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**Being Human: metamodern oscillation in a post-truth world
and Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Symptomizer***

The emergence of metamodern theory expresses the urge to label and define attempts of making sense of the world following the real, imagined or wished for end of post-modernism. Neoromantic endeavours of contemporary American art e.g. the film *La La Land* come, maybe somewhat ironically, in times of Brexiteering in the UK, polarization and post-factual rhetoric in the US. The positive reception, shower of prizes and general praise of Damien Chazelle's romantic musical comedy-drama, *La La Land* indicate the yearning for romance and dreaming. Neoromantic sensibilities, if indeed *La La Land* is to be considered neoromantic, perhaps legitimize themselves as upshots of times even if they fulfil but a longing. Perhaps it is the role of critical theory to be ahead of the era, by reacting to the longing in the artefact, and as such have a reciprocal effect on art.

Metamodern theories however do not focus only on neoromanticism but arguably depict a way of being in ongoing oscillation. When oscillation is accepted as a way of being neoromanticism can be rendered a reaction to manifestations of this process, as a kind of escape or beautification.

The vacillation between two poles, as the main characters way of being in Viet Thanh Nguyen's novel titled *The Symptomizer*, can perhaps be interpreted as a performatist oscillation. It is important to note however as Vermeulen and van den Akker in the 2010 article point out that oscillation in a metamodern sense isn't between two but many poles. It is not a balance, they say, but modern and postmodern at the same time yet neither. These processes can be depicted in the interpretation of this novel.

In my analyses of the novel I compare a post-colonial interpretation of Nguyen's novel with a metamodern one. My objective is to pinpoint the difference between these interpretations, which highlight the difference between postmodern and metamodern theories. I argue that metamodern theories are more humanistic in their attempts in our post-fact, post-truth times.

To my mind ongoing processes of negotiations of self worth versus abstract ideals are ongoing humanizing even homeostatic processes. They are specifically defined in our times, perhaps as metamodern.