

<https://doi.org/10.15407/socium2025.02.029>
UDC 316.334



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POLITICAL, MENTAL, CULTURAL, AND CUSTOMARY FEATURES OF COMMUNITIES IN THE POSTMODERN AND METAMODERN ERA

This article is devoted to the analysis of the change in the paradigms of thinking of communities and nations through the prism of modernist, postmodernist and metamodernist philosophies and concepts, each of which, at a given time, occupies dominant positions in Western society, reflecting the complexity of the combination of various socio-cultural and political factors, their interaction and the ultimate consequences for public administration and the lives of citizens. In order to achieve this goal, the first part examines two transitions, each of which has directly or indirectly affected global demographics. The socio-economic transition describes the change in the way communities live due to the transition from agrarian-rural to industrial-urban and post-industrial production. The second transition is associated with the move from the modern to the postmodern era and the transformation of the value orientations of Western society, which was accompanied by the deconstruction of metanarratives. The second part outlines the conceptual foundations of the simulacrum phenomenon, analysing the specific features of its forms and models of functioning depending on the regime established in the country: dictatorial, in which the simulacrum requires constant support by terror and repression, and democratic, where, in order to preserve the integrity of democratic institutions, the authorities are forced to build their information policy on the basis of empirical data that can be verified by the population. The article identifies the reasons for the new transition of Western society into the metamodern era, the phenomenon of oscillation between the ideas of modernity and postmodernity, which has led to the emergence of pragmatic naivety and new sincerity. Combined with the restoration of myth as a sign rather than an essence, these factors create cultural conditions for the emergence of a demand for a new type of political actors who, in a decentralised information field, are forced to seek new approaches to interacting with citizens. The analysis resulted in the formulation of the main challenges facing the world's states today, in particular, in ensuring national security against the threats of disinformation and the resulting disintegration of society. The main directions and means that governments should use to adequately respond to the challenges faced by society have been formulated.

Keywords: modernity, postmodernity, postmodernism, deconstruction, demography, simulacrum, metamodernity, metamodernism, archetype.

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ПОЛІТИЧНІ, МЕНТАЛЬНІ, КУЛЬТУРНІ ТА ЗВИЧАЄВІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ СПІЛЬНОТ В ЕПОХУ ПОСТМОДЕРНУ І МЕТАМОДЕРНУ

Стаття присвячена аналізу зміни парадигм мислення спільнот і народів крізь призму модерністської, постмодерністської та метамодерністської філософій і концепцій, кожна з

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ISSN 1681-116X. Ukrainian Society, 2025, № 2 (93): 29–46

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яких у свій час займає домінуючі позиції у західному суспільстві, відображаючи складність поєднання різних соціокультурних і політичних чинників, їхню взаємодію та кінцеві наслідки для державного управління й життя громадян. Для досягнення поставленої мети у першій частині розглянуто два переходи, кожен з яких прямо або опосередковано вплинув на світові демографічні показники. Соціально-економічний – описує зміну способу життя спільнот через перехід від аграрно-сільського до індустріально-міського та постіндустріального способу виробництва. Друга зміна пов'язана з переходом від епохи модерну до постмодерну та трансформацією ціннісних орієнтирів західного суспільства, яка супроводжувалася деконструкцією метанаративів. У другій частині описано концептуальні засади явища симулякру, розглянуто особливості його форм і моделей функціонування залежно від режиму, що встановлено в країні: диктаторського, у якому симулякр потребує постійної підтримки терором і репресіями, та демократичного, де для збереження цілісності демократичних інститутів влада вимушена будувати свою інформаційну політику на основі емпіричних даних, які піддаються верифікації з боку населення. У статті окреслено причини нового переходу західного суспільства в епоху метамодерну, характерне для неї явище коливання між ідеями модерну та постмодерну, що зумовило появу прагматичної наївності та нової щирості, які в поєднанні з реставрацією міфу не як суті, а як знаку, створюють культурні умови для появи запиту на новий тип політичних акторів, які в умовах децентралізованого інформаційного поля вимушені шукати нові підходи для взаємодії з громадянами. Результатом аналізу стало формулювання головних викликів, які сьогодні постають перед державами світу, зокрема щодо забезпечення національної безпеки від загроз поширення дезінформації та зумовленої цим дезінтеграції суспільства. Сформовано головні напрями та засоби, які уряди повинні застосовувати для адекватної реакції на ті випробовування, що постають перед суспільством.

Ключові слова: модерн, постмодерн, постмодернізм, деконструкція, демографія, симулякр, метамодерн, метамодернізм, архетип.

History is a broad field for constant rethinking and development of the ideas of the past, their expansion and narrowing, modernisation and deconstruction. Each era constructs socio-cultural, technical and scientific superstructures around old ideas that are characteristic of its present, specific to each one, depending on the level of development of the society.

Not so long ago, Western society made a transition to the new postmodern era, and today we are witnessing the transition to another era – the metamodern one. The world has faced a new reality that has brought its own challenges that are characteristic of our time:

- a fall in the birth rate, which could lead to a social security crisis in the future and the necessary transformation of the economic system;
- the emergence of new challenges in the information space, which, due to contemporary technologies, has acquired forms that are not standard for the human psyche;
- transformation in the processes of interaction between the government and citizens due to the development of social networks;
- value and cultural changes in public consciousness and approaches to assessing the surrounding political and social environment.

All this poses a strategic task to governments to develop and implement policies that will take into account and respond to all these social trends in order to realise the main task of the state's existence – maintaining public order and security: national, cultural,

humanitarian, informational, social, political and legal. Ensuring these guarantees is one of the foundations of stability and sustainable development of the country.

