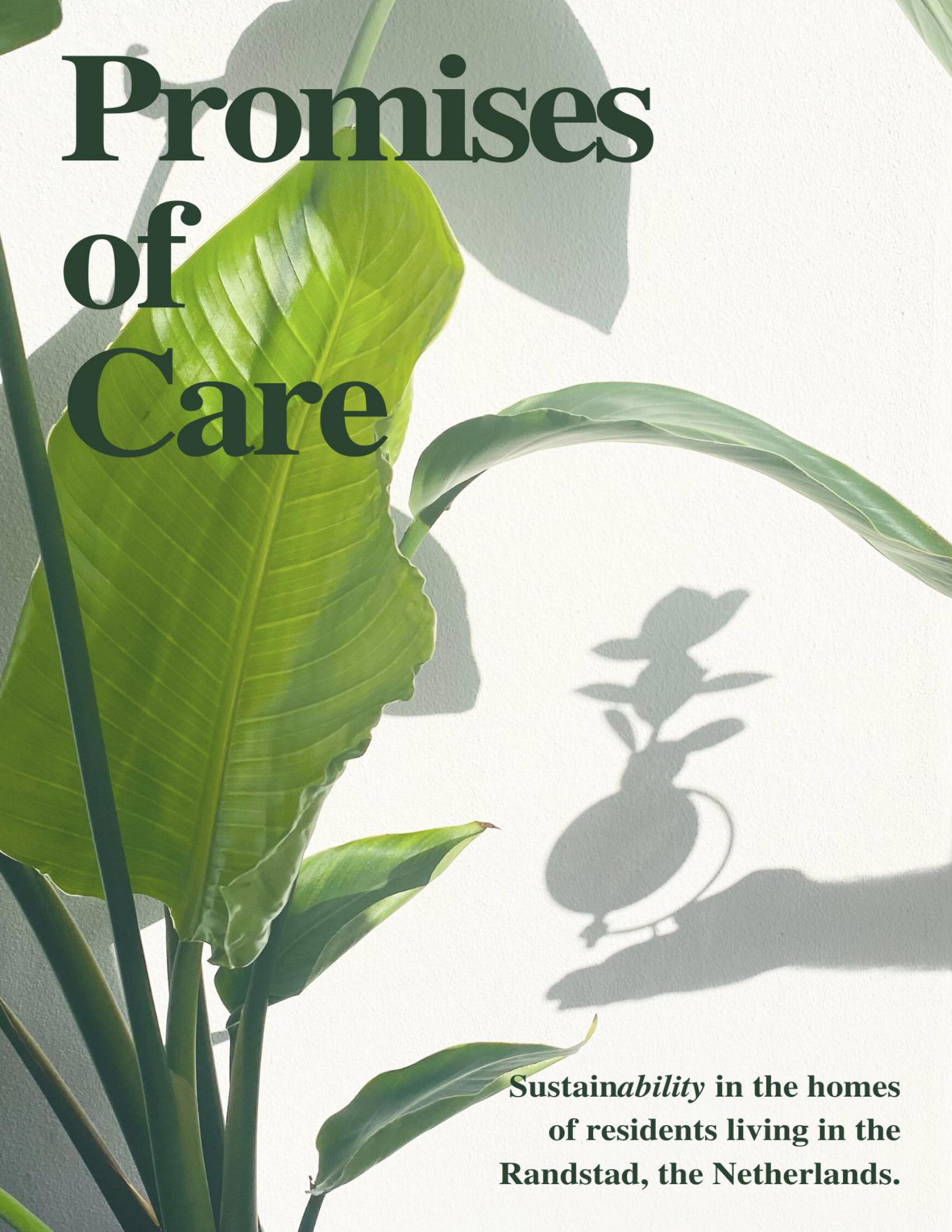
Promises of Care



Sustain*ability* in the homes of residents living in the Randstad, the Netherlands.

Promises of Care

Sustain*ability* in the homes of residents living in the Randstad, the Netherlands.

Master's Thesis

Submitted on July 1st, 2022 to the Department of Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Utrecht University

Student: Carmen Luke

Student number: 7406061

Supervisor: Aditi Saraf

Wordcount: 19.927

Cover page: *"It is all in your hands"* | Photographer: Carmen Luke

ABSTRACT

Living in a time considered the Anthropocene may bring about grievous feelings, and for some, even feelings of unhomeliness. The accelerated anthropogenic ecological and climatic changes and their diverse effects on human and more-than-human lives have increasingly become apparent, and thus worrying. As those changes directly result from human activities, people have started to question what it means to be human. How to feel 'at home' living in the Anthropocene is a pressing question for some, and this question may also be explored within the four walls of what they call their home. While physical shelter may be a basic existential need, it is houses and homes, wrapped up in the desire and struggle for belonging in the world, which underpin human sociality. Considering the need to 'care', 'nurture' and 'protect' nature during this epoch, I uncovered how a person's care practised within the domestic sphere tends to expand to beings outside the domestic unit – to beings on the other side of the world, beings of other species, rivers, and overall nature in its broadest sense. The curation of the domestic sphere itself may be impacted as certain objects within the home have extended significance that may well represent violence, suffering, and exploitation rather than care. As such, by exploring how certain materialities may be invited into or averted from the homes of people living in currently relatively unaffected areas in the Netherlands, namely the Randstad, this may be seen as a practice of care, as well as an experimentation of how to feel at home in the Anthropocene. As I investigated (gendered) categories of care by exploring how they may become reconfigured within the context of caring for nature while living within the Anthropocene, they indicate how domesticity becomes reconfigured within the context of climate change mitigation and sustainability. Through a focus on materials, I traced phenomenological and aesthetical meanings of certain objects together with how the larger collective may enable or constrain a person's ability to feel at home in the Anthropocene. To conclude, I argue for a reinvention of domesticity, where the current climate change crises are expanding ideas of care beyond that of the domestic unit itself, concurrently impacting the curation of homes.

KEY WORDS:

Anthropocene, Curation, Domesticity, Home, Homeliness, Unhomeliness.

PREFACE

It may not always be easy to nurture, protect and care for those you love, especially during a time considered the Anthropocene. The unprecedented changes that are unquestionably induced by human activities have made many people aware of the general unsustainability of the lifestyle they currently 'enjoy'.

But it is exactly the bravery of my participants that I salute during these unhomely times. Their bravery to love, care and feel for those they may never meet; fellow human beings no matter their geographical location, more-than-human species not visible to the human eye, oceans so deep one cannot comprehend, and the atmospheric system that enables processes about which one may never know.

Talking about climate change and its accompanying complications can be very emotional. Many participants experience a sense of grief, a sense I share with them. I recognize the sensitivity of the subject, and I truly hope that I do it justice as I compose this thesis. My participants were vulnerable with me, spent (a lot of) time with me, and even welcomed me into their homes. For that, I will be forever grateful.

This research felt refreshing, depressing, uplifting, de-motivating, intense, numbing, and everything in between. These are all feelings that are not unfamiliar when living in the Anthropocene. This epoch can be marked as one where a deep love for planet Earth's inhabitants can sometimes feel like a toxic relationship, as this love does not always result in happy feelings, but rather sadness, anxiety, and anger. By continuing to engage with subjects intersecting climate change, I hope to continue my own journey on how to feel at home during the Anthropocene, a journey that I hope my participants can also continue. Everybody deserves to feel at home.

The data for this thesis was collected during my fieldwork between February 2022 and May 2022, mostly in the Randstad, the Netherlands. I sincerely thank everybody involved in this research project. Moreover, I want to thank my supervisor Aditi Saraf wholeheartedly – who always seemed to point me in the most interesting directions. Last, I want to thank my participants for daring to care. I commend you and will be forever in your debt.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this academic year, I got to know a young activist by the name of Eva Dassen through an interdisciplinary honours program at Utrecht University. As she had expressed her interest in participating in my research, Eva shared a poem with me that she wrote during the peak of her climate change anxiety, following our first research-related conversation. Eva had sent a spoken version to me, and while listening to it, goosebumps developed on my skin. I appeared to be touched physically as well as emotionally. From the outset and throughout, this poem has remained ever so encompassing to me. Throughout this thesis, excerpts of the poem are interwoven in the text as interludes. They intend to capture the reality of somebody that fails to feel at home in the Anthropocene – and subsequently somebody pursuing promises of care.

Eva's worry is not without reason as the state of the collective home, planet Earth, is changing. Change in itself is not a remarkable phenomenon, as ample academics from geology to anthropology can testify. However, it is specifically the accelerated anthropogenic ecological and climatic changes, and their diverse effects on human and more-than-human lives, which have increasingly created societal and cultural awareness of those changes. This awareness is eloquently presented in Eva's poem, and by pointing out how caring for beings affects her caring for herself, she describes what seems to be her struggle to feel at home during the Anthropocene.

The Anthropocene is a popular definition that has been inaugurated to describe the changes within the current geological epoch. The geoscientific term, albeit not yet approved officially by geologists, describes the significant impact humans have on planet Earth and all other more-than-human beings that may call planet Earth home. Although informally coined by biologist Eugene F. Stoermer and chemist Paul Crutzen in 2000, the 'Anthropocene' has steadily gained traction and is commonly accepted as the argument that the stable Holocene era, an era that allowed human civilization to call planet Earth home, has now been displaced (Crutzen & Stoermer 2000; Scranton 2013). This displacement is a direct result of changes induced by human activities, disrupting planetary processes to an unprecedented degree, and does not only cause climate change, but changes in Earth's very geology – not just for a few centuries, but for millennia to come (Crutzen 2002; Scranton 2013). Paired with the increased societal and cultural awareness of the Anthropocene and the devastating consequences for human and more-than-human lives, is an

increasing number of humans that find themselves worried about the state of the dilapidating collective home – planet Earth. Among this increasing number of worried humans are the people that participated in this research, echoing the words expressed in Eva's poem.

The increased state of worry is simultaneously increasing the urgency to (re)-design humanity to a state of sustain*ability*. How to (re)-design humanity towards an ability to sustain itself is by and large contested and does not fall within the scope of this research. However, in the context of sustainability, climate change crises, and the precarity thereof, I have examined how people residing in the Netherlands presently experiment with spaces, objects and infrastructures in and around their homes in order to feel at home amidst a time considered the Anthropocene. For the purpose of exploring these experimentations, I considered how notions regarding the Anthropocene may challenge one's relationship with the collective home, as – the planet Earth, and the individual home, as – the house they build, design and live in. By considering this relationship, it allowed me to explore how it may impact the (re)-designing of one's home and thereby how domesticity becomes reconfigured within the context of climate change and sustainability.

For that matter, within social sciences, the increased awareness of the Anthropocene discourse highlights how sustainability largely transpires in people's present and individual *ability* to consume, as sustainability has become understood and practised in forms of sustainable consumption (Hall 2011; Johnston & Szabo & Rodney 2011). This can in turn be seen as a part of the broader trend in global capitalism towards sustainable development, market environmentalism, and the "wholesale commodification of nature in all its forms" (Harvey 2003, 148) and has justifiably been criticized.

Approaches towards sustainability have largely been traced to formulations of 'sustainable development' deployed in a publication from the Brundtland Commission in 1983 (Brundtland as cited in Chakrabarty 2021, 81), and which remain popular within contemporary dominant discourse (Kirsch 2010, 89). The Brundtland Commission, formerly part of the United Nations, aimed to unite countries in the pursuit of 'sustainable development'. Subsequently, they articulated sustainability as developing systems that sustain the status quo while passing on a liveable earth for current and future generations. This approach remains within a rather anthropocentric context,

and following Dipesh Chakrabarty, represents "the idea of sustainability [that] puts human concerns first" (2021, 82). Moreover, this approach also remains firmly within the growth paradigm (Blühdorn 2009) and presents a contradiction as economic growth inherently places pressure on limited natural resources. This contradiction is presented in Thomas Eriksen's book *Overheating*, where he describes contemporary sustainability approaches that are expected to encompass both growth and sustainability as "the most fundamental double bind of twenty-first-century capitalism" (2016, 7). Accordingly, Eriksen (2016) points out that growth precludes sustainability and vice versa, which complies with Ingolfur Blühdorn's statement that contemporary attempts at sustainability are "an attempt to prolong the life expectancy of what is known to be unsustainable" (2009, 3). Nevertheless, humans may deal with ideas of the Anthropocene in various manners and for varied reasons, which is why social scholars care about the Anthropocene, as do I. Through this thesis, I explore the various possibilities, but also constraints, for people attempting to feel at home during the Anthropocene.

To expound on this matter, I deliberate on acts of prevention, protection and preservation implemented in the present through the examination of the material elements of one's home. I observe these acts as forms of climate change mitigation, and ultimately, as attempts to cultivate alternative ways of feeling at home within the Anthropocene, which may presently feel particularly unhomely (Vine 2018). Rather than reducing the acts to 'attempts at sustainability that are known to be unsustainable', I expand on the tensions that can emerge when a person wants to curate their home in a 'homely' manner, while the spaces, objects and materials in their home can feel fundamentally 'unhomely'. Their acts of calculated curation, or care, may not be intended to renovate the dilapidating Earth, but they do carry significance for people hoping for a better today and tomorrow – people longing for care in, and for, the one and only place they can call home. Accordingly, through the analysis of the homes of residents living in currently relatively unaffected areas of the planet, that is, in places that are not experiencing direct and acute environmental changes (floods, droughts, etcetera), I examine how the Anthropocene may shift perspectives, and accordingly manifest in the materialities and aesthetics of one's home. Analysing the homes of residents living in currently relatively unaffected areas of the planet allowed me to consider their actions more as forms of climate change mitigation rather than climate change preparedness.

