required for a leader to guide a coalition in desired directions”⁶⁹;
- “The implication of this finding is that socially skilled leaders are more likely to be effective at securing the favorable images (e.g., dedicated, morally worthy, committed, trustworthy, and honest) that can accrue from exemplification, while avoiding the less favorable images (e.g., aloof, hypocritical, condescending, and selfdeluding)”⁷⁰;
- “As described by Jones and Pittman (1982), the purpose of self-promotion is to secure an attribution of competence. To acquire such an attribution, the actor may highlight some general ability level (e.g., athletic prowess and intelligence) or a specific skill (e.g., portfolio analysis)... Because leader competence is obviously an important attribute for prospective followers, leaders have strong incentives to use self-promotion tactics to bolster their reputation as a person with great abilities”⁷¹;
- “Consistent with the notion that socially skilled leaders are more effective in using self-promotion to secure favorable images, Turnley and Bolino (2001) found that high as opposed to low performing actors achieved the desired image of “competent” when using self-promotion more often, while simultaneously avoiding the undesired image of “conceited”...”⁷²;
- “6.1.3. Target attitudes... a skilled leader might be able to mitigate this effect by educating subordinates as to the necessity of such behavior (increasing organizational understanding) and by making them feel that they are active and valued participants in their workplace (increasing perceived control)”⁷³;

67 Ibidem, p. 781, italic PP.

68 Ibidem, p. 762.

69 Ibidem, p. 769.

70 Ibidem, p. 772.

71 For further discussion, see Ibidem, p. 773.

72 For further discussion, see Ibidem, p. 774.

73 Ibidem, p. 783.

- “6.2.5. Leader reputation... Dirks and Ferrin (2002) report strong support for certain behaviors such as transformational leadership activities (e.g., demonstrating individualized concern and respect for others) that result in enhanced trust in leaders and resultant positive impact in follower job outcomes and attitudes. Politically skilled leaders would likely be savvy to these tactics and thus could be expected to benefit from their use to the extent that, for example, increased follower performance yielded increased leader reputation”⁷⁴.

The concept of ability also finds its place in the analysis of the influence of symbolic and nonverbal forms on leaders behaviors: “House (1977) suggested that outstanding leaders need to possess the ability to be verbally articulate as well as nonverbally expressive, recognizing that the effective use of facial and bodily expressions and gestures can be useful in altering the affective/emotional reactions of followers”⁷⁵.

Leader prototypicality is the basis of the effectiveness of leadership⁷⁶. Researchers of leadership assess leadership behaviors and influence tactics according to whether they are in compliance with organizational standards and norms that indicate typical.

Thus, according to Zanzi and O’Neill (2001) in contrast to non-sanctioned political tactics (which deviates from organizational norms, and whose holders are seen as undesirable, unacceptable, and negative), sanctioned political tactics are considered those which “are typically tolerated, expected, or even encouraged”. The sanctioned political tactics include networking, coalition-building, persuasion (rational), and image building, as well as use of expertise and super-ordinate goals. It is important to note that “the former tactic refers to ‘providing particular skills, unique knowledge, or solutions to enhance one’s position’...”⁷⁷.

74 Ibidem, p. 786.

75 See Ibidem, pp. 778-779.

76 Barbara van Knippenberg and Daan van Knippenberg (2005), “Leader Self-Sacrifice and Leadership Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Leader Prototypicality”, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, p. 27: “The notion that group prototypicality is a basis for leadership effectiveness does by no means imply that prototypical leaders can only behave like ‘the average group member’. The ingroup prototype describes and prescribes group-membership appropriate attributes in a specific context, with some attributes more central to the group’s identity than others. The prototypical group member is thus, in fact, closer to a representation of the ideal group member than to the typical or average group member. It is therefore also possible that the prototypical leader is, for instance, rather average in some respects and exceptional or unconventional in others. Prototypicality provides leaders with more leeway in their behavior and thus positions them to effectively engage in behavior that may lead the group or organization in new directions”.

