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Ecological homelessness: towards a participatory praxis of grief and hope

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Abstract

Building on the continuing bonds paradigm, the existential tradition, and deep ecological thought, we propose a participatory praxis of grief and hope, which challenges the clinical pathologisation of grief and reinscribes the grieving process as a meaningful mode of participatory sense-making, a collective space that fosters the emergence of hope-based action.Ecological homelessness provokes a condition of existential groundlessness, made universal under the climate crisis. By considering ecological homelessness, what becomes evident is the generative manner grief discloses our intimate relation with the more-than-human world, and in this way serves to foster hope and life-continuity. It is precisely in grieving for a place that is dying that some sort of hope can emerge. It is through the resurgence and maintenance of community-based grieving practices that facilitate our sense of emplaced memory and shared acknowledgement of our existential precarity that we foster a continuing bond that can facilitate collective action. We may move from dialogical suppression of grief in all its expressions to hope-based action.Consideration of the archetypal significance of "orphanhood" serves to illustrate the human capacity for reinvention despite existential "homelessness", illuminating the hopeful and redemptive dimension of ecological homelessness we conceptualise as "tomorrow sense-making". Tomorrow sense-making articulates our transgenerational responsibility in a way that is resonant with the felt experience of the ecological homelessness associated with forced migration. The kind of hope we describe is a powerful source of life-continuity, as it resides at the heart of participatory processes of making sense of a liveable tomorrow.

Keywords Ecological grief and solastalgia · Deep ecology and continuing bonds · The orphan archetype · Ecological hope · Transgenerational responsibility · Participatory praxis of grief and hope

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1 Migrating people

The openness of the sky, the sense of freedom in exploring new territories, the vitality of fluttering wings in a coordination of movements and direction. Watching Le Peuple Migrateur by Jacques Cluzaud, Michel Debats and Jacques Perrin is an aesthetic experience lived with the open eyes of amazement and the aliveness that comes with novelty. But the movie is not just about travelling, it is about migration. Migrating birds endure long and often dangerous dislocations to reach their breeding and nesting spots every year. This is what biologists call "place fidelity", a territorial inheritance that prompts them to return to the same place year after year. In place fidelity, there is a promise to the future (new little birds will populate the sky next season), and a trust in the past (the eggs will be laid down in the place that was home for previous generations). In place fidelity, we find one of the meanings of home: a secure place ensuring life continuity.

Migration routes are now disrupted by climate change, and many breeding and nesting places around the world risk extinction. Some birds have adapted to the change shortening their migration (Visser et al., 2009), but most of them fly back to their nesting place, putting their life and those of their hatchlings at risk. The complete wholesale reconfiguration of routes appears but is less common and dependent on species and although the route is flexible, the endpoints remain the same (Kumar et al., 2024).

Species extinction is not simply the death of the last individual of a kind but the loss of a form of life (Van Dooren, 2014). The loss of "home" ("habitat loss", in biological terms) plays a crucial role in this loss, as in the case of the Little Penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) in Sydney Harbor. Every year, a colony of little penguins returns to lay their eggs and raise their young in Sydney Harbor. However, over the years, human settlement has gradually taken away the penguins' homes. Eggs are inadvertently trampled by people walking on the beach, and chicks are killed by boats traveling in the harbour. A conservation project is underway to move the penguin eggs to another location. Despite the growing dangers, little penguins continue to risk returning to their nesting place.

Migration is a human phenomenon too. The International Organization for Migration projects mass exposure to costal-specific climate hazards by 2050, driving potentially hundreds of millions of people to leave their homes in the coming decades (IPCC, 2022, IOM, 2024).[1] Rather than chosen migration, climate migrants are forced to leave a home-place due to either major disasters, such as cyclones, hurricanes, wildfires, and flooding; or environmental changes, for instance, sea-level rise, erosion of river deltas, or repeated drought and desertification, undermining safety and habitability. This migration takes the shape of internal displacement, within the national borders, or international displacement. The problems increase with international displacement because climate migrants, different from the forced migration

[1] See Black et al., 2011 about the effects of environmental change on human migration and a framework for distinguishing types of migration, drivers of migration, and barriers and facilitators of movement. See McLeman et al. 2016 on how environmental migration is both a cause and outcome of social inequality.

caused by civil war, political persecution, or ethnic violence, do not have refugee status under current international law (Sciaccaluga, 2020).

Safety and belonging allow life to flourish; yet, what happens when place-fidelity and life continuity are disrupted because the home-place is at risk or, even, is not available as a nesting place anymore? What new life can be envisioned when place-fidelity cannot regulate the migrating journey any longer?

These questions are at the heart of our investigation into ecological homelessness. We will all be subject to ecological homelessness, in some form, in the years to come – if not forced migration itself. We consider ecological homelessness as an existential condition under the environmental crisis. Still, it is important to stress that there are different degrees of vulnerabilities to the environmental crisis, depending not only on geographical location but social positioning and precariousness (Butler, 2004; Reder & Faets, 2026). An ethical stance to ecological homelessness as an existential condition is therefore required. We frame this ethical stance as *transgenerational responsibility*, i.e., the responsibility to protect, preserve, and sustain a liveable place for future generations (Scheffler, 2018). We suggest approaching transgenerational responsibility through the lenses of hope as a collective affective stance towards the future that emerges out of an honest response to home-place loss. Home-place loss has crucial existential significance. We maintain that an ethical stance, not only in the sense of safeguarding what has the right to exist today, but also what needs to be preserved so that there can be a tomorrow, can emerge from this experience if deeply listened to. So, in advancing the concept of "tomorrow sense-making" we offer an affectively laden account of transgenerational responsibility in which the appreciation of what is lost plays a crucial role in life-continuity. As we suggest, honouring our relationship with grief can foster life-continuity through the hope it generates.

Our core thesis is that the kind of hope that emerges out of ecological grief is a crucial affective catalyst for transgenerational responsibility as it allows one to envisioning a future despite and because of the circumstances. We approach this kind of hope out of a close study of ecological homelessness through the Jungian archetype of the orphan (Jung, 1959/1969). We maintain that this archetype helps shedding light onto the hopeful and redemptive dimension of ecological homelessness since it points to the human capacity for reinvention despite being inconsolable at having lost the mother home. We maintain that the existential condition of migration itself can be understood as an expression of hope in the species' impulse to continue even in the face of extreme adversity. Even when ecological homelessness is 'forced', there is necessarily a sort of aliveness in the act of migration. People strive for the continuity of life, although they neither know how nor where they will go. A desire for life continuation can take place alongside grieving the necessity of migration and home-loss, despite and because of the circumstances. This is *tomorrow sense-making* as a form of transgenerational responsibility that is undertaken as an ethical affective stance in the existential precarity itself.

We employ an integrated methodology – at the crossroads of phenomenology, existentialism, enaction, process theory, deep ecology and Jungian psychoanalysis – for diving deeper into the affective experience at the heart of ecological homelessness. Drawing upon an enactive approach to environmental ethics (Candiotto, 2022, 2025a), continuing bonds (Klass et al.,2014) and deep ecology (Naess et al.,

2007), we articulate a participatory praxis of ecological grief and hope; one which reinscribes the grieving process as a meaningful mode of participatory sense-making, which, through emplaced memory, works through the existential transformations that can be collectively experienced when one's own home-place is threatened.