DEBATES & RELEVANCE

As outlined above, the Anthropocene (Crutzen 2002), relates to broader discourses on prevention and anticipation regarding climate change (Blühdorn 2009). An approach to these relations is presented by Michael Vine (2018) in an article regarding aesthetics, ethics, and affect as primary sites of experimentation, improvisation, and innovation in one's home living within the Anthropocene. Specifically, Vine highlights how the Anthropocene has altered the shape and content of 'the ordinary' amidst a sense of both direct and acute, but also future climatic crises. Accordingly, Vine argues how this simultaneously shifts the shapes, textures, and colours of one's vision of 'the good life' – the aesthetics – which, according to Vine, have at least some elements of conscious ethical and moral reasoning (2018).

Through this research, it has become apparent that a person's conscious, ethical and moral reasoning can be expressed in forms of care that tend to expand to beings *outside* the domestic unit, to beings on the other side of the world, beings of other species, rivers, and overall nature in its broadest sense, today *and* tomorrow. Consequently, the curation of the domestic sphere itself seems to be impacted as certain objects within the home have extended (phenomenological) significance that may well represent violence, suffering, and exploitation rather than care for present and future ecology.

Similar to Vine (2018), I argue that these shifts in aesthetics, or acts of care, manifest in various forms of experimentation with one's home's material elements. Whilst these experimentations may be constrained due to one's budget or due to limited contemporary sustainability solutions offered, these experimentations can generate moments of meaningful and enduring moral change regardless. As such, these experimentations with spaces, surfaces, objects, and infrastructures of homes should represent not only sites of repetition and reproduction, but also the reinvention of ways to feel at home during the (rather uncanny) Anthropocene (Vine 2018). Thus, as I consider how narratives surrounding the Anthropocene can hold relations to the material elements of domestic spheres, I thereby call for a reinvention of domesticity, where current climate change crises are expanding ideas of care practised within the domestic sphere beyond that of the domestic unit itself, concurrently impacting the curation of homes.

Specifically, it is through concepts of domesticity and gendered categories of 'caring', 'nurturing' and 'protecting' that I expound on the relationship between objects of the home and the Anthropocene. Other core anthropological concepts incorporated in this research are, firstly, regarding the Anthropocene, and how planet Earth came to be seen as our *only* 'home', marking the present and future climatic changes as an 'ordinary crisis' that need to be acted upon accordingly (Vigh 2008; Nitzke & Pethes 2017). Following, I lay out how the making of these 'ordinary crises' can manifest in feelings of unhomeliness, both of the planet Earth but also of the things we make partake in our home (Ghosh 2017; Hage 2017). I do so through phenomenological and aesthetical approaches to objects and by using metaphors of 'curation', 'the home' and 'homely' (Jackson 2005; Ingold 1995; Saxer 2017). Following, I elaborate on the anthropological work on homes, and how it comes together through infrastructures, domesticity and the ability to care (Abu-Lughod 1990; Bourdieu 1976; 1977; Larkin 2013; Han 2012). Lastly, I detail how one's ability to feel at home in the world transpires in one's ability to (re)-negotiate and experiment with the things they make partake in their home (Miller 1998a; 2001; Vine 2018). By doing so, I contribute to the anthropological debate on how certain (consumption) acts – amongst other things – matter in pursuit of sustain*ability*, or, the ability to feel at home within the Anthropocene.

POPULATION

Studying one's ethical considerations and choices should be done within a setting that is sensitive to the context in which the participants find themselves. Researching morals regarding the environment and one's home should as such be considerate and accommodating of the privacy of the subject and setting (Hall, 2009). As entering one's home and enquiring about their everyday ethics entails intimate undertakings, the establishment of trusting relationships with the participants was a top priority (Slocum 2008). As the timeframe for this specific research was quite short, I initiated the recruitment of participants within my direct network hoping it would allow rapport to be established in a timelier manner as there was already a certain (trusted) relationship. This indeed allowed me to explore the intimate subjects and settings more efficaciously considering that most participants welcomed me into their homes.

Studying anthropology at Utrecht University has enabled me to get in touch with many people that would consider the current anthropogenic climatic changes as an 'ordinary crisis', something to

which I would relate similarly. While my peers and I have been concerning ourselves with subjects of 'sustainable citizenship' over the past year, the general unsustainability of current practices has become more apparent to us, which can feel rather uncanny. Subsequently, this has led me to regularly engage in conversations with my peers, where it has become evident that we share a certain sense of anxiety towards the current and future epoch. Moreover, Utrecht University's extracurricular honours program 'Young Innovators' has also been a place where I have had the opportunity to establish contact with even more people that feel a certain sense of responsibility to change, explore and contribute toward a more regenerative society (Utrecht University 2014). This program is specifically designed for curious and socially involved students that dare to challenge the status quo. It is an interdisciplinary program that intends to motivate students to bring together their varying backgrounds in order to conduct (small-scale) interventions and act as changemakers while recognising the power of communities rather than technocratic innovations. Inviting my peers from Cultural Anthropology and Young Innovators to join the research allowed me to conduct the research in settings based on previously established relationships and mutual understanding, while simultaneously introducing me to a plethora of new perspectives.

Considering that a substantial portion of Utrecht University's students resides within the Randstad, I label the research to be based in the Randstad, the Netherlands. That is, the collection of cities stretching from Utrecht in the east, Amsterdam in the north, and the Hague and Rotterdam in the south. However, any other city also sufficed, as long as it was relatively unaffected by direct climate change for reasons laid out previously. Participants consist of adults of any age and gender that run any form of household (this includes apartments, terraced houses, student-complex dorms, studio apartments, etcetera).

Reflecting on this recruitment strategy, I would consider myself and most of my participants quite privileged. This in the sense that we, for example, have not experienced any climate change-related displacements (yet), but also – we get to learn about climate change through our education. Whilst conducting my research, I became very aware of this privilege, and so also about my, and also my participants' positionalities. Given that all of my participants attended university, our experience of the world must have been influenced by this, at least to some extent. This is important to note and to be reflected upon, especially as the subject of climate change cannot be discussed separately from the subject of privilege.

METHODOLOGY

Aiming to collect empirical data, ethnographic methods have been used in order to address the question of how residents living in the Randstad respond to dystopian ideas of the (future) ecology of planet Earth, and subsequently how they engage with sustainable/ethical home aesthetics in order to mitigate said dystopian ecology. Ethnographic research methods were utilised considering their particularly beneficial qualities for understanding people's everyday realities, what constitutes these realities and how individuals interact and make sense of these realities (O'Reilly 2012). However, as I considered how ethics and the home constitute rather private realms, where complex relationships and considerations often exist behind closed doors (Miller 2001), more appropriate methods constituted visiting rather than living with participants, such as semi-structured interviews, (house-tour) observations and sensory image elucidation.

During my time in the field, the most prominent research method was the semi-structured interview. Altogether, I conducted sixteen semi-structured interviews with fifteen participants: twelve of whom invited me into their homes. My participants also include a (sustainability) artist, a sustainable home interior designer, and a sustainability coach who shared their expertise with me regarding art, aesthetics & the Anthropocene, sustainable home designs and sustainable lifestyles respectively. Our interviews took place in a wide variety of locations and contexts. We had drinks, lunch, or dumpster dive acquired meals[1] together, took walks around their favourite parks near their homes, and also conducted 'guided-house-tours' where they walked me through their home while I posed questions and took pictures.

As such, these interviews also entailed a certain degree of observation. Combining the observations with the semi-structured interviews allowed me to enquire more deeply into "the private realm of ideas, thoughts, opinions and feelings" for the curation of their homes, thereby exploring the subjective meanings behind their specific actions and practices (O'Reilly 2012, 127). As ethic and aesthetic choices may be very personal, similar to the reasons that one may have concerns regarding the current epoch, the interviews offered the opportunity for the participants to

[1] Dumpster diving is the activity of searching through dumpsters or other large containers holding waste, in order to find food that can still be eaten or objects that can still be used.

elaborately expound on their reasoning regarding the curation of their homes. Through the interviews, I invited my participants to link their world to the wider world (Khosravi 2016), while also requiring them to think more deeply about their own reasoning, thereby stimulating reflexivity.

For the purpose of further exploring how certain materialities may take on different meanings within the context of climate change and sustainability, I also conducted a mode of sensory image elicitation. I requested my participants to compose mood boards with their ideal home designs. This allowed me to make sense of their daily lives based on a variety of sensory modes rather than solely through the oral interviews (Pink 2003; 2019; Pink & Mackley 2012). I considered these modes of ethnographic enquiry as they have been proven useful in earlier studies regarding mundane ethical objects and practices within the domestic sphere (Grovers 2017; Hall 2011). By allowing participants to present their ideal home aesthetics through pictures and videos in the form of mood boards on Pinterest – while inviting verbal reflection along with these modes – I uncovered their emplaced, sensory and emotional experiences and ways of knowing through a phenomenological manner. Moreover, it allowed me to make their divergent set of sensory responses more tangible and show how affects and emotions are experienced through materialities (Pink 2015). This research method was especially fruitful in order to understand their (moral) aesthetics, as aesthetics may be something that is hard to express through oral interviews alone (Tolia-kelly 2007 as cited in Pink 2015). Moreover, by asking participants to compose mood boards of their ideal home design, they were further compelled to step away from 'the ordinary' and consider the significance of objects that unintentionally play crucial roles in their lives. In total, ten of the twelve participants that allowed me into their homes also engaged with the sensory image elicitation method, which was structured similar to an open interview.

During the interviews, observations and the sensory image elicitation, I collected visual notes regarding what stood out to me when entering their homes or seeing their 'mood boards', as well as ethnographic notes regarding our conversations. On top of this, I kept a conventional diary regarding any ideas, emotions or frustrations that emerged during the fieldwork. The age of the participants ranged from 21 to 35 years, and most, with the exception of two, identified as female. The majority resided within the Randstad, however, not all participants were of Dutch nationality. As such, the interviews took place in both Dutch and English, and therefore, any citations originally formulated in Dutch are that of my own translation. Some expressions include explicit

language, which I have also re-produced as such in order to preserve the original context. To ensure the anonymity of the participants, I pseudonymized their names. However, participants that become identifiable through the context provided have given further consent accordingly. Considering that I had established relationships and mutual trust with the participants prior to the research, any COVID-19 restrictions did not play a significant role during the fieldwork.

An important aspect of ethnographic research is to carefully consider ethics and positionality, as every phase of ethnographic research entails an ethical backdrop (Madden 2017), and one "cannot undertake ethnography without acknowledging the role of our own embodied, sensual, thinking, critical and positioned self" (O'Reilly 2012, 100). As mentioned previously, the subject of climate change cannot be discussed separately from the subject of privilege, therefore, the reflection on positionality remained ever so important throughout the research. The reflection on positionality entails sufficient consciousness of my own position and its effects in 'the field' (Grassiani 2019, 249), but also that of my participants. Accordingly, while I conducted the ethnographic anthropological research, I reflected on the various positions of the participants and myself, both with regards to how it affects the field, but also how it affects my data collection, analysis and representation of said data.

Moreover, it has generally been acknowledged that the theoretical frameworks and empirical phenomena we choose to explore as researchers are influenced by the political, economic, and cultural circumstances in which the research is carried out as well as by the researcher's personal interests (Ortner 2016). Indeed, my political ideologies regarding the subject I have come to study have both influenced why I came to study it, but as such also influenced *as* I studied it. As an anthropologist, it may sometimes be challenging to take off the 'critical thinking' glasses. However, instead of simply dismissing certain practices as 'attempts at sustainability that are ultimately unsustainable', my motive was to regard my participants and myself as a "part of a social, sensory and material environment" and accordingly acknowledge "the political and ideological agendas and power relations integral to the contexts and circumstances" (Pink 2015, 25). Considering this, it allowed me to evaluate the acts of the participants not according to the significance of the bigger picture, but rather according to the significance for the participants themselves.

During both the data collection and the data analysis stages of the research, I operated along with the American Anthropological Association (2012) & Dutch Anthropological Association (2018) guidelines. An important part of the research process was to apply a form of informed consent (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011). Within anthropology, oral consent is generally preferred, as written consent forms may impact negatively on interlocutors' privacy, safety and possession of knowledge (de Koning et al. 2019), which is why I opted for oral consent. Moreover, informed consent is understood as a dynamic and ongoing process, rather than a 'one-time thing'. Therefore, I applied forms of active consent from the outset and throughout, double-checking with participants what I could and could not include in the writings, and whether or not I did justice to what the participants shared with me.

OUTLINE

Throughout this thesis, excerpts of the poem discussed previously are included. These excerpts act as the interludes between the respective chapters and aim to capture the subjective stakes of being able to practise care – simultaneously impacting one's ability to feel at home in the world. In the first chapter titled 'At Unease Living within the Anthropocene', I elaborate on how the current anthropogenic climatic changes instigate the dilapidation of humanity's one and only home – planet Earth. Accordingly, I demonstrate how this dilapidation entails an 'ordinary crisis', and I lay out some of the contemporary solutions for this crisis. Lastly, I link both the causes and the solutions to the uncanny feeling of living within the Anthropocene. Following, in the second chapter titled 'Homely Homes', the unease of living in the Anthropocene is used as an impetus for the desire for a more homely home. What a homely home encompasses is laid out accordingly through the concept of curare. In the third chapter titled 'Home (Infra)Structures", I expound on the various manners in which participants may be enabled or constrained in their quest for a homelier home. In accordance, I address in the chapter titled 'Experimenting to Feel at Home', how participants experiment with their bodies, spaces, objects and infrastructures in and around their homes in order to cultivate alternative ways of feeling at home in the Anthropocene. To conclude, a brief overview of the main subjects, findings and arguments as introduced throughout the thesis are presented, followed by the references and appendices.

INTERLUDE

It is 6:00 AM.

I couldn't sleep tonight.

A memory popped up in my head.

I am 13 years old and sitting in a classroom.

It is my second year of high school.

The teacher wants us to make a calculation.

A calculation of how much money repeating a year in high school would cost.

