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# THE LEADERSHIP STYLE OF THATCHER AND LINCOLN AS PORTRAYED IN FILM

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## **Abstract:**

*My work is based on a psychological analysis from the point of view of theories of leadership, and includes an analysis of the political style of Margaret Thatcher and Abraham Lincoln. These theories have been covered in the lectures on the psychology of leadership which took place in April 2013 in the PSU. Analysis in this paper is based on nine major theories, the key points of which are described below. The main context of the study was examining the movies "The Iron Lady" (2012) and "Lincoln" (2013). The main conclusion is the confirmation of the truth of those theories and the effectiveness of their practical application.*

**Key words:** theory of leadership; political style; Lincoln; Margaret Thatcher; international co-operation.

## **Introduction**

First of all, it should be noted that the leader can be born, such as monarchs, or achieve leadership under the influence of their own motives, or become leaders by the influence of others and by circumstances.

All of these are ways to becoming special in many spheres. But in this paper, I want to elaborate on the second, i.e. formation of a leader within their own motives and actions, since both Margaret Thatcher and Abraham Lincoln came to power because of that.

## **Key points of nine major theories**

### **1) The theory of 'great man'**

- Great leaders are born - not made
- They are designed to be leaders
- They become heroes and "deified."
- They often become lifetime legends.
- They are highly intelligent.
- They have huge achievements.
- They get great authority.

### **2) The theory of the 'hero'**

Here, leadership is seen in the specific context, which is based on the availability of necessary features needed at this time: motivation, self-confidence, charisma, creativity, flexibility. Such leaders can stay in power for a while and likewise could be heads for a long time.

### **3) The theory of contingency**

- Leadership qualities will manifest themselves in a crisis situation.

- The followers give them power voluntarily (elect or nominate).
- leadership style can be active or passive, ie only for their ideals and rights or as a representative, but without a clear initiative.

#### **4) Situational Theory**

- Depending on the time and conditions Leaders choose the best plan of action based on the situation prevailing culture and their knowledge of their followers.
- Different styles of leadership may be appropriate in different situations.
- The most experienced leader is chosen to give an authoritative leadership.
- The most acceptable leader is chosen to keep the group / country in harmony.

#### **5) A Behavioral Theory**

- Is based on the belief that great leaders are not born.
- It focuses on the actions of a leader.
- Leaders are able to study, copy, and reproduce the styles of leadership.

#### **6) Participating theory**

- Participating leaders take others into account.
- They encourage participation and contributions from others.
- They keep control of the government.

#### **7) Management Theory**

- In management theory leaders can distribute both rewards and punishments
- Rely on those followers who support them.
- The followers who refuse to perform are demoted.

#### **8) The theory of relations**

- Attention is drawn to the emerging relationship between leaders and followers.
- Leaders motivate and inspire, encouraging group members to see the importance and significance of tasks.
- Ethical leadership style with clear moral standards.

#### **9) The bureaucratic leader**

- Highly structured
- Performs procedures clearly
- Slow to change course
- Ask permission from superiors (councilors)
- Leaders who are trying to speed up procedures often fail or upset others
- Bureaucratic leadership controls the banks, the management of the public, universities, hospitals,

## Margaret Thatcher



The political views of Margaret Thatcher were greatly influenced by the attitudes and beliefs of her father.

She clearly set herself a goal and her self-confidence helped her in many ways. Undoubtedly she lived by particular principles. It should be noted that the distinguishing feature of Thatcher was her uncompromising insistence in holding on to those principles. Once she formed policy she tended by all and any means not to retreat from implementing it. The great advantage Thatcher had over her political opponents both inside and outside her own party, was that, as party leader and as Prime Minister, she held powerful positions in the party and in the state while skillfully using them. Despite the pressure surrounding her, and despite the fact that many disagreed with her policy, she nonetheless adhered to her own

views.

In my opinion, according to the theories of leadership, Margaret Thatcher will be one of the "Great Men", though she did not quite have all the necessary qualities. Namely, she was not born to be great (like monarchs), the greatness she achieved was her own. She was not deified: quite the opposite is true. Her rule was a very difficult period in the life of the UK. Thatcher's system of government conflicted with the desired view of society "shared" by the nation.

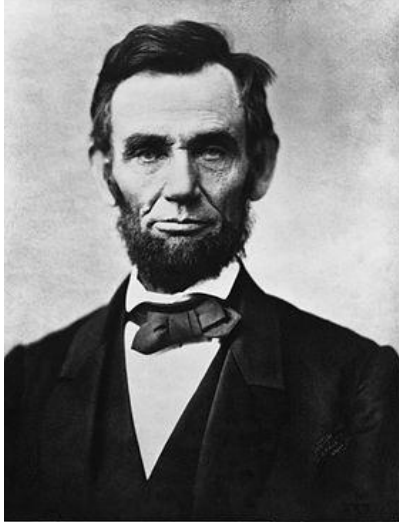
Thatcher's premiership was a period marked by high unemployment, popular unrest and regular strikes. On the issue of unemployment, most critics blame her economic policy, which was strongly influenced by the ideas of monetarism. This problem, in turn, has led indirectly to social problems such as the spread of drug addiction and family divorce. Speaking in April 2009 in Scotland, on the eve of the anniversary of its thirty-election as Prime Minister, Thatcher insisted that she was not at all sorry for her actions during her premiership, including the issue of the introduction of the poll tax and non-subsidising of "outdated industry whose markets were in decline."

However, to supporters of Thatcher she remains a political figure who was able to rebuild the British economy, cause a significant blow to the power of the trade unions and to restore the image of Britain as a world power. During her premiership there was an increase from 7 to 25% in the number of British citizens who owned shares, and more than one million families have purchased a house formerly owned by the municipal councils, which increased the number of homeowners from 55 to 67%. Total personal wealth rose by 80%. Victory in the Falklands War and a close alliance with the United States are considered two of her major achievements. Because of this she has become a legend, acquiring the status of "Iron Lady."

Thatcher's premiership was the longest in the twentieth century, and since the time of Salisbury (1885, 1886-1892 and 1895-1902) and the longest continuous stay in office since Lord Liverpool (1812-1827).

## Abraham Lincoln

"You can fool part of the people all the time and you can fool all the people some of the time, but you can not fool all the people all the time."



Unlike Margaret Thatcher, who many believed to have divided the nation, Abraham Lincoln rallied a nation and eventually unified it.

His most enduring legacy was his campaign for the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution and the abolition of slavery. Just as Margaret Thatcher is not in possession of all the necessary qualities to be a "great man", yet in the eyes of many, he was and still is to this day one of the greatest Presidents of the United States and an outstanding global leader of all time.

If we consider Lincoln from the perspective of the major theories he has all the features of the leader who favours "Participatory theory."

Namely, he took account of the views of the people as well as others of his adherents, and he, nevertheless, retained control of the government. By his

rational and clearly defined actions, he prevented the final dissolution of the states and initiated the formation of the American nation, abolishing slavery.

Lincoln also displayed the characteristics associated with behavioral theory of leadership.

The film *Lincoln* shows the complex relationships within the family of the President, as well as the complex relationships between him and his supporters and opponents during that pivotal time in American history.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the theme of leadership is highly relevant to any analysis of political manifestations, and in everyday life.

Significant elements of the political system of leadership are of a constant and continuing interest to scientists and psychologists who express views on a variety of aspects of its modes.

Formation of a particular type and style of political leadership is determined by a combination of factors such as the subjective nature (personal politics as a person) and a number of factors external to the individual. On these depends the success of the leader.

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