Postmodernism was researched and theorised by such scholars as F. Jameson (who described the cultural changes of postmodernism in an inextricable interconnection with the capitalist economy), J. Derrida (founder of the philosophy of deconstruction), M. Foucault (researcher of the ways in which an individual is shaped by social institutions through the micro-mechanisms of power), I. Hassan (one of the first postmodernist theorists in literary studies), D. Fokkema (who proposed a scheme for the transformation of fiction in the context of the transition from modernism to postmodernism with the loss of faith in metanarratives and the growth of hybrid forms), M. Gabriel (author of the 'Sinnfeld' concept, which offers an updated view of the multiplicity of truths without reducing them to the subjective) and M. Maffesoli (founder of postmodern sociology and author of the concept of the 'postmodern tribe' – a temporarily emotionally connected group in the information society).

R. van den Akker, T. Vermeulen, and H. Freinacht have devoted their works to the study of the new era of metamodernity. They defined metamodernity as a cultural and political space of 'oscillations' between the modernist desire for authenticity and postmodern irony, focusing on the emotional transformations of the subject, environmental responsibility, and socio-political strategies of solidarity in the face of uncertainty. In particular, T. Vermeulen and H. Bachner developed the ideas of 'warm irony' and 'active hope', while D. Gorts emphasised the networked nature of the global politics of the future.

Among the domestic researchers, we should mention V. Yermolenko, V. Kebuladze, S. Krymskyi, T. Hundorova, and M. Pavlyshyn, who analyse the synthesis of Western theoretical guidelines with local cultural practices, depicting the intersection of political narratives and postcolonial experience. The peculiarities of social behaviour in the new era were examined by A. Martynov and E. Afonin, who highlighted virtual tribes, emotional politics of networks, and radicalism of feelings as a form of subjectivity. Demographic research was conducted by O. Libanova, N. Ringold, and L. Slyusar, who studied the correlation between economic and political changes and demographic processes, including intergenerational mobility and reproductive strategies in the context of cultural uncertainty.

In this context **the purpose** of our article is to analyse the dynamics of social change in the postmodern and metamodern context in the spectrum of socio-economic, demographic, cultural and mental transformations; it means also to propose ways to manage these changes based on a productive combination of modern, postmodern, and metamodern ideas, values, and concepts.

Cultural and historical context and demographics. Modernity is a precursor era, an era of great ideas and meta-narratives. It was during this period that the ideals of equality, individual freedom, and the rule of law were established, slavery was abolished in most countries, and the concepts of civil rights and freedoms were developed. The modern era saw great scientific progress, the development of medicine and education, ideas and concepts of social security, pension systems, and health care.

However, like any period of human history, it gave rise to both positive and negative ideas and breakthroughs. One of the dark spots of this era was the emergence of the

ideologies of communism, Nazism, and fascism, which engulfed Europe and drew it into one of the bloodiest wars in history. A characteristic feature of these systems was the philosophy of human existence: it was seen as a small part of one large mechanism whose purpose was to ensure the public good and prosperity. In many countries chaos, inflation, unemployment, defeat in the war, and the absence of an external deterrent were among the catalysts for the manifestation of the archetypes of a strong leader who would restore order with a strong hand and a Collective Sence that was nostalgic for past greatness and wished to restore it by building a strong nation. In the case of Germany, this was complemented by an inferiority complex, which the German people tried to compensate for with delusions of grandeur (C. Jung) [1].

As is often the case, having experienced the negative consequences of a particular system, society goes in search of something new, which is inherently different from the previous one and has the opposite, or less intrusive character. To a certain extent, this is a pendulum effect: when people live in one socio-political system, it eventually begins to push away society because of its shortcomings, which, in turn, reacts and begins to move in the opposite direction. We can observe something similar in another dimension of the struggle between Democrats and Republicans: US society gets tired of the latter from time to time and chooses a liberal course for decades, and over time it gets tired of liberalism and returns to conservatism. Ultimately, such pendulum swings occur, as a rule, due to the accumulation of the negative phenomena of the previous course and their pressure on society.

Although the Second World War and the Cold War were not the direct cause of the transition from modernity to postmodernity, as some of the latter's ideas had been formed over a long period of time and were already maturing, they became a kind of catalyst that brought to a part of Western society the final disillusionment with great ideologies and ideals and gave rise to the phenomenon of deconstruction, which affected some of the fundamental foundations of human existence that society had relied on for centuries.

Postmodernism has deconstructed the naivete of the idea that certain attitudes and ideologies can be universal, objective, and ideal, on which people can place their hopes and expectations. In postmodernity, an individual cannot claim that there is one single truth and that all other views are inferior and hostile; relativism is now beginning to dominate, whereby everyone's truth is valid. People no longer claim that socialism, capitalism, or any other system is completely reliable, because everything is relative and has its flaws.

Deconstruction covered many areas, in some of which it was more successful and in some of which it did not find wide support. Nationalism, communism, socialism, liberalism, religion, traditional values, the idea of state borders, the roles of men and women, sex, gender, politics, family, etc. – almost everything that was previously perceived as an unshakable truth and rule began to be deconstructed. Society has entered an era of a kind of protest, trying to take the meaning away from everything that had previously claimed it and create new meanings of its own. As the literary critic P. Barry wrote, "the grand narratives of progress and human perfection are no longer reliable, and the most that can be hoped for is a series of 'mini-narratives' that are unstable, contingent, provisional, and relative, and that provide the basis for the actions of particular groups in particular, partial conditions" [2].