So, the money that you would have earned instead if you would have graduated in one go – if after flawlessly finishing high school and university, you would have gotten a well-paid job.

Do you know how much money you could have made instead of repeating a year?

About mental and physical health was not spoken, about life quality it remained silent, and about all the societal issues and structural injustice no word was said.

Because do you know how much money that could have cost?

Meanwhile, I had at least three friends that had already tried several suicide attempts, four friends with eating disorders, multiple friends with panic attacks and mental breakdowns, and more people that were cutting themselves than I was supposed to know of.

Of all of those, only one had official help. None of the others were able to find the time to take care of themselves.

The same fucking time that we had just expressed in our beloved currency of money.

The calculation we had to make aimed to illustrate how we could be the most effective and productive version of ourselves.

How could we pump as much money as possible into our economies? Exhaust and exploit ourselves for the sake of earning as much as we can, just in order to spend it again at an incredibly fast rate.

To increase your status by spending money on short paying trips, fancy food, scuba diving, expensive clothes and so on.

All fine as long as the money flows fast, because money has the rule. Do not break of earning money, do not take a break of spending money either.

Keep it rolling at anytime.

The motive behind it doesn't matter as long as we grow, move, develop, be innovative, and increase our GDP.

Let us skyrocket, let the high throughput economy prefill. Earn, and spend without question.

Keep it rolling.

Maintain the system, strengthen it.

And smile meanwhile.[2]

[2] Eva, Poem shared during interview (complete version: It is 6 AM, I couldn't sleep tonight. by Eva Dassen | Mixcloud), 15th February 2022.

2. AT UNEASE LIVING WITHIN THE ANTHROPOCENE

The following quote, posted in a forum for contemporary philosophers in the New York Times, eloquently describes how one can see the world living in the Anthropocene. As such, its writer captures how the Anthropocene not only poses a challenge to national security, commodity markets or 'our way of life' overall, but that the greatest challenge may be to the sense of what it means to be human living in the one and only (dilapidating) home we know, planet Earth.

> Now, when I look into our future — into the Anthropocene — I see water rising up to wash out lower Manhattan. I see food riots, hurricanes, and climate refugees. I see 82nd Airborne soldiers shooting looters. I see grid failure, wrecked harbors, Fukushima waste, and plagues. I see Baghdad. I see the Rockaways. I see a strange, precarious world. Our new home (Scranton 2013).

Roy Scranton is not the only person posing questions surrounding the ability of civilization to sustain itself in the coming decades, nor is he the only one to believe that the climate-influenced collapse of societies in most parts of the world is either likely, inevitable or already unfolding. An array of people are seeing the collective home dilapidate from within the comforts of their own home – whether from behind a screen filled with distressing claims on climate change somewhere far away, or from their garden close by. A participant with whom I got acquainted during this research is Avery, who volunteers as a sustainability coach for the organisation KlimaatGesprekken[3] (climate conversations). Here, she coaches groups of people and gives them tools to live in a manner that respects planet Earth's ecology, also with regards to their home interior and exterior. Moreover, she shows people how to have a good, effective and positive climate conversation with others. In our first interview, she explained her motive to join the organisation:

> I can remember that [my parents and I] noticed very clearly that the first signs of climate change were just there [in our back yard]. That there were flowers or plants or trees in our garden blooming at crazy times or something, you know? That in the winter it was just

[3] Home - KlimaatGesprekken

> really warm all of a sudden. (…) I can also remember my parents and I noticed that there were far fewer birds, for example. Or as a child, I remember going to the field in the back very often, because there were lapwings and so on, and I loved watching and listening to them. Well, they are just not there anymore, you know?[4]

These changes Avery described may be subtle and essentially non-threatening, but to her, they point to a larger truth, namely that climate change is unfolding, and that it very much entails a crisis. *"It is already happening, hey!"* – she stressed during the interview while highlighting some of the current climatic events ongoing in Africa and Australia. *"This is not climate change 'anxiety'"* she continued, *"this is a realistic fear for events currently unfolding"*. She described this as a reality that may be hard to face, but as I found during the research, it is also a reality that some do not wish to look away from. As opposed to Avery, many of the participants do not need to notice subtle changes outside in their garden to realise the urgency of the problem, as they are engaged with the climate change crisis in a variety of manners – which may be through their personal interests, academic endeavours, or in their profession. These crises are not something they engage with occasionally, but rather, they play a considerable role, simultaneously shaping their lives. Marlow, an international development Master's student at Utrecht University described: *"Now when I go to Twitter and see all the despair and everything, I am thinking; I should not be looking at this. (…). Since I am studying this, I am already learning about how fucked everything is, so at the same time I feel like in my private life I try to [filter] it a bit. But at the same time, it is always something that is in the [back of my mind]."*[5]

This assessment of the climate crisis encompasses the making of an 'ordinary crisis', meaning that what was first considered a state of emergency gradually progressed into a permanent feature of everyday life (Vigh 2008). During the interview, Avery clarified that environmental change had always been of interest to her, but that it gradually became *"the only important subject, so to speak"*. Environmental crises are frequently depicted in politics, policy, and popular culture as 'intermediate periods of chaos' in which the social order 'collapses' in on itself, only to be

[4] Avery, interview, 11th March 2022.

[5] Marlow, interview, 22nd February 2022.

'recovered' once the crisis has passed (Vigh 2008, 8). However, in long-term or chronic crises, this interstitial period of disorder can change from a discrete occurrence into a defining feature of the social landscape, forcing individuals to rethink the material, practical, and traditional meaning of everyday life as may currently be the case for the environmental crises. To some, the collective home – planet Earth, may seem to be dilapidating, and in order to counter this, renovation might be needed.

NEOLIBERAL RENOVATION

As presented in the Introduction, one way in which humans have approached renovation has been through sustainability discourses and practices, which are largely shaped by Eurocentric understandings of what nature entails. These understandings are underlined by the idea of the division of *nature* and *culture*, as profusely illustrated and problematized by various scholars within anthropology and social sciences (Gaard 2011; Ingold 2000; Kohn 2007; Moore 2015; Plumwood 2002; Tsing 2001). The dichotomy not only presumes a hierarchical difference between nature and culture, but also, amongst other things, implies that culture, or humanity, contributes to the degradation of nature, as it stands outside of nature itself. As a social sciences scholar herself, Eden has also become aware of this divide during the course of her Master's degree. During our first interview, we discussed the various emotions that may be evoked when she thinks about nature and climate change. She explained to me: *"Sometimes, for example when I walk in a national park, it makes me very sad. [I think to myself]: why do we have to separate this from 'the rest'?"*.[6]

The problematization of the divide further relates to Raj Patel and Jason Moore's (2018) conceptual analysis of capitalism. As they elucidate, capitalism has both manufactured and maintained the conceptual binary separation between humanity and nature. By conceptualising nature as a separate, external, and commodifiable entity (or rather, resource), it allows for capitalist flourishment and overall economic expansion. Meanwhile, the Eurocentric dichotomy does not allow for the consideration of humanity's dependence on the ecological system, and as such, has arguably been at the root of many of the ecological crises we now face (Miéville 2015; Wright 2013). As Eden continued to discuss her emotions regarding the separation, she said something

[6] Eden, interview, 4th March 2022.

similar to this assessment: *"This separation is exactly why we ended up in this situation – the separation between culture and nature brought us to this situation [of climate change]. So now, in order to protect nature, we have to continue separating it from culture"*. Shae, who is also a Master's student in social sciences, similarly expressed during one of our interviews how she thought that (neoliberal) capitalism has allowed for capitalist flourishment and overall economic expansion, but also how it *"essentially brought on more negative things"*.[7]She elaborated: *"Yes, you can worry about the economy, because no country can run without an economy – at least that is what they always say. But then I thought, well, no country runs without a world – without an ecology, either"*. What Shea seemed to point to is indispensable and boils down to the fact that human beings *are* nature – and without 'nature', there will be no culture either as they are undifferentiated. As such, it seems that humanity should move beyond the technocratic 'neoliberal renovation' that has dominated the discourse surrounding climate change mitigation and sustainability if there is any hope of finding a way out of this predicament.

HUMANITY'S ONE AND ONLY HOME

I explore this fundamental shift towards the realisation of our dependency on the ecological system, and as such on the current crises, through the categorization of planet Earth as humanity's home. By referring to a publication of Bredekamp (as cited in Nitzke & Pethes 2017), Solvejg Nitzke and Nicolas Pethes call attention to the fact that throughout history, many photographic depictions of the globe have marked a sense of humanity's superiority over planet Earth and its nature by marking the achievements of human culture (e.g., roads, skyscrapers, cities). Paradoxically, human-culture-permitted Apollo missions enabled humankind to capture planet Earth in a manner that revealed its fragility and need of 'protection' rather than conquest or colonisation, namely through the capturing of 'The Blue Marble' (see figure 6 in the appendix). This image of planet Earth, taken from forty-five thousand kilometres out in space by the crew of Apollo 17 in 1972, fundamentally altered the understanding of the Earth as our home planet (Petsko 2011). According to Nitzke and Pethes, this shift in understanding proved to be of major importance for newly founded ecological movements (2017). Essentially, imagining planet Earth as a home can "result

[7] Shae, interview, 23rd February 2022.

in a rather terrifying perspective on an existential conflict between the planet and the species that calls it its home" (Nitzke & Pethes 2017, 16-17).

While not all people may identify planet Earth as their home, Eden also expressed that she felt that planet Earth should feel like home, but that at the moment, it does not feel like the home it should be: *"All the time I have the feeling that this is not how it should be – this is not how our home should be. It is also a home for all the other species"*.[8] I proceeded by asking: *"So it is essentially everyone's home?"*. To which she answered: *"It is everyone's home. Yes. But because we deal with it in this way now, we have caused that it is not like [home] anymore, and in that sense, we have taken away the home – even from other species – as well as from [beings] within our own species"*.

Seeing planet Earth as home, and thereby as fundamental to humanity's existence, brings forth a humble reminder worded by Vick, who is a self-proclaimed nature lover and a Master's student, as:

> Obviously, Earth will be here when we are gone. (…) You know, like the whole like 'save the planet' thing is – I mean it will be fine, like, Earth is resilient. But like there are so many other species that will not be fine, or that will not be here – and humans might be one of them. As a whole, I do think [planet Earth] is very resilient. But I think that we are a huge interruption because we are not very good at acknowledging our interdependence.[9]

Similar to the American legal scholar Jedediah Purdy (2015), Vick reminds us that even if nature – or planet Earth – would continue, one cannot deny human agency in regard to the climatic changes that shape the ecology. In his book *After Nature: A Politics for the Anthropocene*, Purdy articulates how the collective imagination of nature both heavily shapes nature, as well as how nature then significantly shapes humanity itself. He goes on to scrutinise how humanity should act, or collectively imagine nature, as we are causing the dilapidation of the one and only home we have ever known to inhabit (Purdy 2015). Correspondingly, how we have shaped nature would eloquently be classified by Anna Tsing as a state of 'capitalist ruins', and Eden and Vick seem to

[8] Eden, interview, 4th March 2022.

[9] Vick, interview, 21st February 2022.

agree that indeed, we live in, and live on, ruins. However, by using the analogy of the matsutake mushroom, which paradoxically seems to thrive in heavily logged forests, Tsing proves what she calls 'the possibility of life in capitalist ruins' (Tsing 2015).

Even though Tsing and Purdy cannot agree on whether it should be an assemblage of agencies or predominantly human agencies that redirect humanity's course out of this predicament, the collective home seems to be falling into ruins and the question remains: how is one ought to act living in the midst of these capitalist ruins when you have yet to find the mushroom of hope? This entails having to imagine the possibility of life in capitalist ruins, or, the possibility of feeling at home when living in the Anthropocene. Henrik Vigh also reminds us that the experience of crises does not necessarily lead to passivity. Rather, he underlines the possibility of human agency, not so much as a question of capacity – as we all have the ability to act – but more as a question of possibility; that is, to what extent a person is able to act within a given context (2008, 10-11).

DIRECTION THROUGH DISCONNECTION

Andy, a Master's student with a profound interest in philosophical enquiries, often finds himself questioning the 'given context'. During our first interview, he vouched: *"It is all just kind of ridiculous. (…) The fact that we have come to this point of – just this grand human massive society, these massive structures. (…) There is an absurdity to it which I find very catastrophic at times".*[10] During the course of the interview, Andy examined what he called a certain sense of "absurdity" with regard to how humanity relates to its surroundings. This absurdity, to him, comes down to how the capitalist system does not allow one to see the interconnectedness of human and more-than-human beings that dwell on planet Earth alongside each other. This absurdity makes him question how, then, to 'act accordingly' in the midst of the current epoch. To Andy, acting accordingly does not entail feeling disconnected from the rest. Rather, it entails feeling connected – or as Eva's poem so eloquently details throughout this thesis – he seems to dare to care.

