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CONTOURS OF METAMODERN ESCHATOLOGY: A CORPUS-BASED APPROACH

This article presents an interdisciplinary socio-philosophical study that seeks to integrate corpus linguistics with philosophical analysis of metamodernism and its eschatological potential. The authors argue that today's global political, ecological, and technological challenges call for a renewed mode of thinking about the future – one that transcends both postmodern skepticism and the linear teleology of modernism. As a cultural and methodological framework, metamodernism is capable of holding the tension between a belief in progress and a critical reassessment of past utopias. Therefore, the authors contend, metamodernism offers fertile ground for the emergence of new eschatological imaginaries.

The central claim is that philosophy, which relies on quantitative analysis of philosophical texts (e.g., concordances, collocations, frequency data) – not only allows for empirical validation of philosophical intuitions but also helps overcome subjectivism in interpreting complex concepts, particularly those related to eschatology. Through corpus analysis, the authors reconstruct eschatological sensibilities in the works of Marx, Engels, leading metamodernists (such as Freinacht and van den Akker), and eco-socialist theorists, highlighting not only critiques of capitalism but also emerging efforts to articulate positive visions of the future. Eco-socialism, in this context, is interpreted as one of the few paradigms capable of uniting ecological ethics, social justice, and materially grounded utopia.

Though, drawing on international sociological surveys, the study demonstrates that contemporary imaginaries of the future are polyphonic, conflictual, and saturated with existential anxiety – underscoring the need for new forms of eschatological reasoning. Ultimately, the article offers a corpus-supported reconstruction of metamodern eschatology – one that incorporates dialectical thinking about the end, political commitment, openness to a multiplicity of futures, and attentiveness to the voices of the marginalized. This form of eschatology is not abstract; rather, it emerges as a tool of critique and political engagement in an age of ecological, political, and economic polycrisis.

Keywords: *metamodernism, eschatology, corpus linguistics, eco-socialism, end of history, utopia, capitalism*.

1. Introduction. Why, Ultimately, Must We Reconsider Eschatology?

In recent decades, humanity has increasingly been confronted not with eschatological metaphors but with direct warnings of the end. For over a century, scientists around the world have urged reflection on looming catastrophes – ranging from ecosystem collapse to, more recently, the threat of nuclear war – yet these warnings have largely gone unheeded [Scientists' Warning, 2023]. A recent study published in *BioScience* reports a dramatic deterioration in the Earth's "vital signs," including temperature anomalies, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and glacial melt. According to projections, by the year 2100, between 3 and 6 billion people could find themselves living outside the planet's habitable zones, exposed to extreme heat, food shortages, and rising mortality [Ripple et al., 2023]. This is not merely a grim forecast – it is a direct political challenge. Among the urgent measures proposed by scientists are: eliminating fossil fuel subsidies, enhancing forest protection, promoting plant-based diets in wealthy nations, phasing out coal and gradually moving away from oil and gas, and implementing demographic policies. Against the backdrop of the climate and ecological crisis, equally alarming are the political signals: in 2025, the Doomsday Clock, a symbolic indicator of global catastrophe risk, was moved to "89 seconds to midnight" – the closest to midnight in its history [Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2025]. This adjustment was prompted by growing threats of nuclear conflict, particularly in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, as well as by the international community's failure to respond effectively to the climate crisis. Furthermore, the current level of global inequality is itself deeply

concerning. Contemporary global capitalism has reached an unprecedented concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a narrow elite. Reports by Oxfam, the World Inequality Lab, and the Brookings Institution indicate that global inequality has now returned to levels comparable to those of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – an era often referred to as the "Gilded Age," when the wealthiest 1% wielded control over the destinies of the majority [Oxfam International, 2024; Chancel et al., 2022; Hickel, 2016; Brookings Institution, 2023; Smith and Louallen, 2024].

Capitalism and its consequences – colonialism, militarism, ecological crisis, among others – emerged and intensified during the era of modernity (from the sixteenth century through the first half of the twentieth). These problems were never fully overcome within the framework of postmodernity (the latter half of the twentieth century), despite the rhetoric of the "end of history" [Fukuyama, 1992], which gained traction in the 1990s amid neoliberal euphoria. Significantly, it is during this period that eco-socialist struggle begins to take shape – as an alternative political idea and emancipatory practice rooted in the experiences of the oppressed (farmers, Indigenous peoples, laborers, and groups marginalized by gender and race) who continue to bear the brunt of the capitalist system. This civic movement constitutes both an ecological critique of capitalism and a rejection of the totalitarian distortions of socialism, pointing toward the necessity of transcending modernity's monologic, progressivist, and productivist conception of social development. The viability of this idea increases within the cultural and epistemological framework of metamodernity (early twenty-first century), which reopens the horizon of eschatological imagination in light of the enduring and worsening realities of oppression, social inequality, and ecological collapse – now exacerbated by the rise of far-right, nationalist, and xenophobic political forces in leading Western capitalist nations [Miller-Idriss, 2022].

In this context, the need arises to articulate the contours of a metamodern eschatology – not in the form of abstract openness to the future, as in the thought of Jacques Derrida [Derrida, 1994], where the refusal to envision any image of what is to come effectively paralyzes collective action, but rather through the modeling of radical, politically and conceptually concrete futures. In several leading nations, ruling powers are already actively constructing their own visions of the future – closed, far-right, hierarchical, xenophobic, and dismissive of both collective agency and the reality of climate change. To remain in a position of hopeful expectation that the political right will come to reason is, in effect, to capitulate. What is urgently needed instead are new utopias and new forms of global and deprivatized governance – forms that, for instance, have been tentatively outlined within the eco-socialist paradigm, which constitutes the working hypothesis of this study. This is all the more relevant given the affinity between eco-socialist ideals and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015, which are explicitly oriented toward coordinated global action to eradicate poverty, confront the climate crisis, and more broadly secure the conditions for collective survival.

The resurgence of eschatological reflection within the framework of metamodern philosophy is driven not only by indicators pointing to the imminent realization of various global catastrophe scenarios but also by the often one-sided treatment of eschatology within postmodern philosophical discourse. Jacques Derrida, for example, asserts that Western thought is permeated by onto-theo-eschatology – a drive toward closure, culmination, and finality, whether in the form of the end of man, history, philosophy, or Christianity – an orientation that, by necessity, culminates in political violence [Derrida, 1984]. To be fair, however, Derrida significantly contributed to the decolonization of eschatology: he criticized the construction of Europe as a universal historical project [Derrida, 2024, p. 191], emphasized his own alterity in relation to European eschatology [Derrida, 1994, *Wears and Tears*; Derrida, 2024, p. 191; Bennington and Derrida, 1993, p. 75], and called attention to the violent consequences of non-Western eschatologies, particularly in the context of Middle Eastern conflicts [Derrida, 1994, *Conjuring – Marxism*]. Yannis Stavrakakis argues that the utopian projects of modernity – whether the Nazi ideal of the "Aryan nation" or the communist notion of "proletarian statehood" – reproduce the logic of premodern millenarian eschatologies, wherein the establishment of a new

