

## NETOCRACY AS A FORM OF INFORMATION SOCIETY MANAGEMENT

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### **Summary**

The article examines the change in the paradigm of modern society's existence, the transformational processes of which affect all its spheres. Special attention is paid to the study of mutual relations and communication between various social institutions, in particular, in the field of public administration.

Attention is focused on non-democratic processes in modern management activities as a special form of information society management. The development of modern management is considered through the prism of deliberative democracy, in which members of society recognize each other's ability to deliberate (public exchange of reasonable judgments).

**Key words:** information society, netocracy, deliberative democracy, management, power.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.23856/5525>

### **1. Introduction**

The modern information society is characterized by a dynamic movement of transformations caused by the constant acceleration of processes that affect not only the social spheres of human existence, but also the moral and value understanding of what is happening around a person. Today dictates a fast pace of development, as a result of which society has practically no time left for full adaptation to constant changes and for a sense of stability.

Therefore, the paradigm of the existence of society in general is changing – a radical transformation is taking place in all spheres of society, in socio-political and socio-economic relations, in power, in communications between power and society, etc.

Taking into account the heterogeneity of society and the pace of civilizational development, the form of governance and the state system, in which society has become globalized in social, political, economic, cultural, etc. spheres, we can state that in modern society it is not just the replacement of the «old» with the «new», but a kind of accumulation that forms a high level of multiplicity, which complicates all processes of human existence.

Today, it is very important for everyone, especially the authorities, to understand that modern globalization conditions can lead to the segregation of society and the formation of a new architecture of the world order. Therefore, it is important to strive to become a subject and not an object of these processes. This is facilitated by the pervasiveness of the latest information and communication technologies, networks, means and methods of communication.

Today, the means of mass communication, which thanks to modern technologies have practically «gained power» over people, are intensively displacing the mass media. Representatives of the information society spend more and more time on the «spaces of the Internet». Of course, such changes do not occur separately from social, political, economic, humanitarian or other transformations, because the globalization of society expands the opportunities for an individual person as well.

The specified changes indicate the transition of society to another civilizational stage of development, the genesis of a new type of society, which today is named differently: post-industrial, informational, digital, Internet society, infocratic, mediocratic, non-cratic.

## 2. Information society: changing paradigms

We can tentatively consider the beginning of the XXI century as the beginning of the formation of a new type of society – the period when communication technologies acquired mass status and became accessible to the majority of the population, regardless of their national and religious affiliation, social status, political views or cultural values. Today, we are experiencing a transitional stage of civilizational development, during which the capitalist system has not yet lost its significance and influence, and the new one has not yet been fully formed, and therefore does not meet the urgent needs of society.

Currently, the issue of further development of society, relationships and communication between various social institutions is extremely relevant for scientists of various fields. The study of the mentioned problem in the field of public administration seems especially important, since the full functioning of society is possible only thanks to the established interaction between the state and society.

The outlined problem was studied by a number of foreign and domestic scientists, among them: D. Bell, Y. Habermas, O. Lyashenko, G. Pocheptsov, E. Romanenko, V. Stepanov, E. Toffler, M. Tur and others.

Despite the considerable number of scientific studies of the information society, power, power relations, management, the need for further research is growing. This is due to the dynamics of modern globalization changes, which lead to the actualization of the essence of communicative relations between the government and the information society.

The industrial and information revolutions became a catalyst for the commercial use of artificial intelligence, smart technologies, cyber technologies, genetic engineering, etc. All this is gradually forming a new level of globalization of social values, moral and ethical norms, corporate and state management, relations between the government and society, etc.

A specific feature of the above is the determination of the role of information, which is currently a strategic resource. The new reality is formed on completely different paradigms, and no matter how the future socio-economic formation is nominated, information will play a leading role in it – as a basic factor of productive forces, and as a key component of the processes taking place in society (*Knyazyev, 2003 : 9*).

Apologists of the theory of netocracy A. Bard and J. Soderqvist note that in the information society origin, social level, gender or skin color will not be of decisive importance, instead, personal status and influence will be determined by a person's ability to perceive and process information, the level of social intelligence (*Bard, Soderkvist, 2004 : 165*).

Today, thanks to modern information and communication technologies, the colossal amounts of information produced are available to all users, regardless of their location, and the only criterion that can be an obstacle to understanding information is the language of communication. However, this issue is also solved by universalizing the language (currently the most common languages are English, French, and Chinese). In addition, there are a large number of programs capable of qualitatively translating masses of information in a short time.