It is important to note that the integrated methodologies we draw upon may appear to operate from incompatible metaphysical and epistemological commitments (as has been suggested, for instance, in contrasting enactivism's anti-representationalism against Jungian archetypes; deep ecology's holism against phenomenological first-person method). However, closer inquiry into seeming inconsistencies in fact strengthens our argument. For instance: Jungian psychology is only commonly misunderstood as implying *representationalism*—archetypes are critically not static internal pictures but inherited dynamic meaning structures that are enacted in context-dependent ways (Knox & Fonagy 2003). Furthermore, autopoietic enactivism is not anti-representational, in general,[2] but in fact intensely concerned with the social, symbolic and linguistic structuring of the human environment, more prominently in participatory sensemaking, and works on the continuity between life and language (Di Paolo et al., 2018). Similarly, while Deep Ecology is holistic, it is in fact *first-person phenomenology*, attending to immediate lived experience, that constitutes the necessary method to realize the deep ecological goal of moving beyond the anthropocentric towards the ecosystem at large. As Arne Naess and colleagues describe (Albrecht *et al*, 2007), it is not through reading ecosystem data-charts (a third person view) that the ego can give way to the more genuine ecological self—rather it is through a radical deepening in first-person awareness. Indeed, Deep Ecology embodies Merleau Ponty's phenomenological recognition that we are the Flesh of the World (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, Adam, 1996, 2010): the human body is of the same sentient material as the world it perceives; the eye seeing the tree is of the tree's nature. Immediate sensory experience is thus the gateway for re-entering our ancient dialogue with the living non-human landscape.

The first part of the paper (Sects. 2—3) begins by exploring the affective dimension of "ecological homelessness" in home-place loss. We discuss it in relation to the concept of "solastalgia" and connect it to ecological grief. Keys to this discussion are the concepts of "existential groundlessness" and the "impossibility of the present" in traumatic experiences. The second part of the paper (Sects. 4 and 5) focuses on life-continuity and ecological hope. In this part, we make use of the archetype representation of orphanhood, discuss some collective practices to ensure life-continuity under the climate crisis and present our approach to transgenerational responsibility as tomorrow sense-making. Conceptually, the transition between the two parts is built upon the temporality of the experience of ecological homelessness, revealing the emplacedness of memory and selfhood through continuing bonds and transforming the disorientation of the migrating journey into an opening to the future.

[2] We acknowledge an inner debate in enaction and, so, although there are certainly schools of thought that are anti-representationalists – most notably, radical enactivism, it is important to stress that there are different varieties of representationalism and anti-representationalism that are not necessarily eliminativist. For a reconstruction of the debate, see Steiner, 2014.

2 Solastalgia

Feelings of belonging and familiarity constitute what it means to inhabit a place. Especially when a place becomes one's home. By contrast, what is the felt experience of ecological homelessness?

We might begin discussing the affective experience of ecological homelessness in relation to the familiar experience of grief termed *nostalgia*. Etymologically, nostalgia is suffering caused by unappeased yearning (*algos*, pain) to return (*nostos*, homecoming) to a time in one's life that is passed. Nostalgia then, is not merely fond recollection, but the pain of wanting to return to something irretrievably lost.[3]

Glenn Albrecht and colleagues (Albrecht et al. 2007, Albrecht, 2019) offer a variation on this theme in coining the term *solastalgia*. Albrecht and colleagues construct the notion of solastalgia etymologically from *solaceum*, solace or comfort, and *algos*, pain. While nostalgia refers to the pain of being separated from the past home, solastalgia names the pain experienced while *still at home*, yet where the home itself is transformed, degraded, rendered unfamiliar. The existential feature is key: it is not a loss of place but a loss of a *sense* of place, the meaning of place has changed; and so, one feels "cut away" in solastalgia (Moran & Atherton, 2019). As a consequence, the *algos* is the pain of uneasiness in a present rendered without solace.

Crucially, solastalgia signals a change in how we understand dislocation and the existential meaning of home, suggesting that the principles of geographic dislocation apply to the way existential threats call into question our experience of home *without requiring obvious displacement*. Far from being a limitation to our discussion of forced migration, this instead signals the global existential scope of ecological homelessness. In different respects, ecological homelessness provokes a condition of existential groundlessness, *made universal* under the climate crisis.

Extending ecological homelessness beyond the "spatial" or geographic is necessary as we seek to articulate the effects of the ecological threats posed to climate migrants. In differentiating "space" and "place" from an existentialist perspective (Heidegger, 1951), Jeff Malpas (2021) emphasises that *place* is a complex and dynamic interplay of environmental, cultural, and historical factors that shape and structure human experience. *Space*, taken alone, is "a mode of unbounded and largely undifferentiated extension" (Malpas, 2021: 5). A *place*, on the contrary, is a "dwelling" (*Wohnung*) where life occurs. As such, we can be rendered ecologically homeless without evident features of displacement, and thus without social recognition. As Doka (2017) notes, it is that which cannot be named or overted, which is met with a failure of acknowledgement culturally, renders our loss disenfranchised—and, we would add, ourselves orphans. We maintain that the experience of orphanhood under ecological grief, explored in the second section, offers the redemptive promise for moving from a lost present to a possible future through hope. To appreciate this,

[3] A debate is now challenging this classical understanding of nostalgia. We cannot go deeper into it here but it importantly stresses that nostalgia is about "change", not past per se (Sweeney, 2020; Frenette, 2026), a mismatch between the past and the present (De Brigard, 2018). This view has important connections to our discussion of the disruptions over the temporality of existence in trauma and how life-continuity can be approached through continuing bonds with the past and, thus, in articulating nostalgia and hope through grief work.

we need first to dive deeper into the temporal dimension of ecological homelessness and, specifically, the experience of what we call "existential groundlessness" and the "impossible present".

2.1 Existential groundlessness

Ecological grief touches into a deeper thread of existential anxiety. It is not merely that we no longer find solace at home, but that we can no longer exist in the face of the loss of our greater home. In grief, there is a foreclosure of existential possibilities – not just for the ones who are lost but also for those who remain, since their self-identity and agency are coconstituted by their loved ones. In ecological homelessness, then, there is a negation of existential possibilities which characterizes the experience of a grief world (Ratcliffe, 2022).

In line with this phenomenological approach to grief, Laura Candiotto suggested understanding ecological grief as "existential groundlessness" (Candiotto, 2025a), namely the experience of losing oneself by losing one's place in a deeply embodied and embedded manner. We here need to stress this *emplaced* approach to ecological grief as, although we understand ecological homelessness as an existential condition, this does not mean that the site-specific experience of that which has been lost is not relevant. On the contrary, it is by experiencing that the water in the nearby river is not running anymore, that the grass is getting yellower and yellower and the trees are drying out due to heatwaves—that one knows grief in the heaviness of their stomach, a lump in their throat, and tears in the eyes. This is not just about practical concerns, although they certainly touch on the material conditions for survival. It is about the impossibility of living in a place that no longer signifies, in the meaningful and necessary ways it once did. It is a crisis in dwelling (Fernández Velasco, 2024) as the loss of a meaningful place, i.e., the one that signifies home.