world order necessitates the elimination of imagined enemies who are stigmatized as threats to integrity [Stavrakakis, 2003, p. 58]. Ernesto Laclau, for his part, distinguishes between religious and secular eschatological discourses: the former grounded in the hope for supernatural deliverance, the latter in a rational project of emancipation wherein the subject (e.g., the proletariat) consciously works toward the abolition of alienation, inequality, and oppression. In both cases, however, eschatology tends to become complicit in the intensification of alienation and inequality [Laclau, 2007, pp. 1, 5]. Jean Baudrillard contended that disappearance itself has disappeared – that it has become impossible to bring anything to an end, as reality proliferates endlessly in digital copies and simulacra [Baudrillard, 2009]. In the work of these postmodern thinkers, one finds a persistent critique of Western modernist eschatology – the kind that promised the end of history, the triumph of reason, the total emancipation of humanity, or the establishment of a perfect order. Such eschatology, rationalized and politically instrumentalized, gave rise to the catastrophic projects of the twentieth century: Nazism, Stalinism, cultural purges, and total wars. It sought to conclude history through violence, abolishing multiplicity and the Other in favor of abstract unity. These philosophical assessments reveal the mechanisms by which eschatological thinking became a tool of hegemony, violence, and exclusion. The spectrum of postmodern reflections on eschatology ranges from Derrida's abstract hope and deferral to Baudrillard's radical impossibility of ending anything at all – yet the prevailing tone is one of systemic critique of eschatology itself.

However, the era of disillusionment with metanarratives – including eschatological ones – has run its course. Metamodernism demands the return of eschatology as a mode of thought capable of reposing fundamental questions about the direction of history, the nature of finality, and the ethics of responsibility. Metamodernism both inherits and intensifies a wide array of contradictory interpretations of "the end" – whether historical or philosophical. We are confronted with four key modalities of the crisis of the end. First, there is the *premature end*, as exemplified by Fukuyama's "end of history," wherein liberal democratic capitalism was hastily declared the final stage of human development. Second, the *accelerated end*, manifested in the violent revolutionary eschatons of the twentieth century, where attempts to enact a social end (in the sense of overcoming exploitation) resulted in catastrophe and terror. Third, we encounter the *denial of the end* – a radical detachment from any notion of telos, as proposed by Baudrillard and entrenched in the logic of late postmodernism. Finally, there is the *infinite openness of the end*, as in Derrida's thinking, where the very impossibility of positing a concrete future leads to paralyzing indeterminacy. In the face of mounting global crises – ecological, economic, political – it becomes evident that the concept of the end itself must be rethought. It is precisely at this intersection – between despair and hope, between history and the impossibility of its closure – that our inquiry into metamodern eschatology is situated.

2. Aim, Objectives, and Methodology

In this context, the study aim is to identify the principal features (or contours) of metamodern eschatology as a form of politically engaged thought capable of articulating concrete visions of the future amid an intensifying global polycrisis. The project does not seek to simply resurrect "utopias," but rather to expand the very horizon of thought to accommodate alternative futures emerging from the lived experiences of the oppressed.

Research objectives:

1. To conduct a corpus-based analysis of philosophical texts by metamodern theorists, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and eco-socialist thinkers in order to identify the discursive foundations of a constructive, ecological, and post-capitalist eschatology.
2. To compare the findings of theoretical research with contemporary empirical data on humanity's eschatological imaginaries, based on global and international sociological surveys.

To delineate the contours of metamodern eschatology, this study engages with the works of metamodernist theorists, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, as well as foundational texts in eco-

socialist thought. Metamodernism is of interest to us as a cultural and methodological framework capable of bridging the critical reflexivity of modernity and the irony of postmodernism with a renewed search for meaning, solidarity, and futurity. It offers a form of "open" eschatology in which the future remains indeterminate yet intelligible and inhabitable – as a space for collective transformation. The turn to the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels is motivated by their foundational critique of capitalist exploitation and their attentiveness to the historical dynamics of social formations. Marxism provides a conceptual apparatus for analyzing the structural causes of social and ecological crises, as well as for conceptualizing the possibility of systemic change. Moreover, we seek to engage with and respond to critiques of their eschatological framework. Finally, eco-socialism constitutes a crucial context for contemporary eschatological reflection, as it integrates ecological sensitivity, critiques both capitalism and authoritarian socialism, and aspires toward a socialized, care-centered model of life's reproduction. It not only identifies the limits of the destructive logic of growth but also proposes an alternative ethics of the future – rooted in solidarity, care, and planetary responsibility, in contrast to the closure and exclusion inherent in far-right imaginaries. We will then examine our findings in light of global sociological surveys related to eschatological themes.

The methodological foundation of this study is the principle of triangulation, which entails the simultaneous use of multiple research approaches and methods to achieve a comprehensive and multidimensional analysis [Flick, 2018]. We draw on both qualitative and quantitative methods, allowing us to combine interpretive depth with empirical robustness. First, a corpus-based approach will be applied to the analysis of texts. The use of corpus linguistic tools – specifically, the generation of concordances (text fragments containing the target word), the study of collocations (words that frequently co-occur with the target term and may bear semantic relevance), word frequency analysis (based on the premise that the more frequently a word appears, the more semantically central it is to the text), and multiword expressions (e.g., bigrams or uninterrupted word pairs) – enables the identification of stable semantic configurations that represent eschatological imaginaries within philosophical discourse [Stefanowitsch, 2020, p. 54; Sinclair, 1991, pp. 9, 32, 170, 30; Baker, 2006, pp. 48–49]. A series of corpus analyses will be presented in the article. Second, a close reading method will be employed, aimed at the detailed and attentive interpretation of selected texts and fragments (including concordances and broader textual contexts), in order to uncover their metaphysical, eschatological, and ideological assumptions. Third, the study will incorporate an analysis of contemporary sociological data concerning global existential threats – climate crisis, inequality, and political radicalization. These data will serve to contextualize the philosophical inquiry within the material conditions of the contemporary world.

3. Corpus Analysis of Scholarly Publications on Eschatology (2020–2025)

To situate our study within the framework of contemporary philosophical discourse on eschatology, we compiled a corpus of 154 English-language scholarly publications identified through the Google Scholar database using the search query "eschatology philosophy," covering the period from 2020 to 2025. The total size of the corpus amounts to 1.9 million words. For the extraction of quantitative data, the corpus was lemmatized using TagAnt [Anthony, 2024]. Both the raw and lemmatized versions were processed using AntConc 4.1.3 [Anthony, 2022]. We generated concordances for the word "eschatology" in the context of "philosophy," with a window of 25 words on either side, and examined the broader textual surroundings to determine how eschatology is conceptualized within philosophical discourse. We then analyzed word frequency to identify key phenomena that trigger eschatological thinking. Special attention was given to terms such as "global" (appearing in 89 texts), "economic," "war," "conflict" (87 texts), "technology" (80 texts), "environment" (73 texts), "technological" (71 texts), and "climate" (65 texts). Among the most frequent bigrams, we focused on "climate change" (44 texts) and "artificial intelligence" (32 texts). These terms were subsequently analyzed in proximity to "eschatology" (within a 25-word window on either side) to optimize the search results. We then

conducted close readings of the passages in which these collocations most frequently appeared. The full list of works included in the corpus and quantitative search data can be accessed here [Ilin and Nihmatova, 2025b].