The idea that nature could be seen as something separate and disconnected allowed for the idea that humanity was in control. Historically, there has been a prominent need for this conquest and

[10] Andy, interview, 23rd March 2022.

control, which has also seemed possible since 'the ordinary' has been depicted with nature as 'moderate' and 'orderly' since the nineteenth century. Many of those assumptions were based on the relative climatic stability of the era that nourished human civilization, namely the Holocene (Ghosh 2017). However, the current climatic changes and new understandings of planet Earth, leading us to believe that the Holocene has been displaced by the Anthropocene, disrupted this worldview and brought humanity to the awareness of the elements of agency and consciousness that humans share with many other more-than-human beings, even with planet Earth itself (Nitzke & Pethes 2017). This may be considered one of the 'uncanniest' effects of climate change, for these changes are not merely strange in the sense of being unknown or alien; their uncanniness lies precisely in the fact that these changes point to something humanity had turned away from; humanity's dependence on nature, its connection to planet Earth – its one and only home (Ghosh 2017; Wright 2013). This makes the climate change crisis in a certain sense a cultural crisis, and thus a crisis of the imagination (Ghosh 2017; Purdy 2015). Eden analysed:

> There is this control that people want to have over literally everything – how everything looks, where it should be, where it should not be, what is economically beneficial or profitable, and what is not. (…) We should just let planet Earth be the chaos that it is. It really is just one big chaos, but it is a dynamic chaos, you know. And now, this ongoing dynamic chaos, so to speak, is being disrupted by humanity. It is essentially a sort of control that we are exercising all the time – and I very much hope that we can let go of this control at some point.[11]

In a sense, Eden is (re)-imagining planet Earth and nature in a way that does not entail human domination and control – this image of Earth possibly entails how Eden feels it *should* be, namely: a (chaotic) home for both human and more-than-human species rather than human-dominated and controlled capitalist ruins. As I asked Eden if she tends to find beauty in chaos, she answered: *"Well, can you not tell by the look of my home?"* In the next chapter titled 'Homely Homes', I use the appearance of Eden's home as a springboard to reflect on how one, given the context of the Anthropocene, then curates their home in a manner that feels homely.

[11] Eden, interview, 4th March 2022.

INTERLUDE

Disconnect.

Overrule emotions that make it difficult to embody [capitalist] norms, comply to the system and just disconnect.

Forget about the workers in the clothes companies. The farmers depending on genetically modified seeds. The birds with plastics in their stomachs. Just keep buying this stuff and never even learn about the Indigenous people driven from their lands, about colonialism, slavery, and the persistent structural racism.

Don't even bother with the oil spills, the nuclear waste, the other irreparable harm caused to the most vulnerable groups. Don't report on the preferred subsidised oil companies, the lobbying of multinationals causing harm.

In fact, we know that climate change is happening. But don't worry, innovation will be coming soon enough. Growth won't end, it will just be a bit greener so we can exceed planetary and humanitarian boundaries, just in different ways.

When all this stuff is too much to take in, difficult to live with, a hard reality to take in and too confronting to acknowledge.

Just disconnect.

Forget about the women in the global South that are turning into prostitutes because they lose their land and need to feed their children. Shut off your feelings. Go on your holiday trip and get ways to take selfies that get your societal confirmation. Sponsor money that you'll have exploited yourself for and don't fucking care.

Hashtag "You Only Live Once" [12] .

[12] Eva, Poem shared during interview (complete version: It is 6 AM, I couldn't sleep tonight. by Eva Dassen | Mixcloud), 15th February 2022.

3. HOMELY HOMES

> We are sitting inside, around a candle-lit table with wine and snacks in the eastern part of Amsterdam. Eden's home, or as she often jokingly refers to: her *bezem kast* (broom closet), is no larger than seventeen square metres. As a response to Eden's question about whether her vision of chaos as an illustration of surrendering human control becomes apparent in the appearance of her home, I look around. I would not classify her home as chaotic myself, but I see where she is coming from. It is filled with plants, vintage furniture, artefacts, books, and the like. Given the small space it is confined in, it is – in a certain sense – filled to the brim. By the same token, it looks very organised, and given the small space it is confined in, it better be. Although it is organised and tidy, her home most certainly does not look sterile, but rather filled with warmth, love and carefully picked effects.[13]

As outlined in the previous chapter, Eden expressed that planet earth should be home to both human and more-than-human species. However, within the given context, planet Earth does not feel as such, considering the immense and disparate (human) control effectuated, concurrently leading to the dispossession of planet Earth as a home to both human and more-than-human actors. That planet Earth is *"not how it should be"*, leads to a certain sense of discomfort – or – unhomeliness. *"I don't feel at home anymore with the way we've made planet Earth, and that's a bit what gives me this uncanny feeling"* – Eden continued. At heart, it seems that there is a discrepancy between the world Eden lives in, and the world as Eden imagines it should be. Discussing this uncanny feeling and how the world 'should' look instead led to Eden's question regarding how I perceived her home in relation to this. She added:

> What is really something, though, is that you can still make your home into a space where you can – well not prevent the uncanniness or unhomeliness – but where you can distance yourself from it a little. You can still create a situation in your own home in which you are yourself, a situation that just *feels* right. You know?

[13] Eden, interview, 4th March 2022.

FIGURE 1, EDEN'S STUDIO APARTMENT

Above, pictures of Eden's home are included, depicting the organised chaos she detailed during our interview. Eden's account of creating a home that *feels* right, namely a chaotic one, is consistent with a significant stream of phenomenological research on the home that describes the experience of 'being-at-home' in the world. Generally, phenomenology seeks to understand the outside world as it is interpreted through human consciousness as it focuses on individual, lived experiences, while always acknowledging those experiences as existing intersubjectively (Desjarlais & Throop 2011). Understood in a phenomenological way, home is considered a state of 'being', which might not necessarily be defined by a physical location (Mallett 2004), but rather focuses on practices and the diverse ways people 'do' and 'feel' at home (Jackson 2005; Ingold 1995). Essentially, phenomenologically inclined inquiries in the anthropology of the home attend to the dialectical relationship between the self and the object in the intentional making of the home, thereby including bodily or sensory experiences as well as the meaning attributed to them (Jackson 1996). By approaching the home in this manner throughout the following section, I add to the understanding of what it constitutes to be a human living in a home, in the Anthropocene.

CURARE

Emery – a self-employed activist with a background in political philosophy and gender and postcolonial studies – informed me during our first interview that she (quite literally) has difficulties feeling 'at home in the world'. Given her activities as an activist and her scholarly endeavours, climate change leaves a prominent mark in her life. She described that climate change feels like an emotionally heavy process, also sharing that it contributed to a burn-out over the course of last year, a time during which she felt profound trouble feeling 'at home'.

> In the past year, a big question for me has actually been: how can I really feel at home somewhere? How can I make my place really *my* place? In the past 4 years, I have moved a lot, and I had to move again when I was experiencing a burn-out. When I would come to this new place, I felt very much like: but, I need a home – I need a grounding. To me, the fact that I was burnt out was also a sign of not being rooted. And this does not necessarily mean a physical place, but also simply that I was not rooted in my 'being' as such. (…) [The climate change crisis feels very emotionally intense] and moving all the time was also

very symbolic of that – really being all over the place all the time. So for me, it was a very active question: how can I feel at home in my place, in my home?[14]

Emery explained to me that a prominent question for her was *"how to create a womb feeling"* in her home. This analogy took me by surprise, but it opened me up to some of the most intriguing concepts for this thesis. *"I like it when you see that there has been care"* – Emery explained. *"In order to achieve that, I bought a new rug, for example. (…) There are a few other things, like cute candles, spiritual artefacts, and nice candle holders, and I also work a lot with fragrances and essential oils. I do that with care for myself".*

FIGURE 2, EMERY'S ROOM WITH FRAGENCES, CANDLES, AND THE NEWLY PURCHASED RUG.

[14] Emery, interview, 15th March 2022.

In a way, the curation of her home is guided by principles of care. As such, I consider it valuable to understand curation closer to its original meaning of curare – to cure, or more generally, to care for (Saxer 2017). On the one hand, to cure means to heal and to make better, which in this context relates to the care that Emery wants to give to herself, considering the uncanniness of living in the Anthropocene. On the other hand, to cure also means to cleanse or preserve, thereby preventing a raw substance from rotting and infecting its surroundings (Saxer 2017). In a broadened yet specific sense, it signifies attending to – or taking care of – wider material environments, and in the context of climate change, this might relate to caring for herself through the caring of all other beings, also those residing *outside* her home.

The purchasing of (new) products or the engagement with spiritual artefacts, which are also depicted in the picture of Emery's room above, seem to be part of Emery's process of curating a home with care for herself. However, it also entails another delicate undertaking, namely *"a substantial ethical consideration"* – as worded so by Emery herself. In order to further clarify, she gave an example:

> For me, [spirituality] is a very important aspect of my life and something very felt. But it is also a slippery slope between cultural appropriation and having 'your spiritual journey' while also having white privilege and not being able to fully acknowledge the accompanying violence. So, that is a quest for me too, and the question is: is [something] actually cultural appropriation? Or is it okay? And to me, that is very important, because it may not be linked to the climate crisis at face value, but to me, the climate crisis is also very much about deeper causes; about the erasure of Indigenous cultures and about white supremacy, and appropriating, or using certain traditions and rituals accordingly.

This further relates to curation in a form that attends to – or takes care of – both herself, and concurrently the broader material environment within the given context of climate change. While some effects may be invited, others might subsequently be avoided as they do not signify *curare*. *"I need things around me to support me in this [emotional] journey, and for me it's very much about connecting with nature, and about connecting with myself".* What supports Emery may subsequently be regarded as spaces that accommodate an enjoyable connection rather than an exploitative one.

HOME(LY) DELIVERY

To expound on this, I follow Ghassan Hage (2017) as he cogently approaches being able to feel at home in the world through the etymological roots of the word "domestication". Essentially, domestication is a mode of struggle to make beings and things partake in the curation of one's home, thereby creating homely spaces. This relationship is set and understood to be one of 'mutual benefit'. Yet, paradoxically, it is a relationship that entails domination, control, and exploitation (Hage 2017). Emile Benveniste's tracing of the etymological roots of the word 'domestication' allows further understanding of this paradox (Benveniste as cited in Hage 2017, 89-94). Domus, the Latin word for home, has implicitly been linked to 'domestication', and as such has been recognised as 'bringing into the home'. Benveniste elucidates this link, but also notes that 'Domus' itself shares its roots with 'domination'. This makes domestication not just any kind of homeliness, but rather, homeliness obtained through domination. However, the function of domestication is to ensure that the domination is presented in such a manner – a homely manner if you will – that represents a relationship of 'mutual benefit'. Domestication is therefore not simply the dominating of things and beings in a manner which allows value extraction, but also one which allows this value extraction to be delivered in a 'homely' manner (Hage 2017). In order to feel at home in the world, 'nature' must be extracted in a manner that may inherently be through domination, but which is delivered in a 'homely' manner. However, as the Anthropocene potentially highlights the general unbeneficial relationship humanity holds with Earth's ecology (and essentially with ourselves), certain value extractions may not feel so homely anymore.

The mode of struggle to make beings and things partake in a 'homely' manner became further apparent during my interview with Emery. She explained that she predominantly tries to purchase products second-hand, while *"sometimes I just need to buy it new"* given that certain products are difficult to acquire second-hand. Similar to the new rug and spiritual artefacts, she considered it to be an ethical consideration. However, it was also during this conversation that phenomenological reasoning became apparent:

> Over the past few months, I have sometimes bought things first-hand. However, very often, I also brought it back to the shop because I thought: aaaah this is not good. When I put it on or used it, I really had the *feeling* that... I just saw images of children in sweatshops or

> dead fish in a river. I just saw it. I am very visually orientated, so I literally saw it in front of me. And it really makes me think, I cannot do this just for my pleasure.

Attending to the dialectical relationship between Emery and objects in the intentional making of her home gives further insights into how she relates to those objects, and thereby how it impacts her 'being' in the world. By including the bodily or sensory experiences she described as well as the meaning she attributes to them, they demonstrate how the domestication of certain products in her home does not represent a relationship of 'mutual benefit' and thus are not delivered in a 'homely' manner. These bodily and sensory experiences should not be trivialised. In fact, perhaps one of the most influential contributions of phenomenology to contemporary anthropology is evident in the apparent emphasis on embodiment. It considers the body not only as an object that is available for scrutiny, but rather as a locus from which, and through which, one can actively experience the world (Desjarlais & Throop 2011; Ingold 2011; Jackson 1983). Emery continued:

> I find it beautiful when I *feel* that [connection]. (…) Sometimes it might be a bad feeling to have, but I find it very beautiful - because it shows that I am connected with the people who made my clothes, for example. And that is not something that I know rationally, but that I really *feel in my body*. So, I am also very grateful for that. However, that does not always make life easier, because it is very hard to always feel connected to everyone, as there is a lot of oppression in this world, and a lot of pain and damage, and you really feel that all the time.

Many other participants worded quite similar reasonings. For example, Ellis, a Master's student in geology and environmental sciences elucidated how she feels connected with those that made her laptop in exploitative circumstances, or even how she feels connected with microscopic oceanic creatures that have become endangered due to the current climatic changes. As such, the action of bringing a laptop into her home, or anything that she would consider contributing to climate change, becomes quite the ethical undertaking – making her contemplate whether or not to invite those objects into her home accordingly.[15] Or take Eden for example, who explained during the sensory

[15] Ellis, interview & sensory image elucidation, 5th March & 2nd April 2022.

image elucidation method that seeing a gas heater makes her considerably uncomfortable as she can basically *"see the exploitative fossil-fuel industry"*[16] through the flame in front of her eyes. Even Whitney, who has a background in social work and has the dream of becoming a sustainability life coach, noted how she feels that buying products through conventional methods (e.g. in a shop) does not allow for her to feel connected and therefore she prefers to make things herself – *"otherwise you simply do not know where it even comes from and you cannot feel connected in the same way as when you make and feel it with your own hands"*.[17]

DARING CONNECTION

This further relates to Eva's poem, but also Andy's conviction regarding how we ought to act in these crises, namely by *feeling* connected. This connection, as argued in the previous chapter, seems to be something that capitalism has prevented humanity from feeling and is arguably the root of the crises in which humanity currently finds itself (Miéville 2015; Wright 2013). Accordingly, this connection is something that might make our homes feel unhomely, as the connection – rather than disconnection – reminds us of exploitation, suffering and violence rather than a relationship of mutual benefit, caring or curing. Emery added:

> So [when I do choose] animal products, for example, it shows that it does not actually do that much to me. And then I actually feel sadness, because it shows me a disconnect. If I do choose those things, it shows me that I do not feel connected to the animal industry, or that I do not feel connected to plastic production, and the plastic soup in the ocean. And sometimes, I can feel a little less guilty about it, because I really do believe: yes, I am part of a toxic system [which I cannot escape] as there are very few alternatives. But then there is sadness, that I feel so disconnected, that it is not part of my "being", as it does not hurt me if I consume something like that.[18]

[16] Eden, sensory image elucidation, 4th April 2022.

