



Theories of post-anarchism: Post-structuralism in political philosophy

Maksym Shulha*

Postgraduate Student

Dragomanov Ukrainian State University

01601, 9 Pyrogov Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-6942-5033>

Oleksandr Rovniahin

Master of Sciences

Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design

01011, 2 Mala Shyianovska Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0868-6794>

Abstract. The purpose of the study was to examine post-anarchism as a critique of standard ideologies of power and to assess its potential for social transformation. The study was conducted from September 2024 to February 2025, employing a post-structuralist analysis of power, political identity, and social structures. The findings indicated that post-anarchism conceptualises power not as a fixed hierarchical structure, but as a flexible process shaped through multiple social interactions. Post-anarchist theories demonstrate that the rejection of centralised mechanisms of authority becomes conceivable when alternative forms of social coordination are developed, based on principles of autonomy, mutual aid, and direct democracy. The analysis of contemporary initiatives, including horizontal networks and digital communities, demonstrated that post-anarchist approaches may contribute to the emergence of new models of civic engagement, although they remain vulnerable to latent forms of power arising from cultural and economic dependencies. Several paradoxes within post-anarchist models are identified, particularly the impossibility of completely eliminating power, even within highly decentralised structures. The results confirmed that post-anarchism simultaneously critiques conventional forms of authority while recognising the necessity of certain regulatory mechanisms to maintain social cohesion. The study further showed that in response to the challenges of globalisation and digitalisation, post-anarchism places emphasis on flexible, contextually adaptive forms of political subjectivity that may shift according to situational demands. Limitations of the post-anarchist perspective in addressing social equality were observed, since the absence of universal standards poses risks of newly emerging inequalities, which arise naturally from asymmetries in resources and access to information. Nevertheless, post-anarchism offers valuable opportunities for critical reflection on political freedom and autonomy within contemporary post-structuralist realities. The conclusions may inform further analysis of the transformative potential of post-structuralist theories of power, the rethinking of political identity models, and the development of strategies aimed at fostering more flexible and open social structures

Keywords: deconstruction; discourse; horizontality; hierarchy; relativism

Introduction

Post-anarchism as a strand of political philosophy emerged at the intersection of the anarchist tradition and post-structuralist critiques of power. It rejects the

essentialism of classical ideologies and reconsiders the mechanisms of social transformation within the context of contemporary political realities. Within this

Suggested Citation:

Shulha, M., & Rovniahin, O. (2025). Theories of post-anarchism: Post-structuralism in political philosophy. *Philosophy, Economics and Law Review*, 5(1), 19-34. doi: 10.63341/2786-491X-2025-1-19.

*Corresponding author



framework, post-anarchist approaches offer a critical evaluation of conventional conceptions of power, hierarchy, and the state, proposing alternative models of decentralised social organisation.

According to the study by A.M. Pavliuchenko (2020), post-anarchism arose as a response to the limitations of classical anarchism and Marxism, which, despite their radicalism, remained bound to the metanarratives of modernity. Post-anarchists abandoned the notion of power as a fixed structure and instead interpreted it as a distributed network of relations. This perspective cast doubt on standard models of revolutionary struggle that relied on replacing one system of power with another. O. Bekhter (2024) explored the impact of various organisational models on the effectiveness of social movements, focusing on the relationship between vertical and horizontal mechanisms of governance. The author observed that conventional hierarchical structures provided stability and control, which proved effective in highly structured contexts, yet simultaneously restricted participant autonomy and slowed decision-making processes. In contrast, horizontal structures encouraged greater flexibility, self-governance, and collective decision-making, aligning with post-anarchist principles. O. Bekhter emphasised that although horizontal networks enhanced activist engagement, they frequently encountered challenges in coordination and the distribution of responsibility.

The issue of power as a foundational element of social organisation was central to the research of O.V. Tkalya (2024). The author conducted a theoretical examination of the essential characteristics of political power, treating it not merely as an instrument of governance but as a social phenomenon shaping the dynamics of societal development. The study distinguished state power from other forms of authority, analysing its specific nature through the lens of legitimacy and legality. The study noted that power may function only when recognised by society, and its effectiveness is determined by the capacity to maintain a balance between social coordination and political control. From his perspective, the post-anarchist critique of state power raises doubts about the feasibility of sustaining social order without centralised mechanisms, since elements of hierarchical regulation persist even within decentralised systems.

As part of the analysis of post-anarchism's potential in the digital age, M.Y. Pedchenko (2024) developed a theoretical framework that offers a deeper understanding of the complex interrelations among technologies, social structures, and values, which are central to comprehending contemporary processes of transformation. In his view, the networked community not only responds to new conditions but actively shapes a future grounded in openness, collective creativity, and innovation. Such a future demands continual reconsideration and renewal of value systems in order for society to respond effec-

tively to emerging challenges and to make full use of the opportunities presented by the digital era.

The relationship between citizen self-identification and the stable or unstable condition of a party system is explored in the study by L.Y. Ugryn & B.P. Bevza (2022), which examined political identity development and its influence on political processes in Ukraine. Self-identification is approached as the development of individual identity through the internalisation of norms, values, and discourses present within the social environment. These elements become integrated into an individual's inner world, shaping personal beliefs, motivations, and expectations. The authors argued that individual interests, shaped through self-identification, form the basis for party creation and a stable political system. They emphasise that the effective operation of a party system relies on the capacity of society to articulate and formalise collective interests and to establish a national idea capable of integrating individual needs within a broader political context. When basic material needs become politicised and society lacks awareness of potential developmental areas, there arises a risk of forming an unstructured, amorphous collective of individuals, which cannot be aligned with wider national interests.

Despite criticism, innovative digital platforms developed through Web 3.0 technologies hold considerable potential for transforming economic and social processes, as demonstrated in the study by V. Mishchenko (2023). The author examined the methodological foundations of these platforms, offering a structural and logical framework that incorporates their objectives, functions, tools, and technologies. The study acknowledged that the effective practical implementation of such solutions requires institutional support, regulation, and governance to minimise cyber risks and ensure the resilience of decentralised markets. The challenge remains that most research centres on critiques of conventional ideologies, while limited attention is given to the practical applicability of post-anarchist principles. This study seeks not only to assess the conceptual foundations of post-anarchism but also to explore its potential in addressing urgent social and political issues, particularly within the context of globalisation, environmental crisis, and digital transformation.

The purpose of the study was to identify the theoretical underpinnings of post-anarchism, its critique of conventional ideologies of power, and its capacity for enabling social transformation within the contemporary political landscape.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted using a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach that incorporates conceptual analysis, comparative analysis, and critical discourse analysis. This methodology enabled a thorough examination of post-anarchism not only as a philosophical current but also as a potential socio-political paradigm.

The analysis was situated within the framework of post-structuralist critiques of power, the discursive mechanisms through which it is reproduced, and the transformation of political subjectivity. This allowed approaching post-anarchism as a conceptual tool for critically rethinking social organisation beyond conventional state-centred and hierarchical models. The study was conducted over three stages across a six-month period (from September 2024 to February 2025).

The first stage employed conceptual analysis to determine the theoretical foundations of post-anarchism and its distinctions from classical anarchist and Marxist doctrines. A systematisation of key concepts shaping post-anarchist theory was undertaken, including discursive power, decentralisation, the deconstruction of political subjectivity, and radical autonomy. Particular attention was devoted to the deconstruction of power as a social phenomenon and its interrelation with mechanisms of representation. Sources selected for conceptual analysis were drawn from leading authors in the fields of post-structuralism and anarchist theory. The studies by M. Foucault (1975; 1976) and J. Derrida (1987) were used alongside contemporary studies maintaining a high academic standard and direct relevance to the subject. Academic authority served as the principal criterion for source selection, contributing to a deeper understanding of the post-structuralist approach to anarchist thought. Focus was also placed on studies reflecting current theoretical developments within post-anarchist theory, particularly ones addressing post-anarchist ideas in light of contemporary political and social realities. This ensured the applicability of the theory to both global and local challenges.