To some extent, such an extreme as a pendulum will lead to a smooth transition to metamodernity, in which part of the public consciousness will oscillate between the great ideals of modernity and a view of the postmodern world devoid of naivety.

This era became a fertile ground for those philosophical ideas and concepts that developed in parallel with modernism, but did not have enough socio-cultural conditions to finally establish and develop. Collectivism was replaced by individualism, nationalism was replaced by cosmopolitanism, and the era of consumption, the search for meaning in life and happiness through material acquisitions, which ironically, according to postmodern philosophy, which expressed skepticism even about capitalism, was quite harmoniously combined with the development of capitalist economies, marketing, and targeting.

Researchers refer to the latter phenomenon as the new era of consumer society [3; 4], the essence of which is that a person lives and works to buy as many goods and services as possible, some of which are unnecessary from a purely biological point of view, but psychologically it emphasises the status of the consumer. While in traditional society people expressed themselves through religion, in modernity through belonging to large ideologies, in postmodernity people seek self-expression through brands and expensive goods. It should be noted that the culture of consuming “more than a person needs” is not an invention of the 19th and 20th centuries; it existed in ancient times, but it became widespread in the era of modern history.

A prerequisite for the formation of this type of society was industrialisation, which flourished in the modern era, and the spread of new production technologies, which significantly increased the number of goods that market participants could offer to potential buyers. An important factor in the development of such capitalist relations was the rapid process of urbanisation. If earlier about 80–90% of the population were peasants who were almost entirely self-sufficient, then with the move to the city, many functions of providing people with everything they needed were taken over by production complexes, making each individual subject dependent on what the market could offer.

Since the modern era, the possibility of moving from one social state to another has been developing rapidly. Previously, social statuses were clearly divided into conditional states; the majority of the population did not have such an option as career growth; they were born, acquired all the necessary skills for farming in childhood and used them throughout their lives. This way of life, in some cases, freed them from the need to think about better conditions. At the same time, it was accompanied by a moderate level of financial wealth among co-villagers.

With the transition to industrial production, urbanisation, the development of capitalist relations and the emergence of a wide range of product offerings on the market, a person has wide opportunities to choose: either to remain at a low social level, consume less in terms of quantity and quality of products, or to climb the social elevator, have access to expensive and high-quality goods [5, p. 181].

In the context of demographics, which we want to focus on in this section, this change has affected the issue of having children, as things are now appearing that require a greater investment of time and require the transformation of traditional family life. Competition for better social conditions, which has become a major component of industrial and

post-industrial societies, has turned human life into a constant need for self-development and financial growth. A child, who now needs much more than just clothes and food, becomes the object of significant financial investment, which limits a person's ability to build a career and raise their social status. It is important to note that attitudes towards children have changed with the transition from agrarian to industrial and post-industrial societies. If earlier, every child born was not only a source of emotional joy, but also an additional worker in the field, in modern history, the second component has disappeared and only feelings and emotions remain. In addition, the system of upbringing has changed: if earlier one could count on the help of neighbours and relatives, today, in an era of individualism and social isolation in urban areas, one has to compensate for the lack of these social ties by hiring a childcare specialist, which also creates an additional financial burden.

Objectively speaking, demographics are influenced by many factors that are comprehensively interconnected. On the socio-economic side, the ability to purchase housing, stable employment, and the ability to combine upbringing with work are critical for young couples. For instance, in Hong Kong, where the average apartment price is equivalent to 73 years' average salary¹, the fertility rate per woman fell from 3.46 in the 1970s to 0.96 in the 2020s. Labour relations of a temporary contractual form have become very popular in Europe and the United States, which also affects the decision to have children from an economic point of view, due to the uncertainty and risks of this employment format².

An important aspect of the mental and cultural factor that influences fertility is the natural tendency to give birth in more stable and permanent family relationships. For many people, the deconstruction of the family and traditional values of postmodernism devalued the concept of a reliable marriage, resulting in a significant increase in divorce and a reduction in marriage since the 1960s [6]. So, children raised in single-parent families were more likely to face problems in building their own family relationships, creating socially unfavorable conditions for the formation of reliable families. Uncertainty in future relationships due to a lack of faith in the permanence and stability of marriage also further motivates women to build their financial independence from a potential husband, which requires significant time investment and can also influence the decision to have children. Men, in turn, based on a similar structure of thinking, avoid the possibility of entering into an official marriage, preferring relationships that do not require sacred permanence.

Since the late 1960s, governments have experimented with various policies to support families and encourage them to have more children. Some of these policies have been more successful, while others have shown to be ineffective. France is one of the countries in the European Union with the highest total fertility rate at 1.8. Since the 2000s, it has implemented extensive programs to improve family welfare, preserve women's access to the labour market, and achieve gender equality. Families have access to municipal children's

¹ Ranking of countries in the world by housing affordability: Ukraine ranks 51st out of 109. (2022). *Softloft*. URL: https://an-softloft.com/uk/rejting-stran-mira-po-dostupnosti-zhilya-ukraina-na-51-meste-iz-109?utm_source=perplexity

² Temporary and permanent employment – statistics. (2024). *Eurostat*. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Temporary_and_permanent_employment_-_statistics

centers and kindergartens where they can enroll their children from two months of age, and France has its own system of tax benefits that increase with each child. Although these measures were introduced at a time when the fertility rate was already rising, they still contributed to improving demographic indicators before the 2008 crisis.