[17] Whitney, sensory image elucidation, 8th April 2022.

[18] Emery, interview, 15th March 2022.

Accordingly, I consider how one's desires, dispositions, and visions of feeling at home in the world may be materialised in the phenomenological and aesthetic aspects of the home. Emery, Ellis, Eden, Whitney, Andy and Eva in particular wish to curate their homes in a manner that attends to care, both for themselves, but also for the broader environment (which might not even be considered mutually exclusive). Specifically considering planet Earth's limited natural resources, orientations towards the future play a significant role and thus carry a relationship with one's actions in the present (Bryant & Knight 2019, 11). However, whilst contemporary notions surrounding climate change often regard the future, it has also become apparent how participants' curation of their homes does not solely consider the *future* ecology of planet earth. Rather, their actions also concern dealing with more present crises, the crisis of bringing objects into their homes that *presently* inflict violence, exploitation and control. As such, their actions may not be intended only to mitigate a dystopian future, but rather, their actions may be seen as acts of care, protection and nurturing beings that reside in, but also outside of their domestic sphere, now *and* tomorrow.

Considering this, it seems that objects are carefully selected, or curated, based on whether or not participants want to invite them into their homes. In a sense, the curation process entails including objects that are experienced as 'homely'. 'Homely', then, entails care rather than violence, nurturing rather than exploiting and healing rather than suffering. Through a phenomenological approach to my participants' homes, I have been able to capture the richness of their lives, what matters to them, but also what concerns them in direct and incisive terms. This, in turn, allowed me to reconfigure what it means to be human, to have a body, to suffer and to heal, and to live amongst others within their own home, but also the collective home – planet Earth.

The attitudes that the participants take up towards the world are shaped both by objective as well as subjective aspects of reality: it is a great interplay of what is of the mind and what is of the world. At the same time, historical and cultural conditions inform their values, assumptions, ideals, and norms embedded within. Indeed – the participants do not exist in a vacuum. Akin to what Emery insisted during her interview, they are part of broader systems and structures – concurrently impacting the curation of their homes, or in other words, impacting their ability to care and cure, to create a 'homely home', and to feel at home. In the next chapter titled 'Home (Infra)Structures', I expound further on this.

INTERLUDE

Keep running, buy your ticket to happiness. The happiness you have been programmed for, the happiness that you were born to find.

So don't step out of the turning wheel, don't stop, keep it running in order to succeed, pump an ever-growing amount of resources in the spinning wheel while keep on pumping CO2 in the air.

Forget about the people whose lands will be flooded.

Forget about it.

Don't care, just unplug and disconnect.

But this is fucking madness.

This indifference is madness.

Disconnection - The assumption of independence, control, everlasting growth, materialism, supremacy, human stewardship and superiority.

It is lunacy.

Illusions that are facts to us and indoctrinated, while we get lost in our increasing desire for luxury, capital, and control.

Well, we freak out and have an increasing desire for luxury capital and control.

It is this madness that takes the land that nourishes us.

And it takes our mental health.

It is just madness that takes our lives[19].

[19] Eva, Poem shared during interview (complete version: It is 6 AM, I couldn't sleep tonight. by Eva Dassen | Mixcloud), 15th February 2022.

4. HOME (INFRA)STRUCTURES

Over the course of the twentieth century, a prominent (western) understanding of homes centred around the idea of physical structures as products of capitalist modernity, or, privately owned properties predominantly occupied by nuclear families (Samanani & Lenhard 2019). Marlow, who has been introduced in chapter two, indicated that *"sometimes it does not feel like planet earth is my home, because sometimes the way we refer to 'home' feels more like a materialistic form, which is not home to me. (…) I feel like home is more like a concept, like a concept that our societies – even more the Western and industrialised societies – have developed. So, when talking about home, I feel like we see homes more as the Western concept".*[20] Her subjective understanding of the home did not seem to match with the dominant narratives she understands to surround homes – *"I could say my home is planet Earth, but I do not feel like planet Earth is home. I do not feel like home is what planet Earth means to me given the (western) context in which home is usually referred to".*

Certainly, physical structures, or houses, mainly involve normative, widely reproduced, and often material forms, while on the other hand, homes centre around subjective feelings of belonging and dwelling. Accordingly, anthropologists have studied beyond the physical structures of homes to understand them, portraying them as diverse arrays of practices, feelings, and meaningful and imaginative forms that connect their inhabitants to wider social and moral worlds (Morgan 1965). As such, 'home' may refer to imaginary spaces rather than just physical structures, while houses, as sites of labour, conflict, and exploitation, may at times feel fundamentally unhomely (Samanani & Lenhard 2019). In part, this distinction between the home and the house emerged specifically through the growing understanding that households could be sites of unhomeliness, whether of the everyday realities of poverty or state violence, or of a person's inability to practise care for those they love and care about (Samanani & Lenhard 2019).

Subjective understandings of the home, then, have been enhanced by drawing on the phenomenological tradition of examining what it means for people to have a place in the world (Ingold 2011; Jackson 2005). As a result, ethnographic and phenomenological approaches have

[20] Marlow, interview, 22nd February 2022.

provided compelling insights into the existential demands, constraints, dilemmas, potentialities, uncertainties, and the 'struggle for being' that constitute what it means to be human (Jackson 2005) – similar to what has been presented in the previous chapter. From this perspective, a growing body of work has approached the concept of 'home' not as a typical or identifiable institution, operating to reproduce given forms of authority, but instead as a denomination for the ongoing efforts and aspirations of people to secure a place or sense of belonging in the world. This is something felt, lived, imagined, or struggled for – albeit in ways that are simultaneously enabled and constrained by broader economies, relations of power, and inequalities (Samanani & Lenhard 2019; Desjarlais & Throop 2011; Vine 2018).

As such, when attending to the subjective stakes of homemaking, one should also attend to the intricate, palpable force of the political, the cultural, the discursive, and the psychological in people's lives. This, then, also brings the possibility to consider the home as a site where people can negotiate and even contest their place in the world. This approach to the home is in no small part granted by feminist writings on women's lives, domesticity and labours of homemaking and are laid out in the following section accordingly.

LABOURS OF A HOMELY HOME

"I would like to design my life in such a way that I do not contribute to [climate change], and that also includes the design of my home. But it is hard to realise that as at the same time, I have the feeling that I am in a system which is almost impossible to escape. Of course, we all have a sort of 'ideal home' but is mine achievable at this point in time with just a small amount of people having that same ideal?"[21] – this is the question Eden posed during our second interview when we conducted the sensory ethnographic method regarding her ideal home design. She seemed to contemplate whether it is a real possibility to bring her 'ideal home' into existence, given the system that she finds herself in. In order to realise her 'ideal', Eden recognised the strenuous undertaking it will be – probably as strenuous as trying to feel at home in the Anthropocene.

[21] Eden, sensory image elucidation, 4th April 2022.

When examining the everyday labours involved in the making of a home, feminist scholars have also called attention to how this labour can produce tensions between exploitation and belonging, and between social reproduction and social change. An example has been described by Lila Abu-Lughod, who ethnographically inquired about the homemaking labours of Awlad 'Ali Bedouin women in Egypt (1990) and traced how seemingly oppressive norms of public male honour and private female modesty are ingeniously challenged by women in order to assert power for themselves. Through the echoing of men's strict requisite to separate men and women in the home, the women dedicate spaces in the home for women to smoke, scheme and share household secrets. This way, they can maintain their claim to modesty and virtue while concurrently inverting their formal complaisance to men (Abu-Lughod 1990). More careful attention to these practices uncovers how they emerge as forms of resistance, challenging the power dynamics within households, but also potentially the broader social dynamics. Challenging power dynamics, that being within yourself, your home, or the broader context can feel very uncanny. One can come to question the very things they have held true to themselves. Emery explained:

> Today, I reflect even more [than I used to]. However, now I reflect on my thought patterns, my beliefs, ideals, values, internalised racism, my own socialisation, internalised capitalism, and so forth. So this really comes down to deeply personal work. (…) On a personal level, I am very much de-learning and healing from the deep wounds that society can inflict on you.[22]

These deep wounds do not exclude the wounds that result from socially reproduced narratives surrounding climate change and one's (individual and neoliberal) responsibility towards it. *"Before – I would reflect a lot on myself, but I would reflect predominantly in material terms, with a lot of emphasis towards what I should or should not consume"* - Emery continued. Narratives informing how one should act can place significant weight on individual responsibility, while at the same time, offering limited agency to truly take said responsibility. Vania, an anthropology Master's student with a background in psychology, pointed out: "*I feel like a lot of narratives I see about climate change are often like: turn off your lights, try to not drive the car, take your own*

[22] Emery, interview, 15th March 2022.

bag to the grocery store, and just like the little things. (…) It just feels quite helpless as it is such a big issue that, really, not just one person can fix".[23]

Avery, the sustainability coach that was introduced in chapter two, keeps herself occupied with this exact concern. Her work as a coach brings to the front how people can act in a way that does feel meaningful, regardless of how big or small the impact really is. *"I think the main forces really come from two sides"* she explained. *"On the one hand, it certainly comes from the people themselves, however not necessarily from your, or my, individual behaviour. The world is not going to change if one person stops cooking meat at home – it may still be very good, but the world will essentially only change when there are strict regulations for the broader society set in place. (…) A lot of these regulations depend on the decisions of large organisations and politics".*[24]

Most – if not all – participants agreed that a more tangible form of action would need to come from 'above'. Shae explained: *"I certainly cannot do it on my own, and I feel kind of powerless in that sense. I can do it with myself and my environment, you know me and my housemates. We can, together, motivate ourselves and others to use less plastic, etcetera. But if the food that I can buy in my area is not available free of plastic, and at a normal price, then it gets really complicated".*[25] Change may not feel like it can come from people themselves, but Avery reminds us: *"A lot of change is really coming from citizens who are uniting. It is very useful if residents and groups come together and say: hey, we want this or that in our neighbourhood. This pressure from outside is very much needed to keep politicians and civil servants working well and on the right track"*.

As presented above, people are palpably influenced by the wider structures in which they find themselves, but as also argued by Abu-Lughod, this does not lead to passivity (1985; 1990). For people struggling to find their place in the world, it can be the small meaningful moments, experiments if you will, in which they are able to practise forms of care. Living within these unhomely times, these small moments can feel incredibly significant. Avery added: *"Yesterday I*

---

[23] Vania, interview, 25th February 2022.

[24] Avery, interview, 11th March 2022.

[25] Shae, interview, 23rd February 2022.

tried to find an organic florist, but it did not really work out. Things like that can be really difficult, so I think that is a tricky point. I think flowers are so beautiful and I really like giving people flowers, so I do that quite often. But at the same time, I find it very difficult because I know how harmful it is. What I do try is to actively ask the florist if they have any organic flowers – so that is kind of my contribution when I am buying flowers; to ask about organic flowers so that people know that there is a demand from customers"

During the same interview with Avery, she explained how she wants to practise care – not only for herself and other people to be able to enjoy the flowers, but also for the soil, insects, and the other beings that might be impacted as she buys the flowers conventionally rather than organically. The system that she finds herself in does not offer that option to her, compelling her to deliberate on how to practise care accordingly. Her act, then, of informing the florist that she would be interested in organic flowers could be seen as a small, but meaningful, gesture to be able to practise care towards the soil, insects, and other beings. The participants in the research do not seem oblivious – they are very much aware that greater change is needed. However, by and large, that change seems to be outside of their agency. They are seeing their collective home dilapidate while their hands are tied, only allowing for the small, but nonetheless meaningful, gestures. This seems to be one of the things that contribute to an unhomely feeling – the desire to practise care but the inability to do so. Emery shared during our interview: *"It may not be what is needed for change, but [those small gestures are] still the ethically right thing to do".*

STRUCTURAL PROMISES

A prominent anthropologist writing regarding the subjective stakes of home and homemaking was Pierre Bourdieu, who also highlighted contrasts between the house(hold) on the one hand – understood as a social institution reflecting dominant norms (Bourdieu 1976; 1977) – and the home, understood as including feelings of rootedness, safety, and value (Samanani & Lenhard 2019). However, Bourdieu's approach also underlines how houses impart particular social understandings and roles, thereby focusing less on individual houses or homes, and more on housing as a form of infrastructure (Larkin 2013; Samanani & Lenhard 2019). I also deem this approach productive considering that homes, as such, can be connected to desires for a better present and future (Brun and Fabos as cited in Samanani & Lenhard 2019) similar to new infrastructures as "promises made

in the present about our future" (Anand, Gupta & Appel 2018, 27). Thereby, the Anthropocene may have the potential to reconfigure relationships of the sensual and the ethical, and thus (re-)create new forms of moral aesthetic judgements of homes and their agglomerate of materials and energies materialised in objects. Thus, as one's desires, dispositions and visions of a homely home, now and in the future, may be materialised in the aesthetic aspects of the home, incorporating certain objects and materials in one's home may represent how one may aspire to the promises of said objects and materials, promises of care and a more 'homely' home. This may be seen as cultivating alternative ways of feeling at home in the Anthropocene (Vine 2018). However, this also underlines how one can be constrained in the pursuit of a 'homely' home:

> It is a mild winter's day, and the sun is shining brightly. As I arrive at Utrecht Station, I decide to walk instead of taking the bus to Shae's home. She is the first participant I will be interviewing – I feel excited, and not even that nervous. This may be because the sun is shining, which always gives me an amazing feeling, but it could also be because Shae is an anthropology scholar herself. As I enter her home, the inside feels about the same temperature as outside. I would not particularly say it feels cold, but my skin immediately misses the sun's warmth. We sit down, have lunch together, and chat. As the interview progresses, I notice that my fingers are growing colder and colder. Soon I discover why: Shae describes that she refuses to turn on the central heating. As she points to the window, I can see that the radiator is placed directly under it. "*That window is single glazed. You can literally see the heat escaping to the outside if the radiator is turned on. That just does not fucking work. I do not even want to turn it on anymore, so I sit here – with ten layers of clothing, heat pads and blankets – just to get through the day*". I also feel tempted to put on my jacket again, but it feels inappropriate to do so. I ask her if it feels comfortable to not turn on the central heating. She replied: "*Well, not really. On the one hand, it would be nice to have a warm room, but in order to do so, I need to crank up the central heating really high. And because of that, it does not feel comfortable because it is just such a waste. It is not too bad now, but when it is freezing, it really is not pleasant*". [26]

[26] Shae, interview, 23rd February 2022.