The second stage of the study centred on a comparative analysis of the applicability of post-anarchist concepts within contemporary political discourse. Selected materials for this stage included manifestos, memoranda, and papers, evaluated based on thematic relevance and the utilisation of post-anarchist theories for interpreting present-day socio-political conditions (The Invisible Committee, 2009; Williams and Srnicek, 2013; *Declarations of the...*, n.d.). Theoretical models of decentralised self-governance and the practical implementation of post-anarchist principles in society were examined. The impact of globalisation on the transformation of political subjectivity was considered, with particular focus on the rise of horizontal social movements that serve as alternatives to conventional hierarchical models of governance (Fighting in the..., 2010; Horizontal Organizational Structure, n.d.; Mishra, 2025). Environmental challenges, digital decentralisation, the platform economy, and self-governing initiatives were analysed as empirical manifestations of post-anarchist practice (Desert, 2011; Friends of the Earth International, 2025). The comparison was conducted through an analysis of decentralised decision-making

mechanisms, horizontal network structures, and strategies of resistance against centralised institutions.

During the third stage, critical discourse analysis was conducted using a combination of manual text analysis and the NVivo software. This approach enabled the evaluation of theoretical paradoxes within post-anarchism in the context of post-structuralism, with specific attention given to the notion of total power and the potential for its desubstantialisation. This raised the issue of the correlation between the rejection of hierarchy and the risks associated with political relativism. The relationship between freedom and social order in the absence of centralised regulation was analysed, alongside the dialectic of autonomy and chaos from a post-anarchist perspective. The use of discourse analysis allowed identifying contradictions between the deconstruction of power and the necessity of political subjectivisation as a mechanism of social resistance.

Results

Critique of power and contemporary challenges through the lens of post-anarchism and post-structuralism

Post-structuralism offers a radically different approach to understanding power when compared with classical political theories such as liberalism, Marxism, or conventional anarchism. While classical theories often conceptualise power as a fixed substance possessed by particular actors or institutions, post-structuralists interpret it as a dispersed and distributed network of relations. This understanding is grounded in the foundational premise of post-structuralism, which rejects universal and static categories in favour of analysing the processes and interactions that shape social structures and relationships. Central to this approach is the concept of power articulated by M. Foucault (1975), whose work formed the basis for ongoing debates concerning the nature of power in the contemporary world. M. Foucault critiques the conventional notion of power as something that can be owned or lost. In his view, power is not located solely within specific structures, such as the state, political parties, or economic institutions. Instead, it is a complex web of relationships that permeates all areas of social life. According to M. Foucault, power is exercised not only through mechanisms of direct control but also through the production of discourses that define what is considered “normal” or “correct” behaviour.

For post-structuralists, power is constituted through internalised social norms and knowledge, which are produced and disseminated by various social institutions, including education, media, and scientific bodies. As a result, individuals come to perceive certain social norms as natural or necessary, even when such norms are sustained by violent or repressive mechanisms. In modern states, for instance, both public and private institutions generate cultural and social discourses that

not only shape particular worldviews but also encourage individuals to conform without the need for overt external coercion. These discourses do not merely reflect existing social structures; they actively construct social reality, reproducing power through processes of socialisation. Notably, the philosophy of post-structuralism does not view power as something applied exclusively to oppressed groups or individuals, but rather as an all-encompassing process that touches every domain of life. Accordingly, power cannot be understood as a linear opposition between oppressors and the oppressed, since the logic of power is far more multidimensional and intricate. This reconceptualisation alters the way political influence and social relations are understood, as every individual is, at some point, involved in either reproducing or challenging power.

The post-anarchist approach to power likewise emphasises the importance of intersubjective interactions, whereby power is neither fixed nor localised. Power emerges as a result of intersubjective relations formed through interactions between individuals, social groups, and even through technologies and media. These relations are regarded as constantly shifting, dynamic, and shaped by a multiplicity of social actors. Power thus becomes mobile and multidimensional, which complicates attempts to localise or identify a singular source or institution of control. Individuals and groups, through their interactions, constitute a continually changing mosaic of power relations influenced by cultural norms, technological developments, media landscapes, and social structures. Post-structuralist theorists argue that it is therefore impossible to pinpoint exactly where and how specific forms of power manifest, as power is in a constant state of flux, adapting to new contexts.

This leads to a fundamental rethinking of the mechanisms through which power circulates, as proposed by post-structuralism. While classical conceptions often suggest that power can be “seized” or “overthrown,” the post-structuralist perspective poses questions about the ways in which power circulates and the mechanisms through which it is reproduced. The philosophy of post-structuralism rejects the notion that power can be dismantled through the overthrow of centralised structures, instead advocating for the deconstruction of power relations through the analysis and transformation of dominant discourses. In this process, the focus shifts towards exposing hidden structures of power that operate at the level of language, behaviour, and social institutions. Resistance to power, in this framework, is no longer framed as a binary conflict between “oppressors” and “the oppressed,” but becomes a continuous process of transforming social norms and knowledge. As power is constantly evolving, resistance entails the ongoing deconstruction and reconstruction of cultural and social narratives that sustain existing forms of control.

A comparison between the post-structuralist understanding of power and other political theories indicates a fundamental divergence in the interpretation of mechanisms of control and the nature of domination. Marxism, for instance, analyses power through the lens of materialist dialectics, asserting that power is derivative of economic relations and rooted in the exploitation of one class by another (Mau, 2021). Within this paradigm, power is viewed as an instrument of oppression that ensures the dominance of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat through state apparatuses, legal structures, and ideological institutions such as education and the media. Accordingly, revolutionary struggle in Marxist thought is aimed at transforming the economic base, which, according to classical Marxists, would lead to the automatic dismantling of repressive superstructures, including the state and its coercive institutions.

Liberalism, by contrast, conceptualises the state as a necessary mechanism for limiting and distributing power, designed to maintain a balance between individual liberty and collective responsibility. Liberal theorists maintain that power should be divided among branches of government to prevent its abuse (MacGilvray, 2021). From a liberal standpoint, the state acts as an arbiter that mediates conflicts of interest and ensures the rule of law. Post-structuralists reject any attempt to stabilise power within institutional frameworks, arguing instead that power is not a static resource but a dynamic process continuously reproduced through social interaction. They critique liberalism for its naïve assumption that power can be “fairly” distributed, and stress that even democratic institutions function as mechanisms of behavioural normalisation that generate and maintain dominant discourses.

Post-anarchism emerges at the intersection of classical anarchist tradition and post-structuralist critiques of power, combining the aspiration for social emancipation with an expanded understanding of mechanisms of domination. It develops as a response to the methodological and conceptual limitations of classical anarchism and Marxism, which often relied on essentialist notions of power and revolutionary societal transformation. Rejecting the concept of power as a clearly localised phenomenon, post-anarchists conceive of it as a dispersed network of relations operating through both discursive and material practices.

Classical anarchism defined the state as the primary bearer of repressive power, fundamentally opposed to the principles of liberty and self-governance. Anarchists insisted on its abolition as a necessary precondition for collective liberation (Kinna, 2024). Marxism, by contrast, proposed a different paradigm: class struggle was considered the driving force of history, and the overthrow of the bourgeois state, followed by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, was expected to ensure the transition to a classless society. Although anarchism and Marxism diverged in their

visions of how social equality might be achieved, both traditions were grounded in the assumption that power originates from clearly identifiable sources, namely the state and capital, and that these could be radically dismantled as a decisive step towards emancipation.

Post-anarchism challenges such essentialist assumptions by asserting that power is neither mono-centric nor purely institutional. Power is not confined to state apparatuses or class relations, but permeates every sphere of social life, embedded within both discursive and material structures. Drawing on the work of M. Foucault (1975), J. Derrida (1987), and J. Lacan (2023), post-anarchists demonstrate that power operates through processes of normalisation, subjectivation, and disciplinary control. For instance, behaviour is shaped not only by laws or coercive institutions, but also by social norms, media discourses, educational systems, and other mechanisms that subtly structure modes of thinking and acting. Revolutionary overthrow of a government or capitalist economy, in this view, does not guarantee liberation, since power is continually reproduced through myriad microprocesses of social organisation.

