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**The Public Leader as a Social Actor of Development
of Contemporary Society**

Speciality 5.7.7. Social and Political Philosophy

Abstract of the dissertation for the degree of
Candidate of Philosophical Sciences

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The Relevance of the Research Topic. Contemporary society and the modern world order are evolving over time under the influence of two trends that characterize their social content in diametrically opposed ways. One is the trend explained by the concept of the “necessary elevation of the quality of social intelligence,” which “appears as a reflection of the operation of the world-historical law of the strengthening of the role of ideal determination in history.” The second trend, by contrast, characterizes the fundamental social content of the modern era through the growing role of the latest digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI). At the heart of the dilemma lies the question of the role of the human being in social history, in social development, and in social governance—a role whose value has been unquestioned since the time of the philosophical concepts of Ancient China and Ancient Greece, which described the enduring significance of the ruler.

Currently, this tradition—defined as the “anthropic” or “geoanthropic” cosmological principle—faces an alternative vision of the future in which artificial intelligence takes the place of humans. Widespread mechanization, automation, robotization, computerization, and so on do not diminish the threat but create even more formidable dangers for humanity. More formidable dangers are associated with the transformations of modern technogenic civilization, which has the potential to alter human nature itself, based on the “necessity” of improving humanity through NBIC technologies (nano-, bio-, information-, and cognitive technologies). All of this raises questions regarding a topic that, in the philosophical tradition, has explored the nature of a ruler’s activities, but today confronts issues concerning the significance of modern public leadership.

A number of contemporary trends and social theories create a zone of uncertainty surrounding the question of the image, social significance, and social role of the ruler and public leader in 21st-century society and as the 22nd century approaches.

The uncertainty surrounding the status of the individual and the public leader in the modern era—and their ability to make sense of current events and make wise decisions—becomes even more acute against the backdrop of the increasing complexity of the structure and life of modern society, as well as the nature of the problems and challenges that must be addressed. Globalization is a factor contributing to this complexity; one of its trends in the first quarter of the 21st century is a sharp decline in the role of the individual in shaping the future of society and in participating in social processes. While proposing various scenarios for its future development, the scientific community is far from unanimous in its view that social development in the 22nd century must continue to be grounded in the individual, human potential, and human culture—all of which are under pressure from threats posed by unchecked scientific and technological progress. In contemporary society, we are witnessing a crisis of the “old” world order. Today, in the age of information technology and technological progress, the question of the role of the human being—both as a social agent of societal

development and as the very purpose of societal development, the philosophical foundations of which were laid by the “great thinkers”—is once again becoming relevant against the backdrop of a trend toward the displacement of humans by artificial intelligence.

One of the defining features of modern society is the ever-increasing density of institutional, formal communication and the accelerating speed of information transfer between depersonalized social institutions. In the course of reflecting on social ties within the framework of social communication, a “dissolution” of the individual within socio-institutional ties has become apparent, a reduction of the individual’s sphere of existence to a “Habermasian communication theorist,” who insists on “the transition from Cartesian monological subjectivity to discursive intersubjectivity.” This dissolution of the human personality in everyday communications is also projected onto the sphere of contemporary public politics. Thus, according to a number of researchers, public leaders today do not fulfill such a representative function. From the vantage point of the 21st century, there is a need for a comprehensive understanding of the experience of 20th-century rulers and for comparing it with the experience of rulers from other eras.

The concept of “personality”—and its relationship to the concepts of “human being” and “social subject”—is becoming increasingly ambiguous today in light of the consequences of scientific and technological progress and the associated phenomena of transhumanism and depersonalized communication, as well as under the influence of globalization. This is changing traditional notions of the “wise ruler” in modern society. Whereas in the past, a person—and, above all, a ruler—was viewed as a creator, a holistic personality, a “complex personality” embodying natural, social, and spiritual elements, today the idea of a ruler’s (or any public figure’s) wisdom is gradually becoming a thing of the past, especially in the West. Their popularity, image, embodiment of the values of the new society, and populism are taking on greater importance—with an emphasis on support for technology and the potential for human improvement through its use.