Heat is quite a central subject for many of the participants in my research. Having a warm home, or shower, feels like an act of care towards themselves. However, heat, or forms of energy materialised in objects, are also places of conflict. This in the sense that the care practised towards themselves directly results in violence towards others, sometimes in very visual manners given the resources needed to produce the heat. In Shae's example, the vision of her radiator under the single glazed window means that the warmth is delivered in an unhomely manner. Seeing the waste of heat, and thus of resources, she does not find it worth practising care towards herself as it does not seem to practise sufficient care towards beings residing outside her home.

As her radiator is placed directly under her single glazed window, the significant temperature differences often cause condensation to form. And as a result, the combination of moisture and fungi triggers wood-rot.

As of today, domestic energy policies in the Netherlands do not require homeowners to sufficiently insulate their properties, nor does it require proprietors to instal energy-saving facilities, like double glazing, to properties they sublet (Ministry of General Affairs 2014). As such, proprietors often sublet their properties without investing in sufficient insulation, which also results in higher energy expenses for the subletters.

Shae, but also many other participants, finds herself in this tension – a tension between a 'homely' home and the home she can produce. Shae added that if she would be able to buy a house and invest in proper insulation, she would be able to circumvent depending on her proprietors and produce a more 'homely' home for herself. However, given her current socioeconomic status, she does not have the sufficient funds to do so, and with the housing shortage in the Netherlands making it even worse, the purchasing of her own property does not seem like a feasible option, now or in the near future.

Focusing not solely on houses and their objects per se, but also on how participants perceive being at home phenomenologically, I illuminate the lives and relations that are inaugurated within homes while concomitantly considering the social and political contexts in which they are situated. Homes not only embody the biographies of their inhabitants, but they also embed the interconnection between individual trajectories, kinship and the state (Carsten 2018). Ergo, I consider how houses and homes encapsulate shadows of wider structures and thereby reveal how its inhabitants are forged in the participation of broader structures – even if they do not agree with them. The manner in which Shea phenomenologically perceives her home is just one example of the many others where participants seem to struggle with their subjectivity to wider social trajectories. Arguably, this demonstrates a position of precarity.

PRIVILEGE AND PRECARITY

As presented above, belonging, security, worth, interpersonal relationships and power and contestation are embedded in the home as a physical structure. At the same time, the subjective stakes of the home move beyond its physical form. This produces tension as it also brings to light how lives, or care, within the home can be constrained by multiple, intersecting forms of power, from gendered hierarchies, and home ownership, to the power of the state (Samanani & Lenhard 2019). For example, a classic analysis of hospitality, or the practice of care within homes, may highlight how it serves to enact the authority and moral standing of the hosts, in turn linking to forms of cultural and state authority and alliances (Herzfeld 1987).

Moreover, a remarkable analysis of homes on the margins in Santiago, Chile established that the very possibilities of caring for others, within or outside the households, can be mediated or constrained by wider structures. This marks the possibility to care as a rather delicate and often

fraught endeavour (Han 2012). As such, even in studies focussing on physical structures, the home frequently comes into life not in symbolic or material forms, but rather as an experienced and relational concept. Consequently, the possibility to practise care is of a precarious nature as it is always confined by wider social trajectories.

Continuing on this notion, precarity – and its associate, precariousness – are understood as a shared ontological condition that exposes people to their (involuntary) interdependency while synchronously documenting the forms of dispossession the interdependency entails (Han 2018). While precariousness denotes participants' essentially dependant and involuntary status, it must be emphasised that the forms described in this thesis are forms of a rather *privileged* precarity. This raises the question of how interdependency and vulnerability are experienced and understood in privileged circumstances within the context of climate change.

During our first interview, Eden was venting her frustration that she felt that she could not be happy as she is forced to participate in a system with which she does not agree. She feels unhappy as *"there is so much suffering in the world, suffering about which I cannot do anything, which I cannot change".*[27] She explained she wanted to practise care, but that she does not have the ability to do so – *"and I feel so insignificant, actually"*. This notably contributes to her gloominess and anxiety: *"I just do not see a way out of it. It is all very black to me"*.

Notwithstanding her despair, her attitude towards the current epoch does not entail obliviousness towards her (privileged) place in the world: *"I think it keeps you fighting when you feel you have some kind of influence. I just lack that feeling. But then I think, yeah, what do I want? I am walking around with my privileged status, enjoying this bit of a luxury, what the fuck do I want to strive towards, you know? All right, I can make all these small changes, but with my little contribution, I am not going to change anything. It is just not possible. This is going to be a lifetime of struggle, but it is one that I am willing to take on"*.

Admitting that participants' partaking in certain systems can be interdependent and rather involuntary, it must be noted that they are – at the same time – not completely exposed to many of

[27] Eden, interview, 4th March 2022.

the dispossessions that are experienced within the system overall. Driving their car does not result in the direct dispossession of their home and livelihood as it would for people living on land that has been expropriated in favour of the oil and gas industry. Purchasing a cheap piece of clothing does not follow alongside a life's worth of appalling and underpaid work circumstances as it would for people that fall victim to brutal outsourcing practices. Nor does drinking milk lead to their lifelong captivity as it would for the more-than-human beings that are kept captive and exploited in order to commodify and consume their milk. This makes it important to note that while their capacity to practise care may be impaired and precarious, the inability of practising care impacts beings disproportionately.

This marks the participants' experienced precariousness of a different nature – as they may be impaired to practise care, while their inability to do so does not affect them as much as it would others. However, this does not render participants' experienced precariousness meaningless, but rather underlines, again, how the subject of climate change cannot be discussed separately from that of privilege. In the next chapter titled 'Experimenting to Feel at Home' I expound further on the precarious practices of care by exemplifying how consumption – amongst other things – can impact one's ability to feel at home in the Anthropocene.

INTERLUDE

It is 8:00 AM by now.

I couldn't sleep tonight.

It had something to do with my friends in pain and the climate crisis.

I'm still writing.

And I'm still crying.

I'm crying my tears for you.

I'm crying these tears for you because society has forgotten how to.

How to sit still and how to look back, how to reflect and how to feel.

Because do you know how much money that could have cost? How much money could have rolled instead of tears, how much it could have stimulated the economy instead?

With a well-paid job I could have easily earned over €200 instead of writing this damn thing.

I could have.

But instead, I couldn't sleep tonight.

It had something to do with the climate crisis and my friends in pain.

And insufficient change.

I'm crying my tears for you.

Because society has forgotten how to.

It's my way to show you, that I care and dare to love you.

Because in these times there is nothing more daring than to love you.

Because it means that I will have to cry my tears for you.

In this money driven, competitive, neoliberal world focused on separation and growth. I will be crying my tears for you.

Till the water comes and unites with her. Flushing away the distinction between previous tears and water of despair, till hope will float, will come to the surface and drag people out of water, mixed with tears and hope will come, it will.

But we will have to cry our tears for it.

I will.

Because I care and dare.

To love you.

I do.

I love you.[28]

[28] Eva, Poem shared during interview (complete version: It is 6 AM, I couldn't sleep tonight. by Eva Dassen | Mixcloud), 15th February 2022.

5. EXPERIMENTING TO FEEL AT HOME

As outlined in the previous chapters, living in a time considered the Anthropocene can feel very precarious, and the home in which one finds oneself can feel very unhomely. However, even under what may seem the most dire and precarious of circumstances, the home may serve as a site for creativity as well as a repository for ambitions and aspirations. Returning to Clara Han's analysis of homes on the margins in Santiago, Chile (2012) further exemplifies this. In her poignant ethnography, Han traces how small interventions in the home – the pawning of beloved objects or the sheltering of relatives – create small moments in which new, perhaps unknown possibilities can materialise. Even living in a time when life's possibilities are tightly constrained by debt, gang violence, and the punitive force of the state, Han illustrates how these small moments allow for care to be practised – making homely homes (2012).

While the precarity experienced in the homes of people living on the margins in Santiago is substantially different, I have shown how climate degradation can bring about distinctive feelings of precariousness. As the collective home – planet Earth – dilapidates, feelings of safety, care and homeliness dilapidate with it. In this context, then, the small moments that allow participants to feel that they can practise care become important in order to feel at home in the world. Exactly how the home serves as a locus for creativity and experimentation with the intent of care materialises in numerous ways. One way is described by Michael Vine in his striking ethnography 'Learning to feel at home in the Anthropocene' (2018) as presented below. In this ethnography, Vine demonstrates how people can create small meaningful moments through experimentation with materialities even when they are constrained by wider structures. By focusing less on the impact of the experimentations, and more on what the experimentation signifies for the participant, Vine argues that experimentations matter in order for participants trying to feel at home in the world.

SAVE OR SACRIFICE

By following a group of relatively privileged, primarily Anglo-American residents, Vine examined how a series of unfolding climatic changes in contemporary Southern California led to prominent "experimental efforts to forge alternative ways of feeling at home in the Anthropocene" (2018, 412). In the midst of acute and anticipated climatic changes (specifically prolonged drought), Vine

observed shifts in everyday experimentation between residents and their bodies, spaces and objects around their homes. Accordingly, Vine presented how a married couple decided to replace their green grass lawn with plants native to California since the latter require significantly less water.

In addition to these changes, however, an (expensive) artificial turf patch was added as their garden's centrepiece (2018, 409). Vine notes that in North American public culture, the well-tended turfgrass lawn has largely become associated with specific images of the suburban 'good life' (Vine 2018) and through phenomenological analysis, Vine uncovered the couple's personal and cultural attachment to the features of green grass lawns. By replacing their lawn with native plants and an artificial turf patch, the couple felt like they 'did their bit' to prevent further negatively impacting climate change. Nevertheless, by adding the artificial turf patch mimicking the aesthetic features of their soft, green, grass, the couple did not have to compromise the comforts of their (aesthetically and phenomenologically) pleasing garden. This way, the couple fashioned a creative manner to both practise care towards themselves, while also practising care for the broader environment.

What I call 'experimentation' occurs through a process of decision-making where 'needs' and 'wants' are negotiated within the appropriate context, or, within specific conceptions of 'the good life'. The consideration for the specific context in the process of decision-making is substantially important given that conceptions of 'the good life' are culturally mediated rather than universal and that they therefore "cannot be separated from language, social values, histories, and institutional norms" (Appadurai 2013, 290). In that vein, on the one hand, the 'need' entails something that cannot be compromised upon, it is a necessity. On the other hand, the 'want' is something that is (culturally) desired but not necessarily vital, or worthy of sacrifice (Miller, 1998a).

Vine's example specifically demonstrates how cultural desires, or notions of 'the good life', can become reconfigured in the wake of experienced climate degradation – similar to what is found through my fieldwork. Acting upon these reconfigurations, then, can be considered as a possibility of practising care with respect to experimental efforts to forge alternative ways of feeling at home in the Anthropocene (Vine 2018). This form of practised care, however, also uncovers how experimentations to feel at home in the world tend to materialise through a person's consumption

decisions, and as such, these conceptions of negotiating 'needs' and 'wants' also translate well when thinking about morals within consumption decision-making as a part of curating a home (Hall 2011).

PRECARITY CARE PACKAGE

The anthropology of the home has often also considered consumption's significant role in the making of the home. For example, according to David Bell and Gill Valentine, our memories of home are often marked by consumption habits (as cited in Hall 2011). Consumer items within the home may be regarded as deeply personal possessions, often passing through numerous generations (Edwards 2000), in the same way that consumer habits might be reproduced through family experiences (Bell and Valentine 1997). Thereby, the home and the context of its habitants are considered important sites for everyday consumption. At the same time, the home has become intertwined with concepts of ethics and care (Hall 2011), but also kinship and inheritance (Bell and Valentine 1997). In the context of climate change, it often concerns 'the world that your children will inherit'. Accordingly, people are encouraged to take responsibility to ensure that the world their children inherit is one with care, similar to what Avery expressed in our interview:

> I mean, I try to keep my footprint as small as possible. I even try to have a positive footprint by buying trees every month. (…) Also, I would have found it really difficult if my parents would not be involved as much as they are now. I mean, ultimately, it is mainly *my* future. Of course, I hope my parents will last another 30 years, so to speak. But my life will hopefully last a little longer, and even that of my children, making it even more important for us to be mindful of our footprint.[29]

Considering this, consumption may be defined as the "use of goods and services in which the object or activity becomes simultaneously a practice in the world and a form in which we construct our understandings of ourselves in the world" (Miller 1995, 30). Historically, scholars have understood ethical consumption as a key way in which individuals understand and find solutions to social and ecological problems (Arnould 2007; Barnett et al. 2005; Micheletti 2003), similar to

[29] Avery, interview, 11th March 2022.