When we think about a place signifying as both meaningful and necessary, we are speaking from a distinction, articulated within the psychoanalytic tradition, between signs and symbols (Edinger, 1992). While the sign belongs to a public semiotic field, and thus points to something known or fixed, the symbol carries a surplus of meaning, in mediating between what is conscious and unconscious. It thus opens us onto that which is not yet fully known. The crisis of ecological homelessness may be understood then as the loss or erosion of the symbolic home, a home that is uniquely our own; a meaning that arises through the lived relation we bear to our emplaced memory. This relation cannot be generic but singular, at the level of subject and collective emplacedness. Of course, the personal symbologised home-place always participates in a wider syntax of signs. Importantly, Tim Ingold (2000) has understood dwelling and homemaking in ecological terms. This is crucial because ecological grief is about the loss of something meaningful, maybe the most meaningful, i.e., the existential ground which enables life to continue. This might be called a "lifeworld loss".

Panu Pihkala (2024) has distinguished many types of loss and mourning within ecological grief. Among them, "lifeworld loss" stands as the more holistic—and so the more explicitly ecological—because it entails the loss of ways of relating that

constitute inhabiting a home-place with other species.[4] Thomas Fuchs (2025) has suggested understanding this interdependent network as conviviality. It is our own felt and lived corporeality that connects us with other beings in living together. Grieving for a place is therefore an ecological suffering that comes from undergoing the loss of living relationships, the suffering of a dying place. It is not just that one is losing oneself by grieving for a place, but that one is channelling the grief *of* the place. It is the loss of a common home. Whether or not we consciously recognize it, the daily diminishment in the presence of species, habitats, and cultures, is something that is noted by our embodied psyches (Weller, 2015). Therefore, the grief we carry is not merely personal, but shared and collective. What if, we are made to ask, humans are in fact receptor sites for the suffering of the planet, and that to be numb to those griefs is to lose access to a critical line of defence?

There is however, an unfortunate tendency, culturally and clinically, to misconstrue ecological grief as merely a form of nostalgic 'place-attachment'. In this way rather than appreciating ecological grief as meaningful conviviality with the more-than-human lifeworld, such grief may be clinically rendered in pathological terms—as a persistent grief disorder or complicated grief reaction; descriptions which attempt to fit the experience of grief within tidy biomedical category, thereby transforming a collective experience—a grieving in relationship—into a merely intra-psychic event (Killikelly & Maercker, 2017).

By stressing the interdependence of living beings and place in ecological grief, we therefore challenge a common conceptualisation of grief as an egoic, or self-involved, emotion (Cholbi, 2022). In environmental grief, very often the individual is not alone because it is a community of living beings, humans and non-humans, who are all losing their place. We agree with Cholbi that grief is personal and touches on one's identity, values and concerns, but in the case of environmental grief, one grieves not just for oneself but for an entire community, present and future.

Here we get to the fundamental role that ecological grief can play in transgenerational responsibility. The lifeworld that is lost is not an individual lifeworld but a shared and multispecies lifeworld (Pihkala, 2024) that will not be available for the next generation. This sharedness does not even necessarily require proximity. Ecological grief can extend to broader experiences of grieving for the Earth, including species one is not directly in relation to and generations yet to be born. This is because it comprises a deeper sense of belonging, rootedness, and interdependence that extends beyond the present in life-continuity. It is crucial to appreciate this because it is precisely in this spatial and temporal extension that ecological grief can disclose its redemptive role in fostering transgenerational responsibility. As we will show in the following sections, hope as tomorrow sense-making can emerge precisely from ecological grief because it is not just an egoic emotion but a way of inhabiting the earth in its totality, beyond the dualistic opposition between local and global, present and future. The relational and processual dynamics through which

[4] Other important types of grief related to the experience we are describing here, especially in the next sections about the temporality of the experience, are "anticipatory grief" (grieving ongoing changes that are estimated to get stronger in the future) and "nonfinite loss" (ongoing losses).

global catastrophes emerge and dim predictions about the future of life on the planet reveal this intertwining.

2.2 No golden past, no bright future

Before moving to the possibility of a future, we need to explore the experience of temporality that marks ecological homelessness. The temporality of experience is clearly impacted, and so the self-fragmented, under ecological homelessness. Life-continuity is threatened since no place is perceived as home. Those made homeless through ecological change find themselves stuck in an *impossible present*.

The erosion of one's experience of temporality is a key feature of the traumatic process. The traumatic process arises when we lack the resources to absorb in the present an overwhelming event and the associated affect and sensation. The inexperience-able experience is then dissociated from or repressed from conscious awareness. As a consequence, it cannot be placed fully into the past. This traumatic process thus persists atemporally, in the form of sensate and affective disruptions that cannot be absorbed into the present, thereby rendering a future ungoverned by trauma an impossibility (Dowie, 2022; Tempone-Wiltshire and Dowie 2024a). For this reason, traumatic experience has a never-ending quality to it: it is inescapable, marked by a quality of repetition, whereby one is locked in a recursive pattern (Tempone-Wiltshire & Dowie, 2023a). Ecological grief is constituted by such a traumatic loss that produces a felt experience of the future as closed off and inaccessible, because the past that was our home no longer means what it meant. Ecological homelessness describes this loss of the meaning of home, through which one loses the world of significations from which one has built their home, and sense of self in relation to that home. We could call this in Heideggerian terms (Heidegger 1977, GA 2, ch. 41–42, 58) world-collapse (*Weltzerfall*) or unworlding (*Entweltlichung*).

In recent years, we have come to acknowledge how trauma is meaningfully *inscribed upon the body* (Tempone-Wiltshire & Dowie, 2023c, 2023d). A new frontier is appreciating how human implicit and explicit memory systems which contain enduring features of the trauma process may involve the *exterior* environment, that is, trauma is *inscribed in one's relationship to land*. This fact newly appreciated in Western culture, yet acknowledged by traditional knowledge holders, Aboriginal and Indigenous continuous cultures for millennia, is that when we are out of harmony, our custodial care and place-based obligations cannot be carried out. Our interconnected kinship relations imply that human trauma is then inscribed upon Country and the more than human (Tempone-Wiltshire & Yunkaporta, 2025; Dudgeon & Bray, 2023). The place that was and held the significations for us that were home can be scarred, carrying implicitly the wounds of the past, generating the experience of ecological homelessness.

This phenomenological rendering of the manner in which trauma disrupts temporality and the sense of place illustrates how ecological homelessness is not merely a new pathological condition to be addressed, but rather a change in our collective relationship with time and the present, whereby what we have lost persists as a ghostly specter. It is for this reason that ecological homelessness, although deeply emplaced, is not *merely* reducible to geographical forms of being made homeless. Homelessness

as a loss of the emplacedness of memory finds a parallel in the corrosive effects of trauma on the imaginal dimension of the body. To hold protensions, to anticipate or stretch towards the future, is a possibly that is foreclosed by trauma, as affective and sensate incursions of undigested traumatic experience continually invade the present, delimiting the imaginal acts of the body. This process is mirrored for the climate migrant in light of the "tensional" aspects of ecological homelessness, namely the existential condition of ongoing anxiety and alertness. We consider in what follows the detemporalising effects of the traumatic loss that characterises ecological homelessness by reference to the existential condition of "waiting", as ongoing alertness and anxiety.

Odin Lysaker (2022) has focused on "waiting" as key in the experience of climate migrants. He has shed light on three dimensions of waiting: (1) natural waiting; (2) existential waiting; (3) legal waiting. Discussing the case of Pacific islanders, he describes the waiting for the rise of the sea level, an everyday experience of vulnerability, insecurity, and uncertainty, and the expectations toward international intervention since climate migrants are not protected by law. For Lysaker, the waiting creates a limbo time where the climate migrants are excluded from life. We can say that in waiting, one literally kills time and, so, also one's sense of agency and selfhood.