Faced with unprecedented technology-driven problems, modern society needs to renew its philosophical understanding of public leadership and the contemporary meaning of “wise governance,” as well as a reassessment of the significance and role of the “wise ruler” in preserving the anthropocentric trajectory of social development—that is, a form of development that recognizes the human being as society’s highest value.

The extent to which the topic has been explored in academic research. The topic of the wise ruler and public leader as a social actor, and their role in the social development of society, has been the subject of study throughout the history of the humanities. In European scholarship, works by Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Niccolò Machiavelli, and others are devoted to the study of the concept of the wise ruler. The role of the individual in history is explored in the works of A. Turgot,

G. Hegel, T. Carlyle, E. Troeltsch, and J. Burckhardt. In the 19th century, the social subject and social leadership—as a phenomenon of a collective, socially determined nature—were examined by K. Marx, F. Engels, M. Weber, and others. The volitional, irrational basis of the social subject—the leader—is reflected in the works of A. Schopenhauer, F. Nietzsche, and others.

Throughout the 20th century, social leadership as a mode of existence for the social subject was studied from the perspective of its psychological nature (as explored in the works of C. G. Jung, C. Lévi-Strauss, phenomenology (the concepts of E. Husserl), existentialism (the concepts of M. Heidegger, K. Jaspers, and others), and postmodernism (in the works of M. Foucault and others).

In the modern era, particular attention is being paid to the civilizational characteristics of the social subject, as examined, in particular, in the works of S. Huntington and Z. Brzezinski.

In the works of Eastern thinkers, reflections on the concept of the “self” have always been based on religious (or religious-philosophical) concepts. The greatest contributions to the development of this topic were made by Ibn Khaldun, Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, Imam al-Azam Abu Hanifa, Confucius, M. Gandhi, and others.

In Russia, works by Metropolitan Hilarion, Ivan IV the Terrible, V. S. Solovyov, N. A. Berdyaev, V. I. Lenin, S. L. Frank, and others are devoted to the study of the social role and place of the public leader in the development of society.

In the modern era, among the socio-philosophical works devoted to the study of the social subject and the public leader, the works of the following authors stand out: P. S. Avdeev, A. M. Bekarev, K. Yu. Bogomolov, P. S. Gurevich, A. V. Dakhin, A. M. Dorozhkin, L. A. Zelenov, V. A. Kutyriev, G. S. Pak, V. S. Stepin, A. I. Subetto, T. A. Ursul, A. D. Ursul, A. N. Fatenkov, S. M. Frolova, N. I. Yablokova, V. A. Yachmenik, and others. In the context of studying the typology of leadership, we also refer to G. P. Shchedrovitsky's theory of cognitive activity as one of the foundations for identifying the relevant types.

At present, the question of the contemporary role of the individual in social development appears to have been insufficiently studied. Contemporary realities are creating new conditions for human life and society, which Prof. A.I. Subetto characterizes as the worsening of the environmental crisis and the onset of a global environmental catastrophe—a catastrophe that society may be able to avoid by shifting from a strategy of spontaneous development to one of “managed socio-natural evolution based on collective intelligence.” Furthermore, modern realities are such that individuals become alienated from themselves and lose their individuality in the process of ever-increasing virtual communication. Accordingly, the question of the role of the individual in social development requires rethinking, taking into account new manifestations of scientific and technological progress and new features of the social structure of the Russian Federation (as opposed to the USSR). Reviews by P.S.

Avdeev, who analyzed popular theories of group leadership (the “leadership traits” theory), show that these concepts have a number of significant shortcomings. This prompted the author to develop his own classification of leadership functions, which, however, raises the question of the socio-philosophical basis for such a classification.

The question of the essence of the modern public leader — a concept that has always included the image of a wise ruler — also requires further study. A public leader is a social actor who, throughout history, has significantly influenced the fate of the society he or she leads. Has he retained the traits of a wise ruler today? What defines the personality of a public leader today? What is the significance of his personality in the social development of modern society? These are questions that have received little attention to date and are explored in this study.

The **object** of this research is the dialectic of the individual, society, and social development as manifested in the activities of the modern public leader.

The **subject** of this research is the public leader as a form of realizing the potential for social development in modern society.