By contrast, countries such as Poland and Singapore have not had much success in improving their demographics. In Singapore, this was due to the government's failure to consider the local nuances of the average age of parents at the birth of their first child, as well as the widespread 'cult of success' among young people who are more career-oriented. In Poland, more emphasis was placed on social benefits than on introducing flexible adaptability between work and childcare [7].

It is safe to say that no country has yet developed a universal and comprehensive model that could provide a full-fledged solution to the demographic crisis or doesn't have the resources to apply it. Changes in culture, mentality, economy, and lifestyle are so deeply rooted in society that even the most progressive policies to stimulate fertility do not lead to a complete solution to the problem. The mechanisms and measures that exist today have a temporary effect and are often completely offset by economic crises and instability in the world, which is compounded by information tension with a stream of negative news.

The contemporary economic system is structured in such a way that to develop continuously, it needs to increase the level of consumption and cost, and this requires people who will consume. However, ironically, the mechanisms of this economic system motivate people to give up children largely for better conditions and consumption and thus create a potential shortage of consumers in the future.

The issue of demography is critically important due to its impact on the development and stability of the economies of countries around the world. These countries spend from 1 to 4% [7] of their GDP on family policy, which for some countries is comparable to the military budget. Today, almost all developed countries, except Israel, are facing a crisis of declining fertility rates. Partly, at the expense of migrants, it is possible to compensate for the shortage of labour; the only question is how long this policy will bear fruit, given that political sentiment in Europe is not static. The population in one way or another expresses dissatisfaction with uncontrolled migration, which brings not only labour but also an additional burden on the social system, which will especially increase when future generations of migrants will give birth less and the current ones will already cross the retirement age.

According to UN forecasts, if the situation does not change, the population of national countries will begin to decline significantly by 2100 (and in some cases by 2050), which could lead to negative socio-economic, cultural and ethnic consequences.

Simulacrum and its socio-political impact. One of the phenomena that received its conceptual development in the postmodern era is the simulacrum, a key term in postmodern philosophy that means an image, a copy of something that does not exist; a superficial, hyperrealistic object behind which there is no reality, which is in fact no different from a form of deception. Today, this concept is understood as a cultural or political entity that copies the form of the original model.

The simulacrum is not a new development of the postmodern era; as a phenomenon, it existed before, with its own characteristics and evolutionary stages of development described by J. Baudrillard: 1) reflection of basic reality, 2) masking and distortion of basic reality, 3) masking the absence of basic reality, 4) lack of connection with reality – a pure simulacrum of itself [8].

As in the case of modernity, postmodernity, and metamodernity, the emergence of a new type of simulacrum does not mean the disappearance of the previous one, they continue to exist, combining and interacting with each other.

The main feature of this phenomenon in the 20th and 21st centuries is that it was accompanied by the emergence of television, the Internet, social media, and artificial intelligence, which became effective tools for creating and disseminating a large number of simulacra due to their massive scale and accessibility. This massive scale has led to natural socio-cultural changes in behaviour, values, and life orientations. In the new information age, simulacra perform one of the key functions in shaping people's perceptions of the world around them, creating pseudo-archetypal images of the 'ideal', 'successful', 'correct', 'popular', which mass culture imposes as a social standard that people subconsciously want to follow.

Brands and logos have become more important than the real characteristics of products, cultural artifacts have lost their original meaning and turned into commodities, high ideas have been deconstructed and therefore are no longer the only basis for self-identification, now this role is played mainly by material images with which an individual associates himself or herself. Not the least role in this process was played by the laws of the capitalist economy, in which the expansion of production and sale of goods and services is the main goal, which, as we wrote above, creates conditions for the formation of a consumer society. In the latter, people tend to buy things that are not necessary from a biological point of view, but in which they see an image saturated with the semantic attitudes that were laid down by its manufacturer.

In the field of public policy, simulacra express themselves through the creation of images and symbols aimed at strengthening and affirming the positions of the political elite. History shows that even in ancient times, rulers used images of the 'ideal' and 'divine' to ideologically assert their power, using such tools as public ceremonies, coins with portraits, theatrical performances, surrounding themselves with religious priests, etc. With the emergence of democratic regimes and changes in culture and traditions, the forms, deep meanings, and ways of creating simulacra have been constantly transformed and adapted to new socio-political realities. If in ancient times mythology and religious traditions were the basis of the simulacrum, then in modernism they were eventually replaced by the ideologies and new information images of postmodernism.

Although the simulacrum is often used as a tool to strengthen the legitimacy of power, its impact has its limitations and requires the involvement of additional factors that, depending on the regime, have a different nature.

Authoritarian and totalitarian states use the following tools to preserve their ideological image³:

- 1) physical destruction of political opposition and dissent, creation of a formal opposition;
- 2) information isolation from the outside world and closure of borders;
- 3) state monopoly on the media and censorship of the domestic information space;
- 4) maintaining the economy in a stable state (with reservations);
- 5) ensuring stable relations within the political and military elites.

Their use is due to the fact that the dictatorship around which the simulacrum is created is institutionally unable to maintain itself, as it quickly loses control and power when it comes to competition.

N. Ceausescu's regime was overthrown due to the loss of control over the information space. The split occurred after the population gained access to information about protests and the shooting of activists, which led to outrage and mobilisation of Romanian citizens. By pursuing an ineffective policy towards the military leadership, N. Ceausescu created conditions under which competitive revenge moods gradually grew in the army, which resulted in the military's transition to the side of the protesters and the final loss of one of the main pillars of the dictatorial regime.