Although not discussing the case of climate migrants specifically, but of migrants in general and in the experience of war crisis, Henrick Vigh (2008, 2009) has described a heightened state of waiting as alertness that is important here. In feeling alerted, possibilities are not completely erased, but they are lived as negative potentialities (Vigh, 2011), as a constant sensitisation to the threat of detrimental change and hidden dangers. Here, waiting is not passive but acute and hyperattentive, especially for young migrants. The experience of an enduring "waiting" frequently culminates in an "ambiguous" loss reaction: we cannot grieve what is not resolved, what is persistent and unclear, and so this complicates and impedes the grieving process (Boss, 2010). Waiting and anxiety are thus characteristic of traumatic experience in the manner in which they shape the defensive organization of the psyche, both in terms of the *latent* manifestation, how we experientially avoid contact that is disorganizing or overwhelming, and in the *gross* manifestation, in the instances of traumatic intrusions that overwhelm us (Dowie & Tempone-Wiltshire, 2022, 2023, 2026).

In the face of solastalgic yearning we may engage in a defensive experiential avoidance of the reality that our home has become inhospitable—through various acts of substitution, escape, or denial. We may seek to fill the void left by estrangement through forms of pseudo-belonging. This does not substitute for meaningful homemaking, but rather merely delays or suppresses inevitable grief. If the traumatic process involves the repression of content viewed as threatening to the ego's integrity—then climate uncertainty constitutes a special class of traumatic process; to be already displaced from the future on an unpredictable timeline, in the face of non-finite and chronic losses whose costs are incalculable.

To respond to ecological homelessness calls for a reconciliation of past and future; and yet the traumatic experience of place loss confronts us with a corruption of memory—to survive inexperiencable experiences the psyche renders certain memories inaccessible to voluntary retrieval; while other memories may be fabricated or perception shaped in order to distort accurate recollection. As a consequence, the

traumatised experience a split between the life world they inhabit now and the world they once inhabited. This disruption in self-world relationship has meaningful implications for one's experience of self and their agential capacities. As articulated in the phenomenological account of traumatic disruptions, the organization of memory proves central the formation of a coherent sense of self (Meares, 2000), yet additionally as we here suggest this organisation also proves essential to the emergence of positive protensions towards the future in a renewed sense of agency.

Until this point we have been offering a novel diagnostic of the existential feeling of ecological homelessness under climate uncertainty. In what follows we articulate practices of fostering emplaced memory through the fostering of continuing bonds that can support healing processes in traumatic experiences of ecological loss.

2.3 A home that remembers

As in the case of working with trauma clinically, the processing and integration of trauma collectively requires a process of *forgetting* that occurs via the process of re-experiencing under conditions of safety (Tempone-Wiltshire & Dowie, 2023a, 2023b, 2024a). Trauma that subsists in the exterior landscape, that has interrupted the meaning systems and significations of a place, may be attended to through intentional actions of the individual or of a collective. We focus here upon collective actions, because ecological homelessness is about the ongoing loss of one's home-place, a home-place which is always shared. We will articulate some of these collective actions past, present and retrieved forward in what follows.

In an Indigenous context, we see working collectively with these forms of loss present in grief rituals, smoking ceremonies, and a host of ceremonial ways of speaking to, honouring, and being in relationship with ancestors in connection to place. This speaks to the deeper connections between relationship between memory, kinship group, and land that are disrupted by traumatic experiences of ecological loss. By example, in many Aboriginal Australian ontologies, "Country" beyond land ownership – describes a living entity or spirit encompassing lands, waters, skies, ancestors, laws, stories, and identity. A complex, reciprocal relationship is sustained where people care for Country and Country sustains them. Country is thus not a mere backdrop, but rather a living sentient field that remembers, holding ancestral actions of the past, lore as well as trauma. In this way, events are not merely recalled internally but stored in place (Tempone-Wiltshire 2024b, 2025; Tempone-Wiltshire & Yunkaporta, 2025). It is this continuity and acknowledgement of reciprocal relationship with Country, which allows for collective trauma processing. Similarly, we suggest that the continuity and reciprocity experienced in ecological grief opens us up to the continuity of life through hope.

To give an illustration of continuity under grief: the Aboriginal Australian cultural practices of "Sorry Businesses" describes the mandatory period of mourning and responsibilities that follow the death of a community member. In Sorry Business attention moves from grief as a private affair to its holding and integration within emplaced kinship networks. By the same token, Aboriginal Walkabout practices, previously initiatory rites of passage for the young in stepping into adulthood, have been used into the rewalking of damaged and interrupted places as a means of reconnect-

ing and maintaining relation with ancestral sites damaged and desecrated through colonisation. Demotic innovations to practices such as Walkabout serve as modes of rehabilitation and protest, healing and honouring through the form of *cultural memory repair.* In this way Country that has been violated can once again hold identity, ancestry, and be a space of belonging.

Without appropriating specific culture-bound practices, the spirit of Indigenous community-based grieving practices has been retrieved forward by ecological action-oriented movements, such as Deep Ecology (Naess et al., 2007). The Indigenous acknowledgement of a reciprocity between psyche and Country and the continuity between self and dwelling in relation to the more-than-human have come to be celebrated as offering a meaningful challenge to the paradigmatic assumptions that underpinned how we culturally and clinically conceived the grieving process in the 20th century. This has birthed a reemergence of the continuing bonds paradigm that situates the continuity of relationship through grief as a source for surfacing our kinship ties and thus transgenerational responsibilities. As a consequence, this experience of grief is far from a nostalgic sense of place attachment, a holding onto what ought to be released in the process of moving forward, but rather a connection with what has been lost through grief as a transformative and essential aspect of what it is to be alive, and what does it takes to keep living.

3 In grief: continue our bond with what is passed

Looking cross-culturally, we see that meaningful continuations of relationship with the deceased are the norm rather than exception. This phenomenon is describable as the *continuing bonds* paradigm of grief (Klass et al., 2014). Such relational continuation is present in Aboriginal Australian mourning practices across different mobs, where the deceased are understood to remaining active presences in the Dreaming, playing an ongoing meaningful part in the ever-present cycle of creation. As death is not conceived as the end, rituals of mourning, Sorry Business, and Songlines maintain continuity in relationships with the bereaved, where those lost continue to exert an influence within the community (Tempone-Wiltshire & Yunkaporta, 2025). Comparable practices are found cross-culturally, including amongst Japanese ancestor veneration and Mesoamerican ritual cycles, where relationships with the dead are ceremonially reestablished rather than severed.

What is lost continues to accompany us through life. While the bond with the deceased persists, it is not understood to be static but rather develops and transforms over time. Such bonds are honoured and maintained through symbolic acts personalized to the individual or community. These might include seasonal family rituals with shared meals and stories, lighting a candle for a lost child, commemorating anniversaries, engaging in imagined dialogues with the deceased, or legacy projects honouring what has been lost (Klass et al., 2014). Such practices—through dream work, routines, memory objects, or rituals—move beyond severance, they do not demand we "letting go" but rather, facilitate meaningful emotional relocation of what has been lost, in a manner that acknowledge their ongoing emotional presence.