Contemporary philosophical engagement with eschatology is shaped by several core propositions. According to Patrick Aleke, philosophy inherently bears an eschatological impulse: it is oriented toward the contemplation of ultimate limits and the pursuit of purpose and meaning [Aleke, 2021]. Eschatology thus becomes a horizon of hope – an ethically charged orientation toward the future that confers significance upon the present, especially in the works of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida [Catter, 2022; Maxson, 2023; Shaul, 2021; Soloviy, 2020; Singata, 2021]. A great deal of attention has also been directed toward critiquing the secularized form of Christian eschatology that emerged in modernity [Styfhals, 2019; List, 2023; Gustafsson Chorell, 2021; Kowalewski, 2023; Peters, 2023], including from the perspective of feminist theology, which reimagines eschatology as a plural, open, and transformative process [Murphy, 2020], as well as from postcolonial and post-Western philosophical standpoints [Peters et al., 2023]. These critical approaches reconceptualize eschatology not as a purely temporal category but as a spatial phenomenon, emphasizing the uneven distribution of existential thresholds, including ecological limits [Singata, 2021; Mqhayisa, 2024; Rothe, 2020].

In the context of the twenty-first century, a revival of eschatological thinking is underway, driven by global crises – climatic, technological, and political in nature [Youvan, 2024a; Lichty, 2023; Onah, Ogar, and Okoi, 2023; Youvan, 2024b; Pynnöniemi & Parppei, 2024; Baranenko, 2024]. Under such conditions, eschatology assumes not only a philosophical but also a mobilizing function: ecological catastrophism, as a form of secular eschatology, arises not from revelation but from scientific diagnostics of the Earth's condition [Rothe, 2020; Russell, 2022]; apocalyptic narratives are increasingly interpreted as societal responses to the perceived threat of civilizational collapse [Youvan, 2025a]. Within social philosophy, eschatology is rearticulated as the foundation of an active ethics: instead of the escapist approaches found in certain religious traditions, it calls for materially grounded forms of engagement [Mqhayisa, 2024]. In the political sphere, it is asserted that Russian wartime rhetoric appeals to eschatological tropes of the "end of history" and the "salvation" of civilization through the annihilation of its purported enemy – namely, the Ukrainian state [Pynnöniemi & Parppei, 2024; Wolfe, 2023; Baranenko, 2024]. Simultaneously, it is noted that far-right movements in Europe and the United States convert the sacred rhetoric of "the people" into a secular eschatology that legitimizes exclusion and violence [Van der Tol & Rowley, 2021]. In contrast to such militaristic narratives stands the eschatology of tolerance advanced by Roger Williams, grounded in humility and the acknowledgment of difference [Young, 2022]. Thus, philosophy and eschatology not only continue to intersect but increasingly function as critical keys to understanding the present moment – bringing together reflection on evil, redemption, justice, and futurity not as a predictable conclusion, but as a call to responsibility and transformation.

Contemporary reflections on eschatology within the economic domain reveal a profound tension between the quantitative rationality of market logic and the qualitative ethics of transcendent vocation. In Levinas's philosophy, eschatology emerges as the irruption of the Other, which subverts market rationality and affirms truth as responsibility rather than as a calculable outcome [Maxson, 2023]. The Levinasian paradigm stands in opposition to the technocratic imagination of the future, wherein economic strategy often becomes a form of counter-eschatology – an attempt to forestall "the end" through instruments of economic policy, as exemplified by the liberal tradition from Hobbes to Keynes [Wycoff, 2023]. Yet in the era of digital capitalism, eschatological imaginaries do not disappear; rather, they are transformed: in techno-feudalist models and the "end" is envisioned as a technocratic transcendence [Tigani, 2024; Geiger, 2020; Mokoena, 2025; Checketts, 2021; Villegas, 2023; Youvan, 2024a, 2025b; Leidenhag, 2020; Seymour, 2022; Skariah, 2022; Porada, 2021]. In its extreme forms, capitalist eschatology legitimizes the redistribution of resources in favor of elites under the pretense of saving humanity from impending catastrophe – most notably, climate collapse – through projects

such as Mars colonization and transhumanism [Palmås, Ekberg, & Åberg, 2022]. Such apocalyptic narratives frequently substitute critical technological analysis with ritualized determinism, reducing the multiplicity of possible futures to a binary logic of salvation or annihilation [Mascareño, 2024; Hui, 2023]. At the same time, contemporary theology expands the boundaries of eschatological thought to include considerations of posthumous existence for artificial intelligence and robots, thereby radically revising the anthropocentric constraints of traditional Christian doctrine [Tretter, 2024]. However, technological eschatology carries not only the promise of redemption but also the threat of total control and moral decay, intensifying ecological and social crises by replacing real futures with techno-utopian illusions of accelerated capitalism and the technological control over life and death [Gjermundsen, 2024; Seymour, 2022; Baranenko, 2024]. Thus, economic eschatology may either destructively reproduce the logic of capital and fear or open a path toward ethical transformation – if it is understood not as a script of finality but as a call to responsibility for our shared future.

In the ecological context, eschatology functions not merely as a religious theme but as a powerful cultural mechanism for interpreting the climate crisis. Linear, catastrophic end-time models derived from the Christian tradition shape the perception of ecological threat as an already unfolding apocalypse, thereby paralyzing political will for action [Sæten, 2025; Un, 2023; Mascareño, 2024; Youvan, 2025a; Pawlaczyk, 2021]. At the same time, alternative eschatologies – including eco-theologies [van den Heuvel, 2025; Nel, 2024; Kamore & Kiboi, 2025; Stewart, 2024; Bangert, 2021; Pawlaczyk, 2021] – such as that found among the Igbo people of Africa, offer life-affirming, cyclical models of the future that reinforce care for nature as a place inhabited by both the living and their ancestors [Ufearoh, 2021]. Critiques of the universal "end of the world" emphasize that linear apocalyptic narratives erase localized ecological traumas linked to colonialism and obscure the asymmetry of climate consequences – whereby Western nations are the primary polluters, while non-Western nations bear the greatest burdens of climate change [Kowalewski, 2023; Rothe, 2020].

Thus, as evidenced by the analysis of scholarly publications from the past five years, contemporary philosophical engagement with eschatology is multilayered and interdisciplinary, addressing themes of the end, hope, and transformation that emerge at the intersection of ethics, politics, ecology, economics, and technology. In the context of the twenty-first century, eschatology manifests as a demand for ethical awakening before the Other; as a critique of modernity's progressivist narrative (emphasizing the need to conceive eschatology spatially and plurally, through decolonial and feminist perspectives); as a challenge to the despair-driven postmodern condition, countered by a call for responsibility and mobilization in the face of climate, political, and technological crises; and as a critique of eschatological discourse itself, which can lead either to passive waiting or to salvific logics of exclusion. In place of linear and finalist apocalyptic models, philosophers increasingly propose multiple, cyclical, localized, and materially embedded visions of the end that reveal the potential for transformation and solidarity amid uncertainty and the openness of the future. Nonetheless, despite the interdisciplinary scope of eschatological critique, most contemporary philosophers ultimately remain within the ideological boundaries of dominant capitalist frameworks.

4. Corpus Analysis of Metamodernist Theoretical Works

In the course of a corpus-based study of 106 English-language publications devoted to metamodernism (and in the title of which the corresponding word is indicated) (total corpus size: 2.9 million words [Ilin and Nihmatova, 2025a]), we examined occurrences of terms related to eschatology, soteriology (the doctrine of salvation), teleology, apocalypse, the end of history, messianism, and the end of the world.