The **objective** of this research is to develop the philosophical foundations for conceptualizing the forms and models of modern public leadership and to define the characteristics of a modern leader who can contribute to Russia’s social development in the 21st century.

To achieve this objective, the following tasks are addressed:

1. Defining the concept of “public leader,” identifying the connection between its meaning and the concepts of “ruler,” “personality,” and “social subject,” as well as distinguishing its meaning from that of the concept of “leader” in other spheres of social life (spiritual, scientific, etc.).

2. To identify the types of social leadership that have emerged in the Western European socio-philosophical tradition.

3. To identify the types of social leadership in the Russian socio-philosophical tradition.

4. Identifying philosophical alternatives to theories of modern society’s development.

5. Identifying the nature of the relationship between types of public leadership and alternative directions of social development.

6. Identifying the socio-philosophical characteristics of public leadership consistent with the development priorities of modern Russia in the context of the 22nd century.

Scope of the dissertation research. The dissertation by I.S. Lagunova on the topic “The Public Leader as a Social Agent of Modern Society’s Development” corresponds to the description of scientific specialty 5.7.7 “Social and Political Philosophy (Philosophical Sciences),” specifically, section 7 “The Problem of the Subject and Object in Contemporary Social Philosophy,” item 39 “Man as a Problem of Social Philosophy. Man and Society. The Concept and Types of the Human

Personality,” item 41 “The Variability of the Historical Development of Modern Humanity — The Problem of Identifying Boundaries and Establishing ‘Controlling Parameters ’That Determine the Course and Outcome of Events,” and item 42 “The Historical Fate of Russia and the Prospects for Its Development in the 21st Century.”

Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Study

The dialectical method, the contemporary understanding of which is presented in the works of Prof. L.A. Zelenov as a methodology of human studies, including the principle of humanism, the principle of determinism, the principle of activity, the principle of proportionality, the principle of systemicity, the principle of concreteness, the principle of sociality, and the principle of development. The elements of the dialectical method listed above are central to this dissertation; their application has ensured a holistic understanding of the topic of social leadership, made it possible to identify the elements of human subjectivity in their interconnected presence within human nature, and defined a new, integrative type of social leadership. Through the use of the dialectical method, this work has succeeded in demonstrating the need to develop a new type of leadership in Russia (integrative) capable of preserving its civilization, maintaining the anthropic foundation of its development, preserving and developing a philosophical heritage with a history spanning more than two millennia, and capable of organizing the defense of the nation’s worldview culture against contemporary challenges posed by post- and transhumanism.

The phenomenological method (in the light of A. F. Losev’s philosophy) is grounded in the general principle that “a name is life,” and that “only in a name is the deepest nature of sociality, in all its infinite forms of manifestation, grounded.” This approach made it possible to describe and explain the individual characteristics of each type of public leadership through the interrelationship of subjective qualities. The phenomenological method served as the basis for researching and establishing the connection between the value systems characteristic of different types of public leadership and the nature of their influence on social development.

The historical method made it possible to trace the development of philosophical concepts of social leadership in the Russian and European philosophical traditions, revealing the logic behind the emergence of contemporary challenges to society and the individual posed by technological progress and the philosophies of post- and transhumanism.

The research also employed typological analysis, as well as methods of analysis, synthesis, and comparison.

The scientific novelty of this work lies in the following:

1. The concept of a “social leader” has been defined, along with its distinction from and connection to traditional philosophical notions of a ruler, as well as its specific characteristics in the context of the concrete historical features of contemporary society.

2. A new approach to the problem of typological descriptions of public leadership in the Western European socio-philosophical tradition and in the Russian socio-philosophical tradition has been developed.

3. The introduction of the concept of the “socio-ontological potential of a public leader” has been justified; this concept determines both models of individual-personality-based public leadership and probable trends in social development. The connection between alternative types of public leadership and alternative directions of social development in contemporary society has been substantiated.

4. It has been shown that the components of a public leader’s socio-ontological potential consist of three foundational social frameworks of historical action (everyday-historical, fragmentary-historical, and comprehensive-historical) and two foundational social frameworks of cultural representation (socially-substantial and socially-transcendental).