These continuing bonds hold meaningful implications concerning collective rituals for contacting the grief of ecological homelessness and the experience of forced migration. Advocating for the resurgence of community-based grieving practices and rituals in this way facilitates the maintenance of meaningful continuing bonds with our home, even after its loss. Such rituals serve as powerful sources of collective transformation, facilitating the emergence of hope through grief and fostering an existential stance of transgenerational responsibility. It is in honouring our place fidelity that we find the strength to undertake the migration journey. Importantly, this kind of hope is rooted not in denial or blind optimism, but in the continuity of relationship with what has been lost through the honest and full-hearted expression of one's grief.

Such a participatory praxis of grief and hope bound to wisdom traditions across the globe allows us to tend to the strange intimacy that holds between grief and *vitality*—the experience of sacred exchange between what is most unbearable and what is most exquisitely alive (Prechtel, 2015). Authors such as Louise Richardsons (2024) have attempted to articulate the nature of shared grief, as the collective recognition of possibilities lost to a collective. It is in shared recognition of possibilities lost, that we can most fully experience the intimacy between grief and aliveness, and its fuel for a form of hope as tomorrow sense-making in forced migration. For appreciating this possibility, we need to clarify two steps and then make explicit a structural limitation that serves as the springboard for an ethical stance toward ecological homelessness.

First, we ought to undertake an *apprenticeship* with sorrow, acknowledging that in fact our grief serves as a gateway back into relationship with the breathing and animate world (Weller, 2015). Grief unmakes us. If in making contact with grief, we are unmade and can shed what was and create our lives anew, then we arrive at a conception of grief as alchemical process. In the case of ecological homelessness, this grief binds us to the world at large, fostering an alchemical process of both inner and outer transformation. Failure to grieve is then a failure to listen to the message that is communicated through grief.

Second, we ought to *nurture deep listening* (Tempone-Wiltshire & Candiotto *forthcoming*) in a loving dialogue with a place that is dying (Candiotto, 2022, 2025a), that is, in experiencing the sorrows for the world, we are more existentially in contact with our lives, and the ground of our being: the *body* of the earth. As Chellis Glendening writes, "to open our hearts to the sad history of humanity and the devastated state of the Earth is the next step in our reclamation of our bodies, the body of our human community, and the body of the Earth" (Glendinning, 1994, p. 38).

The structural limitation to this participatory praxis of grief and hope is that the aliveness found in grief is a possibility, not a necessity, and it can be impeded by global pressures that foreclose the grieving for our ecological homelessness. In a contemporary moment where global forces make meaningful political action feel impossible, the compulsion to orient towards individual concerns, to numb oneself to collective sorrows, is understandable. Yet, by turning away from our wider body, the earth, and atomizing our grieving, we cut off aspects of our greater selves. This is a central dimension of solastalgia and ecological homelessness, that by dint of our felt sense of powerlessness to change the broader context we wrap our grief in a mantle of shame and hold it out of conscious awareness. Cast outside the circle of grievabil-

ity into the shadowy recesses of the "psyche" of the collective, it all too frequently regresses and expresses in more primitive way through anomie, meaninglessness, inexplicable anxiety, or dread (Tempone-Wiltshire & Dowie, 2023d).

To render our shared sorrows inarticulate and ungrievable is a particularly pernicious aspect of contemporaneity's response to ecological homelessness. Inhabiting a grief-phobic society, we turn instead towards optimization, the cult of productivity, and commodified images of individual happiness that pointedly ignores the collective processes of homelessness-making that occur at scales we experience as beyond our reach to affect (Slaby, 2025). Recent critiques of contemporary self-care discourse have similarly argued that practices framed as individual resilience or well-being risk obscuring relational, institutional, and ecological conditions of suffering, calling instead for an ethically situated understanding of care as embedded, collective, and world-responsive (Tempone-Wiltshire 2025).

With the cumulative grief of the world being overwhelming, the biosphere under attack and in crisis: what role might a turning towards our ecological grief play in responding to these crises? Acknowledging homelessness-making requires looking beyond ourselves, imagining forms of life that are transformed through anthropogenic displacements and the solastalgia felt at a species level, for those made homeless at home.

In the second part of the paper, we present ecological migrants as orphans carrying a redemptive archetypal dimension. While we are talking about some of the most estranged and precariously located people, we ought nonetheless acknowledge the hope that can come from some of the most deeply challenging experiences. This is not to bolster narratives built upon empowerment, resilience or self-care, but ones which instead dare to collectively face the home-loss we are experiencing under the ecological disaster.

4 Continuation of life

Baby hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) emerge, heads and flippers first from the sand. They leave behind their pierced empty shells and instinctively turn towards the glowing moon to make their first foray into the ocean at night. Evolution has so shaped them that they are responsive to the light cues of the natural world, the moonlight reflecting off the water in the relative darkness of the beachscape. In the absence of their mothers, nature orients them towards the sea. But spring forward to contemporary times, where the bright artificial lights from the nearby urban areas, the beams of streetlights and car headlights, so much brighter than the full moon at night, cause the hatchlings to move instead in the opposite direction, to be misled inland, not towards ocean, but towards the luminescent industry and commerce. They flip their way across the sand and up onto the busy highways, where they are crushed under freight vehicles.

What we see in these misoriented hatchlings is not the result of changing natural conditions or predation, but human-built landscapes hijacking the navigational instincts that are ancient, the compulsion to move by moon and starlight. This illustration demonstrates how fragile our instincts are in the face of anthropogenic altera-

tions to the environment. This speaks to an important aspect of the grief of ecological homelessness tied up with place-fidelity: grief for what we expected *but did not receive* (Weller, 2015). The idea that we come into the world with a set of expected inheritances, and that anthropogenic disruptions have impacted the home environment, has been stressed in both ecological psychology and 4E cognition (Clark, 2010; Chemero, 2009).

Here we suggest approaching the disorientation in the migrating journey when one's mother home is lost through the Jungian archetype of the orphan (Jung, 1959/1969). We maintain that this archetype helps shed light onto the hopeful and redemptive dimension of ecological homelessness. But this archetype is not just a hermeneutical tool through which we analyse the experience of the climate migrant. The suggestion is that part of our *habitus* as human beings is to cohabit a symbolic set of structures and meanings that foster and facilitate our understanding of the transitions through life phases. So, the archetype of the orphan as presented here contributes to our participatory praxis of grief and hope because it leads the way to the emergence of hope from grief.

4.1 Belonging and orphanhood

Home-loss, under conditions of post-industrialism and anthropogenic transformation, has meant a life orphaned from belonging for humans and non-human animals alike. Existential threats produce such orphaning, generating forms of estrangement and abandonment in which we are often made complicit. This experience of unbelonging is rarely spoken collectively, yet it underpins an epidemic of alienation. The fragmentary times in which we live constitute existential threats, emerging from human migrations, technological transformations, and social dislocations across the fault lines of politics, class, and race.

Solastalgia articulates a longing for a lost solace that may be geographic, but also encompasses disruptions to family structures, damage to relationships, and the absence of purpose or vocation through the industrialization of work processes. It encompasses spiritual longing in an era of secularization, and the yearning to engage with ancestral knowledge when intergenerational transmission is interrupted, and modernist institutions such as the university system are in decline. We even experience estrangement from our own bodies—a form of solastalgia reflecting cultural and technological dislocation (Tempone-Wiltshire and Matthews 2023, 2024a, 2025).