Metamodernist thought seeks to move beyond postmodern cynicism and modernist exhaustion by offering a new framework for understanding salvation, identity, and historical process. In her dissertation, Linda Ceriello analyzes the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* as an example of metamodernist soteriology grounded in immanent, secular experience [Ceriello,

2018]. Elements of religious spirituality are retained and transformed: salvation occurs within everyday reality, identities are understood as unstable and plural, and ordinary acts of kindness acquire heroic significance. Central to this vision is the motif of sincere – even naive – love, capable of overcoming evil that is not transcendent but concrete, social, and emotional.

In a broader historical and political context, Gurman Singh and Pooja Khanna argue that metamodernism emerged as a response to the failure of the postmodern attempt to "end history" (in the spirit of Fukuyama) and to the collapse of the idea of a universal truth underpinning neoliberal capitalism [Singh & Khanna, 2024]. In their view, history has "struck back," and in the face of global catastrophes – ecological, political, and cultural – metamodernism seeks to reconcile the antagonistic logics of modernity and postmodernity by reviving soteriological theologies, albeit in a secularized form.

Monica Dall'Asta offers an aesthetic-philosophical interpretation of metamodernism through the example of GIF art, demonstrating that even in the absence of teleology, one is compelled to act as if a goal exists [Dall'Asta, 2016]. This is not a matter of postmodern alienation or irony, but rather a metamodern commitment to the "impossible possibility" – a striving for salvation that is recognized as utopian yet not deprived of its motivating force. Such "utopian faith" does not preclude a multiplicity of alternatives but nonetheless demands a choice, however provisional or fraught with doubt.

Alexandra Dumitrescu emphasizes that metamodernism reopens history as an ongoing and infinite process, in contrast to modernist teleology and the postmodern notion of the "end of history" [Dumitrescu, 2014]. This is not a return to old narratives but an acknowledgment of the plurality of possible future trajectories, where the refusal of final answers is accompanied by a renewed desire to seek them.

Hanzi Freinacht develops a politico-cosmological perspective, arguing that metamodernity requires a teleological metanarrative capable of integrating scientific, mythological, and religious modes of thought [Freinacht, 2019]. Following the postmodern deconstruction of grand narratives, what is now needed is a reconstruction of worldview – one that acknowledges the incompleteness of any given truth yet nonetheless provides a foundation for collective action and a global ethical order. Freinacht further contends that neither modernity nor postmodernity has successfully addressed the fundamental challenges of the contemporary world. Modernity manifested as violence in the name of progress, whereas postmodernity, in rejecting history, turned a blind eye to the violence embedded within neoliberal capitalism [Freinacht, 2017]. Metamodernism, by contrast, does not propose an end to history but rather a deepened listening – both as metaphor and as method for a new political formation grounded in dialogue, empathy, and the unfolding of human potential. Within the framework of metamodernism, Freinacht proposes a model of the "listening society." Accordingly, we expanded our search to examine concordances containing the word stem "listen*" from his work on the listening society. This idea is rooted in green social liberalism – an attempt to synthesize capitalism, socialism, and the principles of sustainable development – alongside the pursuit of bio-psycho-social well-being. Freinacht envisions a transformation of capitalism through emotional maturity and collective intelligence, which emerges not through revolutionary violence but through patient interaction, the overcoming of alienation, and the formation of solidaristic communities. A society in which people truly listen to one another becomes more productive, just, and sustainable – and, consequently, more competitive in the global economy of the future. Moreover, he argues that the struggle for enhanced human, social, and ecological flourishing will itself become a driver of international competition, thereby propelling nations toward the realization of green social liberalism. Freinacht acknowledges the need to reform capitalism and turns to the Nordic countries as a source of inspiration. He places his hopes in the "yoga bourgeoisie," the creative class, and the cognitive aristocracy as the principal agents of this metamodern transformation.

Tomáš Veselý emphasizes that metamodernism neither descends into nihilism nor succumbs to despair, as postmodernism often does [Veselý, 2024]. On the contrary, it seeks to

sustain the tension between the modernist faith in progress and the postmodern recognition of its collapse. Metamodernism raises questions about class inequality, nationalism, revolution, and the climate crisis – not in search of a universal solution, but to preserve the very possibility of collective struggle for a sustainable future, even when that future appears impossible.

Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker argue that metamodernism marks the return of history, the subject, and metanarratives – and, consequently, the return of utopia [Vermeulen & Van den Akker, 2018]. Yet this is a new kind of utopia: one that is not exclusionary but integrative – a utopia capable of uniting diverse contemporary struggles and offering a broad, inclusive horizon for the pursuit of salvation, justice, and futurity.

Thus, metamodern eschatological conceptions of the end are structured around a rejection of both the "ends of history" proclaimed by modernity (the "progress of violence/violence of progress") and by postmodernity (the triumph of capital, indifference to inequality, and cynicism), and instead center on a belief in the possibility of resolving the newly reopened problems of history through the creation of a metanarrative aimed at inclusion rather than exclusion. Yet, in several instances, metamodernist thought becomes caught in a contradiction: on the one hand, it acknowledges that transformation appears possible only within the capitalist system; on the other, it tentatively gestures beyond that system, pointing to the need for class analysis, engagement with socialist ideas, and the development of a utopia grounded in unity rather than marginalization. In Freinacht's elaborately outlined eschatological project, one can observe an attempt to transcend pure capitalism through the incorporation of socialist ideas; however, in advocating for a "listening society," the philosopher fails to account for the voices of oppressed social groups – particularly those on the periphery of global capitalism, who are already suffering the consequences of social and ecological injustice. For decades, urgent warnings and testimonies of deepening ecological crisis have come from rural dwellers, farmers, and representatives of the Global South – those whose lives are directly tied to climate and soil, and whose ecological sensitivity has historically been ignored. As such, the project lacks a sufficiently robust class analysis. Finally, Freinacht overlooks the far-right turn occurring even in parts of Scandinavia, and, by the way, right-wing actors actively deny climate change and global crises. In this light, his thesis on competition for human capital reads more as a euphemism for a renewed phase of geopolitical violence than as a credible alternative. The history of capitalism shows that its periods of systemic upheaval have typically culminated in global wars rather than equitable transformations. Already today, climate migrants are on the rise, resource conflicts are intensifying, and forecasts point toward the catastrophic contraction of habitable territory.

Metamodernism, while drawing upon quasi-socialist vocabulary and ideals, hesitates to fully engage in their theoretical rearticulation – largely due to the shadow of "totalitarian socialism," with its historical legacy of repression, victims, and the suppression of freedom. However, whereas past philosophy tended to foreclose the discussion of socialism by declaring it historically exhausted, the present moment – shaped by metamodernism's openness to alternatives – demands a reconsideration of that position. Is it not the case that contemporary capitalism, as a system responsible for global inequality, poverty, ecological devastation, and millions of premature deaths annually, is equally deserving of the kind of rigorous critique once directed at socialism? As noted at the beginning of this article, capitalism no longer constitutes a viable system, and thus one should not place faith in its benevolent reform. Consequently, if metamodernism is to seriously claim a role in developing eschatological alternatives, it must not only engage with the ideas of capitalism but also incorporate class critique into its theoretical apparatus. Without such critique, any movement toward social justice risks remaining a form of moral rhetoric devoid of political force or specific targets for transformation. It is precisely in order to view eschatology with greater realism that we must turn to the works of Marx and Engels.