A key dimension of post-anarchist critique lies in its expanded conception of the state, not merely as a repressive apparatus but as a mechanism for the construction of subjectivity. While classical anarchists largely focused on coercion enacted through the military, police, and judiciary, post-anarchists investigate how the state produces citizens not only by means of force but also through the fabrication of identities, norms, and political imaginaries. For example, modern liberal democracies employ electoral politics in ways that generate the illusion of popular sovereignty, while in practice circumscribing political agency within the confines of representative systems. Citizens are compelled to operate within pre-established boundaries: rather than exercising genuine influence over decision-making, they are

permitted only to choose periodically among options already configured by the prevailing system.

A central concern within post-anarchist critiques of democracy is the phenomenon of representation. In the conventional democratic model, power is delegated to elected representatives, which, on the one hand, enables the functioning of large political communities, yet, on the other, results in the alienation of the political subject from decision-making processes. Citizens' political subjectivity gradually dissolves into a passive expectation of action from political elites, while real power becomes concentrated in a narrow circle of government officials, business actors, and bureaucratic structures. From the post-anarchist perspective, representation becomes a tool of depoliticisation, reinforcing hierarchy and rendering autonomous self-governance impossible.

As an alternative, post-anarchists advocate radical decentralisation and a multiplicity of forms of political participation that extend beyond conventional state institutions. Autonomous zones, horizontal social networks, local self-governance initiatives, and digital platforms for direct decision-making are viewed as potential tools for overcoming alienation and generating new modes of political interaction. These approaches aim to dismantle entrenched structures of domination and create space for emancipation through the continuous destabilisation of power relations.

Post-anarchism not only reconsiders classical conceptions of power but also proposes new modes of political action (Table 1). It does not aim toward utopian projects of "final liberation," but instead emphasises the importance of an ongoing process of developing autonomous practices capable of undermining centralised mechanisms of control and representation. This offers new perspectives for analysing power and engaging in struggles for social transformation in the context of a globalised contemporary society.

Table 1. Critique of the state through the lens of post-structuralism and post-anarchism

| Critique | Justification (Post-anarchist approach) | Alternative models | Contemporary examples |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| Centralisation of power | The state monopolises coercion and restricts community autonomy | Decentralised communal structures | Autonomous municipalities, e.g., the Zapatista autonomy (Mexico) |
| Representation | The political system alienates citizens from decision-making processes | Direct democracy, horizontal assemblies | Popular council model (Rojava, Syria) |
| Social control | Control is exercised through institutions, discourse, and language | Self-organisation, horizontal networks | Decentralised initiatives (cooperatives, community kitchens) |
| Bureaucracy | The administrative apparatus expands mechanisms of power | Flexible network-based forms of governance | Distributed governance platforms (DAOs, blockchain systems) |
| Ideological apparatus | Education, media, and culture serve to reinforce state structures | Critical pedagogy, decentralised media | Independent media platforms, alternative educational spaces |

Table 1. Continued

| Critique | Justification (Post-anarchist approach) | Alternative models | Contemporary examples |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| Legal system | Law functions as a tool for reproducing hierarchy and oppressing marginalised groups | Restorative justice, communal conflict resolution | Restorative justice in Indigenous communities (Canada, New Zealand) |
| Economic monopoly | The state secures corporate interests through market control | Local economies, shared ownership of resources | Alternative currencies (cryptocurrencies) |
| Migration control | The state defines who “belongs” to the nation, constructing borders | Free movement of people, absence of enforced citizenship | Open borders, migrant support initiatives (Sanctuary Cities, USA) |

Source: compiled by the authors based on M. Foucault (1976), J. Derrida (1987), R. Kinna (2024)

The Table 1 indicated that post-anarchism offers alternative models of social organisation that do not rely on centralised authority. Rejection of hierarchical structures does not imply chaos or destruction; rather, it represents a search for new forms of solidarity and interaction. Both post-structuralism and post-anarchism advance a fundamental critique of conventional statehood, directed against the centralisation of power, hierarchical control mechanisms, representational governance models, and economic monopoly. They instead highlight the necessity of creating decentralised, autonomous, and flexible structures that promote direct citizen participation in decision-making processes, as well as alternative approaches to economics, justice, and social engagement. Critique of the state in post-structuralist and post-anarchist discourse is not limited to theoretical opposition; it is accompanied by the development of concrete alternative models. Many of these are already being realised in contemporary examples of self-organisation, confirming the practical relevance of these ideas and their potential to offer tangible pathways for dismantling hierarchical structures across various spheres of social life.

One of the principal areas within post-anarchist thought is the development of networked structures and horizontal forms of self-organisation. Such models are already being implemented in many contemporary social movements, including ecological initiatives, autonomous cooperatives, and anarchist communitarian projects. These examples demonstrate that society can function without centralised control when grounded in principles of mutual aid, voluntary association, and direct democracy. Nonetheless, the question arises as to whether such a model can remain stable within large-scale societies. Critiques of horizontal movements point to difficulties in coordination and the absence of clear decision-making mechanisms during times of crisis. Post-anarchists respond by arguing that no system is fixed or immutable, and political forms must remain open to continuous transformation and adaptation. Post-anarchism offers a profound critique of classical concepts of power and the state, drawing on post-structuralist approaches to the analysis of political structures. It rejects the revolutionary essentialism

of classical anarchism and Marxism, proposing instead a model of decentralised social transformation. Networked structures grounded in autonomy and self-governance are put forward as alternatives to the state.

In the context of contemporary political realities, post-anarchism appears not only as a theoretical critique of power but also as a mode of thought that offers alternative approaches to the organisation of social life. In a post-industrial society where conventional political ideologies are undergoing crisis, post-anarchism seeks to understand mechanisms of power and ways of overcoming them, taking into account emerging social, economic, and technological challenges. This conceptual reorientation expands the scope of post-anarchist critique while also confronting it with new demands. The world is a complex and contradictory system in which global integration, social mobility, and technological advancement generate conditions for both enhanced autonomy and novel forms of subjugation. The interdependence of societies and the growing scale of political and economic structures complicate the realisation of conventional anarchist ideals, yet simultaneously open new avenues for rethinking strategies of resistance and self-organisation.

Globalisation, as a complex and multidimensional process encompassing economic, political, and cultural dimensions, constitutes both a challenge and an opportunity for post-anarchist theories. On one hand, it facilitates the expansion of horizontal connections among social movements, offering new mechanisms of self-organisation and information exchange beyond the limits of state institutions. This process contributes to the development of translocal and transnational networks grounded in decentralisation and collective decision-making. On the other hand, globalisation is accompanied by the increasing influence of transnational corporations, financial institutions, and supranational governance bodies, which complicates the implementation of anarchic forms of social organisation.

Post-anarchism regards globalisation not as a unified or monolithic process but as a contested political terrain in which alternative forms of political agency may emerge. However, several theoretical and practical limitations confront post-anarchist approaches.

Despite the decentralised nature of global social movements, they often remain vulnerable to processes of co-optation by state and corporate structures. For instance, the study by M. Schaaf & O. Quiring (2023) highlights that the digital platforms utilised by activists, such as social media, are instruments of commercial and political elites, which constrains their effectiveness as autonomous tools of mobilisation.

Economic globalisation constructs a complex system of structural dependencies that hinders the implementation of local, autonomous models of production and consumption. On one hand, such models strive for economic self-sufficiency through decentralisation, cooperation, and local control over resources. On the other hand, they remain embedded within global markets through intricate supply chains, technological dependency, and financial mechanisms, rendering them susceptible to external pressures. Most local economies rely on the import of raw materials, equipment, and technologies supplied by transnational corporations or state institutions. This implies that even autonomous production initiatives often cannot entirely circumvent interaction with global markets. Global supply chains exhibit a tendency toward centralisation, which places local production efforts at a disadvantage. For example, even when a community produces its own goods, it may be compelled to sell them through large retail networks that dictate pricing and logistics. This limits the prospects for equitable profit distribution, intensifies dependency on centralised distribution systems, and complicates the viability of alternative economic models. Economic globalisation thus produces a paradox in which, on one hand, it enables the expansion of local initiatives by providing access to technologies, information, and new markets, yet, on the other, it embeds these initiatives within dependency networks that substantially constrain their genuine autonomy. This forces local movements either to adapt to the prevailing global economic conditions or to seek radically new approaches to achieving economic independence, an ongoing challenge in the contemporary context.