Archetypes, in an analytic sense, reveal when we are undergoing rites of passage, initiations, exiles, symbolic deaths, or rebirths. The existential anxiety induced by solastalgia and estrangement leaves us archetypally orphaned. Our collective species estrangement, therefore, speaks as symbol: our species-being is wandering, outcast, potentially banished from belonging. The orphan is the uncomfortable other: alone in the world, cut loose, unsupported, yet embodying the story that even the most tragic situations may be overcome. Specifically about ecological homelessness, the orphan has lost the place as their mother, in certain situation also assisting in her degradation, if not murder. As we said already, the lost place was a shared home in a multispecies lifeworld. So, the kind of orphanhood that is experienced in ecological homelessness goes with the bigger scope of ecological grief we have discussed so far. The arche-

type of the orphan contributes to it by shedding light on what is lost – our mother home – and the disorientation that it produces in the migration journey.

Yet the orphan is not merely homeless. Archetypally, the orphan plays a sacred role, symbolizing the human capacity for reinvention. This is the pattern of the orphan's unfolding: they endure wandering and hardship, they feel close to giving up, yet in the end, they triumph. This is crucial for our discussion of the continuing bonds approach to ecological grief. Through the journey toward belonging, the orphan establishes a place in the world that is unimpeachable, not only because it is wrought from scratch, but because it becomes large enough to shelter others, potentially non-human others too.

Archetypally, we can be described as in a moment of collectively descending into the underworld—nobody goes willingly into such an initiation. Such an initiation involves a humbling of the will. Even though every part of us may mount resistance to being changed, we are not meant to emerge intact from the descent. We are meant to be disillusioned, dissolved; only from that place, can rebuilding commence (Turner, 2021). This acknowledgement of homelessness, turning bravely towards our grief collectively, is in the nature of sacrifice. There is a sacrifice to be made on the way to belonging, from our moment of ecological homelessness, of orphanage. There is a ruthless phase of elimination, where we strip back what is not alive, so we can find our way forward.

Sacrifice is not self-denial but, etymologically, derives from the Latin *sacrificium*, combining sacer (sacred) and facere (to make) – to make sacred. It is a making sacred through honest encounter with the unknown, lest we cling to outdated versions of ourselves. Answering the call is grieving loudly. To grieve is to make full contact with our experience, and collective grieving is a sign of devotion to our becoming—a show of trust in the unknown. In the context of anthropogenic unhoming, this redemption may take the form of a return to belonging.To acknowledge and experience the grief and estrangement that has been disowned, is an act of acknowledging an ongoing meaningful "continuing bond", then, serves as an instrument of meaningful life continuation. This is the redemption of the orphans who embark upon the necessary journey.

4.2 From collective orphanhood to life continuation

The redemption of the orphans opens up to a felt sense of continuation of life. What is needed to ensure life continuity under the climate crisis?

We here discuss three answers that, although offering important insights, in our view are not able to mobilise the alchemical power of ecological grief that is needed for hope and tomorrow sense-making. After that, we will offer our answer, as an alternative.

Let's start with the hybrid piece of art, Seasoning a Kid: A Search for a Practice of Placeby Adam Amir (2025). In this work, a father exposes his child to seasonal changes. In taking him to the seasons, from searching the snow line in mountain hiking to the joyful attending of flowers blooming, from waiting for the migrating birds coming back to plucking and tasting wild berries, the father offers him affective experiences. "Where others have traditions to teach, classes for their children, very

old stories to tell, I have but a feeling". The passing of time is experienced in the first-person modality of immersion in the natural environment, with all the sensations and emotions that come with it. The tears of the kid because it is too cold in the snow and the brilliant eyes of joy in appreciating the Sakura trees' petals flowing in the wind are the affective ways in which the little one learns to live in time and understands the passing of seasons.

The exposure to the seasonal changes of life and the transmission of that experience father to son encapsulate the transmission of our finitude, our seasonality. Many children are denied this initiation into life's seasonality marked initiation. And yet a crucial element remains missing, in our view. While encapsulating an ancient evolutionary inheritance, the transmission of knowledge of our seasonality as living beings, father to son, what is absent is a depiction of interruptions to renewal, i.e., the disruptions provoked by man wrought environmental crises that are not a part of the natural cycle of transformation. In ecological education, it is important to appreciate change and renewal, but this needs to go with an acknowledgement that the disruptions provoked by the environmental crisis are not just part of a natural cycle of transformation. They are anthropogenic. Yes, as we are arguing, ecological homelessness is an existential condition. Yet, it should be attended with a critical posture that, for us, is the ethical stance towards transgenerational responsibility. So, these experiences that are captured in this piece might not be available for future generations because many natural places are dying, and already now some seasonal experiences as winter snow are unavailable to the kids of parents who had them in their childhood (Beran, 2025: 3–15). It is for this reason that it is critical to ecological education that we provide spaces for being with wounded places so that the younger generation can appreciate how these places are changed, feel the emotions related to that change (Johnson, 2018), and understand human responsibility in that change. This does not necessarily imply kindling shame and guilt. Instead, by engaging deeply with ecological grief, as we are arguing in this paper, new stances, even joyful ones, can emerge in the long run (Johnson, 2023) and, so, contribute to transgenerational responsibility.

To illustrate our suggestion that ethical transmission requires a continuing bond established and maintained through *encounter with emplaced memory* consider what has been taken up in relation to Aboriginal Australian colonial–settler history within the Australian education system. The Myall Creek has become a meaningful place-based historical site where school groups regularly visit the memorial, guided by Aboriginal descendants. Parallels to ecological loss are present in these histories of violence. The teaching extends beyond the facts of the massacre by explicitly inviting students into an affective and ethical encounter: to sit with the site, to hear stories, and to participate in annual memorial ceremonies. Here, a continuing bond is demonstrated: the memorial itself functions as a reconciliation project, a form of active hoping through a transformative pedagogy grounded in an ongoing relationship to place and history. This provides one illustration of a broader attentiveness—though still uneven—within state curricula to the question of what *truth-telling* involves in relation to the Frontier Wars. History is not encountered as an archive, but is experientially encountered through relation, and transmitted grief that facilitates relatedness that ascribes weight, hope and motivated action.

Another example of fostering life continuation under the assault of the environmental crisis is Tuvalu island. Tuvalu is an island in the Pacific Ocean that is hit hard by the sea level rise. The government of Tuvalu has started The Digital Nation Project that aims at recreating Tuvalu in the metaverse. This comprises a digital "back-up" of the entire country, employing satellite images, 3D rendering tools, and drone footage to build virtual replicas of real places in Tuvalu as immersive 3D environments and the digitalization of culture and memory, including songs, dances, stories, and artifacts. The project seeks to preserve not just data but legal identity. This intervention has a crucial meaning for the Indigenous community because it promises to preserve the Tuvalu people's sovereignty despite forced migration. Foreign Minister Maina Talia powerfully advocated at COP30 in Brazil for urgent global climate finance as climate justice. What is happening in Tuvalu is not just Tuvalu's problem. Raising awareness of global influences upon local effects and requesting international intervention is crucial.

Still, from the perspective of the experience of the climate migrants, a digital copy of Tuvalu cannot offer any home there to a new generation. Online life is not the same as life on the island, although they are creating digital versions of "everything", including streets and buildings. It is not just that emplaced memory, so bounded to felt atmospheres and embodied connections to the environment, cannot be there. But that the archival recording of a culture and transmitted into digitalization is like a pale simulacra, almost a mocking simulacra that attempts to fossilize a living culture.