5. Corpus Analysis of Marx and Engels's Texts to Search for Eschatological Ideas

Marx and Engels did not employ the term "eschatology," and thus, for the philosophical interpretation of their texts, it is methodologically appropriate to investigate the collocations and

contexts in which they use the concept of history. The structure of philosophical eschatology is most often articulated not through explicit references to "the end," but through the specific temporal organization of historical process. Therefore, our corpus analysis focuses on identifying word pairings and co-occurrences (collocations) in which the term "history" is associated with notions of directionality and teleology. These lexical relationships enable us to trace the extent to which Marx conceives of history as a process governed by an internal logic and oriented toward a particular finality. Our analysis involved examining concordances for "geschichtlich* bewegung*" (historical movement – a frequent bigram involving "history"), and "geschichtlich* Entwickl*" and eschatologically charged collocations of the word "geschicht*" (history), such as "letzt" (final), "notwendigkeit" (necessity), "fortschritt" (progress), and "spät" (late/end). The full materials are available here [Ilin and Nihmatova, 2025c].

The central research question posed to their works is as follows: do their theoretical constructions in fact contain a rigid linearity and teleology that presuppose an inevitable transition from capitalism to socialism and subsequently to communism? Or, conversely, does the corpus of their texts reveal a more complex, perhaps ambiguous or open eschatological project – one that might be compatible with the contours of metamodern thought? The aim of the corpus analysis is also to broaden the horizon of understanding regarding the theoretical legacy of Marx and Engels.

Thus, according to Marx and Engels, historical movement is conceived as linear (from feudalism to capitalism, and by analogy – to communism), materially conditioned by class struggle, and expressed through revolutionary classes (e.g., the bourgeoisie within feudal society; the proletariat within capitalist society) [Marx und Engels, 4, pp. 356–357, 470; Marx und Engels, 16, p. 28]. In his early writings, Marx refers to the "goal of historical movement" (*Ziel der geschichtlichen Bewegung*) – namely, communism [Marx und Engels, 40, p. 553].

At the same time, there are passages that suggest an awareness of the nonlinearity of historical development: historical progress can be obstructed by reactionary forces (outdated classes resist their obsolescence) [Marx und Engels, 4, pp. 494–495]; and historical progress within class societies has always been accompanied by regression (the development of productive forces coexists with human exploitation and ecological destruction – progress for the few, not for the many) [Marx und Engels, 23, pp. 528, 743; Marx und Engels, 21, p. 68; Marx und Engels, 21, pp. 103–104].

Marx and Engels also criticized eschatological conceptions. In his early writings, Engels argues for the anthropologization of Christian eschatology – not God but humanity makes history [Marx und Engels, 21, pp. 545–546]. Accordingly, the secularization of Christian eschatology is a deliberate practice within Marxist thought. Marx and Engels reject Hegel's notion of the spirit of history, as well as the teleology of the present (the idea that the present is the goal of the past; that Hegelian philosophy is the culmination of the entire history of philosophy, etc.), in which the relationship between past and present is distorted [Marx und Engels, 3, pp. 151–152, 250]. They also critique the Young Hegelians, who sought to end history in German philosophy, positioning themselves as judges of the world [Marx und Engels, 40, p. 569].

At the same time, they also criticize the absence of eschatological vision. Marx reproaches Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo – Malthus for idealizing the past (advocating for the well-being of the feudal aristocracy and the preservation of capitalist society, albeit with poverty), and Ricardo for lacking a sense of the past altogether, that is, a historical consciousness of capitalism as merely a stage, a moment in the broader historical movement [Marx und Engels, 26(3), pp. 46–47].

Marxists assert that the ultimate driving force of history and forms of consciousness is the production and reproduction of real human life [Marx und Engels, 21, pp. 297–298; Marx und Engels, 39, pp. 205–206].

Let us now examine the results related to the bigram "historical development."

Historical development, according to Marx and Engels, proceeds in a generally linear fashion – from the simple to the complex – through the negation of the old and obsolete, overcoming barbarism, cruelty, alienation, and class-based progress, moving toward civilization,

the appropriation of all social forces, and ultimately toward a planned, global, and socialized mode of production and distribution, enabling progress for all of humanity [Marx und Engels, 13, pp. 474–475; Marx und Engels, 20, pp. 324, 354; Marx und Engels, 21, p. 267; Marx und Engels, 4, pp. 392–393; Marx und Engels, 19, pp. 103–104]. Nonetheless, they also allow for the possibility of skipping historical stages – for example, they recognize that the Russian commune might bypass capitalism altogether and move directly to communism [Marx und Engels, 4, p. 576]. In class-based societies, historical development has occurred through violence, egoism on the part of the ruling classes [Marx und Engels, 21, p. 287]. Under capitalism, historical development has reached a point at which the very existence of classes and private property constitutes a barrier to further progress; the productive forces advanced by capitalism, along with the intensified interdependence of individuals, nations, and continents, combined with working-class solidarity, render the abolition of class society possible [Marx und Engels, 40, p. 546; Marx und Engels, 19, p. 225]. Historical development is presented as relentless and governed by necessity [Marx und Engels, 2, pp. 633–634; Marx und Engels, 5, pp. 354–355].

Thus, in Marx and Engels's conception, historical movement clearly bears eschatological features: it has ultimate causes, agents of realization, and a defined direction – "the necessity (*Notwendigkeit*) of capitalism… and the necessity (*Notwendigkeit*) of its collapse" [Marx und Engels, 19, p. 209].

Unlike Hegel and bourgeois political economists such as Malthus and Ricardo, Marx and Engels ground their conclusions in historical and economic arguments, many of which remain strikingly relevant today (ironically, contemporary capitalism has returned to levels of inequality that Marx and Engels had already observed in the nineteenth century!): the critique of capitalism (an analysis of economic and ecological exploitation), and the necessity of extending progress to the majority of the population (universal freedom!).

Consequently, Marx's eschatology remains profoundly significant for our own – perhaps final? – epoch, for it insists on the need to interrogate the global and social practices of economic and ecological reproduction, while envisioning the "rebirth of humanity" (*Wiedergeburt der Menschheit*) [Marx und Engels, 16, p. 323]. These insights are, on the one hand, broader than those of Derrida, and at the same time, resonate strongly with metamodernist conclusions – nudging them toward a more sober political and economic appraisal of current social relations and the possibilities for their abolition.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that historical movement is understood as inherently contradictory (driven by the struggle of opposites) [Marx und Engels, 20, p. 48; Marx und Engels, 22, p. 479], and in certain cases, it may be obstructed by outdated classes. Thus, Marx and Engels cannot be reduced to a simplistic, univocal secularization of Christian eschatology, as some of their critics have claimed.

It is important to note that in their critique of Hegel and the Young Hegelians, Marx and Engels rejected both philosophical and religious eschatology, demonstrating that such frameworks rest on mystical explanations of history – such as the notion of the "absolute spirit" – and serve the intellectual pride of thinkers who regard their own present as the telos of all history. These thinkers position themselves in opposition to the majority (who are not considered the purpose of history), and see no need to study history through historical, economic, or social data, but instead remain confined to "philosophical ideology" and "speculation" [Marx und Engels, 21, p. 298; Marx und Engels, 3, p. 45].