5. In light of the concept of the “socio-ontological potential of a public leader,” various types of public leaders (European rational, postmodern, liberal, Slavophile, and proletarian) are analyzed; their typological characteristics are refined; and the conclusion is substantiated that these types of public leaders cannot resolve the contemporary dilemma of social development in favor of the anthropometric sociopolitical perspective that is a priority for modern Russia. The interconnection between types of public leadership and alternatives for social development has been demonstrated.

6. A concept of an integrative type of public leader is proposed, one capable of ensuring an anthropometric choice of long-term public development policy for Russia in the 21st century. The specificity of the integrative type of public leader is defined through the integrity of the relationship between the underlying social frameworks of historical action and the underlying social frameworks of cultural representation.

The main provisions of the research submitted for defence are as follows:

1. A public leader is a form of social being and existence of a person as an individual who acts publicly as a subject of governance, whose subjective qualities embody the dialectical interconnection of the fields of social relations “individual – society – history” and “individual – society – culture,” which constitute the socio-ontological potential of the public leader’s organizing influence on social development. The concept of “public leader” preserves the ideas, established within the framework of the history of philosophy, regarding the bearer of supreme state power as a “demiurge,” the center of organizing influence on society, which is reflected in

the archaic concept of “ruler.” However, unlike the concept of “ruler” — which linked the source of supreme organizing influence to the transcendental forces of ecumenical, cosmic kinship or with the transcendence of the Creator, the concept of “social leader” reveals the sources of human organizing influence within the system of social relations and characterizes the nature of social leadership through the interconnection of the concepts “personality — social actor — public leader.”

2. The socio-ontological potential of a public leader is realized in a particular historical type of leadership, the components of which boil down to three presuppositional social frameworks of historical action (everyday-historical, fragmentary-historical, and comprehensive-historical) and to two presuppositional social frameworks of cultural representation (socially-substantial and socially-transcendental). Various combinations of the components of a public leader’s socio-ontological potential determine one type of leadership or another.

3. A study of the Western European philosophical tradition allows us to identify two types of public leadership: the European rational type and the postmodern type. The socio-ontological potential of the rational type of public leadership includes, on the one hand, the presuppositional framework of fragmentary-historical action and the presuppositional framework of socio-substantial cultural representation, reduced to the substantial representation of the rational “cogito”; at the same time, the entire socio-ontological potential is realized in the dialectically interconnected qualities of the personality: the rational and irrational principles, the corporeal and the spiritual, the subjective and the objective, the knowable and the apophatic, the collective and the individual, the Dionysian and the Apollonian, the masculine and the feminine. The postmodern type of public leadership is characterized by a socio-ontological potential that includes a presuppositional framework of everyday historical action and a presuppositional framework of socio-transcendental cultural representation. This entire socio-ontological potential is realized in the dialectically interconnected qualities of the individual, who strives to completely separate themselves from the representation of the cultural traditions of their society.

4. In the Russian philosophical tradition, three types of public leadership can be described: liberal, slavyanophil, and proletarian. The liberal type of public leadership is characterized by its socio-ontological potential, which includes a presuppositional framework of fragmentary historical action and a presuppositional framework of socio-transcendental cultural representation, based on a gravitation toward the Western European way of life. The slavyanophil type of public leadership is characterized by its socio-ontological potential encompassing a premissive framework of everyday historical action and a premissive framework of socio-substantial cultural representation, based on the traditional everyday way of life of the Orthodox

peasant community. The proletarian type of public leadership is characterized by its socio-ontological potential encompassing a premissive framework of comprehensive historical action and a premissive framework of socio-transcendental cultural representation, which together were realized in the form of the socialist (communist) revolution, which took place as a concrete historical episode in the management of societal development.