Avery's consideration to purchase trees. Moreover, within anthropology, consumption-oriented arguments have been made specifically for understanding the home as an external expression of citizens' internal character (Miller 1987; 1998b), and it is through renovation, decoration, and furnishing that those citizens can transform houses from generic expressions into places that tell stories of distinct, personal lives and relationships – home. By focussing on the material components within one's home, Daniel Miller argues for the significance of possession and consumption practices in the making of the home (1998b; 2001; 2009). Fitted kitchens, furniture and trinkets are among these material objects, but also objects such as meals, gardens, and the overall household interiors (Vine 2018). As such, the consumption of objects in one's home may be significantly involved with the placing of oneself in broader society and its imaginations, while developing a personal sense of being and creating relationships of care. Home, and the possessions that fill it, may accordingly provide one with a sense of identity and belonging amidst the adversaries of the outside world (Miller 2001), or, the Anthropocene.

According to Shelley Mallett, homes may as such be seen as always in-between the real and the ideal or imagined, highlighting that they have a procedural quality to them (2004). This procedural quality manifests in the tension between how a person wants their home to look and feel, versus how it really looks and feels. In a way, "people spend their lives in search of home, at the gap between the natural home and the particular ideal home where they would be fully fulfilled" (Mallett 2004, 80). As explored in the previous chapters, the ideal home entails a 'homely' home, where care is practised rather than violence, nurturing rather than exploitation and healing rather than suffering. The possessions that fill the home as such palpably influence the manner in which the home is perceived.

However, through the interviews, observations of homes and the sensory elucidation method, I uncovered another quality of the home that many of the participants seemed to pursue. Namely, how they (would) feel fulfilled in a home with ample natural materials – or, at any rate, materials that are designed to evoke 'the natural'. These could include natural colours (sky/ocean blue, forest green, burnt orange), natural materials (wood, reed, jute), animal-signifying decoration (paintings, statues), but also predominantly the houseplant. Some of the participants were aware of this tendency. Take Eden for example:

> You know what I can really see in my home? A lot of green. I have been thinking about it for a bit actually. It stands out to me that I live in a big city in the Netherlands and all I see around me is stone. But actually, in my house or my living environment, just in my little *bezem kast* (broom closet), I want as much green as possible – because that makes me feel calm, it makes me feel more connected to how it should actually be, you know?[30]

Other participants, like Ellis, expressed their desires to *"become a plant mom"*, but also explained their frustration as they currently did not have the means to do so (specifically natural light).[31] Furthermore, others, like Shae, had homes already filled with natural materials and house plants, but only discovered their tendency during the sensory image elucidation method.[32] Accordingly, it seems that feelings of unhomeliness coincide with the proliferation of a 'natural' interior and house plants (see figure 5 in the conclusion) (Garber 2021). While it has been established that care seems to be central to the everyday significance of the home, tending to the plants may then serve to alleviate prominent feelings of unhomeliness. Moreover, anthropologists have also found that it is specifically 'liveliness' within the home that renders them into places of care and safety (Allerton 2013; Carsten 2018), and it may be the liveliness of the plants, their care-needing properties, and their distinct representation of nature that conjunctively provide comforting feelings as well as feelings of homeliness when living in unhomely times such as the Anthropocene.

At the same time, house plants – both signifying 'the natural' as well as 'the domesticated' – represent some of today's tensions and paradoxes. The plants have been domesticated through domination, yet are delivered in a 'homely' manner in order to soothe the home's inhabitants. This paradox has also bled into the latest trend in mass-market home design, where the newly experienced environmental precarity is marketed, packaged and sold. IKEA – the world's largest furniture and home furnishings retailer[33] - also depicts the gratification of attending to the needs

---

[30] Eden, interview, 4th Marth 2022.

[31] Ellis, sensory image elucidation, 2nd April 2022.

[32] Shae, sensory image elucidation, 9th March 2022.

[33] IKEA - Statistics & Facts | Statista

of living beings within the home. According to IKEA, the houseplant is "a perfect way to bring the outdoors a bit closer, and have a sense of nature invited right into your home".[34]

In these ongoing efforts to provide a market for 'environmental' (home) goods, the items that celebrate and respect nature also represent the ongoing tendency to consume it – encapsulating a prominent tension experienced by the participants. This furthermore illuminates particular gravities of contemporary culture, namely the tendency to 'consume' their way out of experienced crises (Garber 2021), similar to the example of Vine (2018). Thus, efforts to curate a 'homely' home may be expressed through ethical consumption. While these habits are shaped by the understandings of oneself in the world, the feelings of unhomeliness during the Anthropocene may as such be countered through habits of ethical consumption. Increased awareness of the Anthropocene may then also transpire in people's *ability* to ethically consume, which is thought to require considered and informed adaptations to one's consumer habits with the purpose of reducing negative effects on humans, more-than-humans and the environment overall (Clark 2006). However, these practices, again, raise the question of whether ethical consumption is primarily an elite social practice (Johnston & Szabo & Rodney 2011).

Lane, who is the Netherlands' first vegan interior designer, also expressed this concern to me during our interview. Through her work as an interior designer, she uncovers the several ways in which home designs can negatively impact both their inhabitants as well as the broader environment. An example that she gave concerned animals, producers and the consumers, namely leather couches. She explained that in order to produce leather, an extensive process is required involving a slew of toxins – most of which are detrimental to the environment. Aside from the rather obvious harm leather production has on animals, she also pointed out the health impacts for workers in the leather field inhaling the toxic fumes during the production process. A visit to Morocco a couple of years ago had left a significant mark on her memory. *"The smell was just so bad – I will never forget it. Now, I just cannot imagine advising leather furniture to anyone*

[34] IKEA - Blur the lines between inside and out with pants

knowing how bad it is. Or even bringing these toxins into my own home for all I know".[35] To her, the leather is not only toxic to animals, the workers or the environment, but also to the consumers – as those toxins are 'brought into' the home.

Consequently, through her work as a vegan interior designer, she hopes to be able to practise care towards herself, her clients and the various other beings that may be negatively impacted. However, she found that in order to mitigate those negative impacts, the interior tends to increase in price. According to her, this is due to expensive label and certification procedures that ensure certain products do not inflict harm (e.g. fairtrade or organic labels). Moreover, she argues that as the supply chain tends to be less exploitative, the products, therefore, tend to be more representative of the 'true costs' – whereas normally many (environmental) costs would remain hidden.

This brings us to a point which is also emphasised by Vine (2018) observing the various experimentations as one's ability to respond to climate change crises. While observing the couple converting their garden for a less water-requiring option as presented above, Vine considers that the couple, according to their own admission, is 'well off'. Correspondingly, one should consider that having the ability to respond may be permitted by profound socioeconomic status – it is a matter of 'affording' (Miller 1998a). By contrast, not everybody has said status or financial means to be able to address these tensions satisfactorily. Thus, the various ways of responsibility-taking and the exclusion thereof may ultimately be underlined both by issues of class, socioeconomic status, as well as other broader relationships of power, inequality and the wider structures overall (Vine 2018). Therefore, as the objects in the home are experienced phenomenologically, participants may be enabled or constrained in various manners to materialise a home that feels 'homely' – also limiting the capacity to experiment in order to generate moments of meaningful and enduring change (Vine 2018). In the following section, tensions between wanting to curate a homely home versus one's ability to do so are presented, bringing together the various prominent themes covered throughout this thesis.

[35] Lane, interview, 7th March 2022.

PHENOMENAL PAINS

Entering the home of Marlow Hunt, a familiar smell penetrated my nostrils. It seems to be a mixture of incense and essential oils that provide me with a familiar and comforting feeling. It is a smell that I associate with caring – as it also reminds me of flowers – and a smell that has also filled my living spaces. I cannot detect the source of the wonderful smell straight away, but I expect it to come from the bathroom. I hope she will show me later in our interview so I can either confirm or adjust my initial judgement. She welcomes me with a hot cup of tea, and we enter the living area to sit down on her colourful plaids. Whilst serving the tea, she mentions the fact that she would never buy the plastic-wrapped tea packages she was serving to me as seeing them makes her *"kind of anxious"*. Rather, she prefers to buy the loose kind. However, as a friend gave them to her and the tea tasted quite good, she did not want to get rid of them. I agree with her, the tea tastes amazing, but the plastic packaging looks like a blot on the landscape of her beautifully decorated home. This is already my second interview with Marlow, and I notice that we are both quite relaxed. As we are talking, Marlow gives me a little tour of her studio apartment, which is compact but feels welcoming. She shows me all the little knickknacks that she collected throughout her lifetime and shares the amazing memories the objects signify to her.

FIGURE 3, FRUIT BOWL WITH REUSABLE CLOTH AND TANGERINES

As we enter the cooking area, she shows me how she recycles and reuses bags, napkins, glass jars, and the like. Whilst talking about her reusable napkins, she stops mid-sentence, reaches out to a brown fruit bowl, and acclaims *"see – now this really annoys me a lot"*. She proceeds to pick up a sack of tangerines and opens the plastic orange net keeping them together in order to dispose of it. I giggle, mostly because I sympathise with her frustration. She explains *"essentially, I know that these tangerines come in this type of packaging, but at least visually I do not like to be reminded of that all the time"*. She resumes walking me through her cooking space and points out what she does to prevent waste whilst also venting her frustration for how unviable it can be sometimes as *"supermarkets often only offer produce packed in plastic"*.

She continues with the house tour, and as we progress, I begin to learn how much of an eyesore plastic really is to her. As we enter the bathroom, my initial judgement was confirmed: her bathroom was filled with vegan, fairtrade, plastic-free beauty products.

FIGURE 4, BATHROOM FILLED WITH 'CLIMATE FRIENDLY' BEAUTY PRODUCTS

The smell (and sight) of the products took me on a trip down memory lane as I used to work for a store that sold equivalent products. Akin to Marlow and various other participants, I learned how to make various types of beauty products myself, which meant that my home has also been notoriously described as smelling and looking like a soap factory. This was the smell of care that hit my nostrils when I entered her home. To me, this is a smell of trying to mitigate violence, suffering and exploitation by taking matters into your own hands. It is a smell of refusing to participate in toxic consumer behaviour by experimenting with creative forms of interventions. This is the smell of trying to feel at home during the Anthropocene.[36]

During the first interview with Marlow, she shared with me that the bathroom tends to be a place where a lot of her climate change anxiety may be induced – given all the plastic wrappings and damaging ingredients beauty products tend to have.[37] Through plastic, the violence these products are associated with becomes very visual to her. Similar to the tea packaging and the sack of tangerines, her associations with plastics in the bathroom engender what would, according to her, account for suffering, exploitation and violence to those that may call planet earth home, and with which she does not wish to engage. These possessions as such have the potential to make her home feel unhomely.

---

[36] Marlow, interview, 3rd March 2022.

[37] Marlow, interview, 22nd February 2022.

However, there is a difference between the tea packaging, sack of tangerines, and her beauty products. Whilst the sight of the plastic wrapping around the tea makes her anxious, she received it from a friend, and it tastes nice (which may even have something to do with the fact that it was preserved in plastic in the first place). Given that she usually abstains from purchasing 'unhomely' objects such as plastic-wrapped tea, the receiving of the product does not signify her inability to practise care. While seeing the plastic may still impact her phenomenologically, it was not part of the conscious curation of her home.

Meanwhile, the plastic net surrounding the tangerines seems obsolete as the tangerines lay in her fruit bowl. Knowing that she would want to buy products that produce less waste (similar to normally buying loose tea), the sack around the tangerines seemed impossible to circumvent as the supermarket near her does not offer any alternatives. She explained that she is still trying to find a way in which she can buy fruit that does not come from the other side of the world, and at the same time does not contain (as much) plastic, while remaining at an affordable price. At this, however, her experimentation has not proven fruitful yet. Therefore, her need to practise care towards herself directly produces tensions with the conscious curation of a 'homely' home.

Unlike the sack of tangerines, the beauty products represent a manner in which she could fill her bathroom with possessions, that according to her, respect planet earth and all its inhabitants – accordingly allowing her to practise care for both herself as for beings residing outside of her home. Both by making her own products, or by purchasing products that align with her ideas of care, Marlow can experiment in order to feel at home in the world. While the form, content, meaning, and – perhaps most importantly – stakes of everyday ethical and aesthetic experiments of the participants varied to certain degrees – it seems very much about being able to practise any form of experimentation that may allow participants to find ways to feel more at home in the Anthropocene (Vine 2018). As such, I consider – amongst other things – how certain consumption or the mitigation thereof matters in pursuit of sustainability, or, the ability to feel at home within the Anthropocene.

6. CONCLUSION

Through the triangulation of ethnographic methods such as semi-structured interviews, observations and sensory image elucidation, this thesis has depicted the lived realities of residents in the Netherlands trying to feel at home in the world by focusing on the particular aspect of domestic curation. The academic written word, supported by photos and a poem, has captured the tensions of those who are caught in the midst of a paradigm shift. This shift is particularly uncanny: it is founded on an insight of how the world works – and correspondingly of how that world might *stop* working, given the unprecedented anthropogenic ecological and climatic changes. It entails a disruption in the conventional world view of relative climate stability as realisation sets in how planet Earth may cease to take care of humanity as readily as humanity has ceased to take care of planet Earth. As such, the disruption forces one to renegotiate relationships with fellow Earth dwellers, the collective home – planet Earth, and also the individual home (Nitzke & Pethes 2017).

This new paradigm produces tensions. Hence, it can feel disorientating, humbling, terrifying, and fundamentally unhomely as what was previously 'known' fails to accommodate what is learned. These tensions may be easy to objectively talk about, but they can be wrenching to live with as they uncover what Emery classified as 'deep wounds' one has to learn to heal from, while one may have not been aware of the wounds in the first place. It demands that, on behalf of all Earth's dwellers – the beings that call planet Earth home – humanity changes their modes of being, whilst at the same time, the modes to change seem to stem from the same root as what brought humanity to this predicament in at the outset. How one deals with these tensions, as presented throughout this thesis, might be encapsulated within the walls of their own home. This brought me to the question: How do Dutch citizens residing in the Randstad respond to dystopian ideas of the (future) ecology of planet Earth and engage with sustainable/ethical home aesthetics in order to mitigate said dystopian ecology?