Another specific feature of the information society is its mobility. Representatives of modern «nomadic» society have the opportunity to move freely over considerable distances, without losing the opportunity to communicate or learn information thanks to technical

capabilities. In this regard, researcher Z. Bauman notes that today mobility has become the most powerful factor of stratification in the world (*Bauman, 2004 : 19*). By mobility, he understands the substance from which «new, increasingly global social, political, economic and cultural hierarchies are built and rebuilt every day» (*Bauman, 2004 : 19*).

In turn, the Swedish authors in the work «Nätokraterna» predict that the development of the information society will lead to significant migration of people. According to A. Bard and J. Soderquist, the new highly mobile elite will migrate to attractive places for themselves mainly for cultural reasons, and such migration will express the lifestyle of neocrats (the new ruling class) in the information society (*Bard, Soderkvist, 2004 : 94*). In their vision of the information society, the researchers emphasize a new social paradigm, according to which the «lower class» – the consumerism – is often ruled. The fundamental difference between these classes, according to A. Bard and J. Soderquist, is that the neocrats control the production of their own desires, while the consumerism is subject to the instructions of the elite (*Bard, Soderkvist, 2004 : 100*). In the case of neocracy, the issue of traditional needs (social, economic, financial, political, material, etc.) is replaced by the paradigm of ensuring one's own desires by the «higher class» at the event level and possessing information resources.

### 3. Non-democratic processes in modern society

Taking into account the above, a natural question arises: how will the non-democratic elite fully carry out its «activity»? After all, at present, classical forms, methods, and management mechanisms are effective within the industrial society, and the specifics of their application in the information society have not yet been thoroughly investigated. Currently, we can state that the transformation of the functioning of traditional institutions of power, state institutions, relationships between the government and society is gaining momentum. At the same time, the transition from one paradigm to another does not consist in the multiplication of the new to the already known, but in the fact that new or already known facts, highlighted in a new way, have changed the picture of the world. As soon as we realize that «the former view of the world is outdated and cannot explain a certain phenomenon, but it cannot be denied or ignored – then it is necessary to get rid of a huge amount of unnecessary knowledge. This is one of the inevitable victims of the paradigm shift» (*Bard, Soderkvist, 2004 : 25*). Therefore, a person cannot be in two societies at the same time, and the final transition to the information society is inevitable.

Today, the government, having extraordinary opportunities thanks to the latest information and communication technologies, does not get the desired reverse effect, which was previously provided by the use of the traditional model of communication.

The gradual coverage of an increasingly large audience of society by traditional mass media, in turn, made it possible to increase the effectiveness of the state information policy. Subsequently, thanks to the Internet, the government has even more opportunities, but it is very surprising, as A. Bard and J. Soderquist point out, that today the global network is promoted as a tool that will contribute to the final triumph of democracy. In fact, the Internet is only responsible for a new information and technological environment in which pluralism flourishes due to natural selection, and democracy, as a form of government, is doomed to defeat (*Bard, Soderkvist, 2004 : 150*).

It is necessary to remember that society has always independently created its future. This is happening even now. It is worth realizing that when forming a new social reality, we must take into account civilizational experience, extrapolating it to modern trends in the

development of society and social institutions, as indicators of the relationship between society and the government through the mediation of modern communications.

#### 4. Modern management through the prism of deliberation

Considering such non-democratic processes, it will be appropriate to consider the development of modern management through the prism of deliberative democracy, in which members of society recognize each other's ability to deliberate – the public exchange of reasonable judgments (*Kohen, 2006 : 161*), and the legitimacy of the results of the discussion is based not simply on the wishes of the majority, but on the results of the collectively reasoned thoughts of those interested in solving the problem.

Modern political life is a symbiosis of «bargaining» and «compromise», conflicting interests and a general advisory process regarding the implementation of state policy, taking into account rational public arguments or consultations. The inclusion of elements of deliberation in political life is currently a widespread trend, because according to the deliberative model, «legitimization of power and agreement in society is achieved primarily through communicative procedures – rational discourse, dialogues, reasoned debate, constructive criticism, compromises, sociological surveys, referenda. <...> The participants of the discourse must see the world through the eyes of another, be ready to give up their preferences if they interfere with the compromise that is possible thanks to free, not forced choice and on the basis of convincing arguments» (*Van Khoyek, 2006 : 82*).