77 According to A.P. Ammeter et al., op. cit., p. 776.

We should also note “assumptions that individuals hold about the characteristics of effective leaders constitute their implicit leadership theories (e.g., Eden & Leviatan, 1975; Lord, 1985). Typically, such implicit theories involve prototypes and stereotypes about pertinent traits, skills and behaviors associated with effective leaders (Yukl, 2002)”⁷⁸.

The key thing is to stand out: “Successful leaders are those who have demonstrated their ability to move their society tangibly in the direction that seemed clearly supportive of their suggested ‘grand design’”⁷⁹. Thereby: “We tend to believe that ‘good’ leadership should be good both ethically and instrumentally... It may also be ‘bad’ in the sense of being ineffective due to, for example, incompetence, rigidity or intemperance in leaders or followers that interferes with the use of appropriate means to attain the ends sought (Kellerman 2004)... Complex leadership can be both ‘effective’ and ‘ethical’...”⁸⁰. Modern theory draws attention to: “Nye’s modern normative typology compares two broadly accepted meanings of the term ‘good leadership’: the one referring to the leader’s ability to achieve results (whatever his or her ends might be) and the other offering an ethical judgement on the value of the goals pursued, means applied, and results obtained throughout the whole cycle of leadership”⁸¹.

Conclusion

It has been shown that leadership is a multidimensional and historically framed phenomenon. It is pointed out that through acting leaders do not fully personalize historical trends – but that they are not completely autonomous. It was pointed out that it is necessary for analyses of leadership to strike balance between determining the importance of leadership and broader structural determinants in the political process. Therefore, the analysis of leader’s actions must take into account its interaction with the group (need of followers for a certain type of leader) in certain historical

78 Ibidem, p. 782.

79 Joseph Masciulli and Mikhail A. Molchanov and W. Andy Knight, op. cit., p. 10. Ibidem, p. 3: “Leadership is an essential feature of all government and governance: weak leadership contributes to government failures, and strong leadership is indispensable if the government is to succeed. Wise leadership secures prosperity in the long run; foolhardy leadership may bring about a catastrophe. The lack of leadership routinizes governance... On the other hand, over-assertive leadership pays little attention to institutional constraints: it may bring about sudden, unexpected changes, and disrupt the normal flow of the political process, thus detracting from its transparency and/or predictability... leaders need to be prepared to abandon policy instruments and ideas that no longer work in a new environment”.

80 Look closer Ibidem, pp. 9-10.

81 Look closer Ibidem, pp. 16-17.

circumstances. In other words, it is necessary to define a measure of the importance of specific historical, cultural, economic and/or institutional determinants and social structure, as independent variables. Within such context, the action of political leaders reflect his/her psychological profile, including his abilities.

The correspondence between the model of organization/group (political culture, and given historical circumstances) and the type of leaders (and certain skills) leads to effective policy. This match is a key moment for the society, which conditions and limits the possibility to realize what in modern civilization means advancement. Therefore, the leadership is realized through the organizational / institutional context with whom it is in relationship of interaction and interdependency – especially their function of responding to the influence of the environment. The point is precisely that this function is realized – especially leadership function of setting goals. If the politics is not realized as an activity of defining the objectives and the means for their realization, it loses its field of existence. When politics are as abovementioned, a function of leadership is clear. Then the importance of leadership abilities is showed.