Among the shortcomings of eschatology in Marx and Engels's framework is the focus on a single class, which they believed would become the most numerous, organized, self-aware, and united in the international organization – within whose history the "final chapter" (*letzte Kapitel ihrer Geschichte*) was to unfold [Marx und Engels, 19, p. 147]. However, their vision lacked a concrete roadmap for achieving this end (e.g., how exactly is private property to be abolished?), which, as history has shown, enabled the transformation of proletarian struggle into the dictatorship of a party bureaucracy over the proletariat, the exploitation of the peasantry in the name of proletarian interests (leading to numerous famines), and more broadly, to an experiment

in barracks-style "socialism," marked by mass killings, the absence of democracy, and, despite some universal state provision, culminating not in the "rebirth of humanity," but in the restoration of capitalism. In all likelihood, the identification of the proletariat as a messianic agent destined to redeem humanity merely reproduced the logic of prior eschatologies – and thus resulted not in a promised end, but in tragedy.

Overall, in Marx and Engels, eschatology is interwoven with a critique of the very idea of historical finality: on the one hand, they conceive of history as moving toward communism as the logical outcome of the development of productive forces, the dissolution of private property, and class struggle; on the other hand, they emphasize the contradictions and potential regressions inherent in this process. The historical process, for them, is not mystically predetermined but materially and socially grounded, distinguishing their thought from that of their religious and philosophical predecessors. Their vision of the future is neither simple nor unambiguous; it simultaneously exhibits features of secular messianism (a hope placed squarely in the proletariat) and a materialist critique of idealist eschatology. Yet, in a historical irony, the absence of democracy and the failure to recognize the plurality of oppressed classes and groups contributed to the disastrous outcomes of all proletarian revolutions in the twentieth century. The corpus analysis of Marx and Engels's texts led us to a critically important conclusion: their conception of historical development is far more complex than the linear-teleological model often ascribed to them by their critics. While some passages do reflect notions of directionality, progress, and messianic expectation, we also find a clear awareness of the multifaceted, contradictory, and conflict-ridden nature of historical movement. Marx and Engels explicitly recognize that any transformation aimed at overcoming domination will inevitably encounter resistance from ruling classes, counter-movements, and regressive tendencies. In other words, their philosophy of history presupposes not a linear but a dialectical model, one in which progress itself carries the possibility of reversal, crisis, and obstruction.

6. Corpus Analysis of Eco-Socialist Works

For the corpus analysis, we compiled a dataset of 110 English-language publications with the term "eco-socialism" (or "ecosocialism") in their titles. The corpus comprises 2.2 million words and covers works published between 1985 and 2024. We then searched for the term "eco-socialism" (or "ecosocialism") in conjunction with the following words: 1) "concept*," "notion*," "defin*," and "term" (within five words to the left), and 2) the word "is" to identify direct definitional statements of the term. The full list of texts included in the corpus is available here [Ilin and Nihmatova, 2025d].

The theory of eco-socialism emerged in the 1960s, with the term itself appearing in 1980, as a response to the profound crisis not only economic in nature, but also ecological, social, and civilizational. This theory was grounded in the rise of social movements among environmentalists, Indigenous peoples, farmers, and workers across the globe who sought to defend not only their economic interests but also the ecological resources being relentlessly destroyed and privatized by capital. Eco-socialism arises from the recognition that capitalism has pushed the planet to the brink of collapse; that twentieth-century socialism failed to overcome its productivist obsession with growth; and that environmentalism, in its early forms, did not offer a socially adequate path out of crisis. Eco-socialism is at times even framed in eschatological tones: «Ecosocialism must be a new beginning because the ecological crisis signifies an end, whether of the succession of modes of production that lead to capitalism, or of civilization itself. Whatever survives the crisis will perforce be an evolutionary advance for humanity, one enabling us not just to endure, or "mitigate," as the buzzword puts it, but rather to heal an ancient lesion between humanity and nature, and thereby transcend our history» [Kovel, 2008]. Thus, eco-socialism is, in essence, a new promise – an imagined end to antagonistic history and the beginning of a history without antagonism, both among human beings and between humanity and nature.

Eco-socialism combines a critique of the capitalist logic of endless privatization of natural resources, a re-evaluation of the lessons of socialist experiments, and an ecological sensitivity to

the limits of growth and the need to restore the metabolic balance between humanity and nature [Isla, Löwy & Turner, 2022; Wall, 2010]. It rejects the belief that either the market or the state alone can save the planet; what is needed is not merely reform of private and state institutions, but the construction of a post-capitalist mode of production and reproduction rooted in care, democracy, and the socialization of the conditions of existence.

A distinguishing feature of eco-socialism is that it expands the notion of the subject of struggle: it no longer refers solely to the proletariat but encompasses a broad range of oppressed groups – from industrial workers to Indigenous peoples, from rural laborers to racially and gender-marginalized communities [Wallis, 2023; Baer, 2021]. Ecological catastrophe recognizes no national boundaries, and its first and most brutal effects are felt by those already living on the margins of survival. Therefore, eco-socialism does not base its strategies on abstract theories of the development of productive forces, but on the concrete suffering of millions of people and ecosystems, seeing in them the moral, political, and practical grounds for revolutionary transformation [Huan, 2010; Isla, Löwy & Turner, 2022]. Within this movement, the labor of caring for life – whether in households, agriculture, or the care of children, elders, and nature – occupies a central role. Eco-socialist eschatology places this labor, largely carried out by women in history and now, at the heart of its vision, arguing that the maintenance and restoration of life – not the growth of gross domestic product – should constitute the true aim and measure of societal development [Isla, Löwy & Turner, 2022; Kovel, 2005].

Eco-socialism emphasizes the need for a qualitative transformation of the mode of production: a departure from the productivist cult of growth, which has equally devastated life on the planet under both capitalism and actually existing socialism, and a shift from quantitative indicators of progress to qualitative ones – ecosystem health, biological regeneration, and the collective well-being of all living beings [Salleh, 2008; Baer, 2017]. Here, economic growth is measured not by the volume of consumption and production, but by society's capacity to live within the Earth's limits, to restore what has been damaged, and to return to nature the vitality needed for the continued reproduction of life [Flanagan and Raphael, 2023; Engel-Di Mauro, 2021]. This necessitates a revolutionary reconfiguration of political structures: from centralized bureaucratic governance to democratic, bottom-up networks built from local communities to global solidarities united in the struggle for a shared future [Singh, 2022; Satgar, 2018].

Eco-socialism draws not only on the achievements of Western thought but also on Indigenous cosmologies that have long understood the human being as part of an organic whole, as one thread in the web of life [Schwartzman and Saul, 2015; Satgar, 2018]. The re-discovery of this worldview enables a break from the modernist division between nature and society, myth and science – the very dualism that contributed to the ecological crisis. Eco-socialist eschatology speaks not of the end of history but of rebirth through reconnection: the restoration of balance between the human and the more-than-human, between production and care, between rationality and reverence for life [Kovel, 2008; Fernandes, 2020].

It is precisely in this deep entanglement of social, economic, ecological, and cultural processes that eco-socialism offers a new vision of the future – not in the form of a productivist apocalypse, but as a caring world grounded not in the idea of domination, but in the idea of serving life. This is not a dream of a perfect society beyond the horizon of history, but a sober recognition: without rejecting the capitalist logic of destruction, without restoring care as the foundation of social life, and without establishing a planned, democratic, and socialized relationship with nature, no "future" is possible. Eco-socialism is therefore more robust than both capitalism and traditional socialism because it integrates an ecological truth: life will either be collective and caring – or it will vanish alongside those who destroy it [Stump, 2021; Isla, Löwy & Turner, 2022].