The destruction of the simulacrum of a successful country in the Soviet Union was caused by M. Gorbachev's 'perestroika policy', which was accompanied by the weakening of repression, censorship, and persecution; the development of public and political organisations began. The main tool of hard power, that had successfully kept the country intact for a long period of time lost its influence. This led to a natural split in the system and the disappearance of the Soviet Union.

At the same time, North Korea and China have managed to preserve themselves as dictatorial regimes through the integrated use of some of the above tools. In addition, China, unlike North Korea, after D. Xiaoping came to power, modernised its control system by using economic instruments to strengthen the legitimacy of the government. Unlike the dictatorship in North Korea, it did not follow the path of strict isolation from the outside world, but integrated advanced technologies into the system of control over the population. However, this context also has its own heterogeneity, since in South Korea, economic growth, on the contrary, has led to increased political ambitions of the emerging middle class and elites. Compared to China, a greater role was played by the limited but still informational and political openness to the West, as well as the high activity and pluralism of the political elite, among which there was a spirit of opposition to the regime (as in the case of the military leadership in Romania), which was suppressed in China.

In the context of dictatorial regimes, which are modernist in their specificity, the simulacrum (outside the postmodern context) acts as an accompanying factor (here it creates the illusion of democracy and the effectiveness of the state apparatus). This factor should establish a political ideology and convince the population of its effectiveness, consolidate the nation for a common movement forward, whatever the end may be in reality. However, its

³ Dictatorship. *Wikipedia*. URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dictatorship>

functioning, especially in relation to large metanarratives, will depend on the complex application of the repressive apparatus, cultural and historical context, because the tradition of building political power within a nation is also a significant factor that will determine the propensity for a democratic or dictatorial regime.

In a postmodern democracy, ideology itself turns into a simulacrum, and politics gradually loses its modern connection to profound ideas, replacing them with narratives, slogans, and emotional signals that lack substance. In such conditions, the outcome of influencing the behaviour of the population is ambiguous, as it can have diametrically opposite consequences depending on the psychology, internal beliefs, and awareness of politics of each individual.

First, creating the illusion of an ideological struggle, using political parties as brands and creating images of success with unsatisfactory economic and social indicators can lead to the erosion of trust in political representation, which is due to information transparency and constant political competition within which each party can refute the simulacrum created by opponents, while in some cases creating its own. In addition, there is a deep deformation of public space, a decrease in the effectiveness of democratic institutions and the formation of a political 'void' where substance (ideology) is replaced by a stylistic surface (a show instead of focusing on real problems). In this context, the transformation of politics into a market of brands and symbols is partly driven by the nature of the population's behaviour in the political and social spaces of postmodernity. As economist B. Caplan noted in his book "The Myth of the Rational Voter", in democratic countries, politicians tend to do what the electorate wants, adjusting their program to it [9]. Decisions made not based on a well-considered strategic analysis but based on the wishes of the population are often harmful and inefficient from an economic point of view. Additionally, the basis is created for the emergence of populist political parties, which, taking advantage of difficult socio-economic circumstances, find their support among the disillusioned population. This reveals the other side of creating and application of the distorted reality simulacrum, which, when combined with other tools, can serve as an effective means of establishing political commitment among the electorate, which, having accepted emotional images and symbols, becomes a sincere supporter of political actors (especially during an election campaign or crisis). Ultimately, these two effects often occur simultaneously and operate in parallel, generating different spectrums of political consciousness and education in society.

Additionally, the effectiveness of simulacra in the information age is facilitated by social media algorithms with an 'information bubble' effect, in which the content consumers is more likely to see information that matches their preferences – as a result, the users is affirmed in their position and are ready to perceive alternative points of view as a threat. Currently, this system of algorithms has been effectively used by the Russian Federation to promote its candidate for the presidency of Romania, which forced the Constitutional Court to cancel the results of the first round of elections. Such situations demonstrate that the problem of disseminating simulacra exists not only from within, but also from outside, which separately poses a threat to national security.

To summarise, the simulacrum in the postmodern and universal context has both viable and unworkable aspects of ways to establish and maintain political power. Factors such as political culture, education, and political regime will determine the level of effectiveness and shelf life of each individual political simulacrum. This phenomenon has one universal feature – decisions based on it will in most scenarios lead to destructive and disruptive consequences for both those who use it and those from whom it is being protected.

Metamodernism and the new information reality. Although the postmodern era still retains its stable position in Western society, in the depths of society, which for some time was in the world of postmodern irony, sarcasm, and criticism of modern ideas, new worldview trends began to emerge in the late 1990s, the essence of which is to revise the values of the two previous eras.

The main reason for the new cultural searches within society is the inability of postmodernism to satisfy the inner needs of a person who, by his or her archaic nature, needs a certain inner support to maintain psychological stability, which postmodernism deconstructs, forcing the individual to begin an inner search for understanding themselves and the world around them. Relativism, distrust of truth, authenticity, and ideological integrity have led to a sense of existential desolation, nihilism, and identity fragmentation. Society is facing cultural fatigue, a state in which irony has ceased to function as a critical tool and has become an autoparody.

One of the researchers who searched for what a new emotionally mature society should look like is the Swiss political philosopher and sociologist H. Freinacht. He outlined in his book “The Listening Society” elements of his vision of how to create and recreate a society in which human life experience is more emotionally satisfying and mentally productive, suggesting that greater happiness will encourage people to give back to society. This will result in better communities and sustainable economies. The basis for this is the worldview and epistemology of the metamodern, whose society simultaneously supports social integration and the possibility of separation of individuals in the exercise of their rights to freedom [10, p. 78].