When leadership is defined as a process it is understood as the interaction of leaders and followers. However, if the man as the center of the process is kicked from the definition, leadership becomes only an effective instrument for achieving the goals. Within different theoretical frameworks leadership often becomes (or is reduced to) the selection and/or implementation of strategies/techniques that lead to a given goal, that is referred to as a style. This is because the theoretical model of leadership cannot overcome the requirements for effectiveness (ultimately, profitability) that is set by modernity. When effectiveness becomes exclusive measure of leadership it is comprehended, and seeks to be provided, through the model of leadership style(s). Effectiveness is solved by choosing appropriate strategies of action. The man is instrumentalized – leader as much as followers. The sole function is to select and carry out available strategies. The goal of this model of action is pre-set– and it cannot be influenced. When the importance of the leader is diminished, a limited number of alternatives remains available. When only a limited choice of alternatives is provided, results are known. If the strategies are pre-selected leadership is factor that has no substantial effect on their acceptance and implementation. When only effectiveness of model of action is sought, leader is solely the executor of the model. If we explore style as appropriate selection and application of strategies it does not matter who the leader is, but whether he/she applies the rules that produce outcome. In that case, not only a crisis of theory of leadership is manifested, but also a crisis of leadership itself. Since the notion of adequacy must be defined, that is achieved through the model of style as a model of effectiveness. Or someone else, but not leader.

However, the styles are dependent on the personality of the leader – especially on his ability to make the right choice of strategy for a given situation at a given moment. The possibility for (appropriate) application of the strategy also depends on the ability of the leader. Theoretical models of leadership therefore must recognize the connection between leadership style and the conceptual and terminological apparatus that is connected to the leader's personality, including his/her abilities (skills, competencies).

Within the given historical circumstances the man in politics must be active, creative and innovative. Or a new understanding of politics does not require that? Does that new understanding of politics provide an answer to the question why the style is defined without reference to the individual characteristics of a man in politics, but rather as the application of strategies/techniques? Although, it should be emphasized, some of the theoretical framework based on application of strategies/techniques search for correlation with personality traits, including the leadership abilities.

Individual must be at the center of the model, with the provision that the model simultaneously must be dynamic. The solution is in a complex and open model that connects followers and leaders via the conditions of their actions. Within the model the leadership style is linked with individuality, including the ability of leaders to fulfill the role of implementing strategies/techniques. The style is not a technique but determined by individuality. In this manner, splitting leadership styles and roles – as the roles are implemented through styles – has a real meaning.

This model understands that leadership style as a group of attributes of action, closely related to the personality of the leaders, including its ability. Why is it necessary? Because styles are manifested identities. Styles cannot exist as concepts without content. That does not mean that we cannot construct the ideal types of styles of political leaders as an analytical tool and hypothetical framework for researchers. These constructs are objectified via the leader, as we must know who carries – determines and implements – political projects. Because politics does not entail only activity but also the identity.

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ZNAČAJ LIDERSKIH SPOSOBNOSTI U POLITIČKOM LIDERSTVU

Apstrakt

U članku je predložena definicija politike, upućeno na ključne elemente koncepta (političkog) liderstva i više njegovih određenja, pozicionirano liderstvo u pojmu politike, i razmatran odnos društvenog konteksta, ličnosti i sposobnosti lidera. Značaj problemskog kompleksa sposobnosti za sveobuhvatno poimanje liderstva izložen je i preko analize koncepta liderskog stila, kao i upućivanjem na probleme tipičnosti, adekvatnosti i delotvornosti postupanja lidera u odnosu na liderske sposobnosti. Analiza relevantnosti teorijskog pristupa liderskog stila za teoriju liderstva vodila je do zaključka da je – uz uvažavanje konteksta – efektivnost liderstva zavisna od ličnosti i time sposobnosti lidera da učini adekvatan izbor stilova (strategija/tehnika), kao i da ih na odgovarajući način primeni. Razmatranje aspekata liderskih sposobnosti takođe je vodilo do zaključka da je potrebno težiti kompleksnom, ali otvorenom i dinamičnom, modelu stila liderstva u kojem je osnažen značaj ličnosti lidera, uključujući njegove sposobnosti da dela u pravcu ostvarivanja svojih funkcija.

Ključne reči: politika, političko liderstvo, liderski stil, liderske kompetencije, liderske veštine.