Today, the crisis of traditional democracy is not directly related to a general loss of confidence in the activities of politicians – «it is accompanied by an increasing concern about their growing helplessness. <...> The silent protest of an increasing number of citizens who do not leave their sofas to vote is not caused by abuse of power, but by the inability to use it» (*Bard, Soderkvist, 2004 : 53*). We cannot but agree with the opinion of M. Castells that the tragedy lies in the fact that at a time when «the majority of the countries of the world finally gained access to the institutions of liberalism (which are the basis of democracy), these institutions appeared to be far from real structures and processes, they seem with a sinister smile on the new face of history» (*Kastel's, 2004 : 297*).

In turn, the non-democratic approach allows for the integration of management and deliberative politics in the virtual information space, which creates favorable conditions for the formation of an effective electronic democracy, as a logical continuation of the transformation of socio-political processes in the conditions of the formation of an information society. Modern information and communication technologies, thanks to which it is possible to implement e-democratic processes, as a form of social relations in which citizens and institutions of civil society are involved in state formation, state administration, local self-government, etc., make it possible to strengthen the participation of citizens in public life; to improve the response of subjects of power to appeals from citizens; make the decision-making process of authorities transparent and accountable to the public; to contribute to public discussions and draw public attention to the decision-making process. Therefore, effective electronic democracy provides the opportunity for every citizen to participate in the formation and implementation of state policy, decision-making by authorities, while using information technologies for two-way interactive communication between the state and society.

Modern information and communication technologies have not only opened up new horizons for traditional types of communication (press, radio, television), but also made it possible for society to access various databases, which enables the free acquisition of large

amounts of information, the exchange of experience with practically the whole world in the mode online, thereby leveling the barriers of time, distance, nationality, language, etc., relevant for the foundations of a traditional «settled» society. As Z. Bauman notes, with the emergence of the global information web, a third, cybernetic space was formed over the territorial, urban, architectural space of our world, which is under construction (*Bauman, 2004 : 31*), which makes it possible to join global information networks, economy, science, education, management system, etc.

According to I. Eydman, the «regulated information society» (television society) is transformed into a «free information distribution society» (Internet society), in which the technological capabilities of the Internet create conditions for the transition from a modern society of private property and representative democracy to a direct Internet society democracy and free dissemination of information (*Eydman, 2007 : 336*), as the main capital of our time and an attribute of the neocratic coordinate system. Under such conditions, the modern management system enables the use of a wider range of mechanisms and tools for conducting a reasoned dialogue with society and actualizing the role of deliberative democracy. At the same time, the public has access to masses of information and the possibility of a direct dialogue with the authorities, which contributes to the adoption of an optimally balanced decision.

## 5. Conclusions

Today, a significant number of information and analytical projects and systems have been created that simplify decision-making processes or even offer ready-made solutions (mostly this happens in areas with a complex management system structure). Therefore, taking into account the experience and technical capabilities, modern society is ready and capable of actively introducing such a form of social relations as electronic democracy. However, the political will of the ruling elite for change remains not fully clarified, because this may lead to the transformation of the essence of the traditional institution of democracy, since «Internet democracy does not need intermediaries between the voter and the government, there is no place in it for political parties called to mobilize by manipulative methods voters' activity to solve the social tasks of their leaders. <...> There will be a desacralization of political governance and the transformation of executive power elections from a manipulative show into the purchase and payment by the consumer of a necessary average service» (*Eydman, 2007 : 337*).

However, taking into account the current pace of development of the information society and mass informatization, we can state that certain elements of electronic democracy, which have successfully passed the test, are gradually being introduced into widespread use. Therefore, we can talk about the gradual formation of non-democratic management, which acquires more and more mechanisms, tools, methods and forms of communication between the government and society.

At the current stage of the development of the information society, the non-democratic government has sufficient opportunities for communication at the latest level, therefore, the so-called conceptualization of the essence of the connections between the actualization of the non-democratic government and the processes of establishment of the information society takes place. The virtualization of space and the informatization of society today play the role of a catalyst in the formation of a new globalized society, and modern communication capabilities create prerequisites for open access to global information, which, in turn, contributes to the formation of deliberative democracy and influence on non-authoritarian government.

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