5. The socio-ontological potential of a public leader is realized not only in models of individual and personal action but also in models of social development, the main contemporary alternative of which is linked to the relationship between the socio-substantial (socially anti-humanistic development of society) and socio-transcendental (trans- and post-humanism) frameworks of cultural representation. The contemporary socio-substantial framework of the cultural representation of a public leader and their policies provides the foundation for the anthropometric trend of social development, that is, it orients policy toward preserving the human being as the highest value of society and the highest criterion of social development. The contemporary socio-transcendental framework of cultural representation creates the foundation for the cyber-dimensional trend of social development, which orients policy toward depriving the human being of the status of the highest value of society and social development, and toward assigning this status to a new, cyber-social actor (transhumanism and post-humanism). The concept of the "socio-ontological potential of a public leader" allows us to identify the relationships between types of public leadership and the most probable types of social development. The social and ontological potential of a public leader is most fully realized in the capacity of the highest state authority. Each of the identified types of public leadership (European rational, postmodern, liberal, slavynophil, and proletarian) contains a number of limitations that do not meet the challenges of contemporary Russian society and cannot ensure the adoption of an anthropometric policy for the social development of Russia as a civilization, a policy of preserving nature, or a policy of the accelerated and comprehensive development of human abilities and natural intelligence.

6. Contemporary society faces the challenge of preserving the anthropometric foundation of social development, posed by threats emanating from trans- and posthumanist concepts that exclude humans from social processes. To ensure an anthropometric perspective for Russia's social development in the 22nd century, a new type of public leadership is required, defined by the concept of "integrative public leadership." The specificity of integrative public leadership is characterized by its socio-ontological potential encompassing the dialectic of the interconnectedness of all prerequisite frameworks of historical action (daily historical, fragmentary historical, and comprehensive historical) and the dialectic of the interconnectedness

of both prerequisite frameworks of cultural representation (social-substantial and social-transcendental). Among the characteristic subjective qualities of a Russian public leader of the integrative type are, firstly, the ability for self-development, secondly, the awareness of the threat to man emanating from technogenic tendencies in the development of society, and thirdly, the ability to take responsibility for organizing the long-term movement of society along the path of anthropomorphic social development of Russia-civilization.

Theoretical Significance of the Study

This study critically reexamines the current trend toward the deontologization of philosophical conceptions of society, social development, and the nature of the social leader—a trend most strikingly evident in the theories of the postmodernist philosophical movement, which currently claims global, world-wide status. The theoretical significance of this study lies in the fact that it contributes to the preservation and development of the ontological tradition of Russian philosophy, specifically through the elaboration of the concept of “the socio-ontological potential of a public leader,” and its content, which encompasses the social framework of a public leader’s historical action and the social framework of a public leader’s cultural representation; in light of this, a typological analysis of the forms of political leadership described in Western European and Russian socio-philosophical literature is presented. This study enables an understanding of the conceptual foundations for a holistic, comprehensive explanation of the nature of types of public leadership, identifies the underlying foundations of their interrelationships, and raises the question of the emergence and prospects of a new, integrative type of public leadership capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century. Furthermore, the concept of “integrative type of public leadership” is substantiated, characterizing a new type of public leadership that is necessary to ensure the prospects for anthropometric social development of Russia as a civilization by the 22nd century. The proposed typology makes it possible to identify alternative forms of leadership in the modern world and the specific nature of their interrelationship with the structures of social existence; it also allows us to determine the relationship between alternative models of leadership and alternative paths of social development.

The **practical significance** of this work lies in the fact that its findings—including the concept of the “integrative-type public leader”—can serve as a foundation for educational and applied research seminars on the topic of the modern public leader’s personality, professional development courses in the field of state and municipal administration, as well as a foundation for applied research into forms of contemporary public leadership and related trends in the social development of modern society within the disciplines of sociology, political science, and philosophy.

Reliability and Validation of Research Results. The reliability of the dissertation's research results is ensured by the comprehensive application of proven scientific methods. The main findings of the research were presented in nine publications in journals recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, as well as in fourteen publications in other peer-reviewed scientific journals.

In addition, the findings of the dissertation research were presented at a number of international scientific conferences held between 2022 and 2025.

The comprehensiveness of the dissertation's content is reflected in twenty-three scientific works published by I. S. Lagunova, including articles in journals included in the List of Publications Recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission of Russia for the publication of the main scientific results of a dissertation for the degree of Candidate (Doctor) of Sciences.

Structure and Content of the Research

The dissertation consists of an introduction, two chapters, six sections, a conclusion, and a bibliography.