Another pressing global concern is the ecological crisis, which compels a re-evaluation of conventional models of social governance. Post-anarchism offers an alternative perspective on environmental issues, emphasising the necessity for decentralised and collective management of natural resources. Theorists within this tradition point to the failure of state-centric environmental policies, which frequently reflect corporate interests and neglect the specific characteristics of local ecosystems. However, the implementation of post-anarchist ecological strategies also encounters notable constraints. Models of local ecological autonomy face material and technical limitations, as many initiatives operating under horizontal governance structures remain dependent on external funding or state

support programmes. The lack of unified coordination mechanisms among local ecological communes may also compromise their long-term resilience.

A further challenge worth highlighting is the emergence of contemporary social movements that increasingly adopt horizontal models of organisation, reflecting the core principles of post-anarchist thought. Feminist, anti-corruption, anti-authoritarian, and environmental movements are increasingly rejecting centralised leadership in favour of decentralised strategies of collective action. For instance, movements such as Occupy and Extinction Rebellion employ leaderless organisational methods, establishing temporary autonomous zones in which decisions are made through consensus.

Despite the advantages of such strategies, they also exhibit certain weaknesses. One key issue facing horizontal structures is the absence of formal mechanisms for resolving internal conflicts. In theory, these movements are grounded in principles of equal participation and consensual decision-making, yet in practice, they frequently encounter the phenomenon of “quiet hierarchy” (Kummelstedt, 2023). This concept describes situations in which informally centralised power structures emerge within ostensibly horizontal organisations. Even in movements that aim to avoid conventional hierarchies, certain participants nevertheless acquire disproportionate influence over decision-making processes through personal authority, charisma, or control over communication channels.

In contemporary horizontal movements such as Extinction Rebellion and Occupy Wall Street, trends of informal dominance are observable: activists with greater experience or resources, including access to media or funding, often wield disproportionate power in decision-making processes. This may lead to discontent and demoralisation among other participants, particularly in moments of crisis when prompt decisions are required, yet the absence of clear procedures creates conditions conducive to informal power consolidation. Analysis of these examples demonstrates that asymmetries of power persist even within horizontal structures, raising questions about the feasibility of complete decentralisation under real-world conditions. The formal absence of hierarchy does not guarantee actual equality among participants; access to resources, competencies, or network connections automatically becomes a source of influence. This indicates that horizontality, in itself, does not eliminate mechanisms of domination but merely alters their form and visibility. As a result, even decentralised movements require critical reflection on their internal power dynamics and the development of mechanisms to prevent new forms of inequality.

Another fundamental problem of horizontal structures lies in their limited capacity for long-term coordination. Many social movements operating on principles of decentralised governance effectively mobilise

people during moments of crisis, yet encounter difficulties in developing stable organisational models to sustain initiatives over the long term. The example of Occupy Wall Street, which gathered thousands of activists and propagated ideas of economic equality and opposition to corporate power, demonstrated that in the absence of strategic vision and clear coordination mechanisms, even mass movements rapidly lose influence (Fong, 2023). Based on this analysis, the successful implementation of post-anarchist principles requires the development of new models of sustainable coordination, balancing openness with structured horizontal networks. The absence of formal hierarchy must be compensated by flexible, yet clearly defined mechanisms for decision-making, responsibility distribution, and conflict resolution. This entails the necessity of creating procedures that simultaneously preserve the inclusivity of processes and prevent the concentration of informal power. Without such measures, even the most decentralised initiatives risk reproducing the very inequalities they aim to challenge.

Analysing the theory involves considering the role of digital technologies within the context of post-anarchist strategies, notably the potential of digital platforms, blockchain technologies, and cryptocurrencies as tools for decentralising power. Post-anarchists view these technologies as instruments for the development of autonomous forms of social organisation. Theoretical discussions also examine decentralised decision-making systems, such as DAOs (decentralised autonomous organisations), as examples of self-governing structures without hierarchical control (Alston, 2022). Post-anarchist critique of technological decentralisation highlights risks associated with digital surveillance and algorithmic governance, which may give rise to new forms of power that are less transparent than conventional political institutions. Particularly, the concentration of control over digital platforms in the hands of corporations contradicts principles of autonomy, thereby undermining the potential of post-anarchist strategies in digital environments.

The analysis shows that post-anarchism not only offers a radical critique of contemporary forms of power but also opens new perspectives on social organisation within the context of decentralisation, local initiatives, and horizontal networks. In Ukrainian society, post-anarchist ideas find practical expression in forms of civic self-organisation, volunteer movements, direct democracy initiatives, and the development of cooperative associations operating outside conventional state structures. These examples demonstrate the adaptability of post-anarchist approaches to the realities of a post-crisis society and the potential of alternative models of power in processes of social transformation. Nevertheless, these approaches face a range of practical and theoretical limitations, casting doubt on their long-term efficacy. The analysis of these challenges is

crucial for the further development of post-anarchist ideas amid contemporary global transformations.

Contemporary political realities indicate a growing interest in decentralised forms of social organisation, which constitute a central concern of post-anarchist thought. In the context of globalisation, ecological crisis, and the advancement of digital technologies, post-anarchism offers conceptual frameworks for the critical analysis of existing power structures and the exploration of alternative paths for societal development. Social movements grounded in horizontal principles reveal the potential for the realisation of anarchic models of organisation, yet their long-term effectiveness remains an open question. By combining a critique of conventional ideologies of power with a post-structuralist approach to political analysis, post-anarchism facilitates a deeper understanding of contemporary challenges and prospects for social transformation.

Post-anarchism, as a current of critical thought, continues to evolve in response to global challenges. Its theoretical foundations offer new approaches to understanding power and the mechanisms through which it operates, though these concepts encounter practical difficulties. The complexity of the modern world, the interdependence of economies, the intensification of digital control, and environmental threats compel post-anarchist theories to adapt and revise their strategies. Horizontal models of organisation, which form a key component of post-anarchist thinking, demonstrate both the potential for social transformation and the limitations linked to a lack of effective coordination and conflict resolution mechanisms. Digital technologies provide new opportunities for decentralisation, while simultaneously generating new forms of subordination through algorithmic governance and the monopolisation of digital platforms. Within this context, post-anarchism remains a field of intellectual experimentation, combining radical critique of existing power structures with the search for alternative models of social organisation. Its future development will depend on the ability to propose more effective mechanisms for achieving autonomy, which take into account contemporary social, economic, and technological realities.

Post-structuralist foundations of post-anarchism

Political identity within the post-structuralist tradition is unstable, processual, and open to constant transformation, shaped by its dependence on multiple discursive practices and socio-historical contexts. It is not a clearly defined or essentialised category, but is constituted through complex networks of interaction between subjects, power institutions, and ideological apparatuses, which continuously reshape its configuration. Political identity emerges not as the product of static social structures but as a dynamic process of constructing and reconstructing meanings, perpetually subject to revision. Drawing on these foundations,

post-anarchism rejects essentialist conceptions of the subject, the political collective, and the social order that characterised classical anarchism, which assumed the existence of objective and fixed bases for social transformation. Instead, post-anarchist theory interprets political relations as decentralised, contingent, and radically open to change. The rejection of essentialism corresponds with the post-structuralist critique of metanarratives and Foucauldian analysis of discursive power, which precludes any final fixation of political subjects within stable identities.

A central methodological tool within post-anarchist theory is deconstruction, as introduced by J. Derrida (1987). Author demonstrated that meaning in language is always deferred, and therefore, no political identity can ever be final or immutable. This directly contradicts classical revolutionary strategies, which view society as a battleground between clearly defined groups, such as the oppressed and the oppressors. Post-anarchism, drawing upon this concept, argues that such divisions are discursively constructed and thus require constant critical re-evaluation.

In this context, M. Foucault's (1975; 1976) analysis of power is especially important. His works "Discipline and Punish" and "The History of Sexuality" offered a novel understanding of power as a dispersed phenomenon, functioning through discourses rather than solely through the repressive mechanisms of the state. Foucault asserted that the subject does not exist independently of the discursive regimes that shape it. Consequently, any struggle for "liberation" must inevitably confront multiple, diffuse forms of power. This perspective shifts the focus of post-anarchist critique. Whereas classical anarchism centred its efforts on resisting the state as the primary locus of power, post-anarchism examines how power operates within the smallest social practices, including language, norms, and cultural assumptions. The field of political resistance is thus expanded: struggle occurs not only through revolutionary action but also by subverting hegemonic discourses, altering modes of subjective self-reflection, and generating new forms of social interaction.