In order to unpack this question, I explored how objects of the home come to be experienced phenomenologically, concurrently impacting one's ability to feel at home in the world (Jackson 2005; Ingold 1995). Entering the homes of the participants, engaging in interviews, and exploring their ideal home design through sensory methods allowed me to consider how notions regarding the Anthropocene may challenge one's relationship with the collective home, as the planet Earth,

and the individual home, in the sense of the house they build, design and live in. By considering this relationship, it allowed me to explore how it may impact the (re)-designing of one's home and thereby how domesticity becomes reconfigured within the context of climate change mitigation and sustainability.

Through this research, it has become apparent that a person's conscious, ethical and moral reasoning can be expressed in forms of care that tend to expand to beings outside the domestic unit, to beings on the other side of the world, beings of other species, rivers, and overall nature in its broadest sense, today *and* tomorrow. I have uncovered this by considering the act of curating the home closer to the original meaning of curare, namely as an act of care. While some objects of the home may be considered 'unhomely' – due to their association with violence, suffering, and exploitation – others are considered 'homely' as they represent care (Hage 2017; Saxer 2017). As such, I consider how the curation of the home is renegotiated in a manner that allows the curator to practise forms of care, both towards themselves as towards the broader environment.

Moreover, focusing on the material aspects of the home allowed me to also expound on how the larger collective may enable or constrain a person's ability to practise forms of care within the domestic unit (Abu-Lughod 1990; Han 2012; Miller 1998a; 2001; Vine 2018). This allowed me to consider how experimentations and interventions may be directed toward a change of the self, the world, or both – albeit in ways that might not address the root cause but rather provide meaningful gestures of change in the *meantime*. As such, I contribute to the anthropological debate on how sustainable and ethical home aesthetics – amongst other things – matter in the pursuit of sustain*ability*, or, the ability to feel at home within the Anthropocene, regardless of its impact in the wider context.

Whereas some, especially critical thinkers, might regard these efforts as contradictory or simply 'attempts at sustainability that are ultimately unsustainable', I do not consider their experimentation any less valuable. Instead, I consider that participants' partaking in the given systems is based on a rather involuntary nature, and as such recognise the precarity of not agreeing with it, while simultaneously being unable to change it. In a time where people are sold the lie of (individual) human agency and stewardship, I salute those not shy of recognising the fallacies of their lifestyle while, in their own ways, they may be occupied with efforts to change it. This is also

why it matters for the field of anthropology – as it encapsulates the lived realities of people not trying to change humanity's predicament per se, but rather their own predicament of failing to feel at home in the meantime. Whether materially present in brick and mortar, or in fleeting memories of how to live with care in the Anthropocene, their experimentations carry significance. So, if it takes watering their *Monstera deliciosa* – the plant species depicted below – to make them feel just that little more at home during these uncanny paradigm shifts, so be it.

FIGURE 5, COLLAGE OF PARTICIPANT'S MONSTERA DELICIOSA HOUSE PLANTS

REFERENCES

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1985. "A community of secrets: The separate world of Bedouin women." *Journal of women in culture and society* 10, no. 4: 637–57.

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1990. "The romance of resistance: Tracing transformations of power through Bedouin women." *American ethnologist* 17, no. 1: 41-55.

American Anthropological Association (AAA). 2012. "Principles of Professional Responsibility". Accessed January 24, 2022. https://www.americananthro.org/ethics-and-methods.

Anand, Nikhil, Akhil Gupta, and Hannah Appel. 2018. *The Promise of Infrastructure*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Appadurai, Arjun. 2013. *The Future as a Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition*. London: Verso.

Arnould, Eric J. 2007. "Should consumer citizens escape the market?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 611, no. 1: 96-111.

Barnett, Clive, Paul Cloke, Nick Clarke, and Alice Malpass. 2005. "Consuming ethics: Articulating the subjects and spaces of ethical consumption." *Antipode* 37, no. 1: 23-45.

Bell, David, and Gill Valentine. 1997. *Consuming Geographies: We are What We Eat*. London: Routledge.

Blühdorn, Ingolfur. 2009. "Locked into the Politics of Unsustainability." *Eurozine*, October 30, 2009. https://www.eurozine.com/locked-into-the-politics-of unsustainability/.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1976. "Marriage strategies as strategies of social reproduction." In *Family and Society*, edited by R. Forster & O. Ranum, 117–44. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bryant, Rebecca, and Daniel M. Knight. 2019. *The Anthropology of the Future. New Departures in Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Carsten, Janet. 2018. "House‐lives as ethnography/biography." *Social Anthropology* 26, no. 1: 103-116.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2021. "Sustainability and Habitability: Distinguishing the Global from the Planetary." In *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age*, 81-85. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Clark, Duncan. 2006. *The Rough Guide to Ethical Living*. London: Rough Guides.

Crutzen, Paul J. 2002. Geology of Mankind – The Anthropocene. *Nature*, 415: 23.

Crutzen, Paul J. and Eugene F. Stoermer. 2000. The "Anthropocene" *IGBP Newsletter* 41: 17-18.

Desjarlais, Robert, and C. Jason Throop. 2011. "Phenomenological approaches in anthropology." *Annual review of anthropology* 40: 87-102.

DeWalt, Kathleen and DeWalt, Billie. 2011. *Participant observation: a guide for fieldworkers*. Walnut Creek: Atlantic.

Dutch Anthropological Association. 2018. "Ethical Guidelines." Accessed January 24, 2022. https://antropologen.nl/app/uploads/2019/01/ABv_Code-of-Ethics_2019.pdf

Edwards, Tim. 2000. *Contradictions of Consumption: Concepts, Practices and Politics in Consumer Society*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 2016. *Overheating: An Anthropology of Accelerated Change*. London: Pluto Press.

Gaard, Greta. 2011. "Ecofeminism Revisited: Rejecting Essentialism and Re-Placing Species in a Material Feminist Environmentalism." *Feminist Formations* 23, no. 2: 26-53.

Garber, Megan. 2021. "The Dark Side of the Houseplant Boom." *The Atlantic*. April 20, 2021. https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2021/04/dark-side-houseplant-boom-nature-empathy/618638/.

Ghosh, Amitav. 2017. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Grassiani, Erella. 2019. "Critical Engagement when Studying Those you Oppose." In *Secrecy and Methods in Security Research: A Guide to Qualitative Fieldwork*, edited by Marieke de Goede, E. Bosma and Polly Pallister-Wilkins, 248-260. London: Routledge.

Grovers, Christopher, Karen Genwood, Fiona Shirani, Grath Thomas, and Nick Pidgeon. 2017. "Why mundane energy use matters: Energy biographies, attachment and identity." *Energy Research & Social Science* 30: 71-81.

Hage, Ghassan. 2017. *Is Racism an Environmental Threat?* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hall, Sarah Marie. 2009. "'Private life' and 'work life': difficulties and dilemmas when making and maintaining friendships with ethnographic participants." *Area* 41, no. 3: 263–72.

Hall, Sarah Marie. 2011. "Exploring the 'Ethical Everyday': An Ethnography of the Ethics of Family Consumption." *Geoforum* 42, no. 6: 627–37.

Han, Clara. 2012. *Life in debt: times of care and violence in neoliberal Chile.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Han, Clara. 2018. "Precarity, Precariousness, and Vulnerability." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 47, no. 1: 331–43.

Harvey, David. 2003. *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Herzfeld, Michael. 1987. "As in your own house': hospitality, ethnography, and the stereotype of Mediterranean society." *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean* 22: 85-89.

Ingold, Tim. 1995. "Building, Dwelling, Living: How Animals and People Make Themselves at Home in the World." In *Shifting Contexts: Transformations in Anthropological Knowledge*, 57-80. London: Routledge.

Ingold, Tim. 2000. “Culture, nature, environment: steps to an ecology of life.” In *The Perception of the Environment. Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*, 13-29. London & New York: Routledge.

Ingold, Tim. 2011. *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling, and Skill*. London: Routledge.

Jackson Michael, ed. 1996. *Things as They Are: New Directions in Phenomenological Anthropology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jackson, Michael. 1983. "Thinking through the body: An essay on understanding metaphor." *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* 14: 127-149.

Jackson, Michael. 2005. *At home in the world.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Johnston, Josee, Michelle Szabo, and Alexandra Rodney. 2011. “Good Food, Good People: Understanding the Cultural Repertoire of Ethical Eating.” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 11, no. 3: 293-318.

Khosravi, Shahram. 2016. “Engaging Anthropology: An Auto-Ethnographic Approach.” In *Engaged Anthropology*: *Views from Scandinavia*, edited by Tone Bringa and Synnøve Bendixsen, 41-60. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Kirsch, Stuart. 2010. “Sustainable Mining.” *Dialectical Anthropology* 34, no. 1: 87-93.

Kohn, Eduardo. 2007. “How dogs dream: Amazonian natures and the politics of transspecies engagement.” *American Ethnologist* 34, no. 1: 3-24.

Koning, Martijn de, Birgit Meyer, Annelies Moors, and Peter Pels. 2019. “Guidelines for Anthropological Research: Data Management, Ethics, and Integrity.” *Ethnography* 20, no. 2: 170–74.

Larkin, Brian. 2013. "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42, no. 1: 327–43.

Madden, Raymond. 2017. *Being Ethnographic. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography*. London: SAGE.

Mallett, Shelly. 2004. “Understanding home: a critical review of the literature. *The Sociological Review* 52, no. 1: 62-89.

Micheletti, Michele. 2003. *Political Virtue and Shopping: Individuals, Consumerism and Collective Action*. New York: Palgrave.

Miéville, China. 2015. “The Limits of Utopia.” *Salvage*, August 1, 2015. https://salvage.zone/in-print/the-limits-of-utopia/.

Miller, Daniel. 1987. *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Miller, Daniel. 1995. “Consumption as the vanguard of history: a polemic by way of an introduction.” In *Acknowledging Consumption,* 1-57. London: Routledge.

Miller, Daniel. 1998a. *A Theory of Shopping*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Miller, Daniel. 1998b. *Material cultures: why some things matter*. London: University College Press.

Miller, Daniel. 2001. *Home possessions: material culture behind closed doors*. London: Berg.

Miller, Daniel. 2009. *The comfort of things*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ministry of General Affairs. 2014. "Is the landlord obliged to install energy-saving facilities on a property?" Accessed June 10, 2022. https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/energie-thuis/vraag-en-antwoord/onderwerpen/energie-thuis/vraag-en-antwoord/is-de-verhuurder-verplicht-energiebesparende-voorzieningen-aan-een-woning-aan-te-brengen.

Moore, Amelia. 2015. “Anthropocene anthropology: reconceptualizing contemporary global change.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 22, no. 1: 27-46.

Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1965. *Houses and House-Life of the American Aborigines*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nitzke, Solvejg, and Nicolas Pethes. 2017. *Imagining Earth: Concepts of Wholeness in Cultural Constructions of Our Home Planet.* Bielefeld: Transcript Verslag.

O’Reilly, Karen. 2012. *Ethnographic Methods*. New York: Routledge.

Ortner, Sherry. 2016. “Dark Anthropology and its others: Theory since the eighties.” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6, no. 1: 47-73.

Patel, Raj, and Jason W. Moore. 2018. *A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet*. London: Verso.

Petsko, Gregory A. 2011. “The Blue Marble.” *Genome Biology* 12, no. 4: 112.

Pink, Sarah, and Kerstin Leder Mackley. 2012. "Video and a sense of the invisible: Approaching domestic energy consumption through the sensory home." *Sociological research online* 17, no. 1: 87-105.

Pink, Sarah. 2003. “Representing the sensory home: ethnographic experience and anthropological hypermedia.” *Social Analysis* 47, no. 3: 46-63.

Pink, Sarah. 2019. *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Plumwood, Val. 2002. “Dualism: the logic of colonization.” In *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, 41-68. London & New York: Routledge.

Purdy, Jedediah. 2015. *After Nature*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Samanani, Farhan, Johannes Lenhard. 2019. “House and Home.” *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, edited by Felix Stein. https://doi.org/10.29164/19home.

Saxer, Martin. 2017. "A spectacle of maps: cartographic hopes and anxieties in the Pamirs." *Cross-currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 6, no. 1: 122-150.

Scranton, Roy. 2013. “Learning How to Die in the Anthropocene.” *Opinionator*, November 10, 2013. https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/11/10/learning-how-to-die-in-the-anthropocene/.

Slocum, Rachel. 2008. “Thinking race through corporeal feminist theory: divisions and intimacies at the Minneapolis farmers’ market.” *Social and Cultural Geography* 9, no. 8: 849–69.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2001. “Nature in the Making.” In *Directions in Anthropology and Environment: Intersections*, edited by Carole L. Crumley and Joseph J. Fletcher, 3-23. Lanham: AltaMira Press.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2015. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Utrecht University. 2014. “Young Innovators.” Accessed 15 May, 2022. https://students.uu.nl/en/academics/honours/young-innovators.

Vigh, Henrik. 2008. “Crisis and Chronicity: Anthropological Perspectives on Continuous Conflict and Decline.” *Ethnos* 73, no. 1: 5-24.

Vine, Michael. 2018. “Learning to feel at home in the Anthropocene.” *American Ethnologist* 45, no. 3: 405–16.

Wright, Erik Olin. 2013. "Transforming capitalism through real utopias." *Irish Journal of Sociology* 21, no. 2: 6-40.

APPENDICES

FIGURE 6, THE BLUE MARBLE

APRIL 2022

"IT IS EVERYONE'S HOME"

PHOTOGRAPHER: CARMEN LUKE

Residential area in Utrecht & quote from interview with Eden on 4th March 2022.