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The rationale of denouncing institutional legitimization of ecocide - the daring social role of metamodernism

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One hundred years ago, first the communist revolution in Russia and then the Nazi movement in Germany emerged from a reaction against liberal regimes, offering alternative values, promises and ideals to parliamentary democracy and liberalism. Two European summits, in 1884, the Berlin conference, and in 1923, the Lausanne conference, referring to the territory of Africa and of the Arab peninsula and the Middle East, set unprecedent international claims related to forced migration and to colonial abuse. Throughout the twentieth century, several schools of thought identified mass culture as playing a critical role in shaping society, namely the Frankfurt school of critical theory and the Birmingham school of cultural studies. It is not possible to face the extent of present times destruction of nature and the ongoing ecocide without acknowledging the open and continuing historical influences. Colonial, imperialistic and white supremacy domination, old and new, new and extra-new, which comprises exponential time-space expansion, have tragic consequences in political, social and ecological terms. If humans have been the last species to dominate the planet, it may be the first one to perish, under the conditions of its own making. Dysfunctional, dystopian and self-serving, faceless and nameless, the creation of an invisible enemy is perpetuated by hegemonic thought. Contemporary societies face rising levels of economic inequality and of social divide. Political polarisation and institutional discredit create a democratic void that pushes forward conformism, alienation and apathy. Ethical, moral and value-based arguments become vulnerable under the pressures of myth-creating instrumentalization. Social movements and civic rights actions are easily co-opted and invisibly manipulated by the status quo. These frailties lead to the weakening of the rule of law and of independent state-based international negotiations, fostering sophisticated and highly professionalised forms of institutionalised political and corporate terrorism and crime. Metamodernism refers to a daring, lucid and forward-looking positioning that acknowledges historical influences through the critical eyes of intersectional ecofeminism and disruptive thought. If Modernism implied the rejection of ancient determinisms and the openness to novelty, then the creative move must be re-equated and reinforced in order to face the self-destructive mode that has become legitimatised. Sceptical and nihilistic compliance may be inverted by the active role of denouncing, dismounting and re-signifying social relations and the social fabric. Strong, vibrant and

energising relations, core communities that are realistic and deeply committed to inverting the perverse toxic rationale, and the opening that is fertile, generous and creative, reveals the kind of disruptive attitude of bottom-up and grassroot initiatives. The paramount potential for social change that is present today and spread across the globe is not based on cult of personality or on individual stoic efforts but on a deeply experienced connection with nature, with oneself and with other fellow beings, human and beyond human. Denouncing that which destroys human spontaneity and creativity, which institutionalises abuse and legitimises crime, is a mature, responsible, committed, informed and adult answer to perverted forms of pseudo-governance and of self-destructive hegemonic drives. Practice-based research and the active scientific militancy of academic communities have a crucial role to play in helping to foster transformation and development as co-creators of social change. Social agency and the potential for resistance emerges from existential breakthroughs of thriving communities. Identifying, recognising, celebrating, sustaining and replicating these experiences and becoming proficient in proliferating their rationale is an ethical, epistemic, methodological and political challenge for present and future generations. The urgency of change and the power of the creative passion reveals life at its best, as an inspiring and illuminating life-giving force able to expand new horizons of action and thought. This change is already there, already creating new possible futures.

Keywords: *social function; ecocide; metamodernism; historicity; social agency*.
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