Another important aspect of post-anarchist critique concerns the symbolic order and the structural impact of power on subject formation. This approach was developed by J. Lacan (2023) in his concept of the "big Other", which views language and symbolic structures as conditions for the emergence of identity. Lacanian analysis of identity became central to post-anarchism, as it demonstrates that power operates not only as external coercion but also as a profound mechanism that defines the very possibility of political subjectivity. This challenges conventional revolutionary strategies, which rest on the assumption that dismantling or transforming power institutions alone is sufficient to achieve fundamental social change. However, post-structuralist analyses of power reveal that even after the formal

dismantling of the state apparatus or centralised institutions, dominant discourses that shape subjectivity, modes of thought, and social behaviour may continue to reproduce hierarchical structures. In other words, power is not exclusively institutional, but manifests through micro-processes of discipline, ideological influence, and normalisation.

Accordingly, post-anarchism does not concentrate solely on the transformation of external power structures or the seizure of political control. It emphasises the necessity of a radical transformation of subjectivity and of political conceptions of autonomy. This implies that emancipatory struggle must unfold not only in the realm of institutional change but also through a rupture with established regimes of knowledge, discursive practices, and forms of social imagination. The key task, therefore, lies not merely in overcoming the material structures of oppression but in creating new modes of thought and new forms of collective action that do not reproduce the logic of domination and repression.

In this sense, post-anarchism radically departs from classical utopian projects, which are constructed upon rigid normative political models and metanarratives. Since no structure is ever final, and every political system is the product of contingent processes and historical change, post-anarchism does not offer a closed theoretical framework. Instead, it advocates a principled openness to new forms of social organisation, flexibility in political action, and experimentation with alternative models of interaction. This reflects the post-structuralist logic of rejecting a teleological approach to history and political evolution, which presupposes a predetermined direction for societal development. By abandoning conventional categories of political identity, post-anarchism opens the possibility for new, flexible forms of social organisation that resist rigid theoretical delimitation. Whereas classical anarchism operated with concepts such as "class," "the people," "exploitation," and "revolution" as objective and structurally defined categories, post-anarchists underscore their instability, historical variability, and contextual contingency. The rejection of fixed social identities and of a singular revolutionary subject allows post-anarchism to understand political processes not as a linear struggle for power, but as a complex network of interactions, in which new forms of resistance and autonomy emerge through multiple practices of discursive and material contestation. Political subjectivity within post-anarchism is therefore conceived as fragmentary, relational, and perpetually open to transformation. Individuals do not belong to static political communities, but participate in dynamic processes of self-organisation, where their identities are continually renegotiated through practices of collective action and political experimentation. For instance, contemporary social movements such as feminist initiatives, environmental activists, or anti-capitalist platforms lack a centralised

core or stable ideological programme. They operate through flexible networks, temporary coalitions, and horizontal structures, which do not require centralised leadership or rigid organisational hierarchies.

This tendency aligns with the post-anarchist understanding of politics as a process of constant re-signification, which renders the final stabilisation of power structures or the universalisation of any social theory impossible. Whereas classical anarchism criticised the state and capitalism as forms of institutionalised oppression, offering instead models of federative self-governance, post-anarchism privileges no particular form of social organisation. It conceives political transformation as a plural, decentralised, and open-ended process, in which the key concern is not the establishment of a specific social order, but the continual possibility of its critical revision and transformation. In this respect, post-anarchism represents a logical continuation of the post-structuralist critique of power and subjectivity. It not only analyses mechanisms of domination but also proposes alternative approaches to political organisation based on openness, decentralisation, and the perpetual reimagining of social relations. This renders it particularly relevant in

the context of contemporary social movements, which reject rigid structures and seek new, more adaptive forms of political engagement. In this sense, post-anarchism does not simply negate conventional hierarchies. It offers a radical rethinking of the very nature of power, political subjectivity, and social order.

Grounded in the post-structuralist critique of power, post-anarchism confronts a number of theoretical and practical paradoxes that complicate its viability as a political theory (Table 2). One of the central issues concerns the possibility of renouncing power in conditions of its omnipresence. The post-structuralist tradition, represented most notably in the work of Michel Foucault, rejects the classical conception of power as a centralised and localised institution. It instead describes power as a diffuse mechanism that permeates all social relations. This implies that even in the absence of conventional structures of authority, forms of domination and subjugation may be reproduced at the level of discursive practices and interpersonal relationships. Within this context, the question arises whether radical emancipation is possible if power is not merely a repressive instrument, but the very condition for the formation of subjectivity.

Table 2. Tensions between post-structuralism and the possibility of practical politics

| Tension | Core issue | Expression in post-structuralism | Impact on practical politics | Possible approaches to resolution |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Rejection of the subject | Post-structuralism questions the stable subject required for political action | J. Lacan: the subject is unstable, formed through language and the Other | Hinders mobilisation due to the absence of a clear conception of the agent of change | Temporary and situational identities; emphasis on processes and relations |
| Decentralisation of power | If power is dispersed, who constitutes its principal opponent? | M. Foucault: power operates through discourses, not solely through the state | Complicates the identification of a primary political adversary | Identification of specific points of resistance, localised struggles, micropolitics |
| Rejection of metanarratives | Post-structuralism critiques overarching ideological projects | J.-F. Lyotard: distrust towards universal ideas | Obstructs the development of general political programmes | Networked movements and situational coalitions without a unified ideology |
| Multiplicity of truths | The absence of a single truth renders political claims unstable | J. Derrida: truth is a play of differences | Political agendas may appear unstable or contradictory | Flexible discourses; rhetorical adaptation to context |
| Critique of representation | Post-structuralism denies the possibility of an accurate representation of social groups | The link between language and power is a construct | Weakens the role of political parties and representative democracy | Horizontal movements, self-governing initiatives, direct action |
| The paradox of action | If everything is discourse, how are material changes enacted? | Language constructs reality (J. Butler) | Creates difficulty in translating theory into practice | Integration of discourse analysis with direct political practices |
| Rejection of fixed identities | Politics demands group solidarity, yet post-structuralism deconstructs it | Identity is fluid and unstable | Undermines sustained mobilisation | Temporary alliances; affective politics |

Source: compiled by the authors based on M. Foucault (1976), J. Derrida (1987), J. Lacan (2023)

The analysis demonstrates several key contradictions among the aspects examined. The first is the rejection of the subject. As post-structuralism denies the stability of the subject, which has conventionally been essential for political mobilisation, post-anarchism faces a fundamental challenge: how to organise sustained political movements in the absence of a fixed identity. This contradiction complicates the development of long-term strategic initiatives and directly limits the possibilities for constructing effective structures of self-organisation. The second key contradiction concerns the decentralisation of power. Rejecting the notion of a singular source of power and shifting focus to discursive practices creates difficulties in identifying the principal opponent of political struggle. This issue is particularly significant for the practical implementation of post-anarchist principles, since effective mobilisation requires a clearly defined object of resistance. The third central contradiction is the refusal of metanarratives. The post-structuralist critique of universal ideologies undermines the formation of broad political programmes, which are necessary to unite large groups around a shared objective. This contradiction raises questions about the prospects for the widespread implementation of post-anarchist models within contemporary political systems.

These problems are intensified by the dilemma between freedom and chaos. While post-anarchism rejects centralised political structures, it also confronts the necessity of organising social life, which in turn entails the establishment of certain norms and rules. The deconstruction of conventional institutions of power does not automatically produce equitable or harmonious relations. On the one hand, self-governance and autonomy, as advocated by post-anarchists, offer opportunities for more democratic and horizontal forms of interaction. On the other hand, the absence of established coordination mechanisms may result in destabilisation and the erosion of social control, which, according to some critics, could lead to societal fragmentation and the undermining of collective forms of solidarity.