Thus, in a general sense, the concept of eco-socialism refers to a critique of social formations and practices that either through action or inaction contribute to the destruction of the very basis for the reproduction of human and non-human life on Earth – through the privatization of vital conditions such as water, land, air, genes, and so on. At the same time, it

represents a wide array of social movements composed of economically and ecologically oppressed groups striving to preserve ecological balance in human–nature relations by deprivatizing the forces, energies, and beings of nature in order to build a democratic, socialized, and eco-centric society. Nonetheless, despite the urgency of its critique, the eco-socialist project has yet to gain broad traction among the majority of the oppressed, although there are a number of moderately radical trade unions (such as the International Trade Union Confederation, representing 200 million people) and red–green parties (such as the Red–Green Alliance in Denmark) active around the world.

7. Triangulating Eschatological Theories Through Sociological Surveys

International sociological surveys provide valuable empirical material for triangulating philosophical conceptions of eschatology, capturing widespread anxiety about the future, declining trust in what lies ahead, and attempts to construct meaning amid crisis. These data reveal not only attitudes toward politics or climate but also fundamental anthropological shifts in the perception of time, history, and hope – key parameters of the eschatological imaginary.

According to a global survey by Ipsos, in 19 countries the proportion of people who live by the principle "I live for today because the future is uncertain" rose from 50% to 61% over the past decade. In 2024, two-thirds of respondents across 50 countries agreed with this mindset, with the highest rates in Thailand (84%) and the lowest in Sweden (44%). These figures reflect the rise of nihilistic sentiments and a perception of the future as a vanishing horizon. Additionally, 56% of respondents in those same 19 countries expressed a desire for their country to be "the way it used to be" (up from 47%), particularly in Turkey, Sweden, Brazil, and Germany. Over 80% consider traditions an important part of society, 57% wish to return to their country's "former way of life," and 39% believe a woman's primary role is to be a good mother and wife [Ipsos, 2024].

These attitudes are reinforced by ecological anxiety: 84% of young people (ages 16–25) surveyed in ten countries reported at least moderate concern about climate change, and 59% reported feeling extremely worried. 75% view the future as frightening, and 83% believe that humanity has failed the planet [Hickman et al., 2021]. More than half reported that such anxiety negatively affects their daily lives. Emotions range from sadness and fear to guilt and powerlessness – all of which together lend an eschatological dimension to the climate crisis. Furthermore, a recent survey found that 89% globally support stronger action against the climate crisis, and 69% are willing to sacrifice 1% of their income [Renwick, 2025].

Declining trust in institutions is confirmed by OECD data: in 30 countries, 44% of citizens report low or no trust in national governments, while only 39% express trust. Trust levels have fallen by 2 percentage points over two years, with particularly sharp declines among women and individuals with lower levels of education (both groups showing a 5-point drop). Trust in parliaments and political parties is even lower (37% and 24%, respectively), compared to higher trust in the police (63%) and the judiciary (54%). Only 40% believe that governments are capable of effectively regulating technology and reducing emissions within the next ten years [OECD, 2024].

The *World Happiness Report 2025* notes that the decline in life satisfaction and social trust since the early 2000s correlates with the rise of anti-system, far-right political parties. In the United States, interpersonal trust has dropped from 50% to 30% over the past 50 years. Among the least satisfied with life – particularly youth and rural residents – there is a trend toward either support for the far-right (in Europe) or political disengagement (in the United States) [Helliwell et al., 2025].

Attitudes toward socialism and capitalism reveal a marked ambivalence, reflecting an eschatological split between hope for a new world, fear of repression, and the desire to preserve freedom and competition. A global survey from 2018 reports that 50% of respondents consider socialist ideals important for progress, yet 48% associate socialism with repression – particularly in India and the United States, and less so in China and Russia. Sixty-six percent of respondents worldwide express faith in market competition, and 52% prioritize individual freedom over social justice. In India, trust in competition and freedom is highest, whereas in Germany, China, and

France, social justice is more frequently prioritized [Ipsos, 2018]. In the United States in 2022, 57% supported capitalism (down from 65% in 2019), while 36% supported socialism (down from 42% in 2019). At the same time, 60% expressed a negative view of socialism, including 33% who held a strongly negative perception [Pew Research Center, 2022]. In Australia, among youth aged 18–24, 53% supported a move toward socialism, compared to only 22% favoring capitalism [YouGov, 2024]. A similar trend has been recorded in Canada: 42% of Canadians consider socialism the ideal system (compared to 31% in the U.S. and 43% in the U.K.), but among Canadian youth this figure rises to 50%, while among older age groups it drops to 38% [The Fraser Institute, 2023].

A comparative reading of international survey data suggests that the contemporary global imaginary is saturated with eschatological structures of feeling: a sense of ending, a loss of control over the future, disillusionment with institutions, anxiety over the environment, nostalgia for the past, and the search for new social utopias. All of these points to a rethinking of the historical horizon – not as a linear forward march, but as an unstable and polyphonic field of conflicting hopes, fears, and expectations.

Based on the analysis of sociological surveys, at least four dominant eschatological orientations can be identified within the global population. The first is a capitalist eschatology, grounded in the idea of progress through individual competition, the expansion of private initiative, and the achievement of personal success within the framework of market freedoms. The second is a socialist eschatology, expressing a desire for collective care, equitable resource distribution, and a return to ideals of public ownership and social protection. The third is a nostalgic, traditionalist eschatology, inclined toward conservative models of the past, including patriarchal structures, authoritarian practices, and religious-feudal forms of social organization. And finally, the fourth is a nihilistic eschatology – a futureless orientation in which the horizon of the future collapses into the immediacy of a single day: individuals live in the present, renouncing any projection of themselves into the future, and limiting their concerns to immediate needs and pleasures. These four types of eschatology reflect the fragmentation of collective imaginaries about the future and point to the absence of a dominant universal model.

8. Conclusion

Triangulating our hypothesis – that eco-socialism represents the only viable eschatology for society – against sociological survey data leads to the conclusion that the hypothesis cannot be fully confirmed. The surveys provide empirical evidence of multiple trajectories of endings, widespread bleakness about the future, and only a partial increase in the popularity of socialism – an increase that nonetheless coexists with persistent memories of its twentieth-century totalitarian manifestations. Therefore, it is not presently possible to claim the greater likelihood of the implementation of an eco-socialist eschatology. At the same time, it is equally untenable to assert a singular eschatological perspective within capitalism. Thus, philosophical and political inquiry should not aim to invent alternatives ex nihilo, but rather to recognize, listen to, and theorize the already emergent forms of resistance and solidarity. The task is not to speak on behalf of others, but to speak with them.

However, when contemporary philosophers' eschatological perspectives are viewed through the lens of survey data, it becomes evident that, despite their claims to pluralize perspectives, philosophers largely remain confined within a single epistemological tradition and focused on a singular actor – capital – as the universal subject of modernity, which stands in contrast to public opinion and expectations (indeed, almost no one speaks explicitly about the need to replace it). In much of contemporary philosophy, capitalism is imagined as the only system with transformative potential, provided that a just and inclusive path out of crisis can be found – even as its catastrophic consequences render life on the planet increasingly untenable in the near future. Yet sociological data indicate that interest in socialist ideas persists – if only at the level of a general yearning for justice, equality, and care. This suggests the presence of latent demands for alternative forms of social imagination.