In their work “Notes on Metamodernism”, T. Vermeulen and R. van den Akker write that metamodernism can be understood as conscious naivety, pragmatic idealism, and moderate fanaticism. In this philosophy, a person is positioned through performatism, embodied in the modern aesthetics of hesitation, as a combination of enthusiasm and mockery, hope and melancholy, compassion and apathy, integrity and duality, clarity and ambiguity, in search of truth without hopes of discovering it [11].

Metamodernism is a view of the ideals of modernism, but through the prism of postmodern philosophy. Ideas and socio-political movements are not perceived as something dogmatic and absolute; they have their advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses, but they are necessary. The view of modernist ideals is deprived of the ironic cynicism and detachment inherent in postmodernism, replacing it with a conscious rethinking and a pragmatic approach devoid of fanatical naivety.

There is a partial return to myth, not as truth, but as meaning, which refers us to the ideas of C. Jung. The scientist viewed myth not as an illusion or fiction, but as a form of collective consciousness and a historical necessity in which myths serve not only to explain

the world around us, but also to establish contact with it⁴. As the British writer and philosopher J. Rowson noted in his essay, the postmodern absence of metaphysics has created its own problems, leaving a vacuum where answers to important questions could have been found before. The metamodern return to metaphysics seeks to fill this vacuum of meaning by providing a new context for human self-understanding – a new story of the universe that includes a new story of self and community [12].

The ontological basis of metamodernism's position between the ideas of modernism and postmodernism is determined by the existence of such a phenomenon as a state of oscillation between the cultural components inherent in both previous eras [11]. In their work, T. Vermeulen and R. van den Akker warn against identifying the state of oscillation with the state of equilibrium. Although the individual of metamodernism returns to the old ideas of idealism, they cannot accept them completely, returning to a state of irony and skepticism and back.

Since the era of metamodernity and the era of postmodernity exist in the postindustrial world of information telecommunications, the former will be expressed in a symbiotic combination with cutting-edge technologies. S. Abramson emphasises the emergence of the Internet as seismic and pivotal, changing our ability to express ourselves and collectively create meaning as a key driver of metamodern sensibility [12].

Social networks are becoming an accompanying tool in the development of a new sincerity, in which an individual is not afraid to be open in expressing their thoughts and everyday life. Networks show them as they are, with all their weaknesses, shortcomings and honesty, with stories not only about victories, but also about failures and defeats. It was not characteristic in the classical period of a person of postmodern thinking, which transformed the archetype of the Persona into a state of simulacrum, where the outer mask is detached from the deeper meaning. At the same time, in the new era the manifestation of this archetype in an individual receives digital protection and control over the expression of the true self. This expression is often more difficult to achieve in live communication, during which the brain does not have time to form the necessary model of behaviour that would meet the expectations of the participant in the dialogue, being subject to natural verbal and non-verbal influences. In this context, there are two dimensions: anonymity, which allows not to hide the true inner world of a person, which may not meet the expectations of society (which also allows to manifest not only sincerity but also the Shadow archetype), and personalisation, which is accompanied by a carefully thought-out and edited future message.

Access to the Internet has made it possible to disseminate information on metanarratives, big ideas, philosophical statements, memes, and criticisms about the state of society in our time and in past eras on a larger scale, creating a new social space for discussion. In this space people of modernist, postmodernist, and metamodernist paradigms from different parts of the world can communicate with each other, comparing ideas and views, looking for their positive and negative aspects. These discussions can manifest both irony and a sincere desire to find and rethink the truth.

⁴ Jung C. *Wikipedia*. URL: https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9A%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BB_%D0%93%D1%83%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%B2_%D0%AE%D0%BD%D0%B3#cite_note-11

Qualitatively new changes in the new information age are inherent in the institution of democracy; in particular, the process of demonopolisation of public and private media in the infopoly is underway. YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and other platforms are becoming alternative levers of social and political influence, as well as tools in the hands of weaker political or independent public forces, enabling them to disseminate information of various kinds. This has opened up opportunities not only for the dissemination of politically biased but also neutral educational content, which aims to objectively assess reality as far as possible. Thus, there has been a reorientation from a vertical way of interaction and influence to a horizontal one, where citizens receive more effective tools for uniting and mobilising, especially at the local level.

Certain positive trends in this process can be found in the impact on the internal political consciousness of citizens, the ability to express their opinions on social media and interact with another audience of political, public or independent figures, creates a sense of belonging and involvement in socio-political processes. In these processes, an individual ceases to be a passive spectator, becoming an active participant in the discussion of a problem in which he or she can feel useful. At the same time, there is a reversal of the social value of the communication format: if in the days of postmodernism, when the development of the latest Internet technologies was just beginning, the digital format of communication was more valued because it was new and progressive, then in the era of metamodernism, when social networks have become an integral part of almost every individual's life, live communication is again gaining more value, which naturally arise due to the non-standard way of digital life for human biology, which was not inherent in most of the history of mankind.

Since metamodernism does not produce anything new, but only rethinks, restores, and reincarnates old ideas, the phenomenon of simulacrum inherent in the digital space of the postmodern era is still effective and even progressively developing. Virtual interaction can only be an image, or the appearance of political influence and activity, where the audience is an object that believes in its subjectivity, which is implicitly influenced by the 'soft power' described by J. Nye. This theorist seeks not to impose its opinion directly, but to quietly lead the viewer to accept this opinion without them realising it [13]. This is the duality of metamodernism: the simultaneous understanding that all actions on social media can only be an illusion that poses as reality and, at the same time, a sincere belief that it works.