Another challenge is relativism, which emerges from the post-structuralist critique of metanarratives and universal truths. If post-anarchism rejects a singular political doctrine and affirms the multiplicity of identities, the question arises as to how social unity might be achieved without appealing to shared ideas or normative foundations. Jacques Derrida, in his writings, emphasised the fundamental impossibility of definitively determining any concept or idea, as meaning is always in motion, continually deferred through processes of differentiation. This implies that any political community attempting to operate on post-anarchist principles will inevitably encounter the challenge of reconciling multiple, and at times contradictory, discourses.

The table highlights that, although post-anarchism offers a radical critique of conventional political

structures, it encounters a number of internal contradictions that limit its practical potential. Its rejection of centralised authority collides with the impossibility of avoiding structural mechanisms of domination, the dilemma between freedom and chaos remains unresolved, and the issue of relativism undermines the possibility of forming stable social bonds. The absence of a normative programme renders post-anarchism an effective tool for critique, though it leaves open the question of its role in the development of alternative models of political organisation. Emerging within the post-structuralist tradition, post-anarchism offers a radical rethinking of approaches to social organisation. Its central concern relates to the possibility of a society existing without stable structures, given that conventional political systems rely on rigid institutional frameworks that ensure order and predictability in social relations. Therewith, the post-anarchist critique of power, representation, and hierarchy entails a search for alternative forms of organisation that do not replicate conventional mechanisms of domination.

Practical examples of decentralised initiatives demonstrate the potential to approximate post-anarchist principles, though these are not entirely free from power relations. Autonomous municipalities, such as the municipal confederalism in Rojava, are based on horizontal structures of self-governance, citizen participation in decision-making processes, and principles of ecological and feminist democracy (Rasit & Kolokotronis, 2020). In this case, political organisation is founded upon the direct participation of communities in decision-making, which aligns with the post-anarchist vision of politics as a process of continual re-signification and collective self-governance. However, even within such systems, mechanisms of coordination and regulation persist, potentially conflicting with the radical deconstruction of power proposed by post-structuralism. In Rojava, the People's Defence Forces exist as a democratically accountable structure, yet still perform armed regulatory functions and may generate new forms of hierarchical authority. This illustrates the complexity of implementing post-anarchist ideas within real social contexts, as the complete absence of power mechanisms may lead to destabilisation and conflict.

These examples show that the post-anarchist principles of decentralisation and radical democracy hold potential for realisation, though they always function within frameworks that cannot be entirely freed from power relations. Post-anarchism, therefore, is not a fixed model of social organisation, but rather a continual process of searching for new forms of political interaction that seek to bypass conventional hierarchical structures, while simultaneously acknowledging the complexity and contradictions inherent in the very nature of power.

An analysis of post-anarchism as a political theory indicates its critical potential while pointing to its

limitations in offering clear models for practical implementation. Post-anarchism does not constitute a conventional normative theory that prescribes specific political strategies or institutional solutions. Instead, it functions as an analytical approach to understanding power, social relations, and identity, offering a radically decentralised vision of politics grounded in the post-structuralist critique of hierarchies and essentialist conceptions of social order.

One of the key strengths of post-anarchism lies in its capacity to expose hidden mechanisms of domination and to illustrate how power is reproduced even within environments that claim autonomy and equality. This is particularly relevant in the context of contemporary political movements that seek to avoid centralisation and hierarchical leadership. Despite its emphasis on decentralisation, any system in practice requires mechanisms of coordination, which may gradually reproduce power relations in new forms. For instance, in digital autonomous communities, power may manifest through algorithmic governance and access to technical resources, whereas in municipal forms of self-governance, the need for collective decision-making often necessitates structured procedures that may take on the characteristics of institutional authority. This raises doubts about the feasibility of fully realising post-anarchist principles in practical political contexts. Another challenge facing post-anarchism is its relativism and openness to a multiplicity of political identities and strategies. On the one hand, this facilitates the critique of all forms of universalism and authoritarianism, yet on the other, it complicates the coordination of collective action within large-scale political processes. In the absence of a central decision-making body, achieving coherence among autonomous initiatives becomes difficult, particularly when confronted with external pressures such as repressive political regimes or corporate interests.

Post-anarchism remains a valuable theoretical tool for the critique of power and the exploration of alternative models of social organisation, although the question of its practical implementation continues to demand further analysis. Its relevance lies not in constructing a new normative system, but in developing dynamic and flexible approaches to political engagement that can be adapted to specific conditions and contexts.

Discussion

The analysis of post-anarchism provides insight into the extent to which this theory offers alternative models of social organisation that reject conventional structures of power and hierarchy. This study illustrates the multidimensional nature of the post-anarchist approach, which involves the deconstruction of power, the rethinking of identity, and the influence of digital technologies on the decentralisation of social processes.

G. Sotiropoulos (2020) and J. Janssen (2024) demonstrated that post-anarchism, grounded in

post-structuralist critiques of the subject, rejects the notion of a stable political identity. Instead, identity is understood as being shaped through discursive practices and interactions with structures of power that do not necessarily take institutional form. Post-anarchist thinkers emphasise that power is dispersed throughout the social space and manifests through language, cultural codes, and technological algorithms. This study affirms that the struggle for freedom cannot be reduced to the abolition of the state or capital, but must involve the deconstruction of dominant narratives that determine the boundaries of political action.

The study by D. Campbell & R. Bleiker (2024), and H. Kallin (2024) explored the influence of post-structuralism on the anarchist tradition, stressing that post-anarchism reimagines the very concept of revolution. Whereas classical anarchists viewed the revolutionary act as a clearly defined intervention aimed at altering political structures, post-anarchists conceive it as a continuous process of micro-resistance. The findings indicate that this process involves the deployment of alternative forms of knowledge, the construction of new models of subjectivity, and the rethinking of political strategies within existing networks of power. This study confirms that post-anarchism does not merely criticise power but investigates its mechanisms to identify spaces for potential deconstruction.

R.W. Valliere (2023) highlights that post-anarchism seeks to reconceptualise power not as a fixed structure but as a flexible process that can be transformed through social practices. In contrast to classical anarchist theories, which envisioned the replacement of centralised authority with federations or communes, post-anarchism emphasises the multiplicity of power relations and the potential for the creation of decentralised forms of coexistence. The study by T. Topuzowski (2024) demonstrated that post-anarchist models continue to face a dilemma: whether a society can function without structures of power, given that even horizontal networks require some form of regulatory mechanism. This study supports the argument that the complete abandonment of power may pose a risk of social disorganisation.

The study by S. Newman & M. Torre (2024) examined the possibility of a just society existing without structures of power, drawing attention to the complexity of maintaining social order in the absence of centralised mechanisms of regulation. Post-anarchists argue that the conventional conception of power as coercive hierarchy is outdated and can be replaced by horizontal networked structures grounded in consensus and self-regulation. The study by I. Lührmann *et al.* (2020) demonstrated that even within highly decentralised social formations, hidden mechanisms of power persist, emerging through cultural norms, flows of information, and economic relations. This study confirms that a just society without power structures remains possible only

on the condition that alternative mechanisms of social coordination exist, capable of maintaining a balance between freedom and necessary constraints.

A. Christoyannopoulos (2022) and S. Newman (2024) highlighted that one of the defining aspects of post-anarchism is its position on the concept of utopia. In contrast to classical anarchist utopias, which envisaged concrete models of a future society, post-anarchism rejects teleological thinking and places emphasis on the necessity of continuous political transformation. This refusal of rigidly defined utopias reflects the post-structuralist scepticism toward stable truths and universal projects of emancipation. Instead, post-anarchism advances a form of "negative utopia" – an open space for multiple experiments in freedom.

The concept of autonomy as a central subject in post-anarchist thought is addressed by J. Rusche (2022). The author approached autonomy not merely as independence from the state, but as a practice of self-governance rooted in principles of mutual aid and direct democracy. Post-anarchism departs from classical models of autonomy based on territorial sovereignty and instead advocates for networked, situational, and contextually fluid forms of autonomous existence. This study affirms that autonomy, in the post-anarchist sense, should be understood as a process rather than a static condition, enabling individuals and groups to evade rigid social structures.

J. Mullenite (2021) stressed that autonomy within post-anarchist discourse is not simply detachment from the state, but an ongoing re-evaluation of the relationship between the individual and society. Post-anarchists view autonomy as a dynamic condition shaped by shifting political, social, and technological contexts. In contrast to classical anarchists, who focused on the economic self-sufficiency of communes, post-anarchism foregrounds the symbolic dimension of autonomy, including informational freedom and cognitive independence. The findings of R. Dzierwa (2025) indicate that although autonomy remains a foundational concept in post-anarchist theory, its realisation within contemporary globalised societies demands new approaches to engagement with existing structures of power. This study confirms that autonomy is not absolute but emerges through ongoing struggles to define the boundaries of freedom under postmodern political conditions.

The study by H. Rahimi & H. Rahimi (2022) and C. Malabou (2022), examines the linguistic power within post-anarchism, drawing on the ideas of M. Foucault and Gilles Deleuze. It demonstrates that political action in a post-anarchist context cannot be separated from the analysis of language as a mechanism for reproducing power relations. Post-anarchists argue that even within highly autonomous spaces, the risk of reproducing structures of domination persists through discursive practices. This study confirms that the struggle for autonomy

must involve not only economic or administrative transformations but also a radical re-evaluation of communicative practices and the production of meaning.

The study by D. Wegner & J. Verschoore (2021) explores digital technologies. The authors assert that a post-structuralist approach to power provides a deeper understanding of how algorithmic governance and digital control influence the possibilities for political resistance. Post-anarchism views online space not simply as a platform for alternative political forms, but as a contested field between centralised mechanisms of control and horizontal networks of interaction. The study shows that contemporary digital technologies can both support autonomy and generate new forms of power relations, complicating the implementation of post-anarchist principles in digital environments.

Post-anarchism, as a foundation for new approaches to social organisation, remains a concept that combines a commitment to decentralisation with the necessity of functional mechanisms for coordination. The findings indicate that although post-anarchist principles are evident in digital platforms, environmental movements, and horizontal initiatives, they continue to face challenges in achieving implementation on a broader political scale. This study affirms that while post-anarchism proposes innovative concepts of political autonomy and social equality, its practical realisation remains an open question requiring further investigation and experimentation with new forms of social organisation.

Conclusions

The study achieved the stated purpose and undertook a comprehensive analysis of post-anarchism as a political theory through conceptual, comparative and discursive methods. As a result, the foundational theoretical principles of post-anarchism were identified, including an understanding of power as a diffuse process and the rejection of fixed identity; the key distinctions between post-anarchism and classical anarchist and Marxist traditions were established; the paradoxes within post-anarchist critiques of power were demonstrated; and the risks of relativism and fragmentation of political projects were articulated. The findings confirmed that post-anarchism holds considerable potential as a tool for the critical analysis of power and for the development of alternative forms of social organisation, though its practical effectiveness depends on the capacity to adapt to shifting social and political contexts.

The analysis of post-anarchism as a political theory demonstrated its radical critique of conventional ideologies of power, grounded in a post-structuralist understanding of power as a social construct. The rejection of essentialism enabled post-anarchist thinkers to deconstruct the concepts of the state, representation, and centralised power structures, though this simultaneously cast doubt on the feasibility of effective social transformation in the absence of stable institutional

mechanisms. Post-anarchism did not present a clearly defined model of political order, which limited its practical applicability. Within contemporary political realities, post-anarchism faced challenges posed by globalisation, ecological crisis, and the digital transformation of power. Although it provided a theoretical foundation for the development of alternative social structures, its implementation relied heavily on the ability of social movements to adapt these ideas to specific political circumstances. Horizontal networks formed within the framework of digital communication technologies offered potential for the application of post-anarchist principles, though they also introduced new difficulties related to the risk of fragmentation and the absence of a unified strategic direction.

The analysis of key post-anarchist concepts showed that the rejection of fixed political categories and conventional understandings of the subject contributed to a deeper comprehension of the mechanisms of power and social organisation. Post-anarchism viewed identity as a processual phenomenon, wherein the subject was shaped through interaction with discursive structures rather than being an autonomous, internally determined entity. Political subjectivity shifted under the influence of symbolic, social, and institutional factors, challenging the notion of a stable political order. Power operated through a network of discursive relations, was embedded in social practice, and reproduced itself through mechanisms of normalisation and symbolic influence. Within this framework, political autonomy was understood not as a predetermined attribute but as a process of continual contestation of power relations. A central feature of post-anarchist thought was the conception of power as diffuse and invisible, permeating all levels of social relations. This rendered the classical

anarchist distinction between state and society untenable and advanced the notion of radical decentralisation through the ongoing deconstruction of power structures.

The reassessment of notions concerning social transformation demonstrated that post-anarchism rejected the idea of the revolutionary subject as the sole agent of change. In its place, micro-political strategies were proposed, oriented towards localised forms of resistance, self-governance, and the creation of autonomous zones beyond the reach of state authority. The examination of post-anarchist paradoxes through the lens of post-structuralism demonstrated that a complete rejection of power was unfeasible, given that power is omnipresent and manifests across various levels of social interaction. This produced a dilemma between freedom and chaos: whether effective social organisation is possible without fixed structures and how its functionality might be ensured. The risks of relativism call into question the viability of constructing a unified political project capable of uniting society around shared values. Future research may focus on developing mechanisms that enable the integration of radical decentralisation with effective coordination among autonomous communities. It may also address the challenge of preventing the re-emergence of power relations within structures that profess their absence.

Acknowledgements

None.

Funding

The study was not funded.

Conflict of Interest

None.

References

- [1] Alston, E. (2022). Blockchain and the law-legality, law-like characteristics, and legal applications. In J.L. Caton (Ed.), *The economics of blockchain and cryptocurrency* (pp. 117-144). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. doi: [10.4337/9781800882348.00014](https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800882348.00014).
- [2] Bekhter, O. (2024). The impact of horizontal and vertical management structures on personnel management effectiveness and working conditions in modern organizations. *Young Scientist*, 7(131), 210-214. doi: [10.32839/2304-5809/2024-7-131-6](https://doi.org/10.32839/2304-5809/2024-7-131-6).
- [3] Campbell, D., & Bleiker, R. (2024). Poststructuralism. In T. Dunne, M. Kurki, K. Kušić & S. Smith (Eds.), *International relations theories: Discipline and diversity* (pp. 196-218). Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: [10.1093/hepl/9780192866455.003.0013](https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780192866455.003.0013).
- [4] Christoyannopoulos, A. (2022). An anarcho-pacifist reading of international relations: A normative critique of international politics from the confluence of pacifism and anarchism. *International Studies Quarterly*, 66(4), article number sqac070. doi: [10.1093/isq/sqac070](https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqac070).
- [5] Declarations of the Lacandon Jungle. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://radiozapatista.org/?page_id=20278&lang=en.
- [6] Derrida, J. (1987). *Of grammatology*. Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- [7] Desert. (2011). Retrieved from <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anonymous-desert>.
- [8] Dzierwa, R. (2025). Autonomy in stratified structures. *Studia Humana*, 14(1), 15-27. doi: [10.2478/sh-2025-0002](https://doi.org/10.2478/sh-2025-0002).
- [9] Fighting in the New Terrain. What's changed since the 20th century. (2010). Retrieved from <https://uk.crimethinc.com/2010/08/23/fighting-in-the-new-terrain>.