Metamodernism offers a constructive framework: not a definitive renunciation or an uncritical return, but a rethinking. Yet even the more radical metamodern logic of eschatology – despite its appeals to alternatives, reconciliation, and reimagining the past; despite its inclusive rather than exclusionary outlook and gestures toward class analysis – remains confined within the bounds of the capitalist system, referencing but ultimately avoiding a serious reengagement with socialist thought. This generates a paradox: the end of history becomes the end of thinking about alternatives. Metamodernism proves unable to accommodate forms of the future emerging from the lived experiences of the oppressed. Without class critique, metamodernism risks becoming a moral posture rather than a transformative force.

Thus, contemporary philosophy and a significant portion of the intellectual establishment become complicit in the structures of oppression, excluding the practices and imaginaries of marginalized groups. While ideas, voices, ways of life, and acts of resistance among oppressed communities – particularly on the periphery of global capitalism – already exist and evolve, they remain outside the purview of dominant theoretical discourse, which remains stuck within liberal-capitalist ideals.

In the metamodern condition, thinking the future demands expanding the scope of emancipatory participation – joining the dialogue, listening, and decentering the arrogance of individual rationality. It requires letting go of the comfort that comes from imagining an imminent, inevitable end. That end may not come – or may come in ways we do not expect. Endings in the past have been unsatisfying, but that does not justify inaction. The enduring relevance of ideas such as freedom, justice, and the necessity of liberation from the exploitation of humans and nature still commands empathy and urgency today.

The analysis of Marx and Engels's writings reveals that their eschatology combines a hope for transformation with an acute awareness of contradictions and the risk of regressions. Their conception of history is not linear, and communism is not portrayed as a predetermined endpoint, but rather as a possible outcome of struggle. However, their failure to account for the diversity of the oppressed and the absence of democratic mechanisms ultimately rendered attempts to realize their ideals in the twentieth century tragic. Therefore, the task today is not to replicate their ideas, but to relinquish the arrogance of imposing fixed expectations on the future without inquiry – without dialogue with those who already know how to think, create, and hope. Eschatology must be plural, democratic, and rooted in solidarity with all socially and ecologically oppressed classes – bringing together believers and nonbelievers, socialists and ecologists, proletarians and farmers, and so on. The analysis of Marx and Engels's eschatology is vital to contemporary eschatological thought: recognizing the nonlinearity of history demands a rejection of any final model of salvation and requires that we ask anew about the plurality, vulnerability, and even tragic potential of any future-oriented project. It is precisely in this context that the development of a genuinely democratic, pluralistic, and politically accountable version of eschatology becomes especially urgent.

Metamodern eschatology – including in its eco-socialist variant – must maintain critical distance from any version of "ready-made salvation" and acknowledge the possibility that transformation itself may generate new forms of violence and oppression. Eco-socialism stands as one of the few theoretical frameworks that meaningfully articulates the position of oppressed groups under contemporary capitalism, examining the multiplicity of forms of domination – class-based, racial, gendered, ecological, and beyond. The ecological crisis, inequality, resource wars, and mass migration are not anomalies but consequences of the very logic of accumulation on which the modern capitalist world order is based. Eco-socialism not only identifies these consequences but offers a fundamental alternative. Crucially, some principles of eco-socialism have effectively informed the Sustainable Development Goals, which are being pursued within the framework of so-called "green capitalism" – a palliative, capital-driven logic that nevertheless demonstrates the relevance of an expanded, renewed, metamodern, Marxist, and eschatological project with concrete aims and outcomes. The expansion of these ideas beyond the confines of capitalist logic is the ultimate goal of future eschatological social movements.

The eschatological project of eco-socialism is post-capitalist, feminist, decolonial, grounded in qualitative indicators of social development, and fully democratic, responding to the ecological and social failures of capitalist society. This aligns in part with recent literature on eschatology, with progressive metamodernist thinking, and with widespread public perceptions of an impending end. Eco-socialist eschatology offers the most comprehensive and forward-looking vision of the future, integrating diverse social crises into a single emancipatory framework. However, its greatest weakness lies in the absence of a clear, consolidated subjectivity and organizational structures capable of translating its vision into practice. At present, the eco-socialist project faces a serious challenge: its eschatology stands in opposition to the rise of far-right alternatives, which more rapidly and effectively channel social discontent into political mobilization. The eco-socialist movement remains fragmented, theoretically underdeveloped, and politically marginalized. Its ideas are not only absent from institutions, but are often excluded from or misrepresented within public discourse. Mainstream media, academia, and political arenas largely ignore or distort its content.

Therefore, the task of the philosopher, researcher, or intellectual is not merely to promote eco-socialism as a utopian alternative, but to bring it forth as a subject of public deliberation. This entails building an intellectual foundation: through publications, public lectures, accessible scholarly writing, and the engagement of civil society in conversations about ecological and social justice. Only through such efforts can a genuine alternative emerge in an era when capitalism is widely perceived as the sole imaginable horizon. It is precisely in this direction that our further development of a metamodern philosophical eschatology will proceed.

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КОНТУРИ МЕТАМОДЕРНОЇ ЕСХАТОЛОГІЇ: КОРПУСНИЙ ПІДХІД

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АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті запропоновано міждисциплінарне соціально-філософське дослідження, в якому здійснюється спроба поєднати корпусну лінгвістику з філософським аналізом метамодернізму та його есхатологічного потенціалу. Автори обґрунтовують, що сучасні глобальні політичні, екологічні та технологічні виклики вимагають оновленого мислення про майбутнє – мислення, яке не обмежується постмодерністським скепсисом чи модерністською лінійною телеологією. Метамодерн, як культурна і методологічна рамка, здатен утримувати напругу між вірою в прогрес і критичним переосмисленням утопій минулого. Саме тому, на думку авторів, метамодерн є плідним середовищем для формування нових есхатологічних уявлень.

Центральна теза полягає в тому, що філософія, яка спирається на кількісний аналіз філософських текстів (конкорданси, колокації, частотність слів тощо), дозволяє не лише емпірично верифікувати філософські інтуїції, а й долати суб'єктивізм у тлумаченні складних концептів, зокрема есхатологічних. Автори демонструють, як за допомогою корпусного аналізу можна реконструювати есхатологічну чутливість у творах Маркса, Енгельса, метамодерністів (Фрайнахта, ван ден Аккера та ін.) та представників еко-соціалізму, показуючи наявність не лише критики капіталізму, а й спроб сформувати позитивні образи майбутнього. Еко-соціалізм у цьому контексті розглядається як одна з небагатьох концепцій, здатних поєднати екологічну етику, соціальну справедливість і матеріально обґрунтовану утопію. Втім, залучаючи результати міжнародних соціологічних досліджень, автори доводять, що сучасне уявлення про майбутнє є поліфонічним, суперечливим і насиченим тривогою, що свідчить про актуальність розробки нових форм есхатологічного мислення. Отже, дослідження пропонує корпусно-підкріплену реконструкцію метамодерністської есхатології, яка включає діалектичне мислення про кінець, соціальну ангажованість, відкритість до множинності сценаріїв та увагу до голосів пригноблених. Така есхатологія не абстрактною, вона постає як інструмент критики і дії в умовах політичної, екологічної та економічної полікризи XXI століття.

Ключові слова: *метамодерн, есхатологія, корпусна лінгвістика,* еко-соціалізм*, кінець історії, утопія, капіталізм.*

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