As J. Rowson has noted, the mastery of metamodern normativity is that metamodernism is not simply political as such. While there is a New Left subculture that links metamodernism to progressive political agendas, or the Hanzi think tank, associating metamodernism with the right, left, or center is not a workable way to go if we want to understand the political dimension of this era [12].

"In a world shaped by the private co-option of the public realm, myriad addictions, ecological collapse, governance failure, reassertions of identity and pleas for survival, the old-fashioned binaries of individual/collective, freedom/equality, state/market and tradition/change are otiose. There is scope for conceptual renewal here grounded in a new aesthetic, and that feels like a metamodern enterprise to be encouraged" [12].

At the same time, J. Rowson sees metamodernism either as a state of quasi-politics, in which politics is influenced by cultural and educational innovations, or as a pre-political state, which includes the cultivation of relational and civic virtues. For a better understanding of how certain characteristic components of each era influence political processes, it is worth referring to Table 1.

Table 1

**Impact of various mechanisms and factors on the strength
and resilience of the state and society**

Modern	Postmodern	Metamodern
Mental and cultural factors		
<p>The promotion of the idea that society could be rationally organised created trust in the state as an instrument for introducing order, control, and modernisation. In turn, mass education was a means of forming a unified national identity and worldview, which supported the legitimacy of the state.</p> <p>The departure from religious dominance in public life strengthened the autonomy of state institutions, separating them from church influence</p>	<p>In postmodernism, the idea of a single ‘truth’ or grand narrative construct is being destroyed, which has significantly undermined the legitimacy of a single state ideology.</p> <p>People identify less and less with a nation or state, and more with subcultures, gender, ethnic, local or virtual communities.</p> <p>Images, signs, brands become more important than real actions or institutions. The state becomes part of a show, a game of symbols, infotainment</p>	<p>People are aware of the absurdity of some processes (as in postmodernism), but still strive for authenticity, participation, meaning. This creates a demand for a new state – not a formal one, but a ‘human’, honest one.</p> <p>There is a search for new forms of collective identity that combine the contemporary worldview with elements of tradition. For example, a new patriotic feeling without chauvinism.</p> <p>There is a growing demand in society for morality in politics, responsibility and empathy – new values that the state is expected to embody</p>
Ideological factors		
<p>In modernism, nationalism served as the basis for the formation of a single people that supported a strong centralised state. The idea of ‘nation-state’ was key for this era.</p> <p>Such ideologies of modernity as socialism, liberalism, technocracy, etc. justified the need for a strong state capable of planning and implementing reforms.</p> <p>Often modernist states endowed themselves with a historical mission – to civilise, modernise, save (their own people or others)</p>	<p>Ideological systems (nationalism, liberalism, Marxism) are deconstructed or perceived as conditional.</p> <p>State strategies are often devoid of a coherent ideology, more reminiscent of managerial reactions to information flows, crises or social demands.</p> <p>Ideas of global coexistence and multiculturalism come into conflict with classical sovereignty, eroding the idea of a centralised nation-state</p>	<p>The state no longer operates from abstract dogmas, but implements flexible projects aimed at solving complex problems (ecology, inequality, inclusion).</p> <p>The ideology of metamodernity accepts a plurality of points of view, but seeks points of unification – for example, in the values of dignity, dialogue, sustainable development.</p> <p>A widespread understanding of the state as part of a global ecosystem. The idea of ‘meta-statehood’ is being formed – a political unit that thinks not only in national, but also in civilisational categories</p>

Modern	Postmodern	Metamodern
Social factors		
<p>The state assumed responsibility for healthcare, education, and social security, which strengthened the public's trust in it.</p> <p>In addition, opportunities were created for personal development and career growth through education and work in state structures.</p> <p>The movement of people to cities allowed the state to more effectively control the population, unify norms of behaviour, and implement universal policies</p>	<p>Non-state actors (corporations, media, communities) influence decision-making more than traditional state institutions.</p> <p>Classical structures (class, family, profession) are losing their power as pillars of a stable society.</p> <p>A person's identity is defined more by consumption style than by civic or social responsibilities</p>	<p>Social networks and digital platforms create horizontal structures, but there is a need for a new type of elites – educated, empathetic, culturally flexible.</p> <p>Civil society no longer opposes the state but becomes its partner in co-creating policy through participatory practices (public budgets, digital consultations), where possible.</p> <p>The state must respond to new forms of vulnerability (mental health, identities, environmental anxiety), adapting institutions to these realities</p>
Technological factors		
<p>Industrialisation provided resources to strengthen the army, infrastructure and administrative machinery.</p> <p>The bureaucratic machinery was improved through the development of a census system, statistics, archives, passport control, which allowed for centralised management of society.</p> <p>Newspapers, radio, and, later, television served as instruments of state propaganda and mobilisation</p>	<p>The state is no longer the only source of information or control.</p> <p>Social networks, platforms, IT corporations themselves set the 'rules of the game'.</p> <p>State power increasingly functions through symbolic gestures, PR, visual images rather than through real governance</p>	<p>The mindset regarding the implementation of new technologies is changing, because now it is becoming important to care about the ethics of data use, privacy protection, and transparency of algorithms.</p> <p>The metamodern state is not just an administrator, but also a visionary that invests in futuristic areas: eco-technologies, education of the future, new energy</p>
Political factors		
<p>In modernism, efficiency was often identified with the concentration of power (even in democratic states), which ensured a rapid decision-making process.</p> <p>Strong institutions like parliament, army, court, police were formed as autonomous, but loyal to the state center of the structure.</p> <p>Legislation, registration, economic regulation, political censorship (in certain regimes) – all this was aimed at maintaining order</p>	<p>Citizens trust institutions less and less; apathy or radicalisation is growing.</p> <p>The center no longer has full control – decisions are made at the level of regions, cities, transnational networks.</p> <p>Democratic mechanisms are formally preserved, but politics is increasingly reduced to a spectacle, where real decisions are made behind the scenes – by elites, corporations, algorithms</p>	<p>Politics becomes a coordinator not only of resource management, but also of creating a cultural context for living together.</p> <p>There is an awareness that political systems are not absolute, but variable, flexible frameworks.</p> <p>State institutions do not simply perform functions, but constantly rethink their role, mechanisms of action, and the meaning of existence</p>

Sources: Modernity. *Wikipedia*. URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernity#:~:text=closely%20associated%20with%20the%20development,many%2020194%20reactions%20against> [12; 14–16].

Metamodernism emerges as a complex, cultural and social condition reflecting new social trends caused by the objective laws of human history and society's search for itself, in which it tries to find itself, to find a basis on which to rely and at the same time not to make a mistake in choosing, or to rethink this mistake by making it part of its experience. It is not a metanarrative as such, but a worldview that restores the dignity of the metanarrative impulse without succumbing to it, being a structure of feelings that precedes the structures of thought and society, as well as the political and epistemological spheres [12]. It can be assumed that in the new era, there will be a renewed demand for the ideological nature of political parties, not as brands, but as centers that produce ideas that they are committed to and believe in.

Conclusions and Implications. Every era, every culture and society is constantly living in the process of struggling and solving socio-political and value problems. Moreover, with the gradual movement forward, society, solving some problems, immediately falls into a whirlpool of new ones, due to the peculiarities of the new present-day conditions and new realities.

In the context of the information wars of our time, the dominance of fake news and the lack of critical thinking among citizens, the state information policy of limiting disintegrative actors in the information space for the sake of the future of democracy becomes somewhat justified. It is like building a democracy using not fully democratic methods.

In practice, it has turned out that international security structures at the present stage do not have adequate measures to influence the initiators of military conflicts. This is exacerbated by the West's fear and unwillingness to be a direct participant in peacekeeping military operations, as there is a problem of low demographic reproduction of the population, which can only worsen in the event of a major conflict. Contemporary wars are also widely waged by non-military means (environmental, economic, social, political, and informational). The Russian Federation, having extended its influence to Eastern Europe, was able to make a partial split in the EU's common policy, which was reflected in blocking decisions on the allocation of financial assistance to Ukraine.

At the same time, in the public consciousness of the latter, in the face of an existential external threat, the deep archetypal structures of the Hero and the Defender emerged, which, as elements of the collective unconscious, became key emotional and psychological determinants of social mobilisation and led to the destruction of the enemy's original plans, destroying its simulacrum. In addition, Ukraine demonstrates a unique phenomenon of a completely non-standard transit model, which was overlaid by essentially two mutually exclusive trajectories – martial law and forced concentration of power, on the one hand, and the implementation of the European integration strategy with its decentralisation standards, on the other. Perhaps it is on the territory of Ukraine that metamodernism will take on its clearer semantic outlines in the field of public administration and politics.

As part of this work, we have outlined several economic and social changes that cause problems such as a decline in the birth rate, a drop in the level of trust in political power, which, having entered the 21st century, is facing the challenges of economic, social, environmental, migration, and other crises.

To resolve or improve the demographic situation in post-industrial countries, radical and comprehensive measures must be taken that combine economic, social, cultural, and ideological tools.

The first is socio-economic: transformation of the labour market with the expansion of the possibility of rapid integration and rehabilitation of women into the labour force after maternity leave, combined with guaranteed preservation of basic salaries during maternity leave, as well as legislative protection of flexible work schedules for young families; creation of economic incentives for living in villages, small and medium-sized cities; ensuring the availability of housing and the financial capacity of families to support two or more children; development of kindergarten infrastructure.

The second is the re-sacralisation of the family institution, a return to the ideological paradigm of ensuring the sustainability of this social unit. This aspect lies in the realm of culture and social consciousness, and cannot be directly addressed by the state, but without considering it, we believe that a complete solution to the demographic crisis will be incomplete. Although the state's influence is limited, with the right strategy, it can develop and implement a strong educational program on family values, backed by scientific research and statistics that will be on par with patriotic education and will be a component of national interests. Such a program should aim not only to change attitudes toward the family institution, but also to raise a generation that is emotionally capable of preserving this institution. Although this will not solve the problem completely, it is better than being passive.

To ensure the stability of political power in the digital world and the mental health of citizens, governments need to pursue a consistent information policy that will focus: 1) on the transformation of state communication, which should be based on the principles of transparency, reliability and structural reference – the formation of messages that retain a connection with actual events that can be empirically verified; 2) on the introduction of programs in media literacy, critical thinking, and the philosophy of symbolic structures into the education and training system to educate a new generation of citizens capable of analysing information through systematic acquisition of basic knowledge about public administration, the laws of the functioning of the economy, and the tools that politicians use for manipulation; 3) on the strategic and ideological basis of political forces should be the concept of building trusting relationships with the population, where the state acts not as a competitor but as a manager-partner.

“If a nation hopes to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects something that never was and never will be”. – T. Jefferson⁵.

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⁵ Thomas Jefferson – most famous sayings. URL: https://slovatadumki.com/authors/tomas-dzhefferson/?dps_paged=1

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Received on May 20, 2025

Reviewed on May 30, 2025

Signed for printing on June 30, 2025