- [10] Fong, B.C. (2023). Leaderless movements? Rethinking leaders, spontaneity, and organisation-ness. *Political Science*, 75(2), 105-121. doi: 10.1080/00323187.2023.2259396.
- [11] Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London: Vintage.
- [12] Foucault, M. (1976). *The history of sexuality, Volume 1: An introduction*. London: Vintage.
- [13] Friends of the Earth International. (2025). *Climate and biodiversity in freefall. How policy failures accelerate the polycrisis*. Retrieved from <https://www.foei.org/publication/climate-and-biodiversity-in-freefall/>.
- [14] Horizontal Organizational Structure. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.aihr.com/hr-glossary/horizontal-organizational-structure/>.
- [15] Janssen, J. (2024). Hope springs eternal: Political engagement in a post-anarchist utopia. *Utopian Studies*, 35(1), 25-46. doi: 10.5325/utopianstudies.35.1.0025.
- [16] Kallin, H. (2024). Henri Lefebvre and the spatial revolution that never ends: Towards the reconciliation of anarchist and Marxist approaches in geography?. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, article number e12726. doi: 10.1111/tran.12726.
- [17] Kinna, R. (2024). Anarchism and the politics of utopia. In L. Davis & R. Kinna (Eds.), *Anarchism and utopianism* (pp. 441-476). Manchester: Manchester University Press. doi: 10.7765/9781526183705.00023.
- [18] Kummelstedt, C. (2023). The role of hierarchy in realizing collective leadership in a self-managing organization. *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, 36, 355-375. doi: 10.1007/s11213-022-09615-x.
- [19] Lacan, J. (2023). *From an Other to the other, Book XVI*. Milton: Polity.
- [20] Lührmann, A., Marquardt, K.L., & Mechkova, V. (2020). Constraining governments: New indices of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal accountability. *American Political Science Review*, 114(3), 811-820. doi: 10.1017/S0003055420000222.
- [21] MacGilvray, E. (2021). Liberal freedom, the separation of powers, and the administrative state. *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 38(1), 130-151. doi: 10.1017/S026505252100025X.
- [22] Malabou, C. (2022). *Cynicism and anarchism in Foucault's last seminars*. In P. Osborne (Ed.), *Afterlives transcendentals, universals, others* (pp. 146-162). London: CRMEP Books.
- [23] Mau, S. (2021). "The mute compulsion of economic relations": Towards a Marxist theory of the abstract and impersonal power of capital. *Historical Materialism*, 29(3), 3-32. doi: 10.1163/1569206X-29031234.
- [24] Mishchenko, V. (2023). Functioning of decentralized markets based on the web 3.0 platform. *Economic Space*, 184, 50-57. doi: 10.32782/2224-6282/184-8.
- [25] Mishra, P. (2025). *What is a horizontal organizational structure*. Retrieved from <https://www.pmapstest.com/blog/horizontal-organizational-structure>.
- [26] Mullenite, J. (2021). Toward broader anarchist geographies: Space/place, nation/state, and anarchist scholarship. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 20(2), 206-213. doi: 10.14288/acme.v20i2.1949.
- [27] Newman, S. (2024). Anarchism, utopianism and the politics of emancipation. In L. Davis & R. Kinna (Eds.), *Anarchism and utopianism* (pp. 207-220). Manchester: Manchester University Press. doi: 10.7765/9781526183705.00022.
- [28] Newman, S., & Torre, M. (2024). *The anarchist before the law: Law without authority*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. doi: 10.1515/9781399513203.
- [29] Pavliuchenko, A.M. (2020). Postanarchism as a philosophy of radical politics. *Journal of V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Series Philosophy. Philosophical Peripeteias*, 63, 34-43. doi: 10.26565/2226-0994-2020-63-4.
- [30] Pedchenko, M.Y. (2024). Research of the axiological foundations of the network society in the context of transformational processes of postmodernity. *Educational Discourse: Collection of Scientific Papers*, 50(7-9), 46-54. doi: 10.33930/ed.2019.5007.50(7-9)-7.
- [31] Rahimi, H., & Rahimi, H. (2022). Deleuze and contemporary planning theory: Neither state nor traditional anarchism. *Armanshahr Architecture & Urban Development*, 15(38), 235-246. doi: 10.22034/aad.2022.220148.2133.
- [32] Rasit, H., & Kolokotronis, A. (2020). Decentralist vanguards: Women's autonomous power and left convergence in Rojava. *Globalizations*, 17(5), 869-883. doi: 10.1080/14747731.2020.1722498.
- [33] Rusche, J. (2022). Imagining peace outside of liberal statebuilding: Anarchist theory as pathway to emancipatory peace facilitation. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 47(1), 18-44. doi: 10.1177/03043754221074618.
- [34] Schaaf, M., & Quiring, O. (2023). The limits of social media mobilization: How protest movements adapt to social media logic. *Media and Communication*, 11(3), 203-213. doi: 10.17645/mac.v11i3.6635.
- [35] Sotiropoulos, G. (2020). Between order and insurgency: Post-structuralism and the problem of justice. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 47(7), 850-872. doi: 10.1177/0191453720931905.
- [36] The Invisible Committee. (2009). *The coming insurrection*. Retrieved from <https://mitpress.mit.edu/9781584350804/the-coming-insurrection/>.

- [37] Tkalya, O.V. (2024). The essence of state power and its main properties. *Actual Problems of National Jurisprudence*, 1, 230-235. doi: [10.32782/2408-9257-2024-1-42](https://doi.org/10.32782/2408-9257-2024-1-42).
- [38] Topuzovski, T. (2024). *Postanarchism and critical art practices*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- [39] Ugryn, L.Y., & Bevza, B.P. (2022). Self-identification of citizens as a key factor of instability of party system in Ukraine. *Regional Studies*, 29, 88-94. doi: [10.32782/2663-6170/2022.29.14](https://doi.org/10.32782/2663-6170/2022.29.14).
- [40] Valliere, R.W. (2023). What is the future for post-structuralist anarchism?. *Philosophies*, 8(4), article number 63. doi: [10.3390/philosophies8040063](https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies8040063).
- [41] Wegner, D., & Verschoore, J. (2021). Network governance in action: Functions and practices to foster collaborative environments. *Administration & Society*, 54(3), 479-499. doi: [10.1177/00953997211024580](https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997211024580).
- [42] Williams, A., & Srnicek, N. (2013). #ACCELERATE MANIFESTO for an accelerationist politics. Retrieved from <https://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/05/14/accelerate-manifesto-for-an-accelerationist-politics/>.

Теорії постанархізму: постструктуралізм у політичній філософії

Максим Шульга

Аспірант

Український державний університет імені М. Драгоманова

01601, вул. Пирогова, 9, м. Київ, Україна

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-6942-5033>

Олександр Ровнягін

Магістр

Київський національний університет технологій та дизайну

01011, вул. Мала Шияновська, 2, м. Київ, Україна

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0868-6794>

Анотація. Метою дослідження був аналіз постанархізму як критики традиційних ідеологій влади та його потенціалу для соціальної трансформації. Дослідження проводилося з вересня 2024 року по лютий 2025 року, з використанням постструктуралістського аналізу влади, політичної ідентичності та соціальних структур. Результати дослідження вказали, що постанархізм розглядає владу не як фіксовану ієрархічну структуру, а як гнучкий процес, що формується через множинні соціальні взаємодії. Постанархістські концепції демонструють, що відмова від централізованих владних механізмів можлива за умови створення альтернативних форм соціальної координації, заснованих на принципах автономії, взаємодопомоги та безпосередньої демократії. Аналіз сучасних ініціатив, таких як горизонтальні мережі та цифрові спільноти, показав, що постанархістські підходи можуть сприяти формуванню нових моделей громадянської взаємодії, хоча і залишаються вразливими до латентних форм влади через культурні та економічні залежності. Було виявлено парадокси постанархістських моделей, зокрема неможливості повної ліквідації влади навіть у найдецентралізованіших структурах. Результати підтвердили, що постанархізм водночас критикує традиційні владні форми і визнає необхідність певних регулюючих механізмів для забезпечення соціальної згуртованості. Крім того, аналіз показав, що у відповідь на виклики глобалізації та цифровізації постанархізм акцентує увагу на гнучких, ситуаційно адаптивних формах політичної суб'єктності, які можуть змінюватися залежно від контексту. В дослідженні засвідчено обмеження постанархістської перспективи у вирішенні питань соціальної рівності: за відсутності універсальних стандартів виникають ризики нових форм нерівності, що формуються природним шляхом через асиметрії ресурсів і доступу до інформації. Водночас постанархізм відкриває можливості для критичної рефлексії щодо політичної свободи та автономії в умовах сучасних постструктурних реалій. Висновки дослідження можуть бути використані для подальшого аналізу трансформаційних потенціалів постструктуралістських теорій влади, переосмислення моделей політичної ідентичності та розробки стратегій формування більш гнучких і відкритих соціальних структур.

Ключові слова: деконструкція; дискурс; горизонтальність; ієрархія; релятивізм