From a legal perspective what this intervention can offer is of paramount importance: there will be digital passports that are necessary for preserving Indigenous identity for climate migrants which can certainly help in the migration journey. Yet this obviously falls short from an affective point of view at the intersection of different form of discriminations and climate violence (McLeman *et al*. 2016, De Vido, 2026). It risks supporting the techno-optimism narrative regarding climate change for which technology will solve the problem without requiring major changes to our lifestyles and economies. But this narrative clearly fights against what Maina Taila and indigenous people are reclaiming, i.e., that the biggest countries take responsibility for what their emissions are causing. It is not out of Tuvalu people's actions that the sea level rise – a technological answer very often hinders systemic causes and delays urgent action at the global level.

A third example is the case of adaptation to climate change. Adaptation is a crucial concept in enaction, and it signals the very same way in which living beings co-institute and reshape themselves in relation to their environments. It is also considered a crucial coping strategy in the face of environmental crises (Ober 2014, Bendell & Read, 2021). There are certainly good examples of adaption (Ostergaard-Nielsen & Vigh 2012), however we need to signal a structural risk that endangers this answer. A request to adapt – as in the "resilience" narratives – is often manipulated by malevolent agents, especially in authoritarian regimes (Bosse & Vieira, 2023), so that the people will not create problems in requesting more demanding changes. So, we claim, that what is needed to ensure life continuity as transgenerational responsibility is more than adaptation.

We shed light on this "more" with *hope* as an existential stance to life continuity. We offer an account of ecological hope as tomorrow sense-making: this is an affec-

tive approach to transgenerational responsibility. Candiotto (2025a) has argued that this kind of hope can emerge out of ecological grief when the love intrinsic to grief is ethically attended and channelled into collective actions for a possible future. We suggest that the key existential character of hope lies in the ability to feel possibilities in uncertain terrains through listening deeply, more and better to the place and its inhabitants (Candiotto, 2022, Tempone-Wiltshire & Candiotto forthcoming) and, so, to practice together the strange intimacy of grief and aliveness that we discussed in Sect. 3. This kind of hope keeps the darkness of grief – it is not naïve optimism – and by experiencing it in ecological homelessness finds sources for a new shared aliveness.

5 Hope despite and because of the circumstances

We may ask: is the foreclosure of a meaningful existence that comes with ecological grief also an impossibility of sense-making? There are moments in which no meaning may be found, and one's existence is under the layers of the absurd. Still, there is sense-making in ecological grief – a kind of sense-making that extends beyond the individual and their egoic self-concerns. Here we're referring to tomorrow sense-making as a felt sense of future possibilities that arises both despite and because of present circumstances. But how to feel and perceive possibilities for action when they are not fully there and their existence is under threat, as in the case of an uncertain future due to the environmental crisis?

Our answer is that what is needed is hope as an affective stance towards life continuity despite and because of the circumstances. We claim that it is precisely through grieving for a place which is dying that some sort of hope may emerge. Hope expresses a desire for a future, but hope cannot grant this desire's fulfilment. We can find here the same tension described in relation to the ecological homelessness of climate migrants, albeit transformed. That is, through the collective grief work practices we have described, active hope surfaces from the fiery kiln of grief, in the service of sense-making. A specific kind of ethical sense-making emerges through this tension (Weichold & Candiotto, 2023), as it is precisely in this tension between grief and hope that we articulate the meaning of a liveable 'tomorrow'. So, "tomorrow sense-making" is an affective stance towards life continuity despite and because of the circumstances.

Discussing trauma, we stressed how the past can intrude into the present, as a form of presence in absence (Fuchs, 2018). In exploring the archetype of the orphan, we showed that this absence can be also turned into a desired possibility and, so, foster redemption as a process of sense-making in cultivating what has been forgotten. We want to highlight that we can find hope in the very same experience of migration. We maintain that migrants in forced migration are, as orphans, also enacting hope. This might be taken as requesting too much from the orphans that, instead, would need to be protected, especially climate migrants that are still not legally recognised as refugees. However, we agree with the feminist epistemologist José Medina (2023) who, in describing epistemic resistance and epistemic activism, suggests this is not in charging the oppressed with the additional responsibility to solve the structural

problems which make them oppressed. But it is the full recognition of their agency, not a paternalistic intervention towards the most vulnerable. As we described in the previous sections with the archetype of the orphan, power can be found in the negative situation itself. This would not be "adaption", as we discussed in the previous section, but the courageous emergence of something new, beyond expectations and without knowing.

In forced migration, leaving is unchosen and yet migrants do not remain to perish in an unliveable situation. Rather in migration there is also aliveness, i.e., a commitment towards life continuity. It is precisely in this tension, grounded on the experience of grief as ecological homelessness, that the meaning of a "tomorrow" can emerge. As we said, place-fidelity does not necessarily imply place-attachment. Instead, if attended in ecological grief through the nourishment of continuing bonds with the lost home, it can be the catalyst for embarking upon a journey, anew. As in the words pronounced by hope itself in Goethe's *Awakening of Epimenides*: "Beyond the grave I become future, life is vital only by my gift".

What kind of vitality can emerge from beyond the grave? For answering this question, let's consider the difference between fear and hope, two key future-oriented dispositions. If environmental fear closes up, in hope there is an openness (Kleres & Wettergren, 2017). It is not that this openness guarantees the absence of future dangers. Differently from environmental fear, hope does not deny a crisis but rather offers a view of the present as something that cannot be changed and that therefore prevents making sense of a possible future (Cuffari *et al*., 2022). In this openness, uncertainty can take a positive shape, as reflected in the catchphrase of Extinction Rebellion "Fight *as if* there is a future". In this *as if* we can find the vitality of a possibility. Here the disorientation of the orphan we described in the previous section referring to the baby hawksbill sea turtles is transformed into an opening to new possibilities.

"Opening to new possibilities" might of course sound too positive. There is the tension of uncertainty and the opening is only partial and under the pressure of the events (Calloni, 2006; Pulcini, 2009). Still, we maintain, this is the kind of hope that can be experienced beyond the grave. It is by being with the place that is dying in the limbo of waiting and the mourning of leaving, alert to negative potentialities, that a transgenerational responsibility can be enacted by climate migrants. It is the pressure of the events that turn one's vulnerability into responsibility, i.e., the ability to respond to the needs of others and situations (Tronto, 1993; Varela, 1999). It is under conditions of oppression that the hope for repair can be collectively mobilised (Stockdale, 2021).

This approach might be criticised as a piecemeal response that is inadequate to the societal and planetary crises we are facing.[5] However, to separate the global from the local reflects a failure to recognise the relational and processual dynamics through which global catastrophes emerge and are addressed in lived reality. It is precisely through felt, situated, and incremental forms of contact and response that we are ethically acknowledging and engaging the catastrophes of the twenty-first century.

[5] See Godfrey-Smith (2024) on the distinction between environmental ethics and climate ethics with the former focusing on local solutions and the latter being in need of global strategies.

The felt experience of tomorrow sense-making as an ethical stance takes the shape of persistence, as in "radical hope", when the framework for envisioning a specific future is profoundly disrupted (Lear, 2008). In radical hope, this persistence is not strategic problem-solving, but a virtue or cultivated skill. For us, as we stressed by discussing the archetype of the orphan, this persistence is rather an honest work with the shadow. Precisely because it is hard even to imagine what can come out of it, hope is beyond expectations, "unconditional hope" (Thompson, 2021). Still, hope is affective sense-making, literally, making sense of a tomorrow out of grief work. The enactive approach can help here. Affective sense-making is a semiotic embodied process. It has been understood from within the continuity thesis between life and mind for which meaning emerges in the constitutive relationship of an organism and their environment (Colombetti, 2013). In home-place loss this continuity is disrupted, if not broken. This might make one think that also sense-making in unavailable, as we voiced in the incipit of this section. But, as our analysis of the continuing bonds has showed, we can find a different kind of sense-making in life-continuity: it is precisely in the strange intimacy of grief and vitality that hope as tomorrow sense-making can emerge, as a life force in grieving loudly, as a gift. Hope as affective sense-making opens up a perspective. As for Varela et al. (1991), "sense" is also a perspective, a teleological directionality. In hope, sense-making contains a future.

Focusing on sense-making does not mean that hope is not committed and agentic. A meaning is enacted. This has crucial ethical significance (Varela, 1999; Colombetti & Torrance, 2009) and points to the relation between knowing and becoming (Di Paolo & De Jaegher 2021). For our approach, it is important to stress that it is *affective* sense-making that constitutes values and cares (Colombetti 2013; Candiotto 2023, 2025b). Specifically about our topic, it is hope as tomorrow sense-making that constitutes transgenerational responsibility. Our focus on phenomenology and the first-person experience is not merely "descriptive" because the first-person perspective is the one of a participant who lives the experience from within the situation and, so, contributes to it through affective sense-making. This is a crucial tenet of our integrated approach, especially in the dialogue between enaction and Jungian psychoanalysis. We can for instance appreciate it in microphenomenology. Especially in relation to the ecological crisis, Claire Petitmengin (2021) has pointed out that anchoring in the lived experience is an act of resistance. For Petitmengin, by connecting to the felt experience one can challenge the dualism that brings to the exploitation of nature and regain enough dignity, lucidity and courage to change one's ways of life. Or, we can also find this entanglement of ethics and experience in hope as *know-how* (Cuffari *et al*., 2022).

Now that we have explained why sense-making is agentic and offered some keys to unlock the ethical relevance of the felt experience, we can dive deeper into our account of hope as tomorrow sense-making. An important interlocutor is Rebecca Solnit (2004). Solnit has described hope beyond expectations as dark. For Solnit (2004), hope is not dark because we exist in a post-apocalyptic hopeless and miserable time (Thaler, 2024). Rather, hope is dark because the future is unknown. As such, the future possibilities that emerge are "wild": they are not entirely within the individual's control and foresight. Nonetheless, the realisation of future possibilities

is not accidental. Instead, these possibilities emerge through collaboration. Such is the case in the collective rituals of grief and hope here described.

Although in affinity, our approach expands Solnit's view about the darkness of hope. We suggest that thedarkness of hope can be deepened when we bear with grief, that is, the darkness of hope can describe both the unknowns of the future *and* also the mourning for place-loss that has already happened. If we are not beyond the grave, we are nonetheless at the grave site standing in elegy, holding a candle. So, our participatory praxis of grief and hope demonstrates that engagement with grief as a cultural practice facilitates hope through fostering a continuing bond through loss. This translates the religious "élan du coeur" of hope into a grounded sphere of affectively-laden participatory praxis. It is beyond expectations, yet down-to-earth, affectively felt in every wounded place.

It is important, however, to articulate the dialectical relation between grief and hope as this relation can appear contradictory upon first impressions. To see why, consider that hope can be utilised as a deterrent to grief work, insofar as hope can be utilised as a denial of the reality of loss. In working with grief, there is a therapeutic awareness that one moves through the stages of grief only by accepting reality in all its faces, including the hardest aspects to bear. In the early phases of grief, a false hope can constitute a form of reality denial that must be relinquished in the processing of grief, in the service of the acknowledgement and acceptance of loss. So, to accept reality, to mourn for what has been lost, one needs a kind of hope that we here describe as "despite and because of the circumstances". So conceived, the darkness of hope is the awareness of the loss. This kind of hope is the one that comes from honest grief. Thus conceived, the affective work of grief is not opposed to hope but its precondition. A participatory praxis of grief and hope, together, is therefore in service of coming into more meaningful relation with reality.

We believe that now we have all the pieces of the puzzle to appreciate transgenerational responsibility as tomorrow sense-making. Although beyond expectations and strategic planning, hope is making sense of a liveable tomorrow so that life can continue. The felt aliveness of tomorrow sense-making comes with the expansiveness and broadening up of positive feelings (Fredrickson 2001) and with the active collective engagement of joy, awe, elevation, kama muta and other so-called "self-transcendent" emotions (Pizarro *et al.*, 2021); it comes with unexpected novelties understood by Thomas Fuchs as the liminal space of a meaning "in statu nascendi" (Fuchs, 2024). Hannah Arendt (1958) would have called it "natality".[6] In ecological terms, this takes shape as re-imagining worldviews, moving away from a domination-based to a partnership-based culture, one that encourages deep listening and appreciates difference (Wray, 2022).

This imaginal work of cultural shift is fundamentally embodied and embedded in the affective life of communities. In the case of climate migrants, it is giving birth to a renewed sense of existential possibility so that the possibility of a tomorrow starts to make sense anew. This is grounded in the felt sense of conviviality, even as so deeply

[6] On the relevance of Arendt's concept of natality to the environmental crisis, also in relation to the debate on antinatalism (the ethical choice of not having children for environmental reasons), see Whyman, 2021 and Beran,2025.

disrupted in the experience of ecological homelessness. So, it is making sense of a tomorrow by leaving the place together, in the support of local communities in the migration journey, in enlarging circles of care so that new places can become home. This support is due to all migrating people, human and not human orphans, who have lost their mother home. As in the words of the poet and ornithologist Drew Lanham, "I wanna be that person that gives a safe space to these migrants. A common space we share… these migrants are wild hope to me" (A mystical ornithology, by Jeremy Seifert and James Roberts 2025).

6 Conclusion

In this paper, we presented ecological homelessness as an existential condition under the climate crisis. We described its affective dimension as existential groundlessness in grieving for a lost home and we shed light on the temporality of the impossible present as a traumatic experience. By freeing ourselves from a pathologizing approach to grief, we offered instead a participatory praxis of grief and hope. Key to it is working with emplaced memory in communal practices of grieving the lost home and the Jungian archetype of orphan as what can lead to a redemptive journey. We have held that a kind of hope despite and because of the circumstances can emerge from attending ecological grief in this manner. The kind of hope we described is beyond expectations but, still, a powerful source of life-continuity. This is because it is at the heart of participatory processes of making sense of a liveable tomorrow. Tomorrow sense-making is therefore our way to spell out transgenerational responsibility in a way that is resonant to the felt experience of the ecological homelessness of climate migrants.

Although our approach is "emplaced", by exploring the disruptions over personal-identity in home-place loss, we also signalled the relevance of ecological homelessness beyond geographical location. This is crucial for appreciating the wide scope of ecological homelessness and, at the same time, the possible global effects of these collective actions. When grief is met, not as a pathological condition to be redressed but rather part of a meaningful ongoing and continuing bond with the broader world, we move into an articulation of how grief discloses one's intimate relation with the more-than-human world. Through ecological homelessness, we maintain, we are compelled to approach the existential dance of dying and birthing anew that mark cycles of life on Earth. This dance grounded on the negative condition of ecological homelessness needs to be ethically attended as transgenerational responsibility, so